

INTERPRETING THE PAST

Volume III

Memory and Identity:
On the Role of Heritage in Modern Society

Editors: Neil Silberman
Claudia Liuzza
Willem Derde
Suzanne Copping

Proceedings of the First Annual Ename International Colloquium

Provincial Capitol, Ghent, Belgium
13-15 January 2005

Interpreting The Past - Volume III

Een co-uitgave van het

Ename Expertisecentrum voor Erfgoedontsluiting vzw, met de steun van de **Provincie Oost-Vlaanderen**
en

Vlaams Instituut voor het Onroerend Erfgoed (VIOE)

Wetenschappelijke instelling van de Vlaamse Overheid

Beleidsdomein Ruimtelijke Ordening, Woonbeleid en Onroerend Erfgoed

en

Provinciaal Archeologisch Museum Ename (pam Ename)

Published by the

Ename Center for Public Archaeology and Heritage Presentation, with the support of the **Province of East-Flanders**
and

Flemish Heritage Institute (VIOE)

Scientific institution of the Flemish Government

Department of Town and Country Planning

and

Provincial Archaeological Museum Ename (pam Ename)

adres VIOE :

Phoenixgebouw

Koning Albert II-laan 19 bus 5

B-1210 Brussel

tel 02/553 16 50 - fax 02/553 16 55

e-mail: instituutonroerenderfgoed@vlaanderen.be

copyright VIOE, B-1210 Brussel en de individuele auteurs.

Alle rechten voorbehouden. Behalve in de bij wet duidelijk bepaalde gevallen, mag niets in deze uitgave worden verveelvoudigd, opgeslagen in een geautomatiseerd gegevensbestand of openbaar gemaakt door middel van druk, fotokopie, microfilm of op welke wijze ook, zonder voorafgaande schriftelijke toestemming van de uitgever.

copyright VIOE, B-1210 Brussels and the individual authors.

All rights reserved. Except in those cases expressly determined by law, no part of this publication may be multiplied, saved in an automated data file or made public in any way whatsoever without the express prior written consent of the publisher.

ISSN: 1780-681X

ISBN-10: 9075230222

ISBN-13: 9789075230222

D/2006/6024/6

INTERPRETING THE PAST
volume III

INTERPRETING THE PAST

Memory and Identity:

On the Role of Heritage in Modern Society

Proceedings of the First Annual Ename International
Colloquium

Provincial Capitol, Ghent, Belgium
13-15 January 2005

Flemish Heritage Institute
Provincial Archaeological Museum Ename
Province of East-Flanders
Ename Center for Public Archaeology and Heritage Presentation

2007 Brussels, Belgium

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	3
<i>Neil Silberman</i> <i>Director, Ename Center</i>	
NEW APPROACHES TO HERITAGE IN FLANDERS AND THE NETHERLANDS	
The Challenge of studying and preserving the remains of World War I <i>Marc Dewilde, Pedro Pype, and Mathieu de Meyer</i>	7
To have or not to have, that is the Question: Designing a Policy for Contentious Heritage in The Netherlands <i>Riemer Knoop</i>	18
Dealing with faulty Heritage: Case Studies from South Africa and The Netherlands <i>GerhardMark Van der Waal</i>	25
EUROPEAN MEMORY: FROM HOLOCAUST TO COEXISTENCE?	
Auschwitz-Birkenau, a Source of Conflict over Interpretation <i>Max Polonovski</i>	37
Memorial Museums for Victims of the Nazi-regime in Germany: Are they only Sites of Patriotic Commemoration and Tourism Development? <i>Thomas Lutz</i>	44
The Jews of Oswiecim: Memories and Identities <i>Tomasz Kuncewicz</i>	50

**ISRAEL AND PALESTINE: CONFLICTING HISTORIES,
CONFLICTING DREAMS**

Heritage and Identity: The role of Heritage in modern Society,
the Archaeological point of view in Israel 57
Uzi Dahari

Archaeology and Politics in the Holy Land 67
Adel Yahya

Israel - Palestine: Whose Heritage? 76
Ludo Abicht

VIETNAM: REFLECTIONS OF WAR, A GENERATION LATER

Remembering Vietnam on the National Mall 83
Dwight Pitcaithley

Monuments, Relics and Museums on War Memory in Vietnam 96
Nguyen Quoc Hung

SOUTH AFRICA: MEMORIES OF APARTHEID AND BEYOND

Airbrushed: Memory and Heritage at The Cape, South Africa 109
Carmel Schrire

Remembering The District Six Museum 124
Sandra Prosalendis

SAMENVATTINGEN 133

RÉSUMÉS 145

FOREWORD

*Neil Silberman
Ename Center for Public Archaeology
and Heritage Presentation*

As part of their continuing program of public discussion and reflection on the role of heritage in modern society, the Department of Culture of the Province of East-Flanders and the Ename Center for Public Archaeology and Heritage Presentation organized on 13-15 January 2005 the first of what would become an annual series of international colloquia on the role of public heritage as a powerful tool for social reflection and intercultural dialogue.

The theme of the first colloquium, "Memory and Identity," brought together a wide range of scholars from different regions whose varying perspectives shed new light on the relationship of material heritage to both memory and identity. For while official presentations of heritage have long been primarily seen in the context of either patriotic commemoration or touristic development, sites of tragedy or difficult memory (famous battlefields, massacre sites, war memorials, concentration camps, political prisons) are now central problems for heritage planners all over the world.

Sites of conflicted memories both symbolize and embody problems of intolerance and difficult co-existence. Thus in order to more fully explore the idea of how material heritage could be an important tool in contemporary discussions of intolerance and conflict, the speakers offered contrasting visions of both past and present in five world regions that have been profoundly shaped by the commemoration of heritage.

In the session, "New Approaches to Heritage in Flanders and the Netherlands," Mark Dewilde, Pedro Pype, Mathieu de Meyer, Riemer Knoop, and Gerhard Mark Van der Waal described recent efforts to deal with new types of material heritage and new policy initiatives that recognize the changing nature of collective memory.

In "Europe: From Holocaust to Coexistence" Max Polonovski, Thomas Lutz, and Tomasz Kuncewicz presented varying perspectives on the potential role of sites connected with the tragic events of World War II in fostering education

and discussion about tolerance and ethnic coexistence in contemporary Europe. Each provided a specific example of how heritage sites and other historical monuments from the World War II period convey their significance and message in the very different cultural landscape of Europe today.

Perhaps no region demonstrates a clearer clash of historical visions than the modern Middle East, and in the session entitled "Israel and Palestine: Conflicting Histories, Conflicted Dreams", Uzi Dahari, Adel Yahya, and Ludo Abicht reflected on how heritage interpretation and meaning in the Holy Land is a matter of widely differing perspective and appreciation by the peoples of Israel and Palestine. They question they all addressed is to what extent can these two peoples share a common vision of the past, or at least share a common responsibility for preserving the full material record of this twice promised land.

In "Vietnam: Reflections of War, a Generation Later," Dwight Pitcaithley and Nguyen Quoc Hung addressed war memories from distinct American and Vietnamese viewpoints. More thirty years have passed since the end of fighting in Vietnam, and the memories of the war are still deep and painful in both Vietnam and the United States. Yet as the speakers explained, the heritage authorities in each country have commemorated those memories in very different ways.

The concluding session on "South Africa: Memories of Apartheid and Beyond" demonstrated how in the new South Africa, history and historical commemoration represent important ways of coming to terms with the experience of apartheid. Carmel Schrire and Sandra Prosalendis offered case studies of archaeology, history, and museology in the changing context of a multi-racial society. It is our hope that the selected papers in this volume offer an overview of the stimulating and important discussions of the First Eneme International Colloquium, in its reflections on how the material remains of difficult and tragic historical events can be used to contribute to public awareness and education about the modern issues of national identity, armed conflict, ethnic violence, and intolerance.

NEW APPROACHES TO HERITAGE IN FLANDERS AND THE NETHERLANDS

THE CHALLENGE OF STUDYING AND PRESERVING THE REMAINS OF WORLD WAR I

Marc Dewilde

Pedro Pype

Mathieu de Meyer

*Association for World War Archaeology
(Flemish Heritage Institute)*

Introduction:

The first scientific World War Archaeology projects in Flanders

World War I (1914-1918) and World War II (1939-1945) both had a major impact on archaeological heritage in the small province of West-Flanders (Belgium): trenches, dugouts, bunkers, shelters and a variety of other structures were built; thousands of soldiers and civilians died and many historical buildings were destroyed. The German-Allied front-line (also known as the “Western front”), which crossed Belgium from Nieuwpoort (Nieuport) to Mesen (Messines) during the First World War, is world famous. The Ypres Salient and the Yser Front were its most important sectors, but defensive structures also existed along the Belgian coast. The coast was again fortified by the Germans during the Second World War, in a series of constructions better known as the Atlantik Wall. Less known, but at least as well preserved, is the Hollandstellung, a World War I defensive line along the Belgian-Dutch border, built by the Germans to prevent an Allied attack through the neutral Netherlands.

Recently all these battlefields were the subject of research carried out by the former Institute for the Archaeological Heritage, IAP, now known as the Flemish Heritage Institute (VIOE - *Vlaams Instituut voor het Onroerend Erfgoed*). This research began in 1989 with the excavation of a deep dugout (an underground shelter for soldiers) of the Australian Tunnelling Company (1917) which was discovered during the excavations of a medieval abbey in Zonnebeke (Ypres). Several other deep dugouts in the Ypres Salient were examined in co-operation with “The Diggers”, a local association of amateur archaeologists. Several trenches and

another deep dugouts were studied at the industrial estate of Boezinge (Boesinghe -Ypres). Recently the Flemish Heritage Institute also excavated the remains of several World War II sites: trenches and bunkers that were part of the Atlantik Wall in Knokke-Heist, Zeebrugge, Nieuport and Oostduinkerke. These are only a few examples of the fieldwork carried out by professional archaeologists in Western Flanders.¹

Meanwhile, parts of the Hollandstellung and other World War I remains were the subject of an extensive inventory project, the Central Archaeological Inventory (CAI).² The study of trenchmaps and aerial photographs from the World War I were an important source of information to accomplish this inventory. In 2001 a first attempt was made to make an overview of the archaeological World War I heritage in Houthulst,³ Klerken, Jonkershove and Merkem; four villages along the Yser frontline. Since there was neither time nor money to make a full inventory of World War I remains in Flanders, the CAI decided to begin with an inventory of seriously threatened areas. A first opportunity came with the A19 Project (see below), the first large scale “battlefield archaeology” project in Western Flanders, during which several inventory techniques were tried out. When most of the A19 work was done, a new project within the CAI was initiated in 2004 with an ambitious goal: the inventory of all the World War I remains in Western Flanders based on aerial photographs, trenchmaps and old documents.⁴

A new challenge: the A19 Project

In April 2002, new plans were announced for the extension of the A19 motorway connecting Kortrijk (Courtrai) with Ieper (Ypres). If this were to be realised, the motorway extension would cross all the major battlefields in the northern half of the Ypres Salient. From Wieltje on, near Sint-Jan (Saint-Jean), the road would extend over a distance of seven kilometers up to Steenstraete in Bikschote (Bixschote). The British frontline from the First Battle of Ypres (October - November 1914) will be crossed near Bikschote. The frontline which was established after the Second Battle of Ypres (22 April – 25 May 1915) would be destroyed between the current exit of the motorway and a place called Turco. This was also the frontline from which the Third Battle of Ypres (31 July – 10 November 1917) was launched. This battle became famous as the “Battle of Passchendaele”. In light of the extensive danger to these historically sensitive areas, the Flemish Minister of Interior Affairs, Culture, Youth and Civil Administration (at that time Paul van Grembergen) commissioned the Flemish Heritage Institute (VIOE) to analyse the

archaeological potential of this particular region.⁵

In the initial phase the most important frontlines in the Ypres Salient were mapped using a GIS (Geographic Information System). British and German trenchmaps, aerial photographs, literature, archival documents and the knowledge of local farmers and inhabitants were used to make an inventory of all the archaeological remains in the area; trenches, concrete shelters, barbed wire entanglements, metre gauge railways and other material traces were put in a database and the GIS. The results were then used as a guide for a surface survey which subsequently identified several concentrations of material. These results were again processed in the same database and GIS. All collected finds were closely studied. Based on the information gathered nine zones were selected, on which extensive archaeological fieldwork would take place. Some sites were to be excavated partially, while other areas were to be investigated by geophysical means (resistivity and magnetometry surveys). Of each of these zones a more detailed inventory was made based upon wartime aerial photographs and more resources which were collected until the end of 2004.⁶ Several British and French historians helped the Flemish Heritage Institute to complete this inventory.⁷

Until now, six of the nine selected zones have been partially excavated: Cross Roads, Turco, High Command Redoubt, Canadian dugouts, Forward Cottage and Bixschote.⁸ As an example, we will focus the rest of this article on one of the sites:⁹ Cross Roads (figure 1). The excavations on this site were the most



figure 1: The excavations on Cross Roads site

extensive thus far,¹⁰ enabling the study of the various periods and evolution of trenchbuilding techniques throughout the war.¹¹ Aerial photographs and other archival documents gave us detailed information about the period in which some structures were built, and are now being used to date them more precisely.

Many well preserved trenches were uncovered, some of them having on the bottom wooden duckboards. In some places these were repaired using bricks, stones and even stable-doors. There seemed to be a difference between the older duckboards and the more recent ones. A detailed study of these duckboards enabled a glimpse into the evolution of trench construction, but it also indicated how and with which materials the damaged trenches were repaired. It appeared that the oldest trenches were constructed hastily, using whatever laid about, while the later ones were constructed more solidly and with standardised materials. The front-line trenches (figure 2) were connected with each other by small communication trenches. Several ammunition stores, artillery emplacements and other structures were connected with the trenches. In one of the stores a case was found filled with 0.303-inch cartridges for a standard Lee-Enfield rifle. The frontline trench is broader and deeper than the others and is strengthened with corrugated iron and A-frames; it was the actual frontline established after the Second battle of Ypres. Starting from this trench a sap was dug towards a fire trench from where the Third battle of Ypres was launched. Along the sap the entrance to a well preserved underground wooden ammunition room was discovered, entered by a staircase. A copper pump was found at the entrance with a rubber hose leading to the room. Another interesting structure was connected to the sap with some duckboards: a brick-wall floor. This could have been an emplacement for an 18-pound field artillery gun. There are some depressions in the floor which support this theory. They seem to be the place where the wheels and the trail stood.

Many artefacts were collected during this campaign. Most of them are parts of the standard equipment: buttons from uniform tunics, several copper buckles, fragments of leather webbing and four regimental insignia. Several copper spoons from different production factories were also collected. A fragment of one of them is very interesting because it contains the personal number of a soldier. The *In Flanders Fields Museum* in Ypres tried to find out from who it was, but could not find any information about the person, which probably means that this soldier survived the war. Remains of the oldest type of gas hoods with mica eye pieces ("Hypo") were found. Several round eyepieces from the later "P" and "PH" gas masks were also collected. Three remains of standard Lee-Enfield ri-



figure 2: Frontline trenches

fles were collected. Indeed, standard 0.303-inch cartridges for this rifle type were present in large quantities in every structure; two full cases of them were found in a dump. Other artefacts included four complete shuffles and a complete French “Vermorel” sprinkler. Such objects were used at the end of the 19th century to destroy weeds, but during the First World War the British soldiers used them to neutralize the poisonous German chlorine gas. Large quantities of ammunition were also recovered: several dumps and loose examples of hand grenades, rifle grenades, mortar grenades and artillery grenades.

Five remains of soldiers who probably died in the spring of 1917, were also recovered from the site. Three of them were piled up on top of each other. The equipment of two of these soldiers was very well preserved: the uniform, the webbing, the Royal Sussex Regiment insignia and the standard ankle boots. One of them carried a Webley pistol, which was standard equipment for a machinegunner. The remains of a fourth soldier was found completely scattered in a shell hole.

An insignia shows that he belonged to the 5th Battalion of the Northumberland Fusiliers. The fifth person was also found in a shell hole; only two parts of his legs and a part of his skull were recovered. All recovered human remains were studied by the physical anthropologist of the Flemish Heritage Institute.¹²

An extensive report for internal use about the preliminary research and the excavations of the A19 project has been written by the archaeologists involved in the project.¹³ The results have so far not been published.

A new initiative: the Association for World War Archaeology (AWA)

During the A19 Project, it became clear that the scientific archaeological research into World War heritage demanded a specific approach in fieldwork. The “conventional archaeology approach” needed to be adapted to World War research. When a “traditionally” trained archaeologist is confronted with the specific remains of the Great War, questions concerning methodology and conservation rise to one’s mind. Surely it is not possible to work on human remains in a similar way to that of a normal excavation, there is a strict procedure to be followed. It is generally possible to deduce the nationality or regiment of the deceased person; in some cases it is even possible to identify the soldier. After the examination of the bodies and the accompanying artefacts, the recovered remains of British soldiers are re-buried in one of the many cemeteries around Ypres. One thing is certain: archaeological excavations make the horror of soldiers’ existence during the war much more vivid than written accounts.

Moreover it is not safe for archaeologists to excavate a trench filled with grenades in the same manner as the foundations of a Roman villa. The demolition squad of the Belgian army comes regularly to collect all explosives, in order to secure the excavation trench and the personnel.

The excavation of remains of World War I (human remains surely, but even trenches, etc.) and other structures, also creates intense impact among the general public. This deep public involvement sometimes prevents the archaeologists from conducting their excavations in a traditional way.

Despite these practical challenges, significant archaeological research can be done. The nature of WWI conflict, a static warfare in trench systems, offers the archaeologist a series of structures that have been occupied for periods up to 4 years. In areas where no trenches were laid, fields where only short encounters occurred between the opposite forces, the archaeologist searches for the remains of actions that took only minutes, even seconds. The availability of archival in-

formation, as well as aerial photographs and trench maps offers valuable information in locating and identifying features found in the excavations. However, some of the best known battles are not completely clear to scholars studying the First World War. Excavations often reveal a constant and swiftly changing terrain where trenches were repeatedly adapted to new threats and needs. They provide another dimension to the available information and helps to locate unknown structures and remains.

In terms of physical conservation, the most important threats are erosion, construction activities, illicit excavations by collectors, and the natural processes of decay. It is to be hoped that eventually the combination of comprehensive research and a constantly updated database will encourage public awareness and support for archaeological protection.

Given all these specific characteristics of the research and the heritage involved, special field methodologies were adopted by the VIOE to proceed and investigate endangered World War sites. While excavating and surveying, the VIOE keeps close contact with the specialists abroad, with the Belgian army demolition squad and with other groups involved in the battlefield research scene.

In November 2004 the “Association for World War Archaeology” or AWA was created by a group of archaeologists who had recently been dealing intensively with World War archaeological heritage in West-Flanders.¹⁴ They proposed to establish an association which would further the goal of spreading information of World War research amongst a broader public. The Association works in close collaboration with the Flemish Heritage Institute and the *In Flanders Fields Museum* in Ypres. The current objectives for the AWA can be summarized in 3 categories: information, exchange, networking and protection. The AWA deals both with the heritage of World War I, and with the remains of World War II.

Information

The AWA seeks to inform and sensitise both the general public and scholars about the importance of World War Archaeology (figure 3). In order to do so the Association committed itself to utilise various information channels for dissemination in scientific and popularised forms. An important tool is the website, which is updated on a regular basis and offers the latest information regarding archaeological research of World War Heritage in West-Flanders. Visitors of the website can subscribe for a free digital newsletter, in which they are informed about current activities and future events. The website can be visited at <http://www.a-w-a.be>.

The AWA also organises events, such as free guided tours on excavation sites and conferences about World War Archaeology. In this way, people can directly experience and feel a piece of World War History by seeing the remains in their original contexts. Examples of other events are small exhibitions and lectures about the research of AWA. An important branch of the publicity consists of contact with the press. Both newspapers and broadcasting companies can facilitate the diffusion of information and help us to reach a broader public. This is important since the heritage we investigate is of international interest.

The AWA also seeks to support amateur archaeologists in carrying out local initiatives in a legal way and according to accepted scientific standards. It is generally known that there are numerous local initiatives concerning World War heritage, but unfortunately many are made in an illegal way and lack any scientific approach. The AWA is intended as a platform to inform these organisations of the professional research and excavation methods, the legal and ethical standards of modern archaeological work and the possibilities to legalise their activities. Furthermore it is in the interest of both the AWA and these local associations that all World War heritage initiatives are linked and steered into the same direction.

The AWA discourages illegal use of metal detectors in archaeological sen-



figure 3: The AWA informs and sensitises the general public.

sitive areas. In Flanders the legislation prohibits the use of metal detectors outside an archaeological excavation: metal detectorists need to have a permit in order to use their detector. Yet many of these amateurs neglect these regulations. The AWA seeks to encourage their participation in scientific research and teach them how to use their equipment in authorized archaeological excavations. This is an important objective for the AWA since the illicit use of metal detectors poses a treat to all archaeological remains, but to World War heritage in particular.

Exchange and networking

The exchange of research results will be conducted by means of publications, brochures, press reports and articles on the website. In addition to exchanging results, the AWA seeks to collaborate in exchange of expertise. Many British, French and other professional and amateur investigators have a vast archive and knowledge of very specific topics regarding the subject of World War I.¹⁵ Examples are the specific study of the standard equipment, trenchbuilding and ammunition. The AWA wants to take part in a broader network of scholars and researchers, exchanging expertise and experiences between various institutions, museums and associations. It is important to develop a suitable working strategy and specialised techniques to apply on this particular kind of heritage such as the use of Remote Sensing techniques and GIS, specialised conservation techniques and the handling of ammunition. All these developments need to be done in co-operation with other scientists, amateur archaeologists or specialised official institutions. In doing so, we hope to improve the collaboration between the different protagonists in the World War heritage research.

Protection

The AWA itself is not empowered to protect World War heritage sites but tries to promote and encourage the conservation and safeguarding of important archaeological sites. Sites with unquestionable value in terms of archaeological heritage need to be protected; this was already promoted by the Treaty of Malta (Valetta Convention, European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, 1992). World War heritage sites need to be included in this policy. Now that the number of remaining witnesses of the Great War is shrinking, the archaeological information conserved in the soil can fill in the blanks in the information and data.¹⁶

Conclusion

The AWA is a fresh start for archaeological World War heritage in Flanders. In its aim to be the link between the scientific research and all the other social and scientific institutions who are dealing with World War I heritage, continuing, close cooperation between all individuals and organisations involved in this field of research will be an essential factor in its success.

References

- De Meyer M. 2004. *Het A19 Project. Deel 2: Historisch Onderzoek en inventarisatie, Woumen* (unedited report).
- De Meyer, M. & Demeyere, F. 2004. De inventarisatie van de gemeente Houthulst (prov. West-Vlaanderen), In: *CAI I - De opbouw van een archeologisch beleidsinstrument CAI*, IAP-rapporten 14, Brussel.
- De Meyer, M. & Pype, P. 2006: Scars of the Great War. New Applications of Battlefield Archaeology in the Ypres Salient. The A19 Project (Western Flanders, Belgium) In *Fields of Conflict: Battlefield Archaeology from Sparta to the Korean War* (two volumes), eds. Douglas Scott, Lawrence Babits and Charles Haecker. Greenwood Publishing Group, Westport (in press).
- De Meyer, M. & Pype, P. 2004. *The A19 Project. Archaeological Research at Cross Roads*. Zarren.
- Dewilde, M., de Meyer, M., Pype, P. & Demeyere, F. 2004. *Het A19 Project. Deel 1: Synthese en evaluatie, Woumen* (unedited report)
- Dewilde, M., Pype, P., de Meyer, M., Demeyere, F., Lammens, W., Wyffels, F. & Saunders, N. J. 2004. Belgium's new department of First World War archaeology. *Antiquity*, vol. 78, No 301, September 2004 (Project Gallery: <http://antiquity.ac.uk:ProjGall/saunders/>).
- Pype, P. & De Gryse, J. 2004. *Het A19 Project. Deel 3: De opgravingen, Woumen* (unedited report).
- Raemen, E., Hendriks, V., Pype, P., de Meyer, M., Rens, R., Peelaerts, A., Dierickx-Visschers, A., Van Baelen, A., Boyen, S., Boffin, C., Jansens L. & Van Looveren, J. 2004. *Loop!Graven. Een archeologische zoektocht naar de Eerste Wereldoorlog*. Leuven.
- Silbermann, N.A. 2004. In Flanders Fields. Uncovering the carnage of World War I, *Archaeology*, vol. 57, nr. 3: 24-29 (may/june 2004).

Notes

- 1 More information about this projects and other research can be found at the Flemish Heritage Institute (Stadenstraat 39, 8610 Kortemark, Belgium) and on the website of the A.W.A.: <http://www.a-w-a.be>. A.W.A. collects all the information regarding research into World War heritage from the VIOE.
- 2 The Central Archaeological Inventory is an inventory of all the archaeological sites in Flanders: Prehistoric, Roman, Mediaeval and more recent remains are mapped in a G.I.S.- database.
- 3 de Meyer & Demeyere 2004.
- 4 More information: <http://www.a-w-a.be>
- 5 de Meyer & Pype 2005; Dewilde, de Meyer, Pype & Demeyere 2004; Silbermann 2004.
- 6 de Meyer 2004.
- 7 Especially P. Chasseaud, N. Steel, Y. Buffetaut, Peter Barton and Peter Doyle had meaningful contributions.
- 8 Pype & De Gryse 2004; Raemen, Hendriks, Pype, de Meyer, Rens, Peelaerts, Dierickx-Visschers, Van Baelen, Boyen, Boffin, Jansens & Van Looveren 2004. De Meyer and Pype 2006.
- 9 More information about the other sites can be found on our website: <http://www.a-w-a.be>
- 10 de Meyer & Pype 2004.
- 11 de Meyer & Pype, 2004, 19-26.
- 12 M. Vandenbruaene.
- 13 Dewilde, de Meyer, Pype & Demeyere 2004; de Meyer 2004; Pype & De Gryse 2004. More information can be found on the website: <http://www.a-w-a.be>
- 14 Marc Dewilde, Mathieu de Meyer, Frederik Demeyere, Janiek De Gryse, Franky Wyffels, Wouter Lammens and Pedro Pype.
- 15 The international attention received by the Flemish Heritage Institute for the project highlights its importance to a wide community of scholars. We would like to thank the following colleagues for their cooperation and assistance in various phases of the project: Peter Barton (Co-secretary of the All Party War Graves and battlefields Heritage Group/ Parapet Archives, UK), Lauri Milner and Nigel Steel (Imperial War Museum London, UK), Peter Chasseaud (University of Greenwich, Department of Military Cartography, UK), Peter Doyle (University of Greenwich, UK), Nicholas Saunders (University College of London, UK), Andrew Robertshaw (National Army Museum London, UK), Martin Brown (Assistent County Archaeologist, East Sussex County Council, UK), Piet Chielens (In Flanders Fields Museum Ypres, B) and Tony Wittouck (Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Poelkapelle-Houthulst, B). All of them have been crucial to the success of the A19 project.
- 16 More information about membership and funding can be found on our website: <http://www.a-w-a.be>

TO HAVE OR NOT TO HAVE, THAT IS THE QUESTION - Designing a policy for contentious heritage in The Netherlands

Riemer Knoop
Dutch Council for Culture

The case

On March 1, 2003, the Netherlands Secretary of State for Culture asked the Council for Culture for its opinion on the desirability of a general policy framework with regard to World War II monuments. The need for this had been triggered by the listing of the decorated tombstone of an individual named Leendert de Leeuw who, before his suicide in early 1943, had been a police officer and a prominent member of the NSB, the Dutch national socialist party, at the provincial town of Roermond. The graveyard in which his tomb was situated, the Oude Kerkhof, was for various architectural and artistic reasons held to be of special cultural-historical significance. The presence of de Leeuw's rather unique tombstone, in shape, design and symbolic content, was earlier felt by the Council's expert advisory committee to add special weight to the graveyard's listed status. In the Netherlands, it had been argued, there are less than a dozen NSB graves known and preserved. Purposely underplaying the cultural-historical significance of some monuments, however painful the period the monument in question refers to might be, had not been on the committee's mind. The mentioning of de Leeuw's tomb in the public notification of recommended listings, however, led to some consternation in the local press, quickly followed by a national public outcry. "*A Nazi grave given the status of a national monument!*". The Dutch wording is even more suggestive: "*NSB-graf wordt rijksmonument*", the prefix "rijks-" denoting both national and state. The Secretary of State quickly put the listing procedure on hold, thereby effectively creating a cooling-off period and decided to turn back to the Council for Culture for further advice.

In view of the minimum age of 50 years for any object to be deemed a candidate for national monument status, as laid down in the Dutch Monuments Act of 1988, The government expected an increasing number of objects similar to the de Leeuw's gravestone to become eligible for listing. A particular, precise way of dealing with such contentious heritage might forestall public upheaval. For instance, by statutorily anticipating any hurt feelings of victims or contestants. The Secretary of State therefore wanted to know whether the Council saw any "*need for a special policy framework on immovable heritage relating to World War II monuments*", and if so, which precise steps should be taken. Specifically, she requested the Council to pay special attention to:

- the possible exceptional significance of monuments from the World War II period;
- the interests of war victims and their relatives;
- feelings within society at large.

The procedure

In order to properly address the Secretary of State's question, the Council for Culture appointed an *ad hoc* Committee for the preparation of the official recommendations. The details of the administrative procedure are significant for understanding the complexity of this case. As the independent statutory advisory board to the government on all cultural matters, the Council develops policies that are, as a rule, neither specialist nor political. The scope of its advice ranges from major questions on general cultural and media policy (laws and regulations), through assigning four annual state grants for arts and heritage, to specific advice regarding the selection of officially protected archaeological sites, monuments, moveable heritage and archives. In this connection the earlier recommendation to put the Roermond gravestone on the national monuments list had been taken by a special selection subcommittee. The Council did not want to review this recommendation but chose to approach the matter in a different, more general way. The added value of the Council's more general advice, it was generally felt, lies in their integrating generalist and expert views and in being neither academically nor politically biased. The task of the *ad hoc* Committee, therefore, was to prepare a broad vision for the Council on the thorny general questions underlying the specific issue posed by de Leeuw's tombstone.

The composition of the Committee reflected this broader approach. The

Council's Chair and its 14 Members included representatives from Archives and Monuments and Museums as well as independent experts on war documentation, resistance history and listing of monuments. At the same time, a well known journalist and researcher, Dr Annet Mooij, who specialised in the psychological effects of World War II memories, was commissioned to write a critical essay on the history and practises of dealing with contentious heritage, at home and abroad. Finally, it was decided also to organise hearings with carefully selected representatives of various stakeholders involved in, or related to, the issues at stake.

Broadening the question

In order properly to address and frame the question raised by the Secretary of State, the Committee decided to broaden the subject matter from contested World War II period monuments also to include objects from other publicly debated periods from the nation's past. Thus, in addition to the themes of World War II resistance movements and racial persecution, the subjects of slavery and colonialism were also examined.

The history of slavery for the Dutch is certainly a contentious subject. The significance of many, if not all of the country's former colonial properties in the Western hemisphere, such as the West Indies, Surinam and the Dutch Antilles, can only be understood in terms of slave exploitation of indigenous peoples and of groups of African origin specifically imported for that purpose. The situation in the largest former Dutch colonies in the East Indies was slightly different. Exploitation there took the form of superimposing a colonial administrative layer upon local hierarchies in order to extract riches and resources. Descendants of the populations from both areas form a significant part of Dutch society today. Their social empowerment, based amongst other things on the recognition of the shadowy sides of our "mutual" histories, is still a bone of contention. The inauguration of a national slavery monument a few years ago, in an Amsterdam neighbourhood populated by what were termed "Surinam immigrants", turned out to be a disaster. Local authorities had, it seemed, exercised a less than balanced acknowledgement of the roles of various ethnic groups in the ceremonies. The "Surinam immigrants" loudly protested on finding out they had not even been invited to the official opening events.

Another example that painfully surfaced during the Committee's hearings revealed a strong bias in the nation's monument policy for *lieux de mémoire* of the "dominant culture". It was felt as a great cause of grievance, for instance, that

the particular Rotterdam quay where most of the immigrant ships of the former colonial subjects used to dock and where many of them first set foot on European soil, had never been given national monument status. Whereas, significantly, a national monument in the capital celebrating General Van Heutz, the commander of the Dutch troops during the extremely grim Aceh wars in the first decades of the last century, had been in existence for over 80 years.

Listening to the representatives of World War II victims of persecution and former resistance members, the Committee realised that the role of the press tends to enlarge and even overly dramatise the atmosphere of hurt feelings surrounding the material relics of World War II events – however painful these may have been in an historical sense. In fact, none of the victims expressed sympathy for extremist positions regarding the necessity of listing such objects – for cultural-historical reasons – as national monuments. Of special interest was the notion that *“everything was already so long ago and that no-one still thought in strictly black and white terms anymore”*, as someone aptly put it. What did emerge, however, was some confusion with regard to the terms used. What does “monument” mean? As with the descendants of past slavery and colonialism, the idea of an official body nominating and arguing over criteria of “exceptional value” for a list of national monuments to be protected by law, was questioned.

As a result, the Committee concluded that “contentious heritage” now covers a wide and continually-changing range of subjects and periods, due to continually changing views of history. In addition, the concept of “forgotten heritage” surfaced during the hearings. This referred to the sites where memories of immigrants or other minority groups that had thus far not been clearly recognised.

The prevailing system

The Dutch legal power to protect the immovable – built – heritage resides in the Monuments and Historic Buildings Act (1988). This law uses the following criteria for restrictions on use, exploitation and restoration: beauty, scientific significance and cultural-historical value, with the additional condition that the object in question is older than 50 years. This usually offers no problems, except that in everyday Dutch parlance, there is no clear distinction between “monument” in the legal sense of listed building or site on the one hand, and “memorial” as a purposely constructed commemorative object on the other. If an immovable object, such as the decorated NSB tombstone at Roermond, is of outstanding (art-)historical significance, being, e.g., among the extremely few grave markers of this type

and for this particular group of people in the whole country, public opinion easily confuses its legal monument status with a commemorative or even honorific intention.

The verdict

Though aware of the need for precise terminology, the Committee decided against coining new phrases. It was deemed better to continue cautiously with the present classifications – and continually make efforts to explain underlying motivation, rather than introduce a new, possibly even more confusing, terminology.

The Committee, furthermore, noted that the contentiousness of many immovable objects is intensified by the public character of their social contexts. By the process of “musealisation” undergone by movable objects and documents (i.e., by their removal from their original contexts and their transfer to less publicly accessible areas such as museums and archives), they may be more effectively safeguarded from being misunderstood in the way described above.

The arguments against conferring legally protected status to contentious monuments were thus sometimes based on notions of public safety. It was feared that the tomb of a collaborator with the one-time enemy might become the focus of right wing extremists. The Committee, however, argued that “*fear is a bad advisor*”. Undesired effects, for instance public safety issues, of certain memorial or places can certainly not be countered by *not* listing them as national monuments. When people want to stir up essentially political issues, they do not need scheduled buildings. Moreover, succumbing to *ad hoc* and emotional arguments of this kind would surely compromise the nation’s long established and balanced protected building designation policy.

This being said, the third legal criterion for designating and protecting immovable objects, “cultural-historical value”, leaves room for valorising the interests of various social groups. The problem the Committee then envisaged was that if the interests of one such group were to play a formal role in the deliberation, then immediately not one but a whole range of “secondary” interests should be taken into account, that is to say pros and cons from various points of view. This would require in each case a careful balancing act, which in itself is not a bad thing, but which in principle would never end. Given a continually changing appreciation of history, new views and new interest groups are surfacing every day. This would require that the arguments underlying the legal protection of each object be periodically and indefinitely re-assessed, as should the very list of pro-

tected immovable objects itself. Now who in his or her right mind would be willing to start an infinite regression of this kind?

Finally, the question of the eligibility of social groups for being heard cannot then be avoided. Also neo-Nazis? And, to make things worse, how should relevant stakeholder groups be identified? An irresolvable dilemma was being opened up by the humane position of wanting to respect the historical injustices done to specific groups while at the same time offering equal chances to be heard by other - perhaps even antagenestic - groups.

The Committee therefore decided to focus on the more neutral criteria explicitly laid down by law. It would be necessary to reject the identification of possible social sensitivities as a criterion and rather base all decisions on the clarification and argumentation underlying a recommendation for listing an immovable object as a national monument, even if public discontent might well be anticipated. It is the Government, not the Council, that ultimately decides on the national monument status, and Government is also free to take broader societal issues, (i.e., non-legal aspects,) into account. In the end, that is a political choice for which Government has to answer to Parliament.

.... no need for a general policy framework...

The Committee came to the additional conclusion that not all monuments dating from the World War II period give equal rise to social contention and that a general policy framework is not required. This answered the main question of the Secretary of State. Yet because the special category of "forgotten heritage" seems to be systematically underrepresented in the national list of protected monuments, the Committee felt that formal and comprehensive re-assessment of these categories was needed.

... but more awareness of social aspects, division of tasks and forgotten heritage.

The Committee further recommended that authorities should be aware of possible controversial and emotional aspects relating to the listing of monuments. No less important, the roles of the various actors involved should be clarified.

The Council for Culture will continue to make recommendations relating solely to substance. Evaluations will continue to take place in accordance with the Monuments and Historic Buildings Act and therefore within the framework of the goals and purpose of that law. Additional matters relating to the tripartite context

outlined above, issues of for example, the dual meaning of the concept of monuments, public order and the interests of specific social groups, the Council fulfils only a informational role. It may anticipate acceptance problems using carefully formulated and well-founded clarifications and considerations.

The Secretary of State for Culture is responsible for decision making about the designation of listed building status. During the course of the decision making, it is the Secretary of State who may take into account the potential problems identified by the Council and related to the monument designation, as well as the recommendations of local or provincial authorities.

Finally, because sensitivities with regard to historical heritage also occur when objects are forgotten, it is not their *listing* but their *non-listing* that may be felt by some to cause injustice and imbalance. Thus, in addition to underlining the right of every citizen to initiate a monument listing procedure, the Committee recommended that the Government officially recognise the “forgotten heritage” category.

The answer

The Council adopted all the Committee’s findings and recommendations by early summer 2004 and brought these to the attention of the Secretary of State for Culture. On 2 November of the same year, she informed Parliament that she endorsed the Council for Culture’s position, with the exception of the last recommendation. She decided not to follow the suggestion to chart to what degree certain episodes of the country’s history might be underrepresented in the national monument registers. Instead, she preferred to stress the importance of the continuous process of selection already being carried out by her various cultural heritage State Services, with an eye to national representativeness. “*It goes without saying*” she concluded, “*that all historical periods and events are part thereof*”.

References

Netherlands Council for Culture, *Advice Relating to WW II immovable Heritage*, 5 July 2004 [s.d., s.l.], including an Appendix with a report by A. Mooij, “Bones of Contention”.

http://www.cultuur.nl/files/pdf/adviezen/mon-2003.5604.2_engels.pdf [English, abbreviated] accessed on 12th June 2006

<http://www.cultuur.nl/files/pdf/adviezen/mon-2003.5604.2.pdf> [Dutch, abbreviated] accessed on 12th June 2006

DEALING WITH FAULTY HERITAGE: CASE STUDIES FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND THE NETHERLANDS

GerhardMark Van der Waal
Heritage Solutions, The Netherlands

The statement I am making in this paper is that Heritage without social acceptance is faulty heritage, regardless of any intrinsic qualities it may have. Faulty heritage is nothing new; it has existed throughout the ages. Periods of iconoclasm occurred during the Byzantine period and the Reformation in the Low Countries, and more recently has flared up in the Near and Far East.¹ Heritage is not regarded as faulty because it fails in terms of common criteria of assessing cultural objects, such as historical, scientific or aesthetic value. It fails because of how it is perceived by the public at large: it is socially wrong, and therefore rejected.

Riemer Knoop has dealt with contested heritage in a 'vertical' way, citing problematic heritage in the Netherlands.² I would like to explore the phenomenon more 'horizontally' in a broader context. After making some remarks on the ontology and contextual aspects of the subject, I will explore categories of heritage in the Netherlands and the concept of faulty heritage in South Africa, where I have lived for nearly 50 years.

Ontology

In an effort to clarify the position of faulty heritage in a larger context, I have compiled the diagram below (see fig. 1). The heritage object in its own right is found in the middle. The more one aspect of heritage (concrete, abstract, individual and collective) is emphasized, the more unbalanced the view of heritage becomes. The combination of two axes gives one The True, The Experienced, The Real and The Right. Right or wrong heritage has to do with one's belief and norms. This is where symbols either attract or repulse; where heritage reinforces converging or

diverging movements, consolidation or separation.

It is telling that the subject of contested heritage is topical today. We have moved from a mono-symbolic period coloured by the Cold War and East-West opposites to a rediscovery of the multiplicity of meanings.³ Ten years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, terrorists destroyed another symbol: the Twin Towers in New York City. The United States responded with a wave of nationalistic and military actions. In the Netherlands, the recent murder of Theo van Gogh launched the country into a soul-searching process for new meaning. The Dutch Parliament is currently discussing a canon for national history.

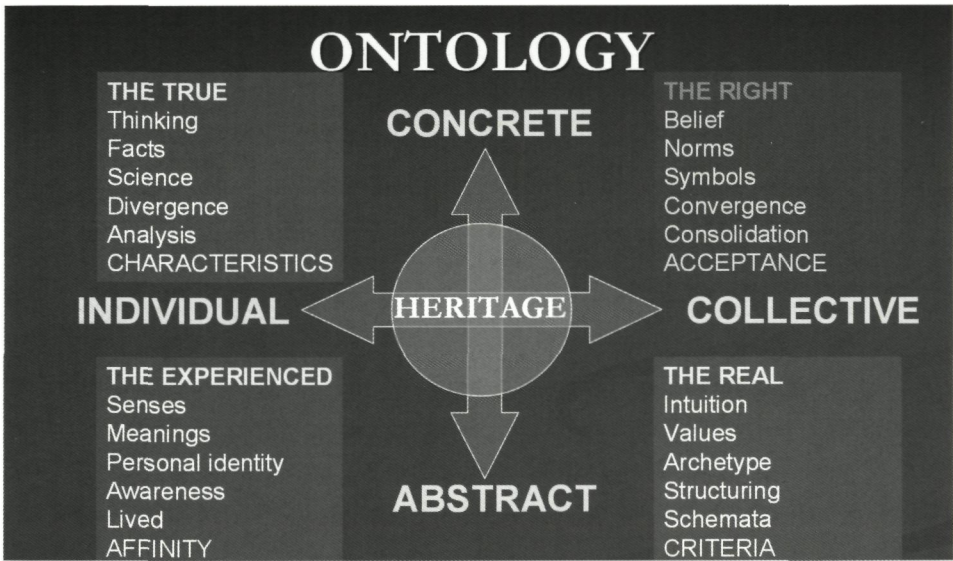


figure 1: the structure of Ontology

Symbolic value and Tolerance

Nobody can live without symbols; one is educated in ways that reinforce a mental heritage through symbols. Claude Lévi-Strauss has stated that each culture is a complex of symbolic systems, it brings structure to experience of reality, it compresses complexities and extremes, it forms a bridge between the personal and the collective, consciousness and sub-consciousness, the ordinary and the transcendental. It can unite, divide, mobilise, comfort and encourage. David Lowenthal views heritage and historical research differently:

*"Research paints a tainted picture of the past. In fact it embodies revealed faith, it is fabricated truth, it revels in bias."*⁴

If Lowenthal's view is accepted, a country needs tolerance to be able to live with faulty heritage. It would require the co-ordinated actions of community leaders, politicians and opinion makers to render harmless all hatred and prejudice, discrimination and repression of unpopular opinions.

DUTCH WAR MEMORIES

The Dutch are struggling with memories of the Second World War, both in literature and in built heritage. One of the best known examples is the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam. Fifty years after the war, the literary market is overflowing with war memories, like soldier's journal, and other narratives of hope and despair. The Dutch are trying to come to terms with their role in the Nazi strategy of exterminating the Jews of Europe. For this reason, the Dutch built a museum at the transit camp Westerbork, Hooghalen in 1983 to commemorate the transport of Dutch Jews to Auschwitz.

More visible throughout the Dutch polders are the German bunkers (pill-boxes) of the Atlantikwall that are strung like beads along the dykes and major rivers. These stern and unapproachable objects have only recently been seriously considered as part of the national heritage.

The adversarial stigma of enemy oppression is gradually making way for a more pragmatic approach. For example, current debates address the issue of practical use. What constitutes an appropriate use when people are still writing about the memories associated with these objects? At Breskens, Zeeland, the solution has been to integrate them into a public park. The Dutch have opted for this kind of solution in other places as well, such as in Venlo, in the southeast of the Netherlands. As one of Nazi Germany's most important military airfields, it was charged during the war with protecting the Ruhr region. The flight command tower at Fliegerhorst has now been put into use as a rock-climbing wall.

SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCES AND SOLUTIONS

South Africa, the industrial and financial giant of Africa has, like many other countries, a troubled past. Conflicts have raged at the southernmost point of the continent since the prehistoric times. There were clashes between indigenous people and, when Europeans began arriving, between them and the local tribes. Two

centuries ago, the country suffered from huge military upheavals in Difaquane, which led to the displacement of numerous tribes in the interior of the country.

When mineral resources, including diamonds and gold, were discovered in the second half of the 19th century, Great Britain annexed large parts of South Africa by force. Large numbers of local inhabitants were used as cheap labour in the mines – this was the beginning of ‘apartheid’. These black workers were to live in closed compounds for the duration of their contracts. During the Boer Wars the English tried to exterminate Afrikaans-speaking (Boers) fighters by starving women and children in concentration camps. Blacks found themselves in the middle of the conflict and were used for military purposes by both warring parties.

During the First World War, South Africa fought alongside Great Britain against Germany. Again, blacks participated in this war. At the same time, a contingent of Boers could not forget the pain of a mere decade and started a rebellion against the Union Government, which was subject to British foreign policy. More or less the same thing happened during the Second World War: this time the resistance movement grew into a significant Nazi-inspired group called the *Oswesabrandwag*.

Soon after the War, separate development according to race was institutionalised and named ‘apartheid’. Black political consciousness about the structural oppression grew gradually from the Freedom Charter of 1955 until the formation of the African National Congress (ANC) and was supported by the majority of non-Whites (including Indians and so-called Coloureds). Protests started during the 1970s and developed into an armed resistance movement during the 1980s. The country was headed in an ungovernable direction until talks were started by the White government with Nelson Mandela and his party leadership, most of whom were still in exile.

Following the peaceful transformation of South Africa to a democratic government in 1994, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, headed by Bishop Tutu initiated a process to come to terms with the country’s apartheid past. Three mechanisms were used: submitting to catharsis; developing a new identity; and asserting ownership.

Catharsis

The first president of the new South Africa, Nelson Mandela, personally paved the way for a process of national reconciliation by initiating a debate on all aspects of apartheid and the resistance movement. Mandela was incarcerated at Robben

Island for 18 years. Today Robben Island is a World Heritage Site and a multi-faceted symbol of oppression, resistance and reconciliation. Another symbol of oppression is the Slave Bell in the centre of Genadendal, a missionary settlement for coloured people in the early 18th century. As a gesture of goodwill from the mainly black African National Congress, President Mandela renamed his official residence in Cape Town after this village.

The Voortrekker Monument was built in 1938 to commemorate the Great Trek during the late 1830s when Afrikaans-speaking farmers tried to escape from British oppression by moving further into the interior of Southern Africa (see fig.2). For many blacks this monument became synonymous with White, more specifically Boer, supremacy and oppression. However, with a view to avoid public debate about the monument, it was sold to a private foundation during the late 1980s. In contrast, the tombstones at Centurion of Boer children who died in the concentration camps were never contested. Not far from the children's graves at Centurion are the graves of 'traitors' during the Second World War. The Ossewabrandwag subversive acts have been kept out of the public debate for 50 years now and will probably remain so for some time.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission played a major role in the process of catharsis - in opening up the public debate around the atrocities that were committed by the Apartheid government in previous decades. The statements by victims of military bombing in Botswana and Mozambique, together with the integration of military units from all warring parties (government, African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Movement), probably prevented the demolition of the Air Force Monument, commemorating the white soldiers who fought against the black liberation forces. Some of the culprits of white on black violence were sentenced during the 1990s by the judicial system. The symbol of this system is the Palace of Justice in Pretoria, built in 1899.

A step up from 'acknowledging' is 'integrating'. A successful effort to reconcile communities on a local level came with the formation of the Tshwane Metropolitan Council within which Pretoria and surrounding black townships including Mamelodi, Atteridgeville and Soshanguve were integrated during the 1990s. Social acceptance of previously rejected heritage by whites and blacks came about when representatives of both groups joined to devise a cultural route. This route was to be symbolic of a new community in which the other's heritage was not merely tolerated, but also celebrated. Through a series of workshops, community groups in this urban conglomerate came up with an innovative mecha-



figure 2: The Voortrekker Monument

nism to promote catharsis and healing. They designed a number of tourist routes throughout the metropolitan complex so as to involve all communities in accessing places of memory. Specific attention was given to those places that inspired protest or resistance. Such an approach to previously divided histories has had a tremendous effect on putting individual biases into perspective.

Asserting identity

Oppressed people needed no prompting to reassert their identity once the country was liberated from the oppressive power of the Apartheid government. At Premier Mine, one of the country's diamond mines, black workers were once incarcerated in compounds. After entering the entrance arch, they had to spend months on the site. Although their facilities were austere, they were able to decorate their surroundings with artwork (see fig. 3).

Wearing traditional dress has always been another means to assert one's identity all over the world. In South Africa, such dresses and handcrafted beadwork are also now seen frequently in public.

Asserting ownership

Part of the success of the healing process in South Africa lay in acknowledging the collective history of all peoples and creating new symbols. Most difficult, of course, was accommodating adversarial heritage. But asserting ownership has proven to be a powerful instrument in the unification process of the South African nation.



figure 3: decorations at Premier Mine

After the Second World War, blacks flocked to the cities. They lived in hovels and shacks on the urban periphery. The white-ruled municipality intervened by addressing the housing needs. The first rondavels at Mamelodi were provided for black workers and their families by the Pretoria Municipality in 1947. However, despite all good intentions, traditional African architectural models were consciously rejected by the blacks (see fig. 4). They would not live in houses that would put them back a hundred years. For what other reason had they come to the cities, but to enjoy western life? The Rondavels were used instead for a teachers' training college, where Bishop Desmond Tutu was one of the students during the 1950s. The buildings are now a heritage site. Western type houses were subsequently demanded – and provided – on a large scale (see fig.5).⁵

As early as 1991 the African National Congress (ANC) began asserting itself as an established political power rather than a resistance movement. The first ANC monument was unveiled by Cris Hanu, leader of the MK ('Umkhonto we Sizwe,' the military wing of the ANC) in 1991 at the entrance of Mamelodi, a township with a population of almost half a million. The headstone of the grave of resistance leader Solomon Mahlangu, who was killed in 1979, overlooks the cemetery at Mamelodi (see fig.6). It has become a place of pilgrimage for many veterans of the anti-apartheid struggle.



figure 4: rondavels at Mamelodi

Conclusion

Relics of white history, either from a distant past (a century or more before the apartheid period) or from the dominance of the British Empire, have not been destroyed or removed from the public realm. Through public debate South Africa has chosen to accommodate its painful past rather than to avoid confrontation. Its people have become aware of the dangers of collective amnesia.

A toponymic transformation has also occurred, which reflects the heritage of the black people. A linguistic indigenisation took place, which reapportioned



figure 5: Vlakkfontein, City Council of Pretoria, 1955

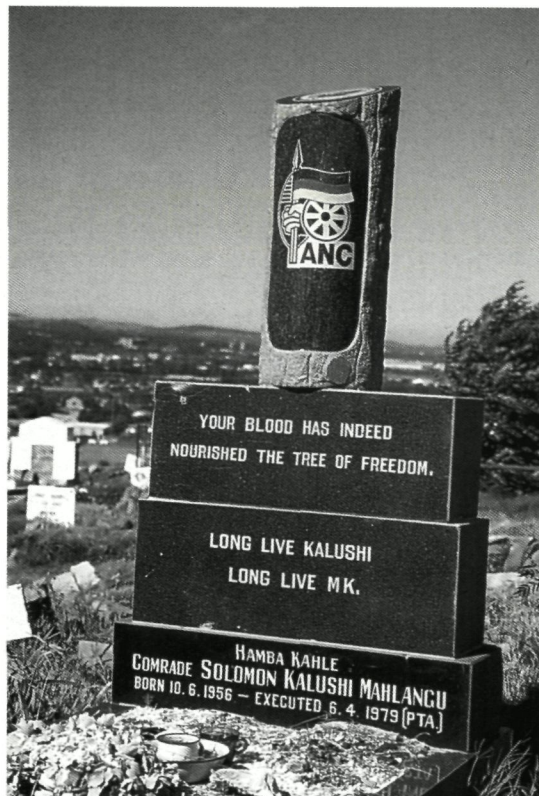


figure 6: the grave of Solomon Mahlangu

four provinces into nine. Regions, cities and towns were renamed with toponyms of the original population. A few years ago, the toponyms of Afrikaans heritage, named after Boer leaders of the 1830s, such as Louis Trichardt, Potgietersrus and Pietersburg, were changed to reflect former local names in Pedi, a black language.

South Africa has not yet solved all of its problems with faulty heritage. But it has succeeded in preserving monuments from painful periods of its history. Heritage is seen as a valuable source of inspiration for the country's youth, reflecting both sides of the country's walk through time. The world is watching as the process of healing through the mutual utilisation of heritage resources in South Africa continues.

Notes

- 1 The giant Buddha statues of Bamiyan, Afghanistan, for example was destroyed by the militant Taliban in 2001.
- 2 Riemer Koop in this volume.
- 3 "The real power in the world today is not in the western technology, economy or military. Rather it is in images and their use in a system of communication called symbolism. In effect, the real power of the world today is in the symbolism of western culture." Fraim J. 2003: *Battle of Symbols*, Einsiedeln.
- 4 Lowenthal D. 1998: Fabricating Heritage. *History & Memory*, Volume 10, Number 1.
- 5 Vlakfontein, City Council of Pretoria, 1955.

EUROPEAN MEMORY: FROM HOLOCAUST TO COEXISTENCE?

AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU, A SOURCE OF CONFLICT OVER INTERPRETATION

Max Polonovski
Ministry of Culture, France

It should be natural that around the symbolic places of human suffering, a general consensus could be reached, so that they would remain as monuments devoted to memory and education and set an example to counteract the causes which released the mechanism of intolerance in the first place.

Paradoxically, the former camp of Auschwitz, the most emblematic place of industrialized barbarity, has generated a large number of conflicts. They are linked to its own history, to its location and to the national and the international political context as well. On the matter of history, the situation of the site of the former camps is quite complicated.

The first camp, Auschwitz I, was initially an internment camp for Polish opponents and Soviet prisoners of war. It only later became an extermination camp with a gas chamber and a crematorium. The industrialization of the Final Solution for European Jewry and the Gypsies led to the creation of a new camp, Birkenau, with several gas chambers, crematoria, and brick and wooden huts. Moreover, the use of prisoners as slaves allowed a quick development of industry, particularly of I. G. Farben, and therefore the creation of plants and additional sub-camps like Buna-Monowitz. The different categories of victims exacerbated claims for exclusiveness. The representatives of each category expect that their sufferings will be acknowledged independently.

On issues of local concern, it must be remembered that the camps were created to a great extent, especially in the case of Birkenau, through the spoliation of the inhabitants. These people never received any compensation. Moreover, the economic situation of the city and its industrial prosperity after the liberation are

directly derived from the history and the nature of the German industries located in this area during the war. Nevertheless, the local population resent the tourism which does not bring any financial benefit to the town. Moreover the former camps are not accepted by the local population as part of their own heritage.

If we consider now the political point of view, the communist regime after the war put the emphasis on the struggle against fascism, on the victory of the Soviet Union and on the lack of differentiation of the victims. On the other hand, nationalism in Poland, a country which was a satellite of the U.S.S.R., sought to enhance the role of Polish resistance and interpreted Auschwitz as the symbolic place of national martyrdom. The combination of these two perspectives in the post-war decades led to an imbalance in the historical presentation of the nature of the sites; stressing the persecution and execution of 150,000 opponents, hostages and prisoners of war, while not emphasizing that this was the place of extermination of 1,100,000 European Jews.

Another source of internal conflict is the legal status of the sites as protected landmarks. None of the various legal zones and borders on the sites of the former camps corresponds to the exact perimeter at the time of their activity. The State Museum created in 1947 includes the grounds of an extant part of Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II-Birkenau. The Museum grounds cover 191 hectares, of which 20 are at Auschwitz I and 171 at Auschwitz II-Birkenau. A buffer zone for the Museum grounds in Birkenau was established in 1962, and a similar zone at Auschwitz I in 1977.

In 1979, when the site of Auschwitz-Birkenau was inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage list, a new zone was delimited. In 1999, a special law was passed creating a protection zone of 100 meters around the sites of extermination in Poland, effectively causing the removal of Catholic crosses erected by Polish nationalists in the Auschwitz Gravel Pit.

There are also two separate official local plans for the town of Oswiecim and the village of Brzezinka where the Birkenau camp is located. The local plans were elaborated independently and without any comprehensive vision of the linkage between the two entities. As Prof. Eugenio Gentili-Tedeschi ironically wrote, "it is an ordinary local plan for an ordinary extermination camp".¹

All these zones and perimeters which have their own regulations add to the confusion of the overall comprehension of the sites and the different levels of importance of the still-remaining elements of the former camps.

The collapse of the Soviet regime, the development of education pro-

grams, the debates connected with the presence of Carmelite nuns and religious symbols near Auschwitz as well as other controversies have emphasized deficiencies and issues linked to the perception of the sites, in particular the fact that the majority of the visitors do not visit Birkenau.

This led the Government of Poland, the International Council of the State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau and a coalition of Jewish Associations to formulate, in 1997, a Declaration of Principles for implementation of a new management plan. The plan had to take into account:

- 1) The physical connection of both sites Auschwitz I and Birkenau
- 2) The adherence to and preservation of the Protection Zones.
- 3) The encouragement of economic growth in the surrounding communities, to demonstrate that the former camps were not a constraint to the natural growth and livelihood of the local population.

This plan could be implemented only as part of an institutional program, with the political and governmental authority necessary for its application. Although the Declaration was never signed because of the presence of the so-called papal cross near the former Theatre (Block 11), a group of international experts, constituted in 1999, was nevertheless committed to work on the management plan. However, in spite of the nomination of three successive plenipotentiaries and three meetings of the group of experts, Polish authorities have always avoided the confrontation of opposing viewpoints between the different actors: the State Museum of Auschwitz, which does not want to share its responsibility; the local authorities who are anxious about the reactions of the population; UNESCO with its recommendations; and the international public opinion.

One of the main issues identified in the Declaration was the fact that statistics showed that a majority of visitors come only to Auschwitz I. The necessity of educating visitors about the site's full range of historical truths required that Birkenau be inserted systematically into the circuit of visits.

Since then, in spite of efforts and a substantial increase in visitors, the apprehension of what is the importance of the centre of extermination in comparison with other functions of the camps (imprisonment, hard labour, executions, etc.) remains deficient. The uniqueness of the genocide of European Jews and its historical and moral importance is partially observed in the presentational emphasis on of the persecution of the Poles during the German Occupation. There is an ap-

parent reluctance to differentiate the genocide from war crimes toward the Polish nation.

The competence, the expertise and the dedication of the team which manages the State museum cannot be questionable. The effective maintenance of the site has been praised during a recent conference in Oswiecim,² and a UNESCO mission has acknowledged that Polish government carries out its responsibilities at the site. In reality, the question is not so much whether maintenance is performed, but to what end. Enthusiasm, devotion and a huge amount of public and private money poured by organizations such as the Lauder Foundation should be accompanied by increased development and conservation programming.

Unfortunately the Auschwitz management program is being implemented without any guiding plan. It seems that the Charter of Venice, which imposes guidelines to preserve authenticity in conservation, is totally unknown.

Maintenance of original equipment and its possible replacement or restoration is an issue of utmost importance. Preliminary and careful consideration is needed, not only from a technical standpoint, but also from an ethical perspective. These issues raise concerns about authenticity, a source of debate in a particularly awkward social and political situation, concurrent with an increase in suspicion about the Holocaust. These issues cannot be handled without consensual and well-reasoned decision-making based on scientific and historic grounds.

When we realize that the complete reconstruction of the gas chamber and the crematorium in Auschwitz I was used by the Holocaust-deniers to pretend that they had never existed, we should worry about the constant and insensitive replacement of materials and elements such as posts, wire and rails. Due to the fragility of the elements of the camp and its huge scale, what is now ruins will become an authentic copy of ruins. It contributes to the confusion and apprehension over what is true and what is reconstruction. Information about what has been replaced, restored and renewed should be constantly shared with the visitors.

Another issue is the problem of the conservation and presentation of personal objects and human remains. This issue cannot be solved in the office of a museum or by a political institution before a global reflection on ethical and scientific grounds has been undertaken on what must be the education and commemorative role of such a place. There is ambiguity between what belongs in a cemetery and what belongs to a museum.

To take only one example about the need for a management plan, the so-called Sauna building, where new prisoners were tattooed, shaven, and disin-

fect, has been renovated to become partially an exhibit area of photographs of Jews from Bendzin. It is a beautiful and technically well-done realization. The question becomes, what are the guidelines and logic behind the location of this permanent exhibition? The Jews from Bendzin who were exterminated in Birkenau and left their private photographs never used the Sauna, since it was built several months after their death. The confusion due to the complexity of the sites should not be increased by the arbitrary location of new activities. A comprehensive program, which is yet to be elaborated, is necessary. Using huge buildings like the Potato cellar near the "Judenrampe," the entrance of Birkenau and the former Headquarters of Birkenau (now a parish church) would create possibilities to develop a coherent circuit and to readjust education and didactic programs in favour of Birkenau.

There is a temptation to seek universal and eternal messages at a site like Auschwitz. The journalist Jonathan Rosen was right when he wrote that the more the Holocaust becomes a metaphor for human suffering, the less it will be anything at all.³ Auschwitz as a myth will lose its substance and its significance.

The connection between historical monuments and national identity is obvious. It is, in a sense, the theme of this colloquium. Historical sites and monuments are registered, maintained and financed by governments. We know that the notion of historical landmarks is born as a people forms their national identity. Their interpretation responds to the evolution of the society and depends on the social and political climate. It will never end, because all societies need to play politics with history.

The compulsory visits by Polish pupils to Auschwitz are quite equivalent to the trips of Israeli children classes. The goal is paradoxically the same in both cases: to strengthen the feeling of belonging to the unique destiny of one nation.

The appropriation or the particularization of the Holocaust has unexpected consequences. Social changes in Europe, in particular in France, where Muslims represent 10% of the population, modified universal consensus about the Holocaust. Youth used the Middle-East conflict to identify themselves with the Palestinians. An anti-Israel opinion quickly became an anti-Semitic wave. They now identify Jews not only with Israel but also with the Holocaust. In France, it is sometimes impossible for teachers in public schools to speak about the Holocaust because of the violent reactions of the pupils.

In November 2004, several youngsters from France exhibited obscene behaviour during a visit to Auschwitz with their class. One of them publicly said that

Jews “deserved what had been done to them”. He was immediately expelled from his school. Considering it not enough, a Jewish association advocated prosecution and punishment demonstrating the high level of sensitivity among the Jewish population in France.

I think we could credit this small event not only to the anti-Semitic stream connected with the anti-Zionist attitude, but also partly to a resistance to the sacred nature, as it is usually perceived, of the Holocaust. I would compare this behaviour to another story which provoked a scandal in Israel. It happened in Krakow few years ago, when a group of young Israeli boys, after their visit to Auschwitz, hired some strip-teasers and brought them to their hotel room to have some fun. It could be interpreted as a reaction to an unbearable experience which had to be exorcized. But it could be also understood as idiosyncratic behaviour, a response to the sensation of feeling fed-up, a reaction to a dogmatic lesson.

The question of whether the Holocaust is a source of identity which concerns only Jews, or instead should be universal, is balanced by the another point of view that says that anti-Semitism and its tragic consequences is a Gentile problem. Jews were just the innocent victims; the non-Jewish world must take the responsibility of the Holocaust and therefore pay tribute to the memory of the victims by keeping and transmitting the consciousness of the failure of its civilization.

I will not respond to this alternative. On one hand, it seems to me that most Jews do not need any reminder to know what happened during the Second World War. On the other hand, recent surveys in the United States and in Great-Britain show that more than half the population has no idea what Auschwitz is or means. So it is logical to ask, what is the result of thousands of books, movies, memorials and museums on the Holocaust? Have they helped to avoid new genocides since 1945? Here is the failure of the education system. The Holocaust, like all other genocides, concerns the whole world, Jews and non-Jews alike. The main issue is to try to understand the mechanism that transforms humans into barbarians, and why some resist it and others not.

This task could be achieved under one condition: history must not be distorted and manipulated for partisan purposes. It is the reason why our duty is to maintain with the most careful attention the remains of the places where the Holocaust was perpetrated. It requires effort but it is the respect we owe to those who suffered and died there. For these are precious witnesses of history.

References

- 1 *Meeting of the Group of Experts on the Management of the Area In and Around the Former Camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau, A UNESCO World Heritage Site*, Radziejowice, March 11-12, 1999 (unpublished).
- 2 *Preserving For The Future, Material From An International Preservation Conference, Oswiecim, June 23-25, 2003*, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 2004
- 3 Quoted by Elliot Jager, in Shoah not fodder for pop culture, *Jewish News of Greater Phoenix*, January 21, 2005, Vol. 57, No. 21.

MEMORIAL MUSEUMS FOR VICTIMS OF THE NAZI-REGIME IN GERMANY – ARE THEY ONLY SITES OF PATRIOTIC COMMEMORATION AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT?

Thomas Lutz

*Memorial Museums Department, Topography of Terror
Foundation, Germany*

History

Before I describe the significance of memorial museums for the victims of the Nazi-crimes in Germany to survivors, visitors and international policy, I would like to recall the dimension of the crimes which were committed during the Nazi period with some sobering statistics:

- Civilian victims: Russian: 7 million; Polish: 4.2 million
- Jews: 6 million
- Sinti and Roma: 70.000 - 500.000
- Euthanised victims: 120.000
- Soviet Prisoners of War 1.1 to 3.5 million
- Other victims in Concentration Camps (including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, and "Asociale"): 700.000
- Victims of the *Wehrmacht* Judiciary: 20.000
- Victims of the Judiciary: 12.000

- Soldiers in Europe: 30 - 35 million.

Among the vast number of people who died an unnatural death, many groups suffered, yet it is impossible to imagine that every group can receive equal commemoration. Also, I am not attempting to present a ranking of the worst and most brutal state crimes. But for the sake of explaining the professional work being done to commemorate these victims, it is necessary to point out two things: one, it is necessary to have the whole number in mind to understand the meaning behind the work as well as the magnitude of individual losses, and two, most of the victims were not Germans.

Present State of Nazi Crimes Research

Germany was divided into two states until 1989. For the previous decades since the end of World War II, the treatment of the Nazi past differed tremendously in the two states. Indeed even now the cultures of remembrance regarding the Nazi regime differ in the “old” West German and the “new” East German states, or *Bundesländer*. Nevertheless I will concentrate my paper on the situation in West-Germany in which most developments have taken place.

In the 1940s, under the auspices of the Allies, many memorials were erected and books published. This period ended with the beginning of the Cold War and the restoration in West Germany.

By the beginning of the 1960s, after a swastika painting on a synagogue in Cologne and 1.600 similar attacks in 1959-1960, the West German government decided to launch an “educational offensive”. The *Zentralen für politische Bildung* (centres for civic education) were founded and material for schools was published. Germans who were interested in dealing with this history had the chance to do it – but it was not mainstream. At the same time, important trials of Nazi perpetrators (the Eichmann trial, the Auschwitz trial, and the Majdanek trial) were widely covered by the media and discussed in public on different levels. Not only the victims were commemorated; it was also necessary to discuss who was responsible for these crimes.

Since the 1970s, with the airing of the television series *Holocaust* and years later, with the films *Shoa* and *Schindlers List*, the majority of German citizens were confronted with the enormity of the Nazi crimes. The educational impact of these media presentations is a matter of debate since the introduction of an historic issue into mainstream society—especially one as complex as geno-

cide—is quite often superficial and designed mostly to stir emotions. It may not fundamentally help the public to understand what happened and why.

During the 1980s, during the final stage of the existence of the two Germanys, academic debates about the contemporary meaning of the Nazi crimes were, at least among intellectuals, widespread—examples include the “Historians’ Debate” and the “Goldhagen Debate.”

After German re-unification, the Antifascist ideology that defined how the Nazi Crimes were dealt with in the German Democratic Republic was disavowed. Unfortunately, the lack of an alternative historical vision of the Nazi regime facilitated the spread of right-wing ideology in East Germany. The common perception was that East Germany had suffered under two successive dictatorships: the National Socialist (NS) government and the Socialist Unity Party (SED). In political debate especially, survivors and critics of the SED dictatorship suggested that the Nazi and SED dictatorships were equal, minimizing the important differences between the two.

During the last decade, Nazi history has received widespread media attention on TV, in the newspapers, and in cinema. Also, many memorial museums have been enlarged and restored. Today, all school curricula across different age levels and school subjects in Germany and in the “new” federal states deal with Nazi history and the Holocaust.

“Authentic” sites as symbols how the two German societies confront the past

Until the end of the 1970s, dealing with the Nazi past was suppressed in the Federal Republic of Germany. In the German Democratic Republic, monuments and memorials were used to create a new heritage for a new state and its socialist society, yet their commemorative contents were different when compared with the memorials and monuments which were built in Germany at the end of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th century.

Before and after World War I, memorials were used to glorify the revanchist policy against neighbouring nations, especially France, and to memorialise the heroism of German soldiers. The *Nationalen Mahn- und Gedenkstätten Buchenwald, Ravensbrück und Sachsenhausen* (National Admonishment and Commemoration Museums) in the GDR highlighted the fight of the Communist resistance fighters against the Nazi regimes. Yet these museums did not explain the history of historic crime sites or document the treatment of persecuted social and

religious groups.

The method of dealing with the Nazi crimes in a new phase, which began about 25 years ago in West-Germany, was totally different. The starting point for this *Gedenkstättenbewegung* (memorial museums movement) was the search for new models for the first post-war generation. The government sought former resistance fighters with a clean record regarding Nazi crimes. Normally these were young teachers, social workers, and historians, but also doctors and psychiatrists who did not belong to any group that was persecuted under the Nazi regime. The government initiated a project to research the history of these individuals' towns, neighborhoods, or clinics, and they discovered that a far wider range of people had suffered under the Nazi-regime than previously recognised.

At the end of the 1970s, when official commemoration began to deal with the Nazi crimes at specific sites, the activities of these private action groups was no long so controversial. And the evidence that the Nazi atrocities were committed here—close to the living and working area of the majority of German citizens—and not far away in Berlin or in occupied territories in Eastern Europe—highlighted the need to deal with the history and not to suppress it.

At the beginning the recognition of Nazi victims, especially the survivors, motivated this work. This activity was soon connected with the demand to pay restitution to most of the victims, who had so far not received anything. The historical research and documentation required for this had an immediate and very real impact. It also created a civil-rights movement for the groups of victims who were expelled from German society, persecuted or killed during the Nazi era. This historical documentation was also socially critical.

The American scholar James Young has called this kind of activity *Gedenkstätten* or “counter monuments,” which suggests a contemporary social as well as commemorative goal. This is very different from the use of monuments at the beginning of the century. Counter monuments encourage reconciliation with former enemy states and ask for the acknowledgement of the suffering of persecuted people.

Volkard Knigge, the director of the *Memorial Museums Buchenwald* and *Mittelbau-Dora Foundation*, calls the object of this kind of memorial *Negative Erinnerung* or “negative memory.” This term emphasizes that German society—for the first time in history—is open to acknowledge crimes that were committed by the antecedent state and supporters some decades ago. Until now there have been little more than two decades of experience with this kind of reflection on one's

own national history. No one knows about the effects on German society over the long run. Will this attitude – at least by a large part of the society – continue or will it change?

Focus and Content of the Memorial Museums in Germany

The term *Gedenkstätte* (memorial museum) is used in Germany to designate institutions that fulfill the following three conditions:

- Deal with an authentic, historical site connected with the crimes of National Socialism, and which is open to the public.
- Explain its historical significance through a permanent exhibition.
- Conduct continuing historical research about the site.

Currently, about 100 memorial museums for the victims of the Nazi regime exist in Germany. An overview is provided on the internet (www.memorial-museums.net). These memorial museums attract an estimated three million visitors yearly. This figure includes a broad range of memorial museums, from large institutions as Buchenwald or Dachau, to smaller museums run by volunteer staff. In addition to these memorial museums, there are many thousands of monuments, memorial plaques and tablets that commemorate the victims of National Socialist crimes.

The memorial museums have always worked toward establishing a crime-and-victim consciousness, the *leitmotifs* of which necessarily differ from those in Israel and the United States. Whereas the exhibition of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington addresses the theme, “How the Germans stripped our fellow Jewish human beings in Germany and other parts of Europe of their rights, plundered their possessions and ultimately murdered them on a massive scale,” German memory must follow a different structure and ask: “How did Germans fight against democracy, erect a racist dictatorship, exclude and kill countless individuals and groups from the *Volksgemeinschaft* (“national community”), and ultimately murder the European Jews?” The commemoration of Nazi victims in Germany cannot be separated from the memory of the act of “its own people.”

The memorial sites, which are increasingly acquiring the professional standards of other types of museums, fulfil diverse functions. They are cemeter-

ies and sites of commemoration; they engage in humanitarian work with survivors and their offspring and descendants; they provide contemporaneous material evidence of the Nazi crimes in contrast to the monuments and places of memory created afterwards; they are museums and research centers; and they are sites of historical education and social self-reflection.

Thus, with the gradual disappearance of the generation that lived through the Nazi period, and with the growing impact of media in the world, the importance of memorial sites in Germany, in their special function of linking the National Socialist history of persecution to an "authentic" site, has become increasingly important.

The historical sites have changed over the more than sixty years since liberation. Yet even if all the building structures still exist in their original form, they are not able to make the history of the persecution come alive without study and public interpretation. Another important point is that the "authentic" site affect many visitors emotionally. This emotional response does not initially say anything about the history, but it does provide a positive motivation to become more interested in the history.

This identification with the history is particularly important for young people who on their own can draw connections between the history and their own behaviour in their immediate surroundings.

In the world of high-tech media, in which pictures can be perfectly falsified, the ability to verify historical events that occurred at nearby sites and to provide evidence of the crimes becomes ever more important. As time passes, these "stone witnesses" and their explanation through an exhibition will increasingly have to serve as powerful substitutes for personal conversation with eyewitnesses.

THE JEWS OF OSWIECIM: MEMORIES AND IDENTITIES

*Tomasz Kuncewicz
Auschwitz Jewish Center, Poland*

*T*he Auschwitz Jewish Center is the only remaining Jewish presence in Oswiecim, a city that became better known to the world during the Holocaust as Auschwitz. Before the war, however, there was a thriving and diverse Jewish community, comprising over 60 percent of the town's population of 12,000. From their first settlement in the 16th century to their destruction during World War II, the Jewish community was a major force behind the economic growth and success of the town. There are, however, no longer any Jews in the town; the fate of the Oswiecim Jewish community is as tragic as that of every other in Poland, and the tiny Jewish community that reformed after the war emigrated around the world. But following the establishment of the Auschwitz Jewish Center in 2000, there now exists a place of commemoration, education and religion in the town, which remembers the Oswiecim Jewish Community as a microcosm of the Jewish life that existed in Poland before the war.

The Auschwitz Jewish Center was founded by the Auschwitz Jewish Center Foundation in New York City and consists of the renovated Chevra Lomdei Mishnayot synagogue (the only synagogue to have survived the Second World War) with an exhibit on the Oswiecim Jewish community, and two former private Jewish houses. The Center is located about five kilometers from the former extermination camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau in the town of Oswiecim, the Polish name for Auschwitz. The Center, through various educational programs and initiatives, teaches about the Jewish community of Oswiecim as the microcosm of the Polish-Jewish experience and provides the visitors of Auschwitz with a place to learn about Jewish life before the Holocaust. The Center's projects include workshops

for Polish, German and Jewish youth on Jewish history, culture and religion, art competitions, meetings for dialogue between Polish, German and Jewish students, community events and international summer projects such as a student scholarship program and military academy program. All the Center's programs have the goal of strengthening the values of tolerance and openness, and of building awareness about the dangers of xenophobia and antisemitism.

Origin and Pre-war history

The first reference to the city of Oswiecim dates back to the 13th century, when in about 1275, Oswiecim was granted municipal rights. The town was located on the border of two distinct cultural regions: Little Poland (Malopolska, in Western Galicia) and Silesia (Slask). Changes in political boundaries over the centuries placed the town under Polish, Bohemian, Austrian and ultimately Polish jurisdiction, and helped give the region a multicultural and very unique identity.

Jews began to settle in Oswiecim in the first half of the 16th century due to the location of the town on the crossroads of the major commercial routes, and the favorable legislation of the Polish Kings.

By the 18th century the Jewish population of Oswiecim consisted of 133 people.

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Oswiecim's total population was around 5000 of which more than 50% Jews. Nearly all branches of Hasidism were represented in the town which had 10 synagogues and other houses of worship. The Oswiecim Jewish Community had a large network of charitable, religious, political, educational and athletic organizations.

At the same time, the members of the Oswiecim Jewish Community were very active in all issues pertaining to the economic and social life of Oswiecim, as well as the activities of the town's local government. For example, in 1904, the Oswiecim City Council consisted of 24 members, 13 of them Jewish. In 1932, the Oswiecim City Council consisted of 32 members, 18 of them Jewish.

With regard to Christian-Jewish relations in the 20th century, they can be characterized by both conflict and peaceful coexistence. Conflicts between Jewish and Christian residents of Oswiecim flared up during the first years of Polish independence, 1918 to 1921, and during the economic crisis of the 1930s. Economic problems stemming from World War I played a large part in the conflicts. Other reasons included changes in local and state governments, confusion in the political arena, changes in political boundaries, and shifts in the social or-

der. However the right wing and nationalist political parties and organizations in Oswiecim ominously accused the Jews of being the major factor and reason for the state's economic crisis. However, the interwar period was also full of occurrences that create a picture of the unusually good relations between Christians and Jews in Oswiecim. One example is the cooperation on the Oswiecim City Council and the fact that in 1934, Polish and Jewish members of the Council elected Dr. Emil Reich, who was Jewish, as the deputy Mayor of Oswiecim. In 1927, Polish Catholic Cardinal Hlond visited Oswiecim on his way to Rome, meeting with the local clergy as well as a delegation from the Oswiecim Jewish Community. Local authorities supported numerous Jewish organizations in addition to Catholics one. Equal financial aid was allocated to both communities. In addition, the Oswiecim City Council annually extended aid to the Jewish poor in order to enable them to buy matzot for Pesach.

Holocaust and Survival

At the outbreak of World War II, the population of Oswiecim was 14,000, with 8,200 Jewish residents. In early September 1939, Oswiecim was invaded by the Nazi Germans forces and on 20 September the Great Synagogue was burned down. In 1941, Jews from Oswiecim were ordered to leave the town for three nearby ghettos - Bedzin, Chrzanow and Sosnowiec. From there, most of them were brought back to the extermination camp that had been established outside the town where they were murdered. In the following years the German form of the name Oswiecim became notorious as "Auschwitz" - a place where more than a million Jews, Poles and others were murdered.

The first local Jewish residents who survived the Holocaust began returning to Oswiecim in the first months of 1945, just after the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. During this period, the Jewish community in Oswiecim was tiny. The first two censuses showed that there were 28 Jews in the city in May 1945, out of a total population of 6,742. Data from September of that year shows that the Jewish population had risen to 186

Survivors began reviving Jewish life in the town of Oswiecim. Jews who returned used the Chevra Lomdei Mishnayot synagogue as the community's main synagogue. They also rebuilt the cemetery. The Jewish Religious Society fulfilled the religious aspects of post-war Jewish life

However, Jews who came back to Oswiecim left quickly. Their families, their homes, and above all the life they remembered from before the Holocaust

were gone. The other factors which encouraged emigration were the communist policies, antisemitism and the creation of the Jewish state of Israel.

Many Jews in Poland – and Oswiecim was no exception – were incapable of living in cities that had been turned into the cemeteries of their families, relatives, and friends. In November 1946, the number of Jews in the city fell to 40. In the whole region there were only 83 Jews. There were fewer and fewer chances for the restoration of Jewish life and the reestablished religious congregations dwindled away. The Jews who came to Oswiecim after the war were rapidly choosing emigration, mostly to the USA and Israel.

Since the opening of the Auschwitz Jewish Center, we have received visits from many former residents and their descendants, who come to look for their heritage and express gratitude for our efforts to preserve their memories.

ISRAEL AND PALESTINE:
CONFLICTING HISTORIES, CONFLICTING
DREAMS

HERITAGE AND IDENTITY: THE ROLE OF HERITAGE IN MODERN SOCIETY, THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW IN ISRAEL

Uzi Dahari

Israel Antiquities Authority, Israel

When I was requested to lecture on *Heritage and Identity: The Role of Heritage in Modern Society*, I agreed even though I am not a sociologist and do not deal on a daily basis with the relationship between cultural heritage and national identity. Therefore, for this lecture I have gathered various thoughts and reflections and I hope that I will succeed in arranging them into an organized philosophy.

When the British Mandate in Palestine issued its famous White Paper, which established a quota for the number of Jews that could immigrate to the Land of Israel owing to the country's carrying capacity, the noted archaeologist and art historian Professor Michael Avi-Yonah penned a newspaper article in which he stated that approximately five million people lived in the Holy Land during the Byzantine period. Avi-Yonah never published that figure in a scientific article because he also knew that even at the peak of the Byzantine period far fewer people resided in Israel. Since then he has been quoted by many people who do not understand that the newspaper article was meant to convince the British to discontinue the policy of the *White Paper* and allow Jewish immigration into Israel. There can be no doubt that from a standpoint of the ends justifying the means, Avi-Yonah harnessed archaeology to politics and to the service of the Zionist movement.

With the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, there were in the young state, especially in the Hebrew University and the Department of Antiquities, a number of first-rate archaeologists: Sukenik, Mazar, Yadin, Avigad, Aharoni, Amiran, Biran, Avi-Yonah and others. These archaeologists steered a course between the German and American schools of thought while developing their own opinions, but their primary aim was to link archaeology to the Bible and to the Jew-

ish people. Here I feel it is important to note and stress that this was not done at the expense of archaeological and historical accuracy, but the emphasis was placed on that connection while at the same time the research of other periods, religions and societies was limited. Two out of many exceptions to this were Professor Moshe Stekelis, who was engaged in prehistoric research, and Professor Michael Avi-Yonah, who despite the aforementioned newspaper article, maintained in his studies of the classical periods proper balance between pagans, Christians and Jews as they are reflected in the archaeological finds (Avi-Yonah 1962;1969).

This triad of the Land of Israel, the Bible and the Jewish people was essential in creating a bond and a direct connection between the people and the land through the Bible. As a rule, when dealing with heritage and identity one must consider the chronological development: it is only natural that the generation of dreamers views the reality differently than the generation of founders and the subsequent generation of founders sees it differently than later generations who are living in their own established country, although still struggling with difficulties in the complex reality. We, the succeeding generations of the Zionist movement do not have the privilege that existed for the generation of dreamers and the generation of founders; therefore, it would be wrong to form a correlation and parity between how we perceive cultural heritage and its place in modern society and the concept of the Palestinians who are currently in transition between the generation of dreamers and the generation of founders.

In 2004 I participated in the American School of Oriental Research conference in the United States; among the many sessions there was one organized by the Israel Antiquities Authority in which lectures were presented on Roman and Byzantine Beth Shean; the Hellenistic period in Israel; the water systems in Jerusalem that mainly date to the Middle Bronze Age; the city of Jaffa from the Hellenistic period until the Ottoman period; and the Philistine finds from the excavations at Yavne. Not one lecture was given on Jews and Judaism. I am convinced that if the conference were to have been convened during the 1950's and 60's the picture would have been different. Then Professor Yadin would have lectured on the city gates of Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer from the time of King Solomon and the precise connection between the Bible and the archaeological finds, even though today most of the archaeologists date these gates to a period later than the United Monarchy (Yadin 1958: 80-86). Therefore, it seems to me only natural that at this conference the Palestinians organized a session in which they emphasized only the archaeology of the Islamic periods in Palestine.

The Myth of Masada and its Alternatives

The generation of dreamers and the generation of founders create for themselves myths in order to accentuate the historic dimension of the lofty ideas to which they aspire. The Zionist movement, for example, created the myth of Masada, even though this myth has no roots in antiquity (Ben Yehuda, 1995). The myth was conceived in the middle of the 1920's and reached its peak during the Second World War when the German general Rommel was approaching Egypt and the Jewish population in the country organized what was then called "Masada on the Carmel", that is, the fortification of Mount Carmel and preparation for a tenacious fight to the death against the invading Germans. As we know the Allies defeated the Germans at the battle of el-Alamein and the "Masada on the Carmel" plan was consigned to the trash bin of history. Yet the Masada myth was created because of the generation of founders' need for heroes from the past. (see fig. 1) The story of the battle for Masada, its tragic ending and especially its message: "Freedom or Death", fascinated that generation. It was an educational message. Many young people, particularly those in the youth movements, danced the *hora* until they were ecstatic while singing: *"the flames of our spirits are dancing, and Masada will*



figure 1: Masada

never fall again". The young people used to hike across the Judean Desert and ascend Masada by foot at great peril and a pilgrimage to Masada became a pilgrimage of the soul. I too was educated this way and when I became an educator, after studying archaeology, I agonized over this myth, since after all, a study of history shows that the people of Masada were not amongst the zealots that fought the Romans during the

Great Revolt of 67-70 CE (Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War*, book VII). They were fanatics who cold-bloodedly murdered any Jew who opposed them. They encouraged the uprising in the Galilee and when the Roman army approached, they did not participate in the fierce battles at Gamla and Yodefat. Rather they escaped to Jerusalem. In Jerusalem they quarreled with the different groups of zealots and murdered many Jews that did not think like they did. After assassinating the high priest they were banished from Jerusalem and did not take part in its defense during the Roman siege and destruction of the city. On their way to Masada they slaughtered some 700 Jews who lived at Ein Gedi (Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish war*, book IV, 402) and they fortified themselves at Masada while they terrorized their immediate surroundings.

A full three years after the conclusion of the revolt, the devastation of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple, the Romans decided to conquer Masada and the Roman Tenth Legion took control of the mountain following a period of

three to four months of siege. According to Josephus, their leader Elazar Ben-Yair preferred to commit mass suicide rather than to fight to the death against the Romans. Indeed neither Elazar Ben Yair nor his people deserve to be role models today.

Generally, any ideology that is based on a single ideal that takes precedence over other ideals is a flawed ideology. In normative Judaism an ideology in which the principal of freedom takes precedence over the ideals of life, love, personal choice, loyalty and other values is unacceptable. There are no martyrs or *shahids* in Judaism and the value of life stands above to any other value even if it entails the loss of freedom.

The real hero of the Great Revolt against the Romans, in my opinion, was Rabban Yochanan Ben Zakkai who



figure 2: The forged Ivory Pomegranate

left Jerusalem during the Roman siege taking with him holy books that he brought to establish a small yeshiva in Yavne, near the Mediterranean coast. Rabban Yochanan Ben Zakkai changed the people of the Temple, with its sacrifices and the pilgrimages to the “people of the book”, which we are to this very day.

Masada was declared a world heritage site by UNESCO in 2001. It was designated as such not because of the myth, but because of its being a huge and unique archaeological site that combines awe inspiring view and unique geology with palaces and buildings constructed in the best of the Hellenistic and Roman building traditions; enormous fortification walls, and the best preserved Roman siege system in the world.

Not all of the Zionist leaders supported the myth of Masada. David Ben Gurion, Israel’s first prime minister and minister of defense, used to say, “*Not Masada and not Vichy*”. He agreed to visit Masada only once at the personal request of the excavator, Yigael Yadin. The president of Israel at that time, Yitzhak Ben Zvi, refused to visit Masada because of his objection to the fanatical acts and suicide that took place there. I do not think it is necessary to shatter the myth; it just needs to be changed in accordance with the spirit of the times.

The Role of Archaeology in Israel Today

Israeli archaeology is no longer more harnessing archaeology to create ideology and heritage; Israeli archaeology in our generation is primarily a scientific activity. The arguments between the different schools of thought, particularly the arguments between the archaeologists dealing with the Biblical period, are academic discussions. They are not connected with the triad consisting of the Land of Israel, the Bible and the Jewish people that I mentioned earlier. I can demonstrate this with many examples, among them the archaeological studies that prove that some of the archaeological remains attributed to the period of the United Monarchy are from a later period of the First Temple Period, and that the kingdom of David and Solomon was small and limited in its scope as reflected in the book by Israel Finkelstein and Neil Silberman (2001) and in other studies. Another example is the committee established by the Antiquities Authority which determined that both the inscription attributed to the renovations of the First Temple by King Jehoash and the famous ivory pomegranate with the inscription: “Holy to the priests of the temple of Yahweh”, are recent forgeries (see fig. 2). These two inscriptions were the seemingly sole inscriptions from the First Temple.

Numerous archaeological expeditions have excavated and are excavating

in Jerusalem and the archaeological information about the city's past is enormous. However, the greatest archaeological discovery that was uncovered by an Israeli expedition is the complex of Umayyad palaces next to the walls of the Temple Mount (see fig. 3). These structures are not known from any existing historical sources and their discovery, size and magnificence surprised the excavator, Professor Benjamin Mazar. Yet Mazar did not relate any differently to the study of these Muslim palaces than he did to the research of the Jewish ritual baths in this excavation (Mazar 1975: 267-271).

Many Jewish Israeli scholars are today also investigating the beginnings of Christianity and the Early and Late Islamic periods. These scholars are not provided with fewer research grants than those who study the archaeological periods during which there was Jewish majority residing in the country. I personally am involved in studying Christian desert monasticism and that is not impaired by my being a Zionist Jew who believes his right to live in Israel is self-evident and does not require any archaeological proof. My definition of Zionism is: "A Jewish state in the Land of Israel" and not "the Land of Israel belongs to the Jewish people

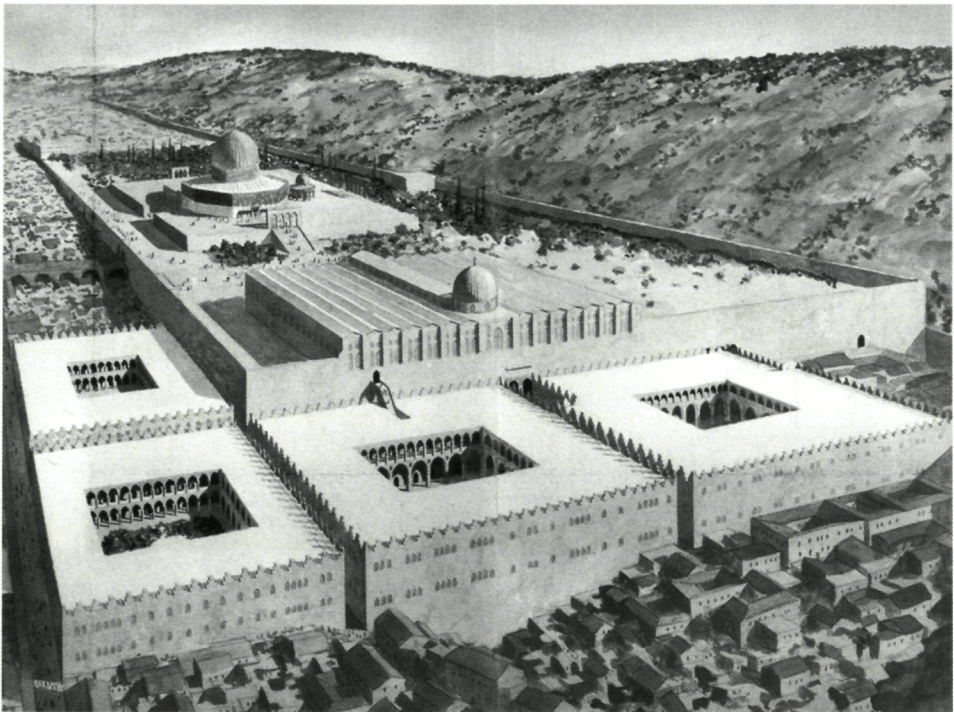


figure 3: The Umayyad Palaces in Jerusalem

based on the Torah of Israel". Therefore I have no problem as a Zionist in recognizing the full rights of the Palestinians to also live in the Land of Israel, which is also their homeland. At no time in history was this country territorially complete and at no time in history did only one people occupy it. It can therefore be divided and we can leave the term "Greater Eretz Israel" or "Greater Palestine" to our messianic thoughts, visions and dreams.

The borders between Israel and Palestine – whether they are those that are temporary; those that are determined by the separation fence or the permanent borders that will be determined in the future – cannot separate our common archaeological heritage. Tell Balata in Nablus, the oaks at Mamre in Hebron and Tell el-Jib (the Biblical site of Gibeon) will remain part of my cultural heritage just as Tel Hazor, Megiddo and Acco will always be part of Adel Yahya's cultural heritage. Our demand from the Palestinians to safeguard and preserve the Jewish synagogue in Gaza is identical to our responsibility to safeguard and preserve the ancient mosques in Akko and Ramla – because all of the archaeological sites belong to the archaeological heritage of all the people, the societies and the religions that lived in the past and live today in Israel, in Palestine or in the Holy Land. However we choose to call it, it is still the same land.

Archaeological sites cannot be relocated and it is wrong to do so, even when their identity is known and they are part of the historic cultural heritage of one people. On the face of it we can relocate synagogues, mosques or churches; however, any appropriating of this sort such as appropriating ancient synagogues for the Jewish people while ignoring their geographic location is a mistake that in the long term is detrimental to the historic heritage and prevents the possibility of co-existence.

However, what is right for historic and archaeological sites is not right for national commemorative sites. The memorial at Nizzana (Uja al-Hafir) for the fallen soldiers of the Eighth Brigade which is my brigade in the Israel Defense Force (IDF), is part of my Zionist heritage (see fig. 4); as is the memorial to the fallen from the Steel Division that was erected in Sinai following the 1973 Yom Kippur War and was relocated to the Negev after the return of the Sinai to Egypt following the Peace agreement (see fig. 5). I certainly do not expect that a foreign tourist or a Palestinian that lives in Israel or Palestine will bow his head when passing next to these memorials.

It is customary to say that only those that do not do anything do not make mistakes. The Zionist movement brought Europe's Holocaust refugees and Jews

from the ends of the earth to Israel while establishing a Jewish state. This was a tremendous feat that provided justice to the Jewish people, but it was also carried out at the expense of the Palestinian people. After all, there is no such thing as absolute justice – justice will always be subjective! Today, from the historical perspective of a people that is residing in its own country, it is our duty to be critical of the process, to examine where we have erred, to admit the mistakes and fix what can be repaired.

After 1948 our fear of the Arabs caused Israel to destroy many Arab villages that were abandoned during the War of Independence. Among these villages was Al-Qabu in the Judean Hills. All that remains of the village is a Crusader church, the mosque, the spring house and channels, and several farming terraces. The village was destroyed by the Jewish National Fund (JNF). In recent years this same JNF has been engaged in reconstructing the ancient landscape of the Judean Hills. It was within this framework that the JNF requested the Israel Antiquities Authority to survey the remains of Al-Qabu and restore as much of the ruins of the Arab village as possible. And another example: I was fortunate to be an eye-witness to a “historic event”. On one winter day a vehicle from the office of the chief rabbinate arrived at one of the IDF outposts on the Israel-Lebanese border. In the middle of the outpost is a sheikh’s tomb referred to as “The Tomb of Sheikh Ubeid” (Ilan Z. 1997: 204). Several workers from the rabbinate stepped down from the vehicle and affixed a marble plaque to the wall of the tomb. On the plaque was engraved “This is the tomb of Rabbi Ashi, third generation of *Amoraim* (which were Torah interpreters in the 3rd – 5th Centuries CE)”. I did not know at that time whether to laugh or cry because of this “thrilling discovery” and today I vehemently condemn when a site that is holy to one religion is appropriated by another religion, when there is no archaeological justification for this.

Conclusion

Harnessing archaeology in order to create a national heritage is permissible and desirable for the generations of dreamers and founders and it can also be a positive thing later, but only if it is based on scientific and historic findings that can withstand persistent testing, and does not minimize the significance of periods, cultures and historic events that are not connected with its heritage.

We have to recognize that even if archaeological sites represent one people or religion, they are part of the heritage of all nations and religions that lived in the past and are living now in the region; likewise religious sites that are sacred

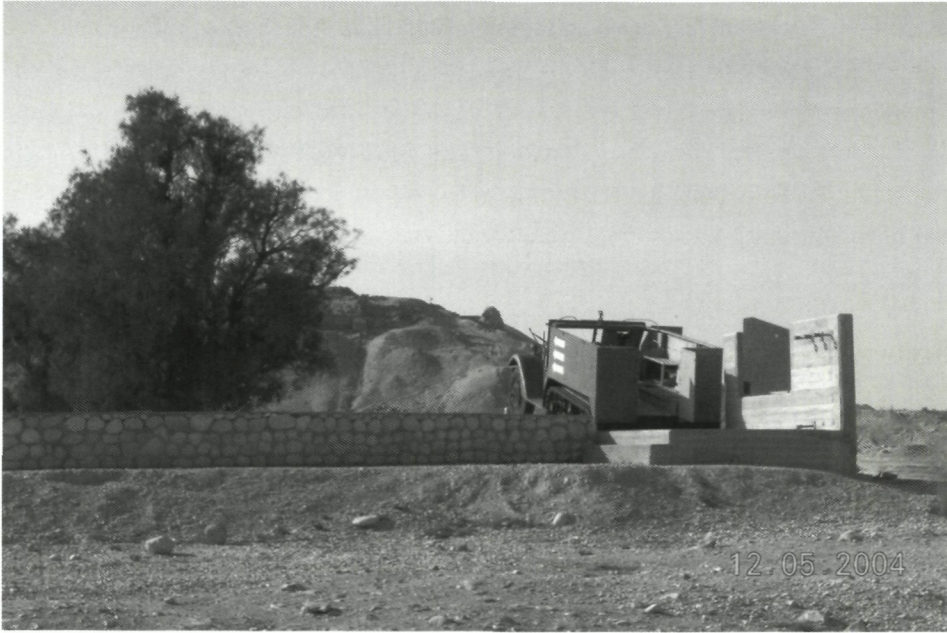


figure 4: The memorial for the fallen soldiers of the Eighth Brigade at Nizzana, Uja al-Hafir



figure 5: The memorial to the fallen from the Steel Division that was erected in Sinai following the Yom Kippur War and was relocated to the Negev after the returning of the Sinai to Egypt following the Peace agreement

to one religion must be respected and maintained by members of other religions; and the universal historical significance of national commemorative sites should be respected as well.

Let us hope that our national commemorative sites and those of the Palestinians will quickly some day be seen as common historical and archaeological sites, part of the shared cultural heritage of the entire Near East.

References

- Avi-Yonah, M. 1962. *Historical Geography of Palestine From the end of the Babylonian Exile to the Arab Conquest* (Hebrew). Jerusalem.
- Avi-Yonah, M. 1969. *A History of Classical Art* (Hebrew). Jerusalem.
- Ben-Yehuda, N. 1995. *The Massada Myth: Collective Memory and Mythmaking in Israel*. Madison, WI.
- Finkelstein, I. & Silberman, N. A. 2001. *The Bible Unearthed – Archaeology's new vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of its Sacred Texts*. NY.
- Ilan, Z. 1997. *Burials of righteous Persons in Israel*, (Hebrew). Jerusalem, 204.
- Mazar, B. 1975. *The Mountain of the Lord*. Garden City. NY: 267-271.
- Yadin, Y. 1958. Solomon's City Wall and Gate at Gezer. *Israel Exploration Journal* vol. 8, 80-86.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND POLITICS IN THE HOLY LAND

Adel H. Yahya

Palestinian Association for Cultural Exchange (PACE)

Introduction

There is probably no place in the world where archaeology carries such a heavy burden of religious and political implications as in the Holy Land. Archaeology in this part of the world has obvious religious and political connotations and archaeologists here often run into conflicts with religious and political authorities, not only over excavating sites containing human remains, but also over the interpretation of archaeological evidence. The discovery of biblical remains often generates worldwide attention, and makes many people enthusiastic about archaeological discoveries. This enthusiasm may initially seem to be positive but in reality it is not. It is harmful to our understanding of the country's history because interest in the archaeology of the Holy Land has always been selective and extremely divisive. It has for a long time been characterized by an almost exclusive focus on specific sites and layers, namely, the biblical period – Late Bronze to the Roman period. And as a result of that, we now possess a great deal of knowledge on that period, which leads to overestimating the importance of that time frame, and much less information on whole epochs in the long history of the land like Prehistory, the Byzantine, Islamic and Crusader periods. This imbalance has to do with the country's internal power relations that compromise the weaker side. It is an explicit selection of contexts in the archaeological record equivalent to the erasure of memory and a selective and harmful historiography that cannot stand up to scrutiny.

Misuses of Holy Land Archaeology

Archaeology has often been used to support nationalist and religious claims in different parts of the world, and the archaeology of the Holy Land is no exception in this phenomenon, but rather a clear example of it. Archaeology was used by both sides to the Middle East conflict, Israelis and Arabs to serve political and religious goals, including laying claims to the land, and denying the claims and narratives of the other. Politicization played an important role in archaeology here and the biblical history of the country was long disproportionately stressed, especially by the Israelis and by Christian fundamentalists. The founding of the State of Israel in 1948 was partially predicated on the biblical history of the country, particularly the stories of the kingdoms of David and Solomon, and the work of many early Israeli archaeologists was geared towards promoting Jewish claims and establishing a Jewish national identity (Glock 1985; Rosen 1998). Archaeology has in this sense added to the competing claims of the two modern peoples in the country, the Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews.

The Israeli Jews at least partially base their claim to the Holy Land on biblical narratives dating back to the Iron Age. They assert that religious and linguistic continuity supports their claims, citing the survival of the Hebrew language and Jewish religion as proof. They believe that these points are compelling arguments in the face of Arab assertions of their continuous presence in the land over the past 1400 years. That explains at least partially why some biblical sites in Israel and even in the occupied Palestinian territories receive far more public attention than many important prehistoric, Byzantine and Arab-Islamic sites..

It is quite indicative in this regard that most major biblical or Jewish sites in the West Bank such as Sebastia (Samaria) near Nablus, Herodion and Rachel's tomb near Bethlehem and Qumran near Jericho, are still under Israeli control, years after the hand-over of those Palestinian cities to the Palestinian Authority. Some of those sites are considered important Israeli national sites as the map of nature reserves and national parks of the "Israeli Nature and National Parks Protection Authority" of 1999 shows (see fig. 1).

The Israeli bias towards biblical sites is counterbalanced by a common tendency amongst Palestinians to deny any Jewish heritage in the Holy Land. The Palestinians in particular and the Arabs in general tend to refuse any Jewish heritage in Palestine because they fear that such recognition will lead to the appropriation of their land by Israel. To support their claim to the land, the Palestinians cite more recent events, especially the dominance of Islam in the country and the

region as a whole during the past 14 centuries. Furthermore, and in response to Israeli claims of precedence in the land, some Palestinians argue that their presence in the land dates from the Bronze and Early Iron Ages rather than to the the Muslim conquest of 638 AD (Ra'ad 2002, 109).

The late President Yaser Arafat was renowned for his famous slogan, "inna fiha qawman jabbarin", referring to the biblical passage (Numbers 13:23) in which the

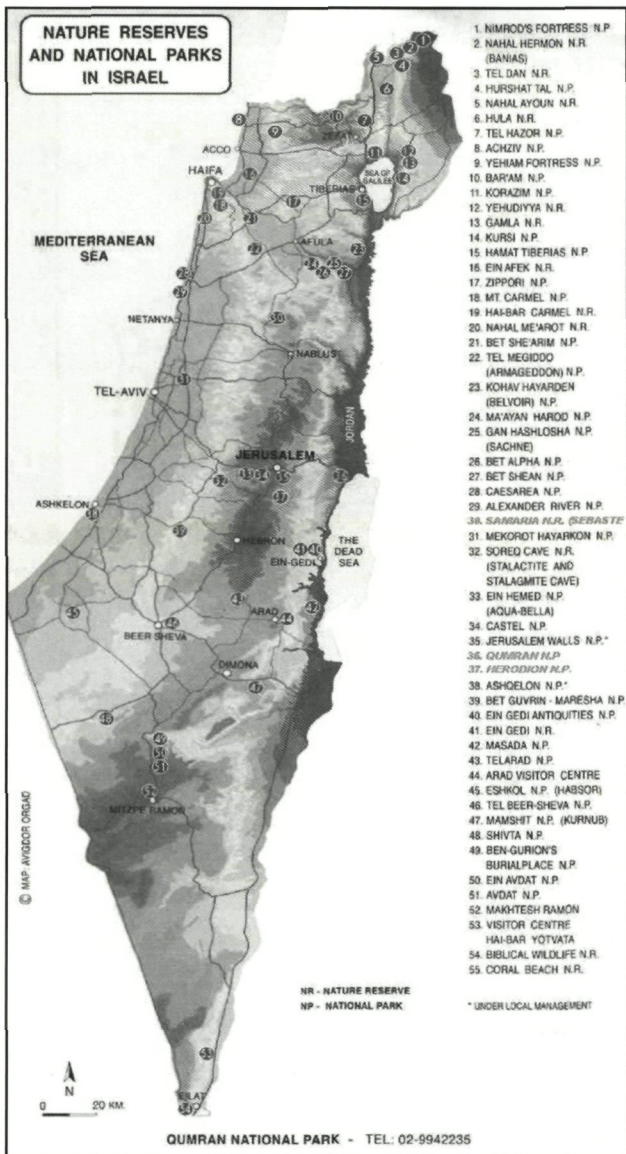


figure 1: Map of nature reserves and national parks in Israel

scouts of Moses warned against attacking the Canaanites who are a great people with very strong, walled cities. From this viewpoint, some Palestinian Arabs of today see themselves as the direct descendants of the Canaanites of the Bronze Age, whose presence in the country preceded that of the Israelites. Some Palestinians express their connection to the land in terms of cultural continuity and point that modern Palestinian towns and villages display a remarkable cultural continuity from the Bronze and Iron Ages into the modern period. Those towns and villages often have names that reflect those listed in ancient records. Furthermore, their traditional agro-pastoralist village subsistence strategies are believed to have ancient origins (Nashef 2000, 25).

More recent political developments and particularly the current Palestinian Intifada which began in 2000 have further complicated the already complex picture in the country and the region as a whole. The competing claims over the country's heritage between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs deemed the work of archaeologists and conservationists in the country more difficult. This short article intends to show the impact of politics on the archaeology of the country and its valuable cultural heritage in light of most recent political developments in the country.

Biblical versus pre- and post-Biblical Sites in the Holy Land

The Holy Land and particularly the West Bank encompasses some of the most important antiquity sites in the world including the historic cities of Jerusalem, Jericho, Hebron and Nablus, and the prehistoric settlements such as Palaeolithic caves of Shuqba, west of Ramallah, and the Neolithic city of Jericho (Tel al-Sultan).

The fate of the Shukba caves, west of Ramallah, is just one example of the fortunes of prehistoric sites in the Palestinian areas. The caves were the first Natufian site to be discovered in the Levant, and the first place where the remains of that culture were uncovered by Dorothy Garrod in 1928. The site revealed a sequence of burials from the Middle Palaeolithic into the Neolithic periods, a transitional culture between the Palaeolithic and Neolithic ways of life and economic subsistence, that Garrod called "Natufian" after the Wadi in which the caves are located. The name came to designate a distinctive Palaeolithic culture in the ancient Near East as a whole. The caves contained a number of burials and an assemblage of artefacts which first defined the Natufian period including complete human skeletons, human and animal bones, and flint tools including hand axes,

sickle blades and flakes as well as bone tools. Despite their importance the caves have never been subsequently re-excavated, protected or presented to the public. Our only information about them remains solely from the 60 years old reports and interpretations of Ms. Garrod, who admitted that she encountered serious difficulties interpreting the stratigraphy and cultural sequence of the caves (Garrod, 1942). Subsequent studies have highlighted the difficulties (Evron 2003).

Until about a year ago the only road leading to the caves passed through the narrow and often crowded streets of the Palestinian village of Shuqba, which may have contributed to the isolation of the site. To further complicate the situation, the Israel military authorities of the West Bank have recently constructed a massive by-pass road that cuts through Wadi al-Natuf, skirting the Arab villages and connecting the Israeli settlements in the area with the main Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway. It is doubtful if this road will make the site more accessible to visitors since it is used primarily by the settlers of the West Bank, but it has already exposed the fragile environment and the natural setting of the caves, and isolated them from the surrounding Arab villages. Furthermore, the separation wall that the Israeli government is constructing just west of the village will certainly further isolate the village and the site, making it even less accessible to foreign visitors and even to Israelis and Palestinians from neighbouring towns.

The world famous prehistoric site of Tell al-Sultan (ancient Jericho) situated on a mound overlooking the modern semi autonomous Palestinian city of Jericho is another example of the fate of archaeological sites in the country. The 1952-1956 excavations of the British archaeologist Kathleen Kenyon uncovered settlements at the site dating from the Neolithic period (9000 BC). The Tel was one of the very first sites in the West Bank to be protected and presented to the public. It was once a popular tourist destination for foreign tourists and even for Israelis and Palestinians. From 1967 until the handover of the city to the Palestinian authority in 1996, the tell was under the jurisdiction of the Israeli civil administration of the West Bank and was in fact added at some point to the Israeli National Parks Authority's list of protected sites. But since the beginning of the current Intifada the site was completely deserted. It is regrettable, however, that the archaeological situation in the country has not changed much after the coming of the Palestinian authority despite the efforts of some NGOs and individual Palestinian archaeologists.

It is troubling for Palestinian archaeologist that far more excavation has been done in levels dating from the Bronze and Iron Ages than from the Islamic

period, which has dominated the landscape of the country and the Middle East as a whole over the past 1400 years (Ziadeh 1987). Some Palestinian archaeologists accuse biblical scholars and Israeli archaeologists in particular of neglecting Islamic sites and overlooking Islamic layers not only because they lack interest, but also because they lack knowledge of Islamic civilization and culture (Abu Khalaf 1987). It is equally troubling that most of the older handbooks on the archaeology of Palestine end with either the Persian or Roman periods. What little has been published of the Islamic period is limited to monumental architecture, chiefly in Jerusalem. This means that the Islamic period is not an important connection with the past for biblical scholars and their intended western audiences, as Albert Glock once wrote. He concluded that *"the history of archaeology in Palestine has failed to portray the intellectual context which would validate it"* (Glock 1987, 5).

The geographical location of antiquity sites in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip that enabled their inhabitants to produce great civilizations in the past have turned out to be a curse on them in modern times. Many of them have been abandoned or are off-limits to archaeologists and visitors alike not because of their historical significance, but rather because of the political context of the people who live with them, the Palestinian Arabs.

Victimising Biblical Sites: A Negative Heritage

Although many biblical sites in the Palestinian areas, that have been previously excavated are still visible today, the overall situation in most of them is disastrous. Some of them such as Gibeon, Tell Balata and Tell al-Nasba have literally been used as garbage dumping sites (See figures 2 and 3: the pool of Gibeon before and after restoration by PACE). Until very recently the only roads leading to them passed through the narrow and often crowded streets of Palestinian villages. The construction of a modern network of by-pass roads did not make those sites more accessible to visitors because they did not connect with them. Clearly, the Israeli involvement in the management of Palestinian cultural heritage since 1967 has had a negative impact on the country's antiquities even including these biblical remains. The continued situation in which the antiquities trade is still legal in Israel has resulted in one of the most destructive phenomena, namely the illegal digging and selling of antiquities within Israel and abroad. That kind of activity has ravaged many archaeological sites in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Ironically biblical sites have been particularly targeted by Palestinian illegal diggers and antiquity dealers because of the high economic value of biblical artifacts to



figures 2 & 3: The Pool of Gibeon before and after restoration by The Palestinian Association for Cultural Exchange (PACE)



collectors and tourists. This makes the efforts of Palestinian archaeologists and conservationists even harder, and at times dangerous.

Is there a way out?

It was not until recently that archaeologists of the Holy Land, including some Israeli and Palestinian archaeologists, realized the need to insulate their studies from political and religious influences. Those archaeologists repudiate discrimination against sites and occupations on the basis of their period, political, or religious connotations. They employ scientific methodologies and pursue the same questions pursued by archaeologists in other countries such as studies of settlement patterns, trade, and economy of ancient civilizations. But there are several other challenges that need to be addressed before one can think of a proper policy to safeguard and promote cultural heritage in the Holy Land, not least of which is facilitating access to sites, and abandoning policies of segregations and closures, as well as modernizing antiquity laws. The study of history and archaeology must be neutralized and constellations within historical periods be re-evaluated, and above all dissemination of knowledge on all sites and periods should be encouraged regardless of sites national and religious connotations (Yahya 2004, 76).

Archaeologists can only protect heritage if they succeed in promoting reconciliation between the peoples of the region and they can only do that by committing themselves to the rich history, diversity, and resources of the country, and therefore to supporting an agenda that both protects heritage and promotes change. Palestinian, Israeli and foreign archaeologists working in the Holy Land can and should facilitate the mutual understanding of the past, something that archaeologists in the past did not consider. Reconciliation may not inevitably lead to a "shared version of our pasts" but it will at least maximize the enjoyment of heritage for the local communities and to visitors from abroad, something which will certainly benefit all of us economically and politically.

References

- Abu Khalaf, M. 1987. Archaeological Excavations of Islamic Sites in Palestine. *Birzeit Research Review* 4: 66-94.
- Evron, M. 2003. In B or not in B: A Reappraisal of the Natufian Burials at Shukbah Cave, Judaea, Palestine. *Antiquity* vol. 77 (295): 96-101.
- Garrod, D. 1942. Excavations at the cave of Shukbah, Palestine. *Proceedings of the Pre-historic Society* 8: 1-20.
- Glock, A. 1985. Tradition and Change in Two Archaeologies. *American Antiquity* 50: 464-477.
- Glock, A. 1987: Prolegomena to Archaeological Theory. *Birzeit Research Review* 4: 4-39.
- Hijazi, M. 2004. The Torah and artifacts in Palestine. *The Jerusalem Times*, July 2nd, 16.
- Nashef K. 2000. 'Khirbet Birzeit' 1996, 1998-1999: Preliminary Results. In: *Journal of Palestinian Archaeology* 1: 25-27.
- Ra'ad, B. 2002. The Cana'anite Factor: (Un) Defining Religious Identities in Palestine and Israel. *Palestine Israel Journal* vol. 8 (4):108-120.
- Rosen, S. 1998. One Hundred Years After Petrie: Is Archaeological Education in Israel Stagnating? In: *Essays in Honor of Walker I. Ackerman*, ed. Marauth, H.: 219-229. Ben-Gurion University Press.
- Whitelam, K. 1996. *The Invention of Ancient Israel*. Routledge, New York.
- Yahya, A. 2004. Archaeology and Nationalism in the Holy Land. In: *Archaeologies of the Middle East: Critical Perspectives*, Pollock S. & Bernbeck, R., eds: 66-77. Blackwell Publishing, Malden
- Ziadeh, G. 1987. The Present is Our Key to the Future. *Birzeit Research Review* 4: 40-65.

ISRAEL - PALESTINE: WHOSE HERITAGE?

Ludo Abicht
University of Antwerp, Belgium

After having first read and then heard the presentations of Uzi Dahari and Adel Yahya, my initial reaction was a deep regret that people like them were not asked to lead the negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. If the decisions were up to them, things could soon move in the right direction, for they start with two essential scientific and diplomatic qualifications: to begin with, they are candidly critical and self-critical, which means that they are also able to listen to each other and at least try to look at the situation through the eyes of the other. Given the present political situation, and under “present” I would like to note that during the century old confrontation and the different intensifications of the conflict since the creation of the State of Israel and the ensuing war of 1948-1949, the Six Days War and the occupation of Gaza and the West Bank in 1967, the First Intifada from 1987 to 1991 and, today, the outbreak of the Al Aqsa Intifada that started in September 2000, such an openness is far from self-evident.

Like most Western observers, I have been aware of the use that was constantly made of archaeology to prove the “primordial autochthonism” of either side, to borrow a term from the Louvain anthropologist Eugeen Roosens. Roosens applies this term to the conflict opposing Quebecois, English speakers, Inuits and native peoples in Canada, but this fits the situation in the Middle East as well.

It was implied that, when one could prove that one’s ancestors had lived here first, the legitimacy of one’s claim over the land was once for all proven. In spite of the fact that such a claim could legally and ethically be no more than one important criterion, since it disregarded other equally legitimate claims on both sides, it was repeated over and over in the nationalistic propaganda literature and

the sterile debates that were based upon it. Thus the new developments in biblical archaeology were not in the first place evaluated on strictly scientific terms, as they should have been, but as arguments for or against the aspirations of both Zionists and Palestinian nationalists. It is therefore refreshingly reassuring to hear the testimonies of two distinctive scientists of both communities who show that their only real concern is the establishing of the truth, regardless of the political and ideological consequences of their findings.

The recent developments in Israeli historiography, however, prove that even this value-free scientific practice is not a sufficient foundation to further mutual understanding and/or acceptance. Thus the conclusions Benny Morris, the "father" of the so-called New Historians of Israel, has drawn from his undoubtedly valid revisions of the problem of the Palestinian refugees in 1948, differs greatly from those of his fellow New Historian Ilan Pappé. While they do not question the basic validity of each other's research results, they see no reason to abandon their Zionist or post-Zionist political positions regarding the same complex historical reality. In other words: when we are confronted with a scientific practice that inevitably has been linked to highly sensitive non-scientific implications, we shall have to take these into account as well, lest we withdraw into the comforting fiction of an enlightened community of rational and reasonable scientists who will be able to solve their differences *sine ira et studio*. Of course there is anger and partisanship in the Holy Land and it does make a difference on which side of the Separation Wall the Israeli and Palestinian scientists are living and working, even when they are trying to concentrate on their archaeological work. It would be naïve to ignore the specific circumstances they are subjected to just as all their fellow citizens. Yet the fact that they are able to overcome these circumstances to such a degree is a sign of hope.

Is it preposterous to expect Palestinian archaeologists and historians to study the vestiges of the Jewish presence in the Palestinian territories, and Israeli scientists to pay as much attention to the Islamic sites in Israel proper? Or, even more utopian, can we imagine joint Israeli-Palestinian teams to work together on both sides of the Fence? As a student of the Jewish internationalist philosopher Ernst Bloch I make a clear distinction between abstract and concrete utopianism. Whereas abstract utopians tend to ignore the facts on, or in, the ground, and to escape into a wonderful world of make-believe, concrete utopians are fully aware of the complex reality, but also of the potential developments of that reality. In our particular case, the cooperation of Israeli and Palestinian scientists, together with

colleagues from the international community, is at the same time a result of and a precondition for the development of the entire region into a state of democratic normality. Unfortunately, that normality, in which all the inhabitants of Israel and Palestine would enjoy to the same degree the four freedoms President Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke of – freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want and freedom from fear – seems to be almost unattainable, however much the leaders of all parties concerned claim their allegiance to this goal.

Uzi Dahari makes a useful distinction between the generations of “dreamers, founders and those that are living in their own country”. According to these definitions, today’s Israelis, the heirs to their generations of dreamers and founders, are in a different place from the Palestinians who find themselves somewhere between the generations of dreamers and founders. Therefore visions of a not yet existing Palestinian state will likely play a larger part in their ideology, even though the insistence upon these visions may become an obstacle to the necessary dialogue with the Israeli people. I would suggest that we add a third group of dreamers to this list: those people in Israel and the Palestinian territories who have not abandoned the vision of a peaceful solution to the ongoing conflict. When I visited the Gaza strip in 1994, after the signing of the Oslo Agreements, I was struck by a word painted in large letters on one of the concrete buildings near the checkpoint between Israel and Gaza. It simply said: IMAGINE, as if John Lennon himself had come back to encourage the peacemakers. Imagine a country where Jews, Muslims and Christians would live together in mutual respect, or two countries that had “disengaged in order to cooperate”, as the Jewish-Israeli peace activist Michael Warshawski once put it. The concrete shape this dreamed-of solution may eventually take will of course depend on the newly created, but as of yet inexistent favourable circumstances, but the content is perfectly clear. Such visions and dreamers are necessary, if Israelis and Palestinians want to put an end to the mutually destructive present-day antagonism.

How can a new and creative approach of the past, as distant as the times of David and Solomon and as recent as the latest act of violence, contribute to the establishment of a peaceful, democratic and prosperous Middle East? Certainly not by creating an imagined mirror-image of the old nationalistic myths and distorted truths, for that will not stand the scrutiny of yet another generation of Israeli, Palestinian and biblical archaeologists and historians. It is therefore encouraging to notice, that neither Uzi Dahari nor Adel Yahya envision some “shared version of their pasts”, but are rather thinking in terms of a shared knowledge of each other’s

understanding of heritage and identity and a high degree of tolerance for the inevitable differences. For the Jewish heritage and identity will always differ from the Palestinian interpretation, just as the symbolism of the religious sites and the national commemorative sites will always have a different meaning for different religious and social groups. There is nothing wrong with that, as long as we do not believe that "archaeology is destiny", which would condemn us to perpetuate the old conflicts forever.

The purpose of the South-African "Truth and Reconciliation Commission" (mentioned above in the paper of GerhardMark Van der Waal pp. 31-40) may serve as an example: during those hearings, none of the crimes and injustices of the past are allowed to be forgotten or embellished. Not to exacerbate and revive the old antagonisms but, on the contrary, with the hope that this painful candour will dispel a number of dangerous myths and, above all, contribute to the realization that these man-made indignities can be unmade in the future by men and women who have the courage and integrity to realize that, while they do not share the same vision of the past or the same cultural or religious identity, they ought to be able to share the same country. Above the entrance gate to the old German Reichstag stands the inscription: *Dem deutschen Volke* (to or for the German people). Recently an artist built a monument in the inner court of the building, bearing the far more humanistic inscription: *Der deutschen Bevölkerung* (to or for the population of Germany). There is a world of difference between both inscriptions, and we do not have to wait for the archaeologists of the 25th century to explain this to their audience.

VIETNAM:
REFLECTIONS OF WAR, A GENERATION LATER

REMEMBERING VIETNAM ON THE NATIONAL MALL

*Dwight Pitcaithley
Chief Historian, US National Park Service*

Dear Bill, Today is February 13, 1984. I came to this black wall again to see and touch your name, and as I do I wonder if anyone ever stops to realize that next to your name, on this black wall, is your mother's heart. A heart broken 15 years ago today, when you lost your life in Vietnam.¹

So begins Eleanor Wimbish's annual letter to her son killed in Vietnam in 1969. She writes him every year on the anniversary of his death and leaves her note and a bit of her heart, at the base of long black granite wall in downtown Washington, D.C.; a wall that is officially known as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. (see fig. 1)

Dedicated in 1982, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is different from all other war memorials in Washington, and perhaps in the country. It does not glorify war, it does not promote a nationalistic view of the quagmire that became the United States' intrusion into Vietnam. The memorial, instead, is an expression of loss, of comradeship, of sorrow. It quickly and unexpectedly became a place where memories can be shared to facilitate personal and, to some degree, collective reconciliation. For some it served and continues to serve as a place for healing the ravages of war.

Physically, the memorial consists of two black granite walls, each 246 feet (75 meters) long. One points toward the Lincoln Memorial, the other toward the Washington Monument. These are two other war memorials of sorts: the first to the country's Civil War of the 1860s, the other to the American Revolution of the 1770s and 1780s. Where the walls meet, they are ten feet (3 meters) in height,

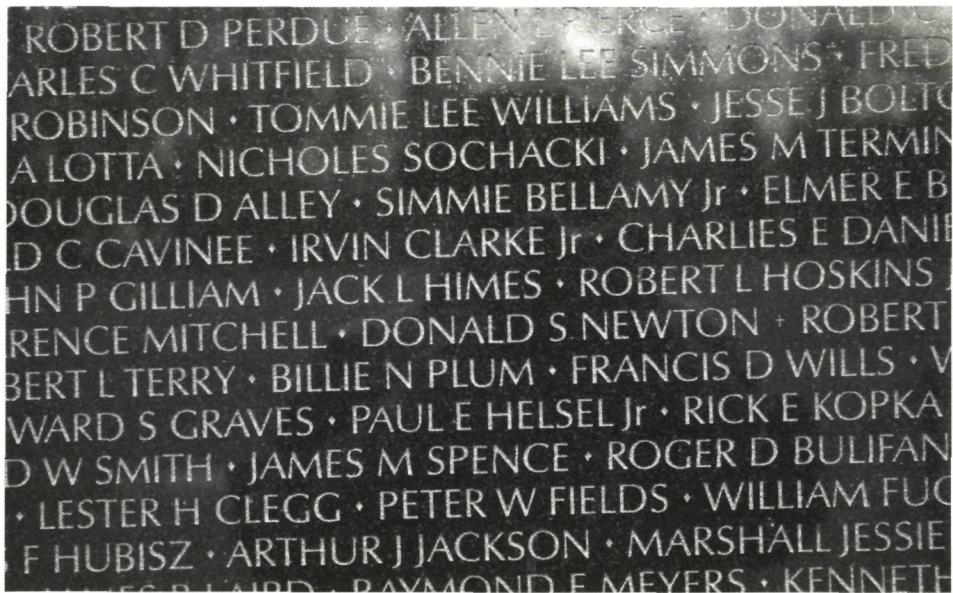


figure 1: Names on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

as they taper out to their extremities, they narrow to a mere eight inches (20.3 centimeters). The 137 panels that make up the walls contain the names of over 58,000 men and women who died in Vietnam between 1959 and 1975. Instead of rising from the grassy landscape of the National Mall in the form of traditional heroic monuments, it sinks below it as though the earth has been peeled back to reveal a subterranean jewel. Maya Lin, the designer of the memorial, envisioned it in just that way.

*I thought about what death is, what a loss is,' she later observed. 'A sharp pain that lessens with time, but can never quite heal over. A scar. The idea [for the memorial] occurred to me there on the site. Take a knife and cut open the earth, and with time the grass would heal it. As if you cut open the rock and polished it.'*²

The black granite, quarried in Southern India, is highly polished so that the reflection of the viewer blends with the field of incised names creating a bond between the living and the dead. Visitors to the wall invariably reach out and touch it, touch the names, connect to those lost, known and unknown. Mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, children, and now, grandchildren come to mourn and remember. (see fig. 2)



figure 2: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial

In her wonderfully moving book, *In Country*, Bobbie Ann Mason captures the moment a mother comes to the Wall to find her son's name. The characters include Dwayne Hughes the fictional son killed in Vietnam; Mamaw his mother; Emmett, Dwayne's brother who also served in Vietnam; and finally Sam, Dwayne's daughter.

"There it is," Emmett says. It is far above his head, near the top of the wall. He reaches up and touches the name.... "I can't reach it," says Mamaw "Oh, I wanted to touch it." she says softly, in disappointment. Finally, Sam finds a ladder so Mamaw can reach the name. Mamaw climbs and reaches toward the name and slowly struggles up the next step, holding her dress tight against her. She touches the name, running her hand over it, stroking it tentatively, affectionately, like feeling a cat's back. Her chin wobbles, and after a moment she backs down the ladder silently. ³

The seemingly endless rows of names and the reflection of ones own living being combine to create stunning reactions. The poet and Vietnam veteran, Yusef Komunyakaa, shares his reaction to the Wall:

*My black face fades,
 hiding inside the black granite.
 I said I wouldn't,
 dammit: No tears.
 I'm stone. I'm flesh....
 I turn this way--the stone lets me go.
 I turn that way--I'm inside
 the Vietnam Veterans Memorial
 again, depending on the light
 to make a difference....
 A white vet's image floats
 closer to me, then his pale eyes
 look through mine. I'm a window.
 He's lost his right arm
 inside the stone. In the black mirror
 a woman's trying to erase names:
 No, she's brushing a boys hair.⁴*

It is, I believe, this very interaction of image and emotion that makes the Wall such a powerful place for reflection, meditation, reconciliation, and perhaps, closure. I have visited the Wall on many occasions, by myself and with others. On my first visit, I had the natural and almost uncontrollable urge to reach out and touch and was instantly moved that my small hand covered so many rows of lost boys.

Designing war memorials that feature the names of lost boys, did not, of course, originate with Maya Lin and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Examples of this remembrance genre can be found around the world. Following its dedication in 1876, the Battell Chapel on the Yale University campus in New Haven, Connecticut, became a memorial for Yale graduates killed during the American Civil War. Throughout the decades, names of Yale men killed in subsequent foreign wars have been added. The World War II Manila Cemetery and Memorial in the Philippines contains the graves of 17,206 United States servicemen (including the author's uncle, Lawrence W. Pitcaithley), who were killed in the Pacific Theater between 1941 and 1945. More to our purposes, the cemetery also features a chapel flanked by two large hemicycles within which are inscribed the names of 36,285 men whose bodies were never recovered; a testament to the cruel inhu-

manity of war. An even greater testament, however, is found in Ypres, Belgium at the Menin Gate which was dedicated in 1927 to remember the 54,896 missing men from throughout the British Empire who died defending the Ypres Salient between 1914 and 1917 and who have no known grave. The horror of the trench warfare that characterized World War I intensifies when one becomes aware that only a few miles away, at Tyne Cot cemetery, the largest British cemetery in the world, are inscribed the names of an additional 35,000 whose bodies were never recovered. In this small area of Flanders, almost 100,000 men simply disappeared in the chaos and mire that characterized the Great War.

Jan Scruggs, the originator of the idea for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, intended the Wall to evoke both emotion and thought. A decade after the dedication, he observed how visitors, like pilgrims, "...touch it. They walk its length. They think. They wonder...about the sadness they see there...about the pride they see."⁵

When Maya Lin's design was announced, the judges for the design hailed it as being "simple and forthright" and "superbly harmonious" with its location on the Mall. The judges concluded their assessment of it by proclaiming:

*This memorial with its wall of names, becomes a place of quiet reflection, and a tribute to those who served their nation in difficult times. All who come here can find it a place of healing....This is very much a memorial of our own times, one that could not have been achieved in another time and place. The designer has created an eloquent place where the simple meeting of earth, sky and remembered names contain messages for all who will know this place."*⁶

Whatever messages the jury thought would be imparted, however, were not among the initial reactions to the design. Some thought it looked like a mass grave; others argued that it was "anti-heroic" and needed to be white, not black, and needed a flag. One Vietnam veteran labeled it a "black gash of shame." One mother of a son who did not return from the war alive, thought the memorial should reflect courage and bravery and not "denigrate our men in black granite." One critic upon learning of the Chinese-American background of the designer asked, "Can't we find a patriot to design this memorial?" Another argued that the memorial should be one that can be "looked up to, not fallen into."⁷ Ultimately, in an effort to settle the conflict, a compromise was reached wherein the design would be augmented by the addition of a United States flag and a statue of ser-

vicemen. The flagpole would be located in front of, yet at a distance from, the apex of the memorial; the statue just off the southern tip of the west wall toward the Lincoln Memorial. Designed by Frederick Hart, the statue as finally approved depicts three soldiers, two white and one black, in a realistic style, accurate down to the smallest detail of their uniforms and weapons. They appear battle weary and seem to have just emerged from a clump of trees. They gaze toward the Wall itself. *Are they looking for the names of comrades? Are they looking for their own names?*⁸ As these elements were added to the landscape of the memorial, some still opposed the ensemble. Another lobby argued that the memorial would not be complete until women nurses who served were appropriately represented. A decade later, in 1993, Glenna Goodacre's statue of three nurses attending to a



figure 3: Glenna Goodacre's statue

wounded soldier was added to the memorial a hundred yards or so from the Hart statue. (see fig. 3)

For all it represents, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial does not, nor was it intended to, make a statement about the intentions or purpose of the United States in going to war in Southeast Asia. As its name implies, it is a memorial to the victims, the veterans of the conflict, especially those who died there. It stands in stark contrast to the recently finished World War II Memorial located nearby.

The newer memorial speaks of a united nation, about the two theaters of war, about individual battles, and expresses a national purpose through many quotes from military and political leaders of the time. Although located in a slight depression, it looms imposingly above the visitor, its white granite and bronze detailing combining to make a muscular and more traditional statement about remembering war. While the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is small, simple, and straightforward, the World War II Memorial is large and complex. Two towers at either end represent the Atlantic and Pacific theaters of war, the memorial is surrounded by pillars representing each state and territory that participated, it is interwoven with fountains and water falls. From its eastern and primary approach, the visitor finds two dozen bronze bas-relief panels that depict scenes of mobilization from battle and the home front. And finally on the west side one finds a vertical field of 4,000 gold stars representing the 400,000 United States deaths the war produced. The website for the memorial articulates its national, even international, purpose:

*...the memorial will be a monument to the spirit, sacrifice, and commitment of the American people to the common defense of the nation and to the broader causes of peace and freedom from tyranny throughout the world. It will inspire future generations of Americans, deepening their appreciation of what the World War II generation accomplished in securing freedom and democracy.*⁹

No such inspiring words define the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

While the United States is of one mind in its memory of World War II and its "Greatest Generation," the country remains far from unified when it contemplates Vietnam. The filter of time has blurred the edges of that era, and it has become a one-dimensional caricature of itself. While universally remembered as a 'bad' war the precise reasons for that negative label have become lost. "We don't want another Vietnam," some proclaim while being unwilling, or unable, to articulate just what they mean. A host of scholarly books detail the tragedy of that decade,¹⁰ yet an uncritical nation seems to have developed its perceptions of the war largely from the Sylvester Stallone, Rambo films which simplify and trivialize complex motivations and results. At the national level, the ghosts of Vietnam continue to haunt politicians. In early January 2005, The Washington Post carried an article on Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, with a lead sentence that read, "Just as Vietnam became McNamara's war," referring to the

1960s Department of Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, "Iraq has become Rumsfeld's War."¹¹ The article detailed the development and lingering effects of an American foreign policy characterized by a reluctance to get involved in foreign wars following the debacle in Vietnam. As past administrations struggled to act internationally unencumbered by the memory of Vietnam, the first President Bush formally announced "By God, we've kicked the Vietnam syndrome once and for all," following the eviction of Iraq's army from Kuwait in 1991.¹²

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial with its avowed purpose to provide a place for healing and reconciliation seems eerily reminiscent of war memorials and monuments erected throughout the United States following its bloody Civil War of 1861-1865. Erected largely to encourage reunion and emphasize the noble qualities among combatants of loyalty, valor, duty, and comradeship, this remembering of the war came with great sacrifice to a larger understanding of the war. In the effort to reunite North and South and heal physical and psychic wounds, the country, with few exceptions, ignored the dissension, brutality, alienation, and anger that characterized the war, it ignored even the causes of the war itself.¹³ The institution of slavery, which had played a central role in the antagonisms developed over decades between the Northern and Southern states, was quickly forgotten. In spite of Abraham Lincoln's claim of a "new birth of freedom" following the war for all the country's citizens, a nation bent on reconciliation denied the hopes and dreams, as well as new found Constitutional rights, to black United States citizens. The rightful place for black Americans was not achieved, to the degree it has, for another century. Not until the 1960s did the United States achieve the equality of all its citizens promised by Constitutional amendments following the Civil War. A useful meaning of the war was sublimated in favor of a constructed memory that ill served the country.

Similarly, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which functions magically on a personal level among veterans and families, fails to promote a common understanding of the war. Current discussions of the war tend to devolve into positions of polarization. Defenders of the correctness of the war argue that had the politicians only allowed the generals to fight the war as they wanted, the outcome would have been different. Those opposed to the war argue that the underlying Cold War motivations that pulled the United States into the war, while understandable, ignored the reality of political and social conditions throughout Vietnam. Regardless of military might, they insist, the United States was destined to conclude its incursion into Vietnam the same way the French had a decade earlier—with

complete failure.

Vietnam has never really receded and settled comfortably into the past as has World War II or even Korea. It lurks just below the surface of our social and political structures, haunting us yet. One need only review the Presidential campaign of 2004 to understand how scattered and disconnected the United States remembers and mis-remembers the war. The current political climate in the United States turns, to a large extent, along a newly created patriotic fault line. It is a fault line, however, that has somehow gotten turned on its head. A telling and unsettling preview of the 2004 election was evident in the 2002 re-election campaign of Congressman Max Cleland, a Vietnam veteran and triple amputee from Georgia. In spite of his obvious disabilities and the sacrifices he made for his country, Cleland was branded "unpatriotic" by his opponent and connected him in television commercials to Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein.¹⁴ Cleland lost his reelection bid! In a biting article published during the Presidential campaign of 2004, David Halberstam, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of several books on Vietnam including *The Best and the Brightest*, pondered the military careers of John Kerry and George Bush. While Senator Kerry volunteered for duty in Vietnam and served with distinction, President Bush served in the Texas Air National Guard and avoided going to Vietnam. Somehow, in the "world-turned-upside-down" arena of United States politics, Bush's non-combat status became more patriotically acceptable than Kerry's actual combat service. The certitude that President Bush articulated about war was not tempered by any doubts. Halberstam suggested that service in Vietnam may have, and rightfully would have, tempered his view of the world and what military action can and cannot achieve.

What we want-need-from our leaders more than anything else is wisdom, Halberstam wrote, and wisdom normally connotes a slow learning curve, and is usually purchased at a steep cost, the product of having experienced bitter disappointments and failures.¹⁵

The United States Congress recently passed legislation authorizing the construction of a visitor interpretive center near the memorial. It is difficult to imagine what kind of interpretation of the war would be found there that would not offend one segment or another of today's polarized public.

One cannot describe the Vietnam Veterans Memorial or assess its significance in contemporary culture without mentioning an unintended byproduct of it. Beginning almost immediately upon its completion, visitors began leaving mementoes at its base (see fig. 4). People come to wall and leave ordinary objects;

boots, hats, stuffed animals; others leave personal messages to fathers, brothers, sons, comrades. All attempt to reconnect with those lost, those who will be “forever young.” One begins: “Dad, I know you would like Lisa. You could not ask for a better wife. Dad, you have a granddaughter. Her name is Meghan.”

Another begins, “Dad, I’ve always been told I look like you...how I wish I could remember you. I was four when you were killed...”¹⁶

These offerings illustrate the power of the Wall to heal, to expunge ghosts that haunt many veterans. One of the most moving letters left at the wall was accompanied by a photograph of a North Vietnamese soldier and a young girl. The note read:

Dear Sir, For twenty-two years I have carried your picture in my wallet. I was only eighteen years old that day we faced one another on that trail in Chu Lai, Vietnam. Why you did not take my life I’ll never know. You stared at me for so long, armed with your AK-47, and yet you did not fire. Forgive me for taking your life, I was reacting the way I was trained, to kill....So many times over the years I have stared at your picture and your daughter, I suspect. Each time my heart and guts would burn with the pain of guilt. I have two daughters myself now....I perceive you as a brave soldier defending his homeland. Above all else, I can now respect



figure 4

*the importance that life held for you. I suppose that is why I am able to be here today....It is time for me to continue the life process and release my pain and guilt. Forgive me, Sir.*¹⁷

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial serves dramatically, in the final analysis, to relieve the personal anguish people experience as a result of war. It is unable, however, to provide meaning and perspective to a nation engaged in another war. Perhaps the lessons the war has to offer may never be knowable. The memorial's emphasis on loss and suffering caused by the war are indeed universal characteristics known to all countries that have experienced war and expressed loss and grief through memorials and monuments. As I have emphasized the power and effect this black wall with its 58,000 names has on those who seek it out, it is important to remember that the losses experienced by the United States pale in comparison to the losses experienced by mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters in Vietnam during that same period. One estimate puts the total soldiers and civilians killed in Vietnam at nearly two million; a figure thirty-four times the number of sons and daughters lost to families in the United States!¹⁸

All peoples understand the loss and suffering brought by war, all mourn children and husbands, brothers and fathers taken by its ugly hand. William Stocks's mother, Eleanor Wimbish, understands the pain of losing a son, as mothers all over the world understand that loss. As she writes her son every year, she speaks for those mothers whose sons' names are inscribed on walls a distant as Yale and Manila and Ypres and dozens of other places. She agonized as she wrote the letter with which I began:

*Oh, God, how it hurts to write this but I must face it and then put it to rest....They tell me the letters I write to you and leave here at this memorial are waking others up to the fact that there is still much pain left, after all these years, from the Vietnam War. But this I know. I would rather to have had you for 21 years, and all the pain that goes with losing you, than never to have had you at all. Mom.*¹⁹

Notes

- 1 Edelman 1985, 299.
- 2 Campbell 1983, 151.
- 3 Mason 1985, 243.
- 4 Komunyakaa 1988, 63.
- 5 Scruggs 1994.
- 6 Ashabranner 1988: 38.
- 7 Bodnar 1992, 5.
- 8 Ashabranner 1988, 63.
- 9 www.wwiimemorial.com/archives/factsheets/ww2.asp?thispage=archives
- 10 A short list of these books would include David Halberstam, *The Making of a Quagmire* (New York: Random House, 1964); Marguerite Higgins, *Our Vietnam Nightmare: The Story of U.S. Involvement in the Vietnamese Tragedy, With Thoughts on a Future Policy* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1965); Hugh A. Mulligan, *No Place to Die: The Agony of Vietnam* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1967); William J. Lederer, *Our Own Worst Enemy* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1968); William R. Corson, *The Betrayal* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1968); David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest* (New York: Random House, 1969); Michael Herr, *Dispatches* (New York: Avon Books, 1968); Frances Fitzgerald, *Fire in the Lake: The Vietnamese and the Americans in Vietnam* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972); Chester L. Cooper, *The Lost Crusade: America in Vietnam* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1970); David Kaiser, *American Tragedy: Kennedy, Johnson, and the Origins of the Vietnam War* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2000).
- 11 Freedman 2005, B4.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Piehler 1995, 177.
- 14 Halberstam 2004, 252.
- 15 Ibid, 263.
- 16 Offerings at the Wall, 1995; 9.
- 17 Ibid., 7-8.
- 18 Ashabranner, 1988; 23.
- 19 Edelman, 1985; 300.

References

- Ashabranner, B. 1988. *Always to Remember: The Story of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, New York: Scholastic Inc.
- Bodnar, J. 1992. *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century*, Princeton: Princeton University Press
- Campbell, R. 1983. *An Emotive Place Apart*. *A.I.A. Journal*, May 1983, 151, quoted in Great Buildings website: http://www.greatbuildings.com/buildings/Vietnam_Veterans_Memorial.html.
- Edelman, B. (ed.) 1985. *Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Freedman, L. 2005. Rumsfeld's Legacy: The Iraq Syndrome? *The Washington Post*, January 9, 2005.
- Halberstam, D. 2004. Of War and Presidents, *Vanity Fair*, September 2004. [Http://www.wwiimemorial.com/archives/factsheets/ww2.asp?thispage=archives](http://www.wwiimemorial.com/archives/factsheets/ww2.asp?thispage=archives).
- Komunyakaa, Y. 1988. *Facing It, Dien Cai Dau*, Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.
- Mason, B. A. 1985. *In Country*, New York: Harper & Row Publishers.
- 1995: *Offerings at the Wall: Artifacts from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection*, Atlanta: Turner Publishing Inc.
- Piehler, G. K. 1995. *Remembering War the American Way*, Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Scruggs, J. 1994. *Writings on the Wall: Reflections on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, np: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund.

MONUMENTS, RELICS AND MUSEUMS ON WAR MEMORY IN VIETNAM

*Nguyen Quoc Hung
Department of Cultural Heritage
Ministry of Culture and Information, Vietnam*

Background

Vietnam has experienced many wars of resistance during its 4000-year history. Since the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1945, two wars of resistance have been waged against French colonialism (1945-1954) and American imperialism (1954-1975). These wars of resistance have resulted in serious consequences that are still felt after more than 30 years. These consequences include backwardness and poverty in a post-war economy due to the lack of manpower in families who lost their relatives in the wars. In addition, some survivors are war-wounded and disabled and others, affected by Agent Orange, have passed it on to the next generation. The material and spiritual hurt has lasted until the present time.

Events and people from such wars have been memorialized in many ways. These memorial relics not only show the people's respect for their heroes but seem to be proof of older generations' skills in military arts. The memorial relics of great historical events and national heroes through the wars of resistance in Vietnam mainly intend to educate people about the traditions of national construction and defense, humanism, and the altruism of Vietnamese people toward the enemy.

Methods of Memory

During the wars of resistance, remarkable events and heroes have been honored by the state and its people in various ways through historical books and stories, stage plays and film scripts; public works dedications including boulevards and

streets, garden parks, and schools; steel engravings; monuments, memorial houses and museums (see fig. 1). Some Vietnamese museums and sites are also keeping painful vestiges of the wars, warnings to humankind about their savageness and unjustness. The museums and war relics show that citizens, the elderly and children are always the first and the most-affected victims of war.



figure 1: A streetname evoking memories of the 1945-54 War.

System of Military Cemeteries

Vietnam may be the country with the highest number of war cemeteries that commemorate the contributions of soldiers who sacrificed their lives for their country. While most communities have their own war cemetery, districts and provinces also have them, and cities have monuments to fallen soldiers. Villages and wards that do not have enough space for cemeteries set up



figure 2: Trung Son War Cemetery.

memorial houses with steles for citizens to commemorate the contributions of local soldiers who lost their lives in the war. As at Truong Son, the bodies of these soldiers are buried at the district or provincial cemeteries (see fig. 2).

Memorial Museums

In Vietnam, the public form of remembrance of events and persons related to the war is a network of central and local museums. The system was established and is still managed by the State. According to current statistics, Vietnam has 116 national, provincial, and specialized museums. With the exception of specialized museums, which focus on scientific topics, they all have a section displaying local events and persons related to the war. For example, the Museum of History in Hanoi shows the history of Vietnamese culture in general but also features displays dedicated to military history. Similarly, the Revolutionary Museum in Hanoi, while focusing mainly on the different stages of the revolutionary movement, partially displays military activities.

Besides the above-mentioned museums, there is also a system of army museums in Vietnam, including the Vietnam Military Museum (formerly the Army Museum) which has the biggest display of the history, activities, and great achievements of the Vietnamese army from its establishment until present time (see fig. 3). Vietnam celebrated 60 years of the establishment of Vietnamese People's Army in 2004. The name of the Army Museum was changed to enlarge the display to include stories of the engagement of non-military individuals and organizations, and at the same time to cover military events prior to 1944. Besides the Vietnam Museum of Military History in Hanoi, there are another 25 military museums across the country which highlight the activities of different military regions and military branches, such as the Museum of Military Region III and the Museum of the Air Force. Another example is the Museum of B-52 Victory in Hanoi, which was set up to commemorate 12 nights and days of fighting against the bombardment of the American Air Force in December 1972 (see fig. 4).

Of particular mention are the War Remnants Museum in Ho Chi Minh City, and Son My War Relics Exhibition House in Quang Ngai province, which will be discussed later. The War Remnants Museum highlights four main themes: the toll that weapons had on the civilian population through a century of war in Vietnam; the unhealable injuries and consequences of war; aspirations of peace in the world; and the threats that modern war presents. The museum has attracted the attention of pacifists around the world with its message that the calamities of

war have impacted not only Vietnamese, but all human beings. War influences not only one generation, but also the generations that follow.



figure 3: Tank collection in the Vietnam Military Historical Museum.



figure 4: The remains of a B52 bomber in Ngoc Ha Lake, Hanoi.

The Value of War Monuments

The remembrance of the war-related events and heroes also protects and highlights the value of associated war monuments. These include 86 of the more than 2800 listed national monuments in Vietnam—for example, the battlefield memorial associated with the ancient Quang Tri citadel; a roadside monument associated with the Ho Chi Minh Trail; the Cuchi Tunnel monument; and the Independence Palace monument in Ho Chi Minh City which witnessed the fall of the aggressors, ending the Vietnam War in 1975. Another important war monument is the Son My War Memorial, housed at the Son My War Relics Exhibition House in Quang Ngai province (see fig. 5).

The Quang Tri citadel monument commemorates the violent fighting between army units and the enemy throughout 81 days and nights. Thousands of bombs and shells were dropped on the citadel within an area of 160,000m². The citadel was almost completely destroyed. After the liberation of the South, which united the country, the Vietnamese government prepared an investment plan to preserve and display the value of this site. According to this plan, some parts of

the citadel have been restored and reconstructed. Memorial works have also been constructed in the ancient citadel area to remind people of the war and events that occurred here. Today, the Quang Tri citadel, Hien Luong Bridge, and Truong Son Cemetery are the most-visited sites in Quang Tri province (see fig. 6).

In the Vietnam War, many creative activities demonstrate the abilities of the Vietnamese. For example, Ho Chi Minh trail connected the North (the home



figure 5: Quang Tri ancient citadel.



figure 6: The Son My War relic in the Quang Ngai province.

front) with the South. American forces found ways to drop thousands of bombs along this road, but could not stop Vietnamese reinforcements from the North. There are many emotional stories about the persistent and indomitable spirit and courage of the soldiers, volunteers, and drivers who risked the danger of bombardment to keep the road in operation. To commemorate the events that took place on this legendary road, many locations have been listed as national monuments, and many have become attractions for tourists, visitors and students. There are locations which witnessed the bravery of young volunteers whose duty it was to protect and repair the road to ensure the smooth transportation of goods. One of these locations is the Dong Loc Crossing (in Ha Tinh province. This crossing

lay on the main road and became a major target for bombardment by American aircraft, which on July 29, 1968 released 42,000 tons of bombs on this area. One of the bombs was dropped on a shelter and took the lives of ten young girls belonging to a young volunteer group that had taken cover in the shelter (see fig. 7). After the war, this location was listed as a national monument and the tomb of the ten girls has also been restored. A memorial and exhibition has been constructed to remind visitors about the fierceness, sacrifice and loss, and courageous spirit of Vietnamese fighters and the ten female youth volunteers.

Similarly in Quang Binh, at another location on the Ho Chi Minh Trail, during an American bombardment eight young female volunteers and some other soldiers who were on duty to protect the road hid in a shelter, and were trapped and died there due to the bombing. Today, this site has become a national monument and has been restored. The Vietnamese government has set up a memorial here to honour the volunteers and soldiers who lost their lives in the shelter (see fig. 8).

The Vietnamese national monuments commemorate a wide range of other facets of war and resistance. These include the system of underground tunnels and trenches, as can be seen at the Cu Chi tunnel in Ho Chi Minh City, and Vinh



figure 7: Impact crater at Dong Loc.

Moc in Vinh Linh near the 17th parallel, the border line dividing Vietnam into two parts during the American War. Cu Chi tunnel is near Saigon, the headquarters of the American forces and the Saigon regime during wartime. Here, American and Saigon troops sought to exterminate Vietnamese communists from the Cu Chi tunnel area, but could not succeed in almost 20 years. The Vinh Moc tunnel is located on the north bank of the 17th parallel, near the banks of the Hien Luong River. During the war, the government and local people lived inside the tunnel, which was close to the battlefield, to fight against the enemy and continue farming at the same time. Although the people suffered from frequent American bombardment they remained there until unification and successfully fulfilled their duties to reinforce troops in the South and to fight the enemy. Today, Cu Chi and Vinh Moc tunnels have been restored and listed as national monuments, and become tourist



figure 8: Statuary of Youth Offer in Dong Loc historical turning point.

destinations.

Another form of war monument recognises the massacre of civilians, such as occurred at Son My (My Lai) in Quang Ngai province, located in Tinh Khe commune in Son Tinh district. On March 16, 1968, the American infantry gathered there and massacred 504 civilians. This listed site offers evidence for the cruel, inhumane nature of the war. It covers an area of 29,000m² and includes

exhibition rooms displaying the event and a memorial to the victims.

Another monument, at Kham Thien Street in Hanoi, commemorates the intense American bombardment of the city in December 1972. Kham Thien Street, Bach Mai hospital and other locations in the capital were leveled by American bombs, and in some cases whole families lost their lives. The fight against American air forces continued for 12 days and nights. A group of monuments has been built here to commemorate this sorrowful event. Another monument of the victory of shooting down the B-52 bombers during this conflict has also been erected. Finally, the end of the American occupation of the southern part of the country is marked at the Independence Palace in Ho Chi Minh City, which formerly served as the presidential palace of the Saigon regime. On April 30, 1975, liberation forces seized the palace. This event marked the end of the American occupation to unite the whole country. The palace has also been listed as a national monument.

Destruction of Cultural Heritage

The war not only destroyed buildings and took away millions of lives, but also destroyed more ancient cultural heritage, such as the Cham towers in My Son Sanctuary in Quang Nam province (see fig. 9). In the early 20th century about 72 towers were standing. The French shelled and destroyed some of them during the 1945-54 war and the French occupation. In 1972, American B-52 bombers dropped bombs in this area and destroyed most of what remained. After the unification of Vietnam in 1975, the Vietnamese government listed this area as a national monument and financed its restoration. UNESCO inscribed this site on its World Heritage List. At present, Vietnam, UNESCO and other countries, including Japan and Italy have worked to restore this relic area. The restoration still has to overcome many difficulties associated with the impacts of the Vietnam War.

Identity

The relics, monuments, and museums that commemorate war events in Vietnam seek to embody heritage values that:

- Honor the heroes and events concerned with the struggle for national defense
- Educate people about the traditions of national defense and development

- Warn people about the calamities of war, display the spirit of solidarity and mutual assistance, and encourage peace and unity to overcome the aftermath of war
- Bring to the forefront the spirit and creativity of the Vietnamese during the war
- Strive to build a better future world.

The Vietnamese people are trying their best to heal the wounds of war. With international assistance, Vietnam hopes to overcome the wounds of war faster. The lessons from the war will continue to be studied more deeply so that people around the world can avoid the human tragedies and suffering that took place in Vietnam.



figure 9: The Cham towers in My Son Sanctuary in Quang Nam province.

SOUTH AFRICA: MEMORIES OF APARTHEID
AND BEYOND

AIRBRUSHED: MEMORY AND HERITAGE AT THE CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA

Carmel Schrire

Department of Anthropology, Rutgers University, USA

This is a study of heritage sites and installations at the Cape that analyzes the impact of political changes on depictions of memory and identity in South Africa today. It emanates from a lifetime of observation and research and concentrated study of museums, installations and archaeological sites made at the Cape in early 2005.

I

Between 1983 and 1987 I excavated Oudepost I, an outpost of the Dutch East India Company, the *Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie* or VOC. The site stands about 100 km north of present-day Cape Town on the shores of Saldanha Bay, the largest natural harbor on the African coast. It operated between 1669-1732 with a small contingent of soldiers who were under orders to provision passing ships sailing between Europe and the Indies, to discourage foreign incursions, and to act as a trade post for the VOC with local Khoikhoi pastoralists (Schrire 1996) (see fig. 1).

The outpost was located on private land owned by the Oudepost Syndicate. Chartered in 1947, many members bore old VOC names that revealed their ancestral roots in Northern Europe and Huguenot France (Schrire 1996: 164). Some farmed nearby in Paarl, Stellenbosch and Fransch Hoek, where the legends and language of Afrikaner identity were born (Crapanzano 1985: 30-37). They recalled the annual trek from the Hottentots Holland and Fransch Hoek mountains down to the rich winter pastures on the shores of Saldanha Bay. They spoke of



figure 1: The excavated lodge at the VOC outpost, Oudepost I, Cape.

Oudepost as their *erf*, or inheritance and of its granite pillars as *die vingers van God* (“God’s fingers”), being convinced that they were the inspiration behind the columns of the Afrikaans Language Monument in Paarl (see fig. 2). They recognized that the place had a long history visible in the stone ruins at the foot of the Postberg mountain, which they identified as an old *kraal* or even a pirate’s den. They might have been right about the pillars (though the official Monument pamphlet never mentions Postberg), but they were wrong about the heaps of stone on Kraal Bay where they often fossicked for old pipes, bottles and cannon balls. It became our job to identify the ruins and once we realized it was the old VOC outpost, we had every expectation that they would flock to watch us uncover their own historical antecedents. But they did not.

In time Oudepost became a household word. My account of its discovery was included in a popular book about archaeology alongside that of Howard Carter’s entrance into Tutankhamen’s tomb (Schrire 1999). Visitors and colleagues dropped in constantly and one of our team, Jane Klose, a Syndicate member herself, updated the membership at every opportunity. Yet they showed practically no interest at all.

Remember, these were the 1980’s when the country was stockaded under a State of Emergency. Some Syndicate members were linked to the deep recesses



figure 2: Afrikaanse Taalmonument (Afrikaans Language Monument), Paarl, Cape.

of political power as members of the “secret” association called the “Afrikaner Broederbond”(literally, the “Afrikaner Brotherhood” or “league of Afrikaner Brothers”). Others remained part of the powerful white minority whose privileges were enshrined in religion, marriage, education, public holidays, monuments, memorials, and the constitution itself. It was inconceivable to us that they should shrug off the implications of their ancestral outpost on the beach.

The reason as it turns out, was quite simple especially if one remembered Isaiah Berlin’s essay of the hedgehog and the fox (1953). We were foxes who knew a lot of small things. We knew that Apartheid was peaking, that oppression was rising and that torture, murder and violence would end in a bloodbath. But certain members of the Syndicate, such as the South African ambassador to the US, were hedgehogs who must have known one big thing, namely that official negotiations were already under way with the African National Congress (ANC) and that the past was about to become a very foreign country (Sparks 1990).

This essay uses the VOC heritage as a vehicle to explore the wider field of how public presentation of memory and identity is changing in South Africa today.

II

A brief overview of South African heritage will help to set the stage for the discussion that follows. The three-million year human record in South Africa is one of the oldest in the world. After a sequence of hominid types, modern humans appeared around 100,000 years ago. Stone and Iron Age pastoralism developed over the past 2000 years. European contact began in 1488 when Portuguese ships rounded the Cape on their way to India, and with the expansion of mercantile capitalism, other nations followed their path and all used the Cape as a refreshment station. In 1652, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) commissioned Jan van Riebeeck to establish the first European settlement at the tip of Africa on the site of modern Cape Town. Over time a creole society developed at the Cape with its mix of indigenous Khoikhoi forager-pastoralists, European settlers, imported African and Asian slaves, and a language that would later be called "Afrikaans". The VOC governed the Cape until 1795 during which time it commissioned almost a million men in the field and became a key player in the development of Asian trade with Europe. Its power exceeded that of the Dutch parliament or States General and extended far beyond trade, ships and sales, into matters of war and justice. Preferring profits to moral or philosophical contemplation, its commitment to the practicalities of power and trade produced a vast archive of travel ethnography, maps, meteorology, and governance that formed the bedrock to the deeper concerns of the Enlightenment (Boxer 1977; Schama 1987).

In 1806, the Cape Colony became part of the vast British Empire. Former Company men became British subjects as did fledgling communities strung out along the distant frontiers. These had long identified themselves as something other than subjects of the VOC and many now called themselves "Afrikaners" (Giliomee 2003: 22) or "Boers" (farmers). Their discontents grew with the expansion of British control, and between 1836-54 they left the colony and headed north, penetrating deep into the heart of Bantu kingdoms and a fabulous world of gold, diamonds, cattle and ivory. This "Great Trek" quickly became mythologized as an Exodus from Oppression, and by the turn of the 19th century its proponents were locked in conflict with the British Empire. The subsequent Boer War left a long-lasting resentment, papered over by the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910.

By 1948 the tables were turned. The new National Party consolidated their old opposition to *gelykstelling* (social equality, leveling) with a regime of legal

inequality called Apartheid (Giliomee 2003: 44). By 1960, the National Party cut their links to the Commonwealth and declared a Republic. Now the question became not if there would be a bloodbath, but when it would erupt. Events of the 1990's confounded all expectations, when following on the collapse of the Soviet empire, negotiations produced a joint presidency followed by a full democratic election in 1994 with Nelson Mandela as president of the new South Africa.

III

Returning now to the VOC, although its power ended in 1795, its memory was entrenched at the Cape in buildings and people, in languages, songs, names, genes, and even in few enduring genetic disorders like porphyria and Urbach-Wiethe syndrome. Changes in the memory of the VOC are best seen in the history of celebration of the landing of the first fleet in 1652. The 1752 centennial Jan van Riebeeck's arrival was small and sober, but the second, in 1852, was one of mixed emotions, with missionaries blaming the misery of the Cape underclass on the greed of the Founding Father himself (Witz 2003: 40). When Union celebrations took place in 1910, a rising tide of Afrikaner identity, rooted in the Great Trek and the Boer War, condemned the VOC along with European authority of all sorts (Witz 2003: 45). This hostility was consolidated in 1949, when 250,000 white Afrikaners celebrated their anti-authoritarianism at the opening of the Voortrekker ("Pioneer") Memorial (see fig. 3). It was hardly surprising therefore, that when the Van Riebeeck Tercentenary rolled around in 1952, the organisers had their work cut out for them.

By then, most white people had long since suppressed any images of the glory of the VOC and people of color viewed the VOC as a root cause of their present oppression. How then could a Tercentenary be used to proclaim a unity of purpose within the new and divided Apartheid state? The answer was a theme park. The "Van Riebeeck Festival" arose phoenix-like on the dusty reclaimed shore where Van Riebeeck once anchored his fleet. One of the first of its sort at the Cape, it was no Disneyland, nor was it a jingoistic fabulation like the New York World's Fair (1939-40) or the Festival of Britain (1951), but it was nevertheless pretty impressive for Cape Town. The opening pageant featured twin white horses galloping out of the darkness of Africa into a sunny future. People in period costume wandered through the recreated town square of Van Riebeeck's birthplace, Culemborg, and his landing at the Cape was re-enacted by actors swaying ashore



figure 3: Voortrekker Monument, Pretoria.

from replicated galleons. Contact was more problematic because it had long since been inadvisable for anyone to claim descent from the local indigenous Khoikhoi people. Bushmen were therefore trucked in from South West Africa (Namibia) to live in a village where semi-naked hunters made ostrich eggshell beads. Progress in the world of Bantu people was portrayed by a simulated mine shaft where tourists could ride up and down and experience (metaphorically) how Bantu miners were progressing from tribal darkness into the light of a skilled labor force (Witz 2003). Van Riebeeck's portrait appeared on commemorative stamps, crockery and coins alongside the iconic pentagonal Castle which he had never seen. For all these efforts, people of color boycotted the events and denounced Van Riebeeck as a crook, shoving his image upside down into a bin.

IV

Today theme parks still bloom along the highways of the Cape but Van Riebeeck himself is practically invisible. Afrikaner nationalism, Apartheid, and the New South Africa have combined to erase the memories of the small ship's surgeon, to say nothing of the great and glorious Company that he represented. Afrikaners

might have forgotten Van Riebeeck but they still retain their Huguenot memorial, their Afrikaans Language Memorial, their Vrouemonument to women martyred in the Boer War, and their Voortrekker Monument, but these retentions pall alongside the current threat to their greatest legacy, the Afrikaans language. Despite the Constitutional assurances of minority rights, opposition is mounting to government subsidy of Afrikaans-speaking schools. It may be that Afrikaans' best hope lies in the formerly oppressed, "non-white, Colored population of the Cape", who, though playing a minor role at the Afrikaans Language Memorial, are the most populous and vocal proponents of this Portuguese-Dutch-German and Creole language that they themselves once vilified as the "language of the Oppressor"!

The identity and message of VOC monuments have also changed over time. Foremost is National Monument number 1, the Castle of Good Hope, a vast pentagonal structure that was built on the beach of Table Bay between 1666-1674 (figure 4). In addition, there is the Company Slave Lodge, warehouses and homes as well as numerous gabled farmhouses with their slave-era belfries that chart the advance of European settlement up the mountain slopes of Cape Town and out into the former lands of the native people.

The VOC Castle originally housed the entire military and administrative

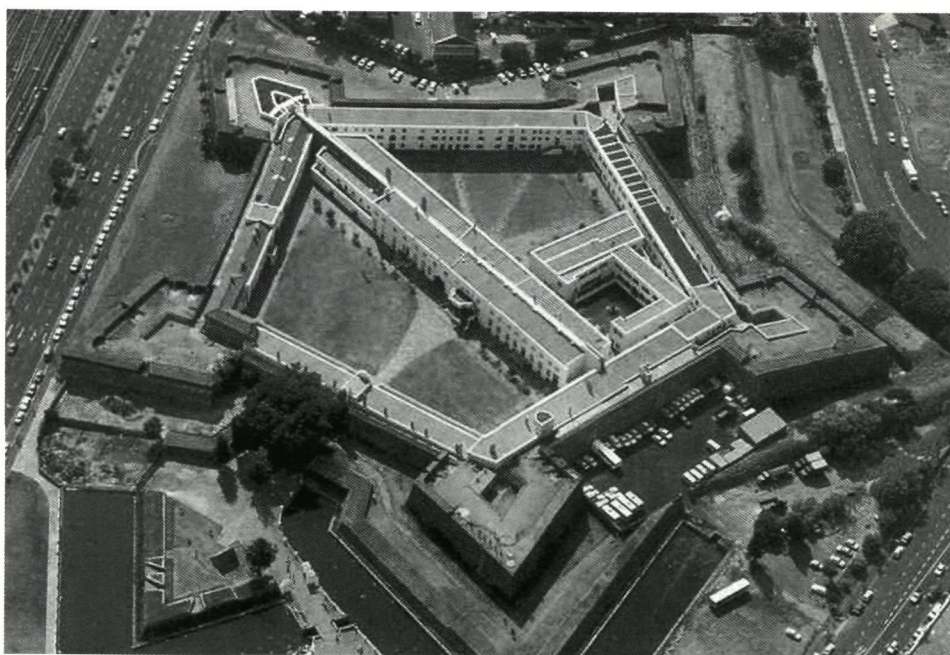


figure 4: Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town.

staff, from the Governor and his entourage down to the garrison and artisans, but when the British took over, it assumed an entirely military role (Meltzer 2004: 71). In 1888 it acquired a mythical status, as the place where “civilization at the Cape began” (Meltzer 2004: 71), and as such, it became the place to celebrate other historical moments like the Great Trek, Emancipation, and the Tercentenary of Van Riebeeck’s landing, as well as more mundane events like the centenary of the foundation of the Red Cross (Meltzer 2004: 73). These were not open to all, and so pointedly did the Castle exclude non-white people that with its monolithic military identity, it soon became seen as the epicenter of Apartheid. By 1990 it was clear that such a role was unacceptable in the New South Africa and although the military remained, the Castle has since been dramatically and insistently re-configured as a site of diversity, reconciliation and self-expression.

Visiting the place today (2005), a decade after the end of Apartheid, the Castle retains a strange mix of identities. The official tour is as uninformed now as it was 20 years ago, but today the guides are black, and their riff kicks off by asking their audience to identify themselves. As tourists choke out “Belgium”, “Britain” or “Bolivia”, they are graded according to whether their people stepped up to the plate to help the ANC during the Struggle. Zimbabwe shines, Sweden



figure 5: Interior, Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town.

does a lot better than Poland, and the US fails outright. After a brief tour people are dismissed to view the public rooms of the Castle, where presentations remain outwardly unchanged since Apartheid. Vast, dim halls are suffused with potpourri and beeswax, and gravitas issues from portraits of Company officials surrounded by elaborately carved East Asian furniture, tiers of Oriental porcelain and sparkling German crystal (see fig. 5).

In marked contrast to these atavistic presentations, the Castle introduced a program of events and installations in the 1990's, that focused on the underclass. The roots of this trend may be traced to *Vergelegen* ("Far Away"), a VOC farm that lies at the foot of the Hottentots Holland mountains, about 20 miles from Cape Town (see fig. 6). Deeded in 1699 to VOC Governor Willem Adriaan van der Stel, it soon became the center of a bitter fight with the burghers who insisted that it typified the conspicuous consumption and exploitative greed of the VOC (Markell et al. 1995:10; Tas & Van der Heyden 1712). When the great multinational company, Anglo-American, bought *Vergelegen* in the late 1980's, they embarked on a multi-disciplinary program of restoration that combined an interest in both the ruling and the underclass. The farm house itself had been so modified over the years that instead of trying to restore its original VOC identity, the architects used the house and its standing walled garden to memorialized the wealthy owners who restored it in the 1920's (Gutschke 1966). VOC heritage was addressed by sponsoring the archaeological excavation of three outbuildings, namely a mill, winery and slave lodge. Although farming had obliterated most archaeological residues, the foundations of the outbuildings still remained and a 19th-century burial of a possibly imported slave was found under the latest floor in the Slave Lodge (Sealy et al. 1993). This became the centerpiece of the *Vergelegen* Visitor's Center where slave labor is acknowledged right alongside the achievements of colonial farming in the glorious parklands of this vast farm.

The *Vergelegen* work owed its existence to Anglo-American/De Beers Chairman's Educational Trust who deserves full credit for being one of the first to subsidize archaeological research of the colonial underclass. It did so in the late 1980s when the Apartheid seemed utterly entrenched, though history has since shown that Anglo was actually well ahead of the game, being instrumental in the early negotiations with the ANC (Sparks 1990). Up to the time that *Vergelegen* appeared, labor, slavery and class had been largely overlooked in public presentation of the past. Custodial women of color, dressed in period costume, wandered silently around the four reconstructed period houses in the neighbouring town of

Stellenbosch. The BoKaap Museum, located in a small house in the heart of the Malay Quarter in central Cape Town, was so undersubsidized that it could only make a desultory attempt to commemorate Islam at the Cape. The Koopmans-de Wet house - a wealthy merchant's home - displayed sumptuous fittings but never noted that some were purchased with money paid by Britain to compensate the owners for the emancipation of their slaves (Schrire 2002: 29).

Since Vergelegen, the pace has quickened to foreground labor and slavery in colonial VOC times. At the famous wine farm at Constantia, pale-peach translucent panels etched in pale letters, list the slaves and their owners. A large still stands rooted on the floor and a slit trench exposes an unintelligible section of a paved floor unearthed in the course of archaeological work. The installation carries no particular punch, possibly because there is too much to read. In contrast, the old VOC Slave Lodge in central Cape Town, has limitless potential to exude the cold misery of a holding pen where labor and prostitution were penned

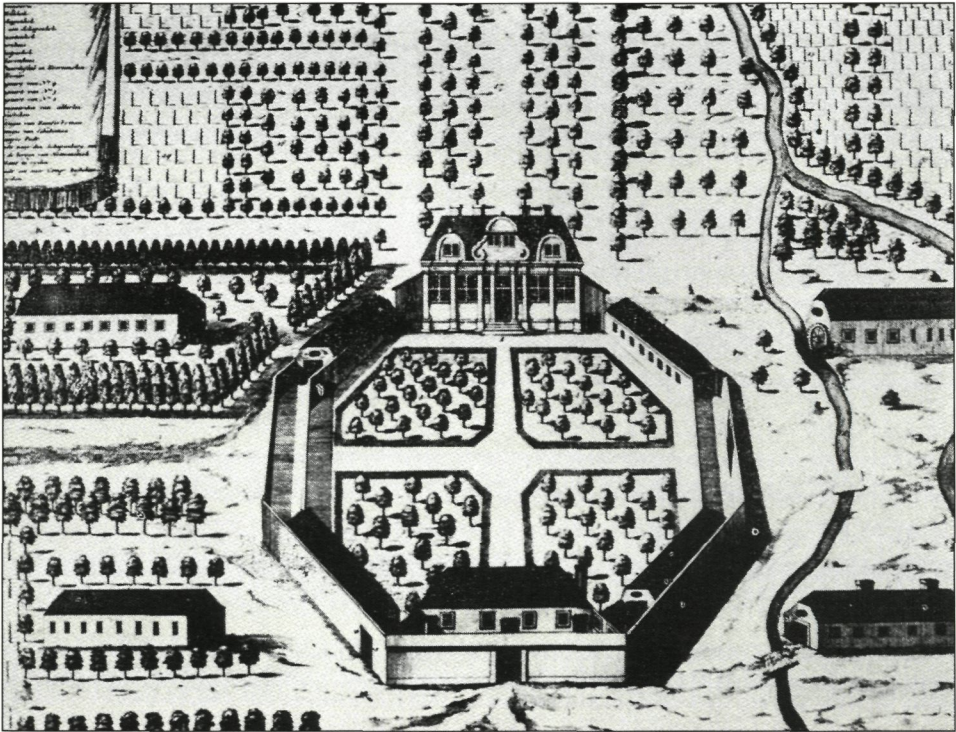


figure 6: Vergelegen, Cape, viewed from behind to show the main house, the octagonal, parterre garden, and the outbuildings, with the slave lodge on the lower right (Tas & Van der Heyden, 1712).

up for the taking (Shell 1994: 172-205). Since it stopped housing slaves around 1824 (Shell 1994: 204) it has housed first the Supreme Court and more recently, the Cultural History Museum. Its current installations include a film about Cape slavery that draws unabashedly on Steven Spielberg's "Amistad", with chains and tears accompanied by a dissociated narrative that insists that Cape slavery was not all bad. In an adjacent room "Hands that Shape Humanity" is a cacophonous overlay of the voices of "ordinary people" (like Nobel prizewinners and movie stars) who "have done something extraordinary with their lives". Its incontrovertible message is that it is better to be a decent person than an oppressor.

The former focus on the ruling class has been balanced recently by an intellectual interest in the VOC underclass, of soldiers, artisans, slaves and assorted felons (Newton King 2003: 25; Penn 1999). The Castle installations speak strongly to this, starting in 1993, when it hosted a tricentennial celebration of the arrival of a famous Muslim sheik together with an exhibition of the Dutch anti-Apartheid movement (Meltzer 2004: 74). In 1995 an exhibition entitled "Scurvy" floated an enormous blue and white Delft jug made of welded steel and old woven plastic bags in the moat. It echoed a questionable archaeological inference that slaves, in acts of resistance, stole their masters' prized possessions (Hall 1992: 390) and threw them in the moat. The installation also "enacted a plea for [...] passersby who had previously shunned the Castle, to enter". (www.cama.org.za) "Fault Lines" (1996) commemorated the 20th anniversary of the Soweto uprising with a giant icon of the first victim, Hector Peterson, cradled in his fleeing rescuer's arms. "Messages from the Moat" (2004) echoed "Scurvy", with a hammock of wine bottles suspended over the water in a colonial drain. The bottles were engraved with names and particulars of 150 slaves and filled with cut-up copies of Dutch paintings to embody the revenge of the slaves who are saying "we're going to cut up your paintings and send them back to you" (www.culturebase.net/artist.php?1215).

Most recently, "Democracy X" (2004), celebrated the past decade by tracing the origins of democratic human consciousness from cross-hatching on ochre done by Stone Age people 70,000 years ago, to the crosses erected over the graves of AIDS victims only yesterday (Becker 2004: 271; Olifant et al. 2004). The message is at once opaque and patent: everyone shares a common heritage but not everyone shares a common fate. The same may be said of the representations in "Democracy X" itself. The show reconfigures the Castle from its 17th century identity into a stage set where whites and blacks get very different treatment. In

contrast to the music surrounding indigenous artifacts, a leaden silence attends on European ancestry as epitomized in a dark Portuguese *padroa* and a blue and white VOC plate (Olifant et al. 2004: 291-2). But the erasure of the VOC is just the tip of the iceberg and unless you look very carefully at something like the 1935 photograph of Trade Unionists (Olifant et al. 2004: 307) you will scarcely see a “white” face in the entire exhibition!

One might be tempted to plead artistic license for “Democracy X” were it not for the patent repetition of these sentiments in official circles. SAHRA (South African Heritage Resources Agency) has a 2005 calendar, entitled “Intangible Heritage”. It has four color panels: One shows a black musician, a second, black tribal dances, a third, a bridal couple called “colored” in South Africa. The last shows a cluster of rocks. Whites do not feature at all (see fig. 7). This is no mere oversight being perfectly consistent with SAHRA’s policy on scientific research, especially as regards the problem of who owns the past. Over the past few years massive waterfront development in the city of Cape Town has encroached on the old graveyards on the reclaimed beach. Scientists have identified some of the buri-



figure 7: SAHRA Calendar, 2005.

als as imported slaves and others as possibly poor people of unknown legal status (Cox et al. 2001). Putative descendants, who started off by resenting the developers for exposing the graves, soon turned around and accused the archaeologists of grave robbing to enhance their scientific careers at the expense of the oppressed. SAHRA's initial mediation was aimed at getting the remains out of the ground, but since then, it has not supported scientific analysis of the remains. Instead, in choosing to remain silent, they are affiliating with a widespread distaste for Western science that starts with blaming eminent scientists like Georges Cuvier for creating the racist climate of colonial South Africa (Abrahams 1996), and culminates today in the President's rejection of Western anti-retrovirals to treat the South African AIDS pandemic (Kenny 2004).

V

The great liberal politician Helen Suzman recently observed that whites have been "airbrushed" out of South African history and heritage (Cape Argus, "Veteran fighter finds herself still in opposition to the party in power", April 1, 2005:10). She was speaking about the new Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg, but her remarks would fit just as well into our analysis of the VOC heritage at the Cape. This trend to "airbrushing" may be traced back to the early days of transformation when South Africans were heady with the possibilities of a new and open society, and acts of "translation" were made to heal painful memories and soften the agony of Apartheid rule. Foremost among these was the reinterpretation of the Great Trek which softened the meaning of the iconography of the Voortrekker Monument with its hostile spears, gates and wagons by recasting these images as welcoming icons, rather like the swords that occasionally form an archway at military weddings (Coombs 2003: 35-37). But reconciliation has waned since then and changes in the heritage scene are now patent in VOC memory and identity. True, European roots were being vilified long before by the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, but with the transition to democracy, VOC sites have become mere stages on which to enact apologies for colonialism, for slavery, and most recently, for white existence. This "airbrushing" is congruent with policies regarding western knowledge and science. Heritage matters may seem to be very small potatoes when compared with the presidential failure to address the AIDS pandemic, but they are also important barometers of political trends.

Acknowledgements

A preliminary version of this paper was delivered at the International Colloquium on "Memory and Identity: The Role of Heritage in Modern Society", Ghent, 13-14 January 2005. I thank Mr J.-P. Van Der Meiren for his generous hospitality and Neil Silberman for his intellectual insight. Funding for this work came from the province of East-Flanders, the Provincial Archaeological Museum – Ename, the Flemish Heritage Institute (VIOE) and the Ename Center for Public Archaeology and Heritage Presentation. My research owes much to support from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research and to CHES (Center for Evolutionary Studies, Rutgers. The State University of New Jersey). I am grateful, as ever, to the faculty and staff at the Archaeology Department, University of Cape Town, and IZIKO, South African Museum, for their constant hospitality and intellectual inspiration.

References

- Abrahams, Y. 1996. Disempowered to consent: Sara Bartman and Khoisan slavery in the nineteenth century Cape Colony and Great Britain. *South African Historical Journal* 25: 89-114.
- Becher, R. 2004. Marking time: the making of the Democracy X exhibition. In *Democracy X. Marking the Present. Re-presenting the Past*, eds. Olifant, A.W., Delius, P. & Meltzer: 271-278. L. Pretoria and Leiden.
- Berlin, I. 1953. *The Hedgehog and the Fox; An essay on Tolstoy's view of History*. New York.
- Boxer, C. R. 1977. *The Dutch Seaborne Empire. 1600-1800*. London.
- Coombs, A. 2003. *History after Apartheid. Visual History and Public Memory in a Democratic South Africa*. Durham and London.
- Cox, G., Sealy J., Schrire, C. & Morris A. 2001. Stable carbon and nitrogen isotopic analyses of the underclass at the colonial Cape of Good Hope in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. *World Archaeology* 33:73-97.
- Crapanzano, V. 1985. *Waiting. The Whites of South Africa*. New York.
- Giliomee, H. 2003. *The Afrikaners. Biography of a People*. Cape Town.
- Gutschke, T. 1966. *No Ordinary Woman*. Cape Town.
- Hall, M. 1992. Small things and the mobile, conflictual fusion of power, fear and desire. In: *The Art and Mystery of Historical Archaeology. Essays in Honor of James Deetz*, eds.

- A.E Yensch. & M. C Beaudry: 373-399. Boca Raton.
- Kenny, A. 2004. The madness of Thabo Mbeki. *The Spectator*, 31 October: 26-27.
- Kolben, P. 1745. *Beschreibung des Vorgebürgers der Guten Hoffnung*, Reprint of 1719 edition, Frankfurt.
- Markell, A. M., Hall, M. & Schrire, C. 1995. The historical archaeology of Vergelegen, an early farmstead at the Cape of Good Hope. *Historical Archaeology* 29 (1): 10-34.
- Meltzer, L. 2004. A stage for history: repositioning the Castle in post-1994 South Africa. In: *Democracy X. Marking the Present. Re-presenting the Past*, eds A.W. Olifant, P. Delius & L. Meltzer: 69-77. Pretoria and Leiden.
- Newton King, S. 2003. For the love of Adam. Two sodomy trials at the Cape of Good Hope. *Castle Study Group ms*: 1-32.
- A.W. Olifant, P. Delius & L. Meltzer (eds) 2004. *Democracy X. Marking the Present. Re-presenting the Past*, Pretoria and Leiden.
- Penn, N. 1999. *Rogues, Rebels and Runaways. Eighteenth-century Cape Characters*. Claremont, Cape.
- Schama, S. 1987. *The Embarrassment of Riches. An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*. New York.
- Schrire, C. 1996. *Digging through Darkness. Chronicles of an Archaeologist*. Charlottesville.
- Schrire, C. 1999. The Oudepost Discovery. In: *Eyewitness to History. First-person Accounts of more than Fifty of the World's Greatest Archaeological Discoveries*, ed B. M. Fagan: 257-269. Oxford and New York.
- Schrire, C. 2002. *Tigers in Africa. Stalking the Past at the Cape of Good Hope*. Charlottesville.
- Sealy, J.C., Morris, A.G., Armstrong, R., Markell, A. & Schrire C. 1993. An historic skeleton from the slave lodge at Vergelegen. *South African Archaeological Society Goodwin Series* 7: 84-91.
- Shell, R. C.-H. 1994. *Children of Bondage. A Social History of the Slave Society at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652-1838*. Hanover, London.
- Sparks, A. 1990. *The Mind of South Africa. The Story of the Rise and Fall of Apartheid*. London.
- Tas, A. & Van Der Heyden, N. 1712. *Contra Deductie*. Amsterdam.
- Witz, L. 2003. *Apartheid's Festival: Contesting South Africa's National Pasts*. Bloomington.

REMEMBERING THE DISTRICT SIX MUSEUM

Sandra Prosalendis

Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa

I never lived in District Six. Until coming to Cape Town in 1994 to become the first Project Director of the District Six Museum, I had lived my whole life in Johannesburg. I cannot, therefore, remember District Six as it was, except through the direct memories of former residents, people who now call themselves District Sixers. I can remember the District Six Museum and the ways in which we created a framework for it to act as a repository for District Six memories, a space for remembered happiness and pain. The Museum and exhibitions we made reshaped and repackaged memories for others to share. This is, then, not a memory of the District, but instead my memory of the Museum. What has struck me is the complex interplay between remembering and identity, a tension that has underpinned the face that the District Six Museum has presented to visitors.

History

I start with a view often voiced by former residents that District Six has welcomed over the years, giving them a foothold into the complex social fabric of Cape Town. Close to the harbour and the central business district, the district has housed a series of immigrant populations--sailors from the West Indies, Jews fleeing the pogroms of Europe, African labourers looking for work in an urban centre, and young fortune-seekers (one of which was my grandfather) looking for an opportunity in the colonies. The sons of African chiefs came to learn about colonial administration, black missionaries from the Americas came to spread the word of God, and the descendants of Asian leaders exiled from the East settled in the District. In this mixture there were certainly descendents of indigenous

Khoesan. Much of the capital used to develop the fabric of District Six came from the compensation paid by the British government to former slave owners upon the emancipation of their slaves in 1838. By the time that District Six was declared for demolition by the Apartheid government, it had become a working class area in which most people rented rather than owned their accommodations.

District Six was named the sixth municipal district of Cape Town in 1867. Originally established as a mixed community of freed slaves, merchants, artisans, labourers and immigrants, District Six was a vibrant centre in the heart of the city, a kilometre from parliament and not much farther from the port. By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the history of removal and marginalization had begun. The first to be 'resettled' were Africans, who were forcibly displaced in 1901. As the more prosperous inhabitants moved away to the suburbs, the area became a neglected ward of Cape Town. Remember that the segregation of colonialism was formalized, extended and enforced under apartheid into a complex classificatory scheme. Literally apart from whites, there were groups and sub-groups including Honourary White, Asian, Indian, Chinese, Other Asian, Cape Malay, Cape Coloured, Coloured, Other Coloured, and, of course, Bantu (Africans such as Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, and Tswana). In 1966, the District was declared a white area under the notorious Group Areas Act of 1950, and by 1982 the life of the community was effectively over. District Six became an archaeological site, destroyed above ground but still preserved below. At least 60,000 people were forcibly removed to barren, sandy, outlying areas aptly named the Cape Flats, and their houses in District Six were flattened by bulldozers. In South Africa as a whole, 4.5 million people were relocated to designated, largely undeveloped areas under the Group Areas Act.

There are several versions of how the District Six Museum was born out of resistance to the demolitions and forced removals. Whatever the details, the District Six Museum has always been an unofficial initiative, a grass-roots movement with a stated mission to remember a set of working-class ways of living and of making the world, with all the issues and values that this entailed. The Museum has not only assisted the political victory of former residents in realizing the promise of return for a displaced community, but also has retrieved for Cape Town and South Africa a memory that had almost been lost. This memory is that of a time and place of relative social integration in Cape Town and a time of being whole, of participating in both the sacred and profane routines of public life, and of being enfranchised citizens. People expressed personal identification with this

wholeness through the plethora of sporting, artistic, political and social activities in which they were involved during the Museum project. Many participants asserted this history in the face of disbelief from younger people born in the diaspora of apartheid. They sewed it onto the banners that hang from the rafters and signed it on the memory cloth that has now become a rich archive.

From Demolition to Display

It was virtually impossible to resist the removals. Once the area had been flattened, only the mosques and churches remained. Despite the physical destruction, however, the intellectual and religious life was maintained, albeit attenuated by the tragic destruction and removals. A Hands-Off District Six committee was formed from several academic, church, teacher and taxpayer groups. The concept of a museum grew out of the struggle to fight forced removals, when several community based organizations and academics from the universities established themselves as trustees of a District Six Museum Foundation. Over a period of six years, these community activists developed ideas through vigorous argument, conflict and community consultation to a point where they and their ideas inspired the Central Methodist Church to dedicate a space to start a museum. The Buitenkant Methodist Church, standing on the edge of District Six and, significantly, across the road from the central Cape Town police station, had already gained a unique position in the struggle against apartheid. Protestors regularly sought refuge here, leading to the unofficial name Freedom Church. No better venue could be imagined.

Once we had full-time use of the Church, an exhibition to announce the progress we had made in the formation of a District Six Museum was planned. From my perspective as a community activist involved in education, my impression was that museums were built around collections. Photographs and artworks had accumulated and even been exhibited, but the physical core of this exhibition remained elusive. As part of my research, I became aware of a collection of District Six street signs and traced them to the cellar of a house in Mowbray. The collector had been an Inspector of Works during the removals, employed by the infamous and ironically named apartheid Department of Community Development, and had been briefed to "dump the rubble of District Six in Table Bay." He did his job well: the rubble of District Six is now the landfill beneath Duncan Dock in Cape Town harbour. The street signs, however, did not accompany the rubble. He systematically collected and saved over 160 of these signs.

Negotiations were difficult. He was anxious about meeting us, not want-

ing any trouble or publicity. Some of our members were bitter and resented him, wanting no dealings with everything he stood for. However, the power of this remaining material evidence of District Six was stronger than both fear and anger. Eventually, we bought the signs and, with the assistance of a local artist, hung them on a series of ladders, charging the empty space of the church with their magic. His inspired act of salvage provided a powerful material frame for the building of the Museum.

The signs acted as a catalyst for new ideas and, at last, our exhibition had a name: "Streets: Retracing District Six." We converted the floor of the Museum into a giant map, retracing the original street names and bringing to the surface the original, now demolished, grid of District Six. The combination of street signs and the map became an effective stage on which people could reenact their memories. Inspired or entranced by the representation of their former space, with some of the original scenery as props, people danced, sang and talked at length about their experiences in the real District. The street signs and the street map became the material hooks on which the intangible memories could be hung. Using other metaphors that the street signs and other artefacts triggered, the map caught and held the remembered images and events. The experience of facing those signs and standing on the map was intense. Many people cried, even those who were visiting District Six for the first time. Streets became the first layer in the palimpsest of displayed memory that is the District Six Museum.

The empty streets were both the surviving skeleton and the evocative scars of the once bustling District Six. With the consent and encouragement of former residents, archaeologists had excavated the buried remains of houses in Horstley Street, Stuckeris Street and Tennant Street over a period of about eight years in the 1990s. An objective was to provide both the space and the material triggers to allow District Sixers to tell their stories and activate their memories. The excavations attracted much attention from schoolchildren, former residents and casual visitors, drawn to the site by the obvious signs of (re)activity. The rooms, or at least their foundations, went on view again. Poignant material traces of daily life were revealed, such as the 32 layers of linoleum in a kitchen on Horstley Street. This site exemplified the recoverable evidence of District Six's entrenched traditions, in this case the annual relayering of the floor surface at New Year. The excavation became a bridge between the tangible heritage of archaeology and the intangible memories of former residents, reminding us of the power of the artefact. The political motivation for these excavations was to try to urge

the city of Cape Town to reinvest in returning people to District Six, albeit not to their original houses.

While the Museum building was being renovated in 1999, activities were temporarily moved to the Moravian Church that had survived the demolitions along desolate Richmond Street. Upon our return we planned and developed a new exhibit, *Digging Deeper*. By now we were aware that beneath the stories there was a depth of memory that would allow us to penetrate beyond the streets and into the rooms of memory. *Digging Deeper* was about working with oral testimony and giving it a material form, about moving beyond the first reactive memories of the place into the deeper, more subterranean issues of the past. *Digging Deeper* was a metaphor for this act of trying to get beyond the 'stuck record' of some memories into the deeper, perhaps more painful and less palatable ones. In this exhibition we also wanted to mine the collection of artefacts, especially photographs, which we had collected.

Nomvuyo's Room was one instance of digging deeper into the intimacy of the interior spaces of memory. While sitting in the Museum, a former resident named Nomvuyo Neelwane had described in detail the single room in which her family had lived in District Six. No artefacts from her home remained, only the memory. In creating the exhibit the artists strove to give a physical presence to that memory. They did this through working with the dimensions and details that she remembered: the bed covered in a candlewick bedspread, the wardrobe piled with old suitcases and a hatbox, the primus stove, the table set with oilcloth tablecloth, and the kitchen shelves papered with cut-out newspaper. When their work was done Nomvuyo was pleased with the room, although she worried that we would not dust it often enough and thereby create an incorrect impression of how her family lived. The room became a wonderful space within which to entertain the memories and excitement of older African women from the townships of South Africa. It generated much argument around matters such as the price of a wardrobe, a suit, a hat; about living in the town and travelling back to the rural areas; about how to build a shack and paper its walls; and also about the hardship that ordinary people had endured in their struggle for rights, land and citizenship.

The Museum has always been committed to working with oral testimonies. One of the founding initiatives of the Museum had been an oral history project at the University of Cape Town. The memories contained in the testimonies we had listened to and collected over the years have been given a physical presence in the exhibitions and were always considered our founding texts. In the overall

aesthetic of the Museum, we tried to capture more than specific memories, but also an atmosphere and a set of values. We worked within a very modest scale: the Museum was not large, but being a former church it had a wonderful transcendent wooden ceiling. We were not afraid to repeat texts and images and to layer the floors and walls, writing onto the walls large excerpts of oral testimony. The Museum was, in fact, one room with little rooms inside it. Each new exhibition contributed another layer to the growing palimpsest that formed its fabric. The participatory processes we used to make the Museum and its exhibitions was evident too on this palimpsest. In addition, I believe that the Museum's success and attraction was largely based on visitors' ability to be in a space that is both the Museum and the place where its content was developed, and to witness and participate in the actual making of the Museum.

Current issues

From time to time, criticism is leveled at the Museum for being too nostalgic, even sentimental and for having an aesthetic that is too rosy and soft. Some people ask why we did not show the wound, the trauma. Of course, the demolition is there in photographs, on film, in recorded remembrances, and on the stark apartheid signs, but the poignancy of the loss resonates so much more when one is confronted with the material vision of what former residents felt they had before the destruction. The space of the Museum and its muted earthy colours, with scattered fragments of memories recovered from oral histories and artefacts of the personal and domestic items recovered from the archaeological excavations, signify these material possessions and other losses. It is this intimacy that moves visitors to the Museum and enables them to see what former residents have created to represent what was lost and ultimately what is longed for in the future.

It became difficult to bring the shadows of District Six into the light of the Museum. Most of the people who came to build the Museum were not ready to make public the racism, the gangs, the collaborators, and the threatening aggression and less positive undertones that are inevitable components of any vibrant working-class district. Alex la Guma captures some of this shadow when writing in 1959 in the *New Age Journal*:

From Castle Bridge to Sheppard Street Hanover [Street] runs through the heart of District Six, and along it one can feel the pulse beats of society. It is the main artery of the local world of haves and have-nots the prosperous and the poor the

struggling and the idle, the weak, and the strong. Its colour is in the bright enamel signs, the neon lights, the shop-fronts, the littered gutters and draped washing. Pepsi Cola, Commando Cigarettes, Sale Now On. Its life blood is the hawkers bawling their wares above the jazz from the music shops: Aartapples ja, Uiwe ja; ragged youngsters leaping on and off the speeding trackless-trams with the quality of monkeys; harassed mothers getting in the groceries; shop assistants; the Durango Kids of 1956; and the knots of loungers under the balconies and in the doorways leading up to the dim and mysterious rooms above the rows of shops and cafes.

What happened to the people of District Six was a double blow. After the abolition of slavery the underclass of Cape Town had gradually fought to participate as citizens in their city, albeit under colonialism. The 1930s, 1940s and even the 1950s are described by these people as the heyday of District Six, but they were thrust again into the despair and hopelessness of disenfranchisement with the coming of Apartheid. Was the Museum, or is any museum able to move people past this resentment and despair into reconciliation and hope? Can museums genuinely assist with the resolution of "Never Again"? Are they able to heal the wound? Not unless they are able at the same time to give an attainable vision of the future and are explicit about how individuals can materially benefit from participating in that future. This requires the reclaiming of citizenship.

The District Six Museum has been very successful in creating a special and poignant public space. Former residents have generously donated their memories, their photographs, their District Six, to the project. A series of exhibitions has reflected on diverse issues from sport to land restitution. Every day large numbers of visitors, both local and international, come to experience the environment of memory and image. Despite, or perhaps because due to, the lack of formal municipal, provincial and national government support, the Museum is by many accounts the most lively, the most effective and the most poignant memorial to Cape Town's recent past. It is a substantial voice in municipal social issues, such as the reburial debate arising from excavations in central Cape Town. The District Six Museum is now established as a landmark in the heritage landscape, just as District Six itself is and was.

The very success of the Museum as a tourist destination generates some concerns. Museum guides escort many thousands of visitors, the majority of them not from South Africa, past the enlarged photographs of what was, what hap-

pened and what is now. Necessarily, perhaps, the stories become fixed, the versions selected, and the points underlined with witty asides and humour. In a way the memories have become packaged, branded and sold. The traffic through the old Buitenkant Methodist Church hall now speaks many languages, all of them English. Has the District Six Museum made the transition from Memory to Heritage? Whose memories have been selected, and what vision of the future steers the guides? The Museum has to work hard at retaining its freshness.

The role of the Museum has shifted from that of dealing with the past to that of building the future. The District Six Museum has illustrated this with its commitment to assisting with the land restitution process and lately through its carefully crafted youth programmes. Through its longstanding partnership with the Malmo City Museum in Sweden and the International Coalition of Site Museums of Conscience, the District Six Museum has organized workshops on the practice of democracy and citizenship. Necessarily, as people with direct memories are replaced by younger people (albeit mostly descended from families who were forcibly removed) with different experiences, identities and expectations, the priorities of the Museum change. The Museum has established a position in civil society from which to contribute to debates about citizenship and democracy in New South Africa.

Interestingly, the Museum is now in a newly-acquired space (an old wholesale shop and warehouse in the District), not the space that was established to contain the memories of former residents. The transition from housing memories to nursing hopes means generalising from the hurt of District Six to the global issues of marginalisation, poverty and political disempowerment. In this way the Museum participates in an international debate and makes new international partners while nurturing local ties. In addition, in South Africa there has always been an undercurrent of racial politics, derived from the prevailing nationalist ideology. Tension comes from resisting the drift toward becoming a sectional museum, a museum of coloured people as envisaged by the apartheid government.

What I have tried to trace are the connections between the place remembered and the place constructed to remember it. Eventually we are left with the place that is the Museum. As a result, neither personal nor group identities are emphasised. Instead, the identity promoted relates to place, and to being a District Sixer and a citizen of Cape Town.

References

- Bickford-Smith V. 1990. The Origins and Early History of District Six to 1910. In: *The Struggle for District Six: Past and Present*, eds. S. Jeppie & C. Soudien C. ,1990, Buchu Books, Cape Town.
- Chidester D. 2002. Global Citizenship, Cultural Citizenship and World Religions in Religious Education. In: *Occasional Paper Series*, 1, Human Sciences Research Council.
- Ngcelwane N. 1998. *Sale Kahle District Six*, Kwela Books, Cape Town..
- Rasool C. & Prosalendis S. (eds.) 2001. *Recalling Community in Cape Town: Creating and Curating the District Six Museum*, District Six Museum Foundation, Cape Town.

SAMENVATTINGEN

NIEUWE AANPAK VAN HET ERFGOED IN VLAANDEREN EN NEDERLAND

Studie en behoud van de restanten van de Eerste Wereldoorlog: een uitdaging

*Marc Dewilde, Pedro Pype, Mathieu De Meyer
Association for World War Archaeology (Vereniging
voor Wereldoorlogsarcheologie, VIOE), België*

De provincie West-Vlaanderen in België bezit een heel specifiek soort erfgoed: de restanten van de Eerste Wereldoorlog. Omdat dit stuk erfgoed bedreigd wordt door de uitbreiding van de A19 autosnelweg, heeft het Vlaams Instituut voor Onroerend Erfgoed een speciaal Departement voor Archeologie van de Eerste Wereldoorlog opgericht. Het doel is een uitgebreide historische en archeologische studie van de restanten. Om dit initiatief financieel te kunnen steunen, werd de Association for World War Archeology (A.W.A) opgericht. Dit initiatief en de resultaten ervan worden kort beschreven.

Erfgoed of geen erfgoed, dat is de vraag: Een beleid voor omstreden erfgoed in Nederland

*Remier Knoop
Nederlandse Raad voor Cultuur, Nederland*

In maart 2003, vroeg Nederlands Staatssecretaris voor Cultuur aan de Raad van Cultuur om te onderzoeken hoe oorlogsslachtoffers, hun familie en de maatschappij in het algemeen denken over monumenten van de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Ook moest de Raad advies geven in hoeverre een politiek kader nodig was voor deze monumenten. Een ad hoc comité werd opgericht, waardoor meteen het voorstel kwam om ook andere thema's van "omstreden erfgoed" aan te snijden, zoals slavernij en kolonialisme. Tijdens deze openbare forums kwamen ook andere "moeilijke" onderwerpen ter sprake als "vergeten erfgoed", het collectieve geheugen van migranten en andere minderheidsgroepen.

Door de voortdurend veranderende kijk op de geschiedenis, duiken elke

dag nieuwe visies en nieuwe betrokken groepen op. De criteria waaraan elk voorwerp moet voldoen om wettelijk beschermd te zijn, zouden om de zoveel tijd moeten worden herzien, net zoals de lijst van beschermde monumenten.

Deze tekst vat het werk van het Comité in detail samen en argumenteert dat historisch erfgoed niet alleen gevoelig ligt als het gaat om omstreden erfgoed, maar dat dit eveneens het geval is voor vergeten erfgoed.

Omgaan met fout erfgoed: studiegevallen van Zuid-Afrika en Nederland

*Gerhard-Mark Van der Waal
Erfgoedoplossingen, Nederland*

Erfgoed dat sociaal niet wordt aanvaard is – los van zijn intrinsieke kwaliteiten – fout erfgoed. Bekende voorbeelden van fout erfgoed zijn objecten die gemaakt werden door politieke tegenstanders in tijden van opstand of socio-religieuze omwenteling. Fout erfgoed is niet nieuw: het bestaat al sinds jaar en dag. Al tijdens de Byzantijnse periode vond een beeldenstorm plaats, net zoals tijdens de Reformatie in de Lage Landen en nu recent, flakkert het ook op in het Nabije en Verre Oosten. Erfgoed wordt niet als 'fout' beschouwd omdat het geen historische, wetenschappelijke of esthetische waarde heeft. Het is fout omdat het grote publiek het ziet als sociaal verkeerd en het dus heeft verworpen. Eerst geeft Van der Waal enkele opmerkingen over de ontologie en de contextuele aspecten van het onderwerp. Nadien onderzoekt hij het concept van fout erfgoed in Zuid-Afrika en vormt hij enkele besluiten over waar het concept van fout erfgoed voorkomt.

HET EUROPESE COLLECTIEVE GEHEUGEN: VAN HOLOCAUST NAAR COËXISTENTIE

Auschwitz-Birkenau, Twistappel van de Interpretatie

Max Polonovski

Ministerie van Cultuur, Frankrijk

De voormalige kampen van Auschwitz en Birkenau vierden onlangs de zestigste verjaardag van de bevrijding. Zij werden symbolen van de vernietiging van het Europese Jodendom omdat zij als enige kampen nog goed bewaard bleven, en de andere vernietigingskampen volledig verwoest zijn. Toch is de kijk op deze sites dubbelzinnig en verschillende factoren liggen daarvan aan de basis. De eerste is politiek: het communistische regime maakte geen onderscheid tussen de verschillende slachtoffers van fascisme. De tweede factor is logischerwijs van nationalistische aard: Auschwitz ligt in Polen en was de belangrijkste plaats waar Poolse burgers werden vervolgd die betrokken waren bij het verzet tegen de Duitse bezetter. Naast vooroordelen, spelen ook de psychologische en menselijke factoren een belangrijke rol. Bovendien wordt de kijk op deze sites beïnvloed door de evolutie van de hedendaagse wereld en de graad waarmee mensen de geschiedenis steeds aanpassen.

Bezoekers niet inlichten over het echte aantal Joden dat in Auschwitz is omgekomen, gebeurt ook in Frankrijk. Recente voorbeelden tonen aan dat de interpretatie van de geschiedenis nog steeds georchestreerd wordt. Sinds 1945 worden genociden, oorlogen en hedendaagse conflicten vergeleken met de Holocaust en moeten ze voortdurend met de Holocaust 'concurreren'. Door een uit de lucht gegrepen genocide niet te benoemen zoals het hoort, verliest de site waar het heeft plaatsgevonden en het educatief programma dat eraan verbonden is, volledig zijn betekenis. Zoals Albert Camus zei: "Wie een kat geen kat wil noemen, maakt de miserie in de wereld alleen nog groter."

Herdenkingsmusea voor de slachtoffers van het nazi-regime in Duitsland – Zijn het enkel sites voor vaderlandse herdenking en toeristische ontwikkeling?

Thomas Lutz

Departement Herdenkingsmuseum, Stichting Terreurtopografie, Duitsland

De Duitse gemeenschap en regering van de twee Duitse, na-oorlogse staten, hebben de rol van Duitsland – waar slechts een klein aantal nazi-slachtoffers leven – als land van de genociden, oorlogsmisdaden en misdaden tegen de menselijkheid tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog, altijd genegeerd en zelfs volledig geschrapt. Nochtans heeft de herontdekking van “authentieke sites” op het einde van de jaren zeventig in West-Duitsland, een belangrijke invloed gehad op de herdenkingscultuur van de nazi-misdaden, en op de sociale erkenning van de vele slachtoffergroepen voor wie de na-oorlogse situatie vaak een tweede vervolging was. Concepten als “Contra-Monumenten” (James Young) en “Negatieve Herdenking” (Volkhard Knigge), die kritiek leveren op de Duitse gemeenschap en haar inspanningen om zich opnieuw te verzoenen met de overlevenden van de nazi-misdaden, zijn dan ook volledig nieuw.

Sinds de eenmaking van Duitsland, wordt het werk van de herdenkingsmusea meer en meer officieel erkend en gesteund. Een van de gevolgen is dat herdenkingsmusea ook gebruikt worden voor meer officiële, politieke doeleinden, wat hun geloofwaardigheid niet altijd ten goede komt. De Holocaust Herdenking, die in mei 2005 werd ingehuldigd, is een voorbeeld van deze nieuwe ontwikkeling. Deze paper beschrijft de situatie van de herdenkingsmusea als een spiegel voor actuele debatten in Duitsland over de slachtoffers van de na-oorlogse gemeenschap, en stelt vragen die in de toekomst een antwoord moeten krijgen.

De joden van Oswiecim

*Tomasz Kuncewicz
Joods Centrum van Auschwitz, Polen*

Het Joodse Centrum van Auschwitz is de enige joodse aanwezigheid in Oswiecim, een stad die de wereld tijdens de Holocaust beter kende als Auschwitz. Voor de oorlog leefde er echter een welvarende en heterogene joodse gemeenschap, die meer dan 60 procent vertegenwoordigde van de 12 000 inwoners van de stad. Vanaf hun eerste nederzetting in de 16de eeuw tot hun vernietiging tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog, was de Joodse gemeenschap dé drijvende kracht achter de economische groei en het succes van deze stad. Nu zijn er echter geen joden meer in deze stad; het lot van de joodse gemeenschap van Oswiecim is even tragisch als dat van elke andere gemeenschap in Polen en de joden die na de oorlog opnieuw een minuscule gemeenschap hebben gevormd, zijn naar alle hoeken van de wereld uitgeweken. Maar door de oprichting van het Joods Centrum van Oswiecim in 2000, is er nu een plaats voor herdenking, educatie en religie in de stad, die de Joodse Gemeenschap van Oswiecim herdenkt als een microkosmos van het joodse leven in het Polen van voor de oorlog.

ISRAËL EN PALESTINA: IEDER ZIJN EIGEN GESCHIEDENIS, IEDER ZIJN EIGEN DROMEN

Erfgoed en identiteit: de rol van erfgoed in de moderne maatschappij – het archeologisch standpunt in Israël

*Uzi Dahari
Israëlische Autoriteit voor Oudheden*

Elke samenleving heeft symbolen nodig, maar deze symbolen zijn waardeloos wanneer er geen echte idealen zijn, wanneer holle slogans deze symbolen moeten promoten, of wanneer ze slechts voor één ideaal staan in plaats van voor een

complexe set van waarden. Israël heeft het recht om een Groter Israël voor ogen te hebben, net zoals de Palestijnen het recht hebben te blijven dromen van een Groter Palestina dat volledig islamitisch is. Toch blijft het beter bij dromen of filosoferen.

Archeologie 'opwaarderen' om nationaal erfgoed te creëren kan en is zelfs wenselijk voor toekomstige generaties van dromers en stichters, maar alleen als het gebaseerd is op wetenschappelijke en historische waarheden die blijvend op hun echtheid getest worden en wanneer het geen periodes, culturen of historische gebeurtenissen minimaliseert die niet verbonden zijn aan dat erfgoed. We moeten een onderscheid maken tussen:

- 1) archeologische sites die, ook al vertegenwoordigen ze maar één volk of één godsdienst, deel uitmaken van regionaal, historisch en cultureel erfgoed van toekomstige generaties;*
- 2) religieuze sites die slechts gewijd zijn aan één religie maar door leden van andere religies moeten gerespecteerd en behouden worden;*
- 3) nationale herdenkingssites die verbonden zijn aan het cultureel erfgoed van slechts één enkele samenleving.*

Hopelijk worden de Israëlische en Palestijnse nationale herdenkingssites snel archeologische sites en maken ze vlug deel uit van het cultureel erfgoed van het volledige Nabije Oosten.

Archeologie en Politiek in het Heilig Land

Adel Yahya

Palestijnse Vereniging voor Culturele Uitwisseling

Er is waarschijnlijk nergens ter wereld een plaats waar archeologie met zoveel belangstelling wordt bedreven als in het Heilig Land. Toch is deze vroege interesse altijd vrij selectief en heel erg verdeeld geweest. Het concentreert zich bijna uitsluitend op specifieke sites en lagen, waardoor we een heel onevenwichtige kennis krijgen over de archeologie van dit land. Deze onevenwichtige kennis heeft alles te maken met de interne machtsrelaties binnen het land zelf. Pas recent zijn archeologen van het Heilig Land, met inbegrip van enkele Israëlische en Palestijnse archeologen, gaan inzien dat hun onderzoeken moeten los staan van elke politieke of religieuze invloed. Bovendien zou de kennis over alle sites en periodes, onge-

acht hun nationale of religieuze connotaties, moeten gestimuleerd worden.

Archeologen kunnen erfgoed alleen maar beschermen wanneer ze de verzoening promoten van de verschillende volkeren in de regio. Dit kunnen ze alleen wanneer ze trouw blijven aan de rijke geschiedenis, de diversiteit en aan de hulpmiddelen van dat land. Zij moeten het erfgoed beschermen en tegelijk verandering stimuleren. Verzoening mag niet leiden tot een "gedeelde versie van ons verleden", maar moet ervoor zorgen dat zowel de lokale gemeenschappen als de buitenlandse bezoekers maximaal plezier beleven aan het erfgoed, wat ons uiteindelijk allemaal economisch en politiek ten goede komt.

Israël – Palestina: Wiens erfgoed?

Ludo Abicht

Universiteit van Antwerpen, België

Wanneer mensen als Uzi Dahari en Adel Yahya gevraagd worden om de onderhandelingen te leiden tussen Israëli's en Palestijnen, dan kunnen dingen snel de goede richting uitgaan, omdat ze vertrekken vanuit twee essentiële wetenschappelijke en diplomatische eigenschappen: om te beginnen zijn ze eerlijk kritisch en ze zijn zelf-kritisch. Dat betekent dat ze ook in staat zijn naar elkaar te luisteren en dat ze tenminste proberen om de situatie door de ogen van anderen te bekijken. Gezien de huidige politieke situatie is zo een openheid helemaal niet vanzelfsprekend. Ik besef heel goed dat archeologie constant gebruikt werd om het zogenaamde "primordiale autochtonisme" van elke partij te bewijzen. De recente ontwikkelingen in de Israëliëse geschiedschrijving tonen echter aan dat deze wetenschappelijke methode, die niet gekleurd is door enige waarde, niet voldoet om te komen tot een verder, wederzijds begrip en/of wederzijdse aanvaarding.

Is het absurd van de Palestijnse archeologen en historici te verwachten dat zij de overblijfselen bestuderen van de joodse aanwezigheid op Palestijnse grond, en dat Israëliëse wetenschappers evenveel aandacht besteden aan islamitische sites in Israël zelf? Of, nog utopischer, kunnen we ons inbeelden dat Israëliësch-Palestijnse teams samenwerken aan de beide kanten van de grens? Hoe kan een nieuwe, creatieve aanpak van het verleden, gaande van de oude tijden van David en Salomon tot de meest recente, gewelddadige gebeurtenis, bijdragen tot een vredig, democratisch en welvarend Midden-Oosten?

VIETNAM: TERUGBLIK OP DE OORLOG, EEN GENERATIE LATER

De herdenking van Vietnam in de National Mall

*Dwight Pictaithley
National Park Service, USA*

Bijna 25 jaar geleden werd de Vietnam Veterans Memorial opgericht in Washington D.C. In welk opzicht is dit een uiting van het collectieve geheugen? Op welke manier verandert de symboliek van dit monument voortdurend? Deze presentatie gaat dieper in op de draagwijdte en de verschillende percepties van dit gedenkteken. De auteur vergelijkt dit gedenkteken eveneens met andere herdenkingsmonumenten van de Vietnamoorlog in de rest van Amerika en met monumenten die de Amerikaanse Burgeroorlog herdenken, een eeuw voor de Vietnamoorlog. De auteur schreef "De Herdenking van Vietnam" als historicus, maar ook als veteraan die verminkt uit de Vietnamoorlog terugkeerde.

Monumenten, Relikwieën en Musea over de Oorlogsherdenking van Vietnam

*Nguyen Quoc Hung
Departement voor Cultureel Erfgoed, Ministerie van
Cultuur en Informatie, Vietnam*

Sinds de afzetting van de monarchie en de oprichting van de Democratische Republiek Vietnam, heeft het land al twee verzetsoorlogen gekend: tegen het Franse kolonialisme (1945-1954) en tegen het Amerikaanse imperialisme (1954-1975). Bijna dertig jaar later dragen de Vietnamezen nog steeds de gevolgen: de na-oorlogse economie kent een grote achterstand, het land is in de armoede gedompeld en vele families zijn hun kostwinners verloren in de oorlog. Tel daarbij nog eens de gewonde oorlogsslachtoffers, invaliden en slachtoffers van Agent Orange die het gif hebben doorgegeven aan hun kinderen.

De staat en haar bevolking heeft de oorlogsgebeurtenissen en de helden al op verschillende manieren eervol herdacht. Herdenkingsrelikwieën tonen niet alleen het respect van de Vietnamezen tegenover hun helden, maar getuigen ook hoe Vietnamezen al generatieslang bedreven zijn in de kunst van het oorlogvoeren. De herdenkingsrelikwieën willen mensen bijleren over de tradities van nationale opbouw en verdediging, humanisme en altruïsme van de Vietnamese burgers tegenover hun vijand. De musea stellen ook voorwerpen en foto's tentoon die de mensheid moeten waarschuwen voor de wreedheid en de onrechtvaardigheid van oorlog. De oorlogsrelikwieën en musea tonen dat burgers, oud en jong, altijd de eerste en meest getroffen slachtoffers zijn van oorlog.

ZUID-AFRIKA: OMGAAN MET DE WORTELS VAN HET KWAAD

In de kijker: Herdenking en Erfgoed in de Kaap, Zuid-Afrika

Carmel Schrire

*Departement van Antropologie, Rutgers University,
USA*

Toen de Nederlandse Oost-Indische Compagnie of VOC in 1652 voet aan wal zette in Kaap de Goede Hoop, waren zij de eerste Europeanen die zich in Zuid-Afrika vestigden. Deze nederzetting maakte de overzeese handel met de Indische Staten mogelijk en zorgde ervoor dat de Nederlanders de pioniers waren in het noorden van het land, tot de compagnie rond 1800 op de fles ging en de Britten de Kaap overnamen.

De genetische, linguïstische en culturele aanwezigheid van de VOC vind je nog steeds terug in vele aspecten van het Zuid-Afrikaanse leven, maar de herdenking ervan heeft onlangs een grote gedaanteverwisseling ondergaan die de radicale politieke transformatie van Apartheid naar Nieuw Zuid-Afrika duidelijk weerspiegelt. Bij de 300ste verjaardag van de VOC was de niet-blanke bevolking de grote afwezige. Vijftig jaar later, wanneer de meerderheid van de regering

Apartheid de rug heeft gekeerd, is VOC het synoniem voor onderdrukking, en hun oud Kasteel een symbool voor het kwaad. Deze reactie is typisch voor elke vorm van revolutie, of ze nu gewelddadig is of niet. Wat de Zuid-Afrikaanse zaak echter zo speciaal maakt, is hoe snel wetenschappers hun bevindingen herschrijven, en de geschiedenis, de archeologie, de taal, de biologie en de raciale relaties uitpluizen om te kunnen afstemmen op de huidige politieke ideologie.

De herdenking van het District Six Museum

Sandra Prosalendis

Kunst en Cultuur, Onderzoeksraad voor Menswetenschappen, Zuid-Afrika

Het District Six Museum (D6M) wil een "museum voor de gemeenschap" zijn in het Zuid-Afrika van na de Apartheid. Het staat model voor andere instellingen die het collectieve geheugen zien als een weg naar evolutie. D6M is een soort arena of theater waar mensen hun verleden kunnen herdenken, hun heden proberen te begrijpen en naar de toekomst kunnen kijken, en net daar ligt de sleutel van het succes. Het doel van het museum is niet om de bezoekers dingen bij te leren, maar het is eerder een plaats waar mensen kunnen nadenken en vragen stellen. Net omdat de thema's van D6M gaan over plaats en gemeenschap, creëert het een identiteit die typisch is voor een gemeenschap en niet voor een individu. Wie deel uitmaakt van D6M, denk niet meer in termen van een bepaalde raciale categorie, wat vaak tot discussies leidt, maar deelt een niet-raciale ideologie en ziet Zuid-Afrika als een geheel. Een indeling in klasse en ras leidt vaak tot machtsconflicten binnen de groepen.

De beheerders van D6M proberen verder te kijken dan de enge indeling in categorieën en zien D6 als een ruimte voor (succesvolle?) sociale integratie. Ironisch genoeg kan D6M een dergelijke rol spelen omdat het opgericht is buiten de officiële museumstructuur van de Kaap.

RÉSUMÉS

NOUVELLES APPROCHES DU PATRIMOINE EN FLANDRE ET AUX PAYS-BAS

Le défi d'étudier et de préserver les vestiges de la Première Guerre Mondiale

*Marc Dewilde, Pedro Pype et Mathieu de Meyer
Association for World War Archaeology (Association
pour l'archéologie mondiale de guerre, VIOE), Belgique*

La Province de Flandre Occidentale en Belgique possède un type particulier de patrimoine: les vestiges de la Première Guerre Mondiale. Cet héritage étant en danger en raison de l'extension de l'autoroute A19, l'Institut Flamand du Patrimoine a créé un département spécifique concernant l'archéologie mondiale de la Première Guerre Mondiale afin de réaliser une étude historique et archéologique approfondie des vestiges. Pour des raisons financières, cette initiative a aboutie à la création de l'Association pour l'Archéologie Mondiale de Guerre (A.W.A.). Une courte description de cette initiative et de ses résultats sera présentée ici.

Avoir ou ne pas avoir, voilà la question: Définir une politique pour le Patrimoine en difficulté aux Pays-Bas

*Riemer Knoop
Conseil Néerlandais pour la Culture, les Pays-Bas*

En mars 2003, le secrétaire d'état néerlandais pour la culture demanda au Conseil de la Culture d'étudier la manière dont les victimes de guerre, leurs parents, et la société en général appréhende les monuments de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale et de faire des recommandations sur la nécessité d'un encadrement politique général concernant ces monuments. Un comité ad-hoc a été constitué, ce qui a entraîné la suggestion d'inclure d'autres thèmes du "patrimoine en difficulté", en incluant l'esclavage et le colonialisme. Durant la discussion publique, le concept de « patrimoine oublié » ainsi que la mémoire collective des émigrants et des

autres minorités ont été évoqués.

Le Comité a noté que le contentieux de nombreux bâtiments est renforcé par le caractère public de leur contexte. Le déplacement de leur contexte d'origine et le transfert vers des endroits moins accessibles au public, leur évite totalement d'être mal interprétés. Une approche en perpétuelle mutation de l'Histoire, de nouvelles vues et de nouveaux groupes concernés font surface tous les jours. Les critères de protection légale de chaque objet devraient être revus périodiquement, comme devrait l'être la liste définitive des objets protégés.

Ce texte recense en détail le travail du Comité et argue que la sensibilité au patrimoine historique n'est pas uniquement fonction d'un patrimoine en difficulté, mais également d'un patrimoine oublié.

Traiter avec un patrimoine imparfait: Etudes de cas en Afrique du Sud et aux Pays-Bas

*Gerhard Mark Van der Waal
Heritage Solutions, Pays-Bas*

Un patrimoine sans reconnaissance sociale est un patrimoine imparfait, indépendamment de la qualité intrinsèque qu'il pourrait posséder. Des exemples bien connus de patrimoine imparfait sont des objets faits par des opposants politiques durant les périodes de résistance ou d'agitation socioreligieuse. Le patrimoine imparfait n'est pas un fait nouveau; il a existé à travers les âges. L'iconoclasme durant la période byzantine et la Réforme dans les Pays Bas, et plus récemment dans le Proche et l'Extrême-Orient. Le patrimoine n'est pas considéré comme imparfait parce qu'il n'appartient pas à des critères communs concernant l'estimation d'objets culturels, comme la valeur historique, scientifique ou esthétique. Il échoue par la façon dont il est perçu par un large public : c'est une erreur sociale, et pour cela rejeté. Après avoir fait quelques remarques sur l'ontologie et les aspects contextuels du sujet, ce texte explore le concept de patrimoine imparfait en Afrique du Sud et tire quelques conclusions sur les lieux où le concept de patrimoine imparfait est présent.

MÉMOIRE EUROPÉENNE: DE L'HOLOCAUSTE VERS UNE COEXISTENCE?

Auschwitz-Birkenau, Une source de conflit d'interprétation

Max Polonovski

Ministère de la Culture, France

En raison de leur bonne conservation, alors que d'autres camps d'extermination ont été détruits, les anciens camps d'Auschwitz et de Birkenau, où l'on a célébré récemment le 60ème anniversaire de la Libération, sont devenus des symboles de l'éradication des Juifs européens. Cependant, la perception de ces sites n'est pas sans équivoque. La première est politique: le régime communiste a imposé une doctrine qui ne fait pas de différences entre les victimes. Un facteur nationaliste joue un rôle évident, puisque Auschwitz, situé en Pologne, était le lieu principal de persécution des Polonais impliqués dans la résistance à l'occupant allemand. Par delà les préjudices encourus, nous ne devrions pas sous-estimer d'autres facteurs psychologiques et humains. En plus, les perceptions de ces sites sont influencées par l'évolution du monde contemporain et le degré d'adaptation des personnes.

Le refus d'indiquer aux visiteurs la proportion réelle de Juifs parmi les victimes d'Auschwitz est similaire en France. Des exemples et des projets récents nous montrent que l'interprétation de l'histoire est toujours instrumentalisée. Depuis 1945, des génocides, des guerres et des conflits contemporains ont été comparés à l'Holocauste et situés celle-ci dans une sorte de compétition. Un génocide désincarné et sans nom veut dire que le site où cela s'est passé et le programme éducatif avec lequel il est lié sera vide de signification. Comme le disait Albert Camus, "Le refus de mettre un nom sur les choses contribue à la misère du monde."

Musées mémoriaux pour les victimes du régime nazi en Allemagne – Sont-ils uniquement des sites de commémoration patriotiques et de développement touristique?

Thomas Lutz

Musée mémorial, Fondation Topographie de la Terreur, Allemagne

Le rôle de l'Allemagne comme pays générateur de crimes – avec seulement un petit nombre de victimes des Nazis de ce même pays – commettant un génocide, des crimes de guerre et des crimes contre l'humanité au cours de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale, a été occulté, voire supprimé, par la société et le gouvernement allemand dans les deux états allemands d'après-guerre. Pourtant, la redécouverte de sites « authentiques » depuis la fin des années 70 en Allemagne de l'ouest a eu un impact important sur la culture de la mémoire des crimes perpétrés par les nazis, la reconnaissance par la société des nombreux groupes de victimes de la situation d'après-guerre a souvent été une seconde persécution. Les concepts de “Contre monuments” (James Young) et de “Mémoire négative” (Volkhard Knigge), qui décrivent l'approche critique de la société allemande et l'effort de réconciliation avec les survivants des crimes nazis, sont tout à fait neufs.

Depuis l'unification de l'Allemagne, le travail des musées mémoriaux est reconnu et soutenu plus officiellement. Un des résultats est que les musées mémoriaux ont aussi été davantage utilisés à des fins politiques, ce qui pourrait nuire à leur crédibilité et à leur sérieux. Le mémorial de l'Holocauste, qui a été inauguré en mai 2005, est un exemple de ce nouveau développement. Ce document décrit la situation des musées mémoriaux comme un miroir des débats actuels en Allemagne, qui se concentrent à nouveau sur les victimes de la société d'après-guerre, et posent des questions qui devront recevoir une réponse dans le futur.

Les Juifs d'Oswiecim

*Tomasz Kuncewicz
Centre Juif d'Auschwitz, Pologne*

Le Centre Juif d'Auschwitz est l'unique présence juive qui reste à Oswiecim, une ville qui est mieux connue dans le monde pendant l'Holocauste comme Auschwitz. Avant la guerre, pourtant, il existait une communauté juive prospère et diversifiée, comprenant plus de 60 pourcent d'une population de 12,000 unités. Depuis leur premier établissement au 16ième siècle, jusqu'à leur destruction durant la Seconde Guerre Mondiale, la communauté juive était une force déterminante de la croissance économique et du développement de la ville. Pourtant, il n'y a plus de Juifs dans la ville; le destin de la communauté juive d'Oswiecim est aussi tragique que celles d'autres communautés ailleurs en Pologne, et la minuscule communauté juive qui s'est recréée après la guerre a émigré dans le monde entier. Mais suite à l'établissement du Centre Juif d'Auschwitz en 2000, il existe actuellement un lieu de commémoration, d'éducation et de religion au sein de la ville, qui présente la communauté juive d'Oswiecim comme un microcosme typique de la vie juive existant en Pologne avant-guerre.

ISRAËL ET PALESTINE: HISTOIRES CONFLICTUELLES, RÊVES OPPOSÉS

Patrimoine et Identité: Le rôle du patrimoine dans la société moderne—Le point de vue archéologique en Israël

*Uzi Dahari
Autorités Israéliennes des Antiquités*

Chaque société a besoin de symboles; pourtant, les symboles n'ont aucune valeur s'il ne sont pas soutenus par un idéal; quand il n'y a pas à la base des idéaux,

quand ils représentent des slogans vides, ou quand ils représentent un idéal unique au lieu d'un ensemble complexe de valeurs. Les Israéliens ont le droit d'avoir une vision d'un état d'Israël plus grand, comme les Palestiniens ont le droit de rêver à une plus grande Palestine qui serait entièrement islamique. Pourtant, il serait préférable que les visions restent dans le domaine du rêve ou d'autres désirs philosophiques.

« Harnacher » l'archéologie afin de créer un patrimoine national est permis et désirable pour une future génération de rêveurs et de fondateurs, mais uniquement s'il est basé sur des vérités scientifiques et historiques qui acceptent les tests effectifs et ne minimalisent pas les périodes, les cultures et les événements historiques qui ne sont pas en rapport avec son patrimoine. Nous devons faire une distinction entre 1) les sites archéologiques qui, même s'ils représentent un peuple ou une religion, font partie du patrimoine régional historique et culturel des générations futures; 2) les sites religieux qui appartiennent à et sont sacrés pour une religion déterminée mais doivent être respectés et conservés par les membres d'autres religions; et 3) les sites commémoratifs nationaux qui sont associés au patrimoine culturel d'une seule société. Il reste à espérer que les sites commémoratifs nationaux d'Israël et ceux des Palestiniens deviendront rapidement des sites archéologiques ainsi qu'une part du patrimoine culturel du Proche-Orient dans son entièreté.

Archéologie et Politique en Terre Sainte

Adel Yahya

Association Palestinienne pour l'Echange Culturel

Il n'y a probablement pas de place au monde où l'archéologie a donné autant d'immédiateté qu'en Terre Sainte. Mais l'intérêt précoce pour l'archéologie du pays a été plutôt sélective et extrêmement divisée. Il est caractérisé par un intérêt presque exclusif pour des sites et certaines couches spécifiques, entraînant un déséquilibre dans notre connaissance archéologique du pays. Ce déséquilibre concerne les relations de pouvoir interne du pays qui compromet l'aspect le plus faible. Ce n'est que récemment que les archéologues de la Terre Sainte, y compris quelques archéologues israéliens et palestiniens, ont réalisé le besoin d'isoler leurs études des influences politiques et religieuses. L'étude de histoire et de l'ar-

chéologie doit être neutre et des constellations au sein des périodes historiques réévaluées. Avant tout, la dissémination de la connaissance de tous les sites et de toutes les périodes devrait être encouragée indépendamment des connotations nationales ou religieuses de ces sites.

Les archéologues ne peuvent protéger le patrimoine que s'ils réussissent à promouvoir la réconciliation entre les peuples de la région. Ils ne peuvent le faire qu'en se soumettant à la richesse de l'histoire, à la diversité, et aux ressources du pays, et en s'adaptant à un agenda qui protège à la fois le patrimoine et promeut les changements. Une réconciliation ne conduira pas nécessairement à « une version partagée de notre passé » mais au moins il agrandira le plaisir des communautés locales et des visiteurs étrangers, ce qui sera bénéfique - économiquement et politiquement - pour nous tous.

Israël – Palestine: Le patrimoine de qui?

Ludo Abicht

Université d'Anvers, Belgique

Si des personnes comme Uzi Dahari et Adel Yahya étaient demandés pour mener les négociations entre Israéliens et Palestiniens, les choses pourraient rapidement se mouvoir dans la bonne direction, parce qu'ils débutent avec deux qualifications essentielles, scientifiques et diplomatiques: Pour commencer, ils sont sincèrement critiques et autocritiques, ce qui veut dire qu'ils sont aussi capables d'écouter l'autre et, du moins, d'essayer de voir la situation à travers les yeux de l'autre. Etant donné la situation politique présente, une telle ouverture d'esprit est loin d'être évidente. J'ai été conscient de l'usage qu'il a été fait constamment en archéologie pour prouver « l'autochtonisme primordial » de chaque côté. Les développements récents dans l'historiographie israélienne prouvent cependant que même cette pratique scientifique libre de valeur n'est pas un fondement suffisant pour une compréhension et une future acceptation mutuelle.

Est-il absurde d'envisager que des archéologues et des historiens palestiniens étudient les vestiges de la présence juive dans les territoires palestiniens, et que des scientifiques israéliens portent leur attention sur les sites islamiques en Israël ? Ou même, plus utopique, peut-on imaginer des groupes de travail israélo-palestiniens travaillant ensemble de chaque côté de la frontière? Comment

une approche nouvelle et créative du passé, aussi distant que l'époque de David et de Salomon et aussi récent que le dernier acte de violence, peut-il contribuer à l'établissement d'un Moyen Orient pacifié, démocratique et prospère?

VIETNAM: RÉFLEXIONS SUR UNE GUERRE, UNE GÉNÉRATION PLUS TARD

Se souvenir du Vietnam dans le National Mall

Dwight Pitcaithley
U.S. National Park Service

Cette présentation désire nous faire part des résultats des manifestations de la mémoire collective concernant le Mémorial des vétérans du Vietnam à Washington D.C. et des efforts continuels pour manipuler la portée symbolique de ce monument depuis son érection, il y a plus de 25 ans. L'auteur approche les différentes perspectives concernant le mémorial en le comparant avec d'autres mémoriaux de la guerre du Vietnam à travers le pays ainsi qu'avec les mémoriaux de la Guerre Civile Américaine érigés un siècle plus tôt. "Se souvenir du Vietnam" nous présente le point de vue de l'auteur, en tant qu'historien et en tant que vétéran handicapé de la guerre du Vietnam.

Monuments, Reliques et Musées sur la Mémoire de Guerre au Vietnam

Nguyen Quoc Hung
Département du Patrimoine Culturel, Ministère de la Culture et de l'Information, Vietnam

Depuis le renversement de la monarchie et l'établissement de la République Démocratique du Vietnam, deux guerres de résistance ont été poursuivies l'une contre le colonialisme français (1945-1954) l'autre contre l'impérialisme américain

(1954-1975). Près de 30 ans plus tard, les Vietnamiens en ressentent toujours les conséquences—dans la lenteur et la pauvreté de l'économie de l'après-guerre, et l'absence d'hommes dans les familles qui ont perdu leurs proches parents au cours du conflit. De plus, bon nombre sont blessés, handicapés et certains, affectés par l'Agent Orange, ont transmis ces séquelles à leurs enfants.

Les événements et les héros de guerre ont été honorés de multiples façons par l'état et la population. Les reliques mémorielles ne montrent pas uniquement le respect des gens pour leurs héros, mais témoignent également de la compétence de plusieurs générations dans l'art militaire. Les reliques mémorielles ont pour but d'éduquer la population au niveau des traditions de construction et de défense nationales, de l'humanisme, et de l'altruisme des Vietnamiens envers l'ennemi. Les musées montrent également des objets et des tableaux qui portent témoignage contre la sauvagerie et l'injustice de la guerre. Les reliques de guerre et les musées sont la preuve que les citoyens, vieux et jeunes confondus, sont les premières victimes de la guerre mais aussi les plus affectés.

AFRIQUE DU SUD: MÉMOIRES DE L'APARTHEID ET AU-DELÀ

Mémoire et Patrimoine au Cap, Afrique du Sud

Carmel Schrire

Département d'Anthropologie, Rutgers University, USA

La Compagnie néerlandaise des Indes Orientales, ou VOC, a fondé le premier établissement européen permanent au Cap de Bonne Espérance en Afrique du Sud en 1652. Cet établissement a heureusement facilité le trafic de la marine marchande vers les Indes et a permis une pénétration européenne dans le nord du pays, jusque vers 1800, date à laquelle le VOC a fait banqueroute. C'est également à ce moment que les Britanniques s'emparent du Cap.

La présence génétique, linguistique et culturelle du VOC est toujours manifeste dans bon nombre d'aspects de la vie sud-africaine, mais sa commé-

moration a récemment fait l'objet d'un revirement, ce qui est le reflet de la transformation politique radicale de l'Apartheid dans la Nouvelle Afrique du Sud. Le 300ième anniversaire du VOC en 1952 a été célébré en l'absence d'une grande partie de la population non blanche. Cinquante ans plus tard, alors que l'Apartheid engendre un gouvernement majoritaire opposé à ce mouvement, le VOC devint synonyme d'oppression et leur ancien Château, un symbole du mal. Ce type de réaction se situe dans les normes et est caractéristique de toute révolution, qu'elle soit violente ou non. Le cas sud africain est intéressant dans la mesure où les scientifiques ont refondu, en un temps record, leurs recherches, fouillant l'histoire, l'archéologie, la linguistique, la biologie et les relations raciales pour être conformes à l'idéologie politique prévalente.

Se souvenant du musée du District Six

Sandra Prosalendis

Arts et Culture, Conseil de recherches et sciences humaines, Afrique du Sud

Le musée du District Six (D6M) incarne la notion de « musée pour la communauté » dans l'Afrique du Sud du post-Apartheid, servant de modèles pour un grand nombre d'autres institutions qui se spécialisent dans la mémoire comme moyen d'évolution. Un élément clé du succès de D6M est l'importance de ce lieu comme une arène ou un théâtre, où les personnes peuvent se rappeler leur passé, comprendre leur présent et envisager leur futur. Le musée crée un espace qui, plus qu'un encadrement pour l'apprentissage, est un lieu de questionnement pour les visiteurs. Parce que les thèmes de D6M sont tant le lieu que la communauté, les résultats identitaires générés sont plutôt ceux de la communauté que de l'individu. En tant qu'individus issus du District Six, les personnes partagent un idéal non raciste de l'Afrique du Sud plutôt que les spécificités (souvent divisées) propre à une catégorie définie racialement. Les classes sont aussi souvent que les races, le centre d'intergroupes de conflit d'intérêt.

Les curateurs de D6M tendent à éviter l'étroitesse d'une catégorie sectaire et se réfèrent à la perception de D6 en tant que champ (couronné de succès?) d'intégration sociale. L'accent placé sur l'histoire d'un lieu plutôt que sur les résultats obtenus sur place ou sur un groupe spécifique permet aux visiteurs

de questionner les transformations et la croissance futures aussi facilement que les déplacements et les inégalités passés. Les disponibilités permettant de jouer ce rôle proviennent, ironiquement, du fait que le D6M est resté à l'écart de l'établissement et de la structure du musée officiel du Cap.





