What Can We Weave? Authority, Reconstructing, and Negotiating Heritages Through Archaeological Open-Air Museums

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ABSTRACT

The construction of heritage is an ongoing process, with numerous voices involved in it. Physical remains of the past frequently—though not always—play a significant role as focal points that heritage narratives attach to. As resources, these remains can be used to draw both domestic and foreign tourism, providing economic benefit to states and providing a platform from which heritage narratives may be told. Such narratives can be economically, socially, and politically powerful. They have been previously examined through the authorized heritage discourse, wherein only certain ‘pasts’ are explored, or as heritage brands. In a world of change in society and in tourism, the authority of archaeologist/historian/scholar, governing bodies, tourism agencies, passionate ‘non-specialists’, and multiple publics over heritages is one of contestation. Each is a weaver of heritage. This article examines the creation of archaeological open-air museums (AOAMs) as renewable resources for tourism within a fragmenting market. It explores the authorities and threads of heritage that result in different capacities to actively address visitor perceptions of the ‘past’ and present they are touring. This paper concludes with viewing the use of an AOAM as a location of contestation, as any other heritage property can become, though one more malleable to the changing needs of heritage weavers due to its existence in conflict with understandings of linear time.

Résumé: La construction d'un patrimoine est un processus inscrit sur la continuité, auquel s'associent de nombreuses voix. Les vestiges physiques du passé jouent souvent—mais pas toujours—un rôle important à titre de points centraux auxquels s'attachent les discours sur le patrimoine. En tant que ressources, ces vestiges peuvent être utilisés pour attirer le tourisme tant local qu'étranger, apportant ainsi un profit économique aux états et fournissant une plateforme à partir de laquelle les discours sur le patrimoine

peuvent s'articuler. Ces discours peuvent être puissants d'un point de vue économique, social et politique. Ils ont auparavant fait l'objet d'un examen dans le cadre du Discours autorisé sur le patrimoine (Authorized Heritage Discourse—AHD), suivant lequel seuls certains « passés » sont explorés, ou en tant que marques d'un patrimoine. Dans un monde en évolution pour ce qui a trait aux sociétés et au tourisme, l'autorité de l'archéologue/historien/chercheur, des organismes gouvernementaux, des agences de tourisme, des « non-spécialistes » passionnés et des publics multiples sur les patrimoines, s'inscrit dans la contestation. Chacune contribue à tisser un patrimoine. Cet article examine la création des Musées archéologiques à ciel ouvert (archaeological open-air museums AOAM) en tant que ressources renouvelables pour le tourisme au sein d'un marché fragmenté. Il explore les autorités du patrimoine et les fils qui le tissent ayant résulté en des capacités multiples afin de prendre en compte activement les perceptions par les visiteurs du « passé » et du présent explorés par eux. La conclusion de cet article considère l'utilisation d'un AOAM comme un site de contestation, ainsi que tout autre site du patrimoine peut le devenir. Celui-ci est cependant plus malléable aux besoins en constante évolution de ceux qui œuvrent à tisser les fils d'un patrimoine, en raison de son existence s'opposant aux approches d'un temps linéaire.

Resumen: La construcción del patrimonio es un proceso continuo, con numerosas voces participando. Los restos físicos del pasado con frecuencia, aunque no siempre, juegan un papel importante como puntos focales a los que se unen las narrativas del patrimonio. Como recursos, estos restos se pueden usar para atraer el turismo nacional y extranjero, proporcionando beneficios económicos a los estados y proporcionando una plataforma desde la cual se pueden contar las narrativas del patrimonio. Tales narrativas pueden ser económica, social y políticamente poderosas. Se han examinado previamente a través del Discurso del Patrimonio Autorizado (DPA), en el que solo se exploran ciertos 'pasados', o como marcas de patrimonio. En un mundo de cambio en la sociedad y en el turismo, la autoridad del arqueólogo/historiador/erudito, los órganos de gobierno, las agencias de turismo, los "no especialistas" apasionados y los múltiples públicos relacionados con las herencias es una cuestión de contestación. Cada uno es un tejedor de patrimonio. Este artículo examina la creación de museos arqueológicos al aire libre (MAAL) como recursos renovables para el turismo dentro de un mercado fragmentado. Explora a las autoridades y los hilos del patrimonio que dan como resultado diferentes capacidades para abordar activamente las percepciones de los visitantes sobre el 'pasado' y el presente que están recorriendo. Este documento concluye con la visión del

uso de un MAAL como lugar de contestación—algo en lo que cualquier otra propiedad del patrimonio puede convertirse—aunque sea más maleable a las necesidades cambiantes de los tejedores del patrimonio debido a su existencia en conflicto con la comprensión del tiempo lineal.

KEY WORDS

Cultural heritage, Tourism, Authenticity, Reconstruction, Living history

Introduction

The process of heritage work is made up of numerous and complicated—at times conflicting—actions. From foundations in enlightenment-inspired sciences and understandings of the world, many places at which publics may engage with heritages (such as museums) foster colonial narratives of the past. The very roots of ‘the museum’ are based in the colonial accumulation of cultural objects. As civil rights movements emerged to address systemic inequalities, museums moved away from these elite, colonial aspects, to be re-imagined as a forum (Lonetree 2012, 4). This brought museum specialists and museums to act as agents of heritage (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004, 1). Still, these agents denote authorities of who can create narratives at heritage sites and museums, and what stories people are invited to consume.

This work examines heritage tourism resources. Rather than forwarding narratives of loss and scarcity that pervade discussions on the remains of the past, I consider potentials of renewability and re-creating less visible pasts. In particular, it reflects on the capacities of archaeological open-air museums (AOAMs) in the re-imagining of heritage narratives within a fragmenting tourism market. As reconstructions, these sites have differing options available to them in what pasts they can speak of, and how they can speak.

This article serves as a literature review, drawing together strands from several disciplines. It works from foundations of heritage, archaeology, theatre studies, and tourism studies. The latter of this grouping derives from data and research conducted largely in the United Kingdom (as one of the largest ‘brands’ in heritage tourism, and as a host of a substantial number of archaeological open-air museums). In order to expand on the topic of AOAMs as a tourism resource, it also draws tourism studies from a global perspective. Finally, this work approaches the subject of tourism, museums,

heritage, and authorities from a decolonial perspective (see Quijano 2000). Decoloniality is an undefined number of options (critical and/or practical) taken to challenge and delink from the colonial matrix of power that penetrates all aspects of the world we live in (Mignolo 2007). This matrix (also called coloniality) limits our capacity to think about and perceive the world; our pasts, presents, and futures.

As decolonial praxis, I draw on Indigenous world view to approach heritage work and research. Wilson (2015, 75–76) described lights and knots to explain the interconnectedness and relational natures of everything, including the researcher to the people and subjects involved in their studies. Within this work, and in others, I refer instead to images of weaving such as strands, threads, fibres, and baskets. Ultimately, this imagery is utilized to holistically consider the many aspects and agents that take part in heritage work, in the process. It also aims to keep us mindful of desired outcomes for that process, to create something useful for contemporary people and communities.

The structure of this article begins with a review on positions and authorities of heritage, followed by the powers that advance cultural tourism narratives and their consumption. Authenticity and authorities of narratives to heritage sites are drawn upon, to which the AOAM is brought into the work as a counter. Finally, this article concludes with examining the decolonial potentials to these diverse sites as sites wherein unique heritage-weaving can take place, focusing on emotional and human-focused storytelling and engagement.

Heritages; Authorities

Researching, understanding, and presenting the pasts of human cultures are foundational goals of archaeology as a discipline. The final aspect is an immense undertaking and—like all of archaeology—is wound up into social and political worlds. Remains of the past are not simply bound into those pasts, or to a history. Rather, they find their way into the working, the weaving, of heritage which has been described by Schouten (1995, 21) as “history processed through mythology, ideology, nationalism, local pride, romantic ideas or just plain marketing”. The creation of heritage is an ongoing process of negotiation. Indeed, the very nature of heritage itself is one of contestation, struggle, and conflict. Smith (2006, 281) considered the process as “a struggle over power ... because heritage is itself a political resource”. Again, this is to be understood as political on multiple levels. Smith’s influential work, *Uses of Heritage* (2006), brought forth the concept of the Authorized Heritage Discourse. This is explained as “the proper care of heritage, and its associated values, lies with the experts, as it is only they

who have the abilities, knowledge and understanding to identify the innate value and knowledge contained at and within historically important sites and places” (Smith 2006, 29–30). This AHD has been critiqued since then within the umbrella of critical heritage studies.

Holtorf considered three models to ‘doing’ public archaeology: Educational, Public Relations, and Democratic. The second of these, he noted as being directly politically minded and ethically difficult (2016, 119). These first two appear to coincide with Smith’s AHD, with the direction of power to shape ‘heritage’ and create value resting with experts. The third, Holtorf admitted a lean towards. This approach, he stated, was the removal of expert command and the control being placed into the hands of stakeholders. This is a clear divergence from the understanding of Authorized Heritage. Indeed, a recognition of multivocality in the ‘doing’ of heritage is important to understanding the process and realities. Certainly, “heritage is produced through sociopolitical processes reflecting society’s power structures” (Logan and Wijesuriya 2015, 569). Heritage is born out of political interactions from all directions and places in society and in/across societies. The Democratic Model of Holtorf still holds an intrinsic political dimension—as was said of the ‘expert led’ Public Relations Model—and can readily become grounds of contestation. As its name would suggest, it provides for the inclusion of multitudes of voices, views, opinions into the passage and use of archaeologies—into the fabrics of heritage. These very narratives of conflict are what Daly and Chan (2015, 429) stated as being the fabrics that create heritage.

Emerick (2014, 190) wrote that heritage is a process, not a product. That is, it is not physical and it is not bound to the stones of a wall or held within the confines of a displayed brooch or sword, or pot, or ring. It is doing, conversing, connection, and interconnecting. An issue with Smith’s AHD and the first two models that Holtorf considered is that they place power in the hands of experts and the powerful, while eliding that regardless of this, many of those on the ‘passive’ end of these models are anything but that. Even in top–down productions of heritage, the outcome is not one singular entity—it is a being of many spirits. That is not to suggest that all spirits are given the same stage of presence to manifest. Smith (2006, 106) considered that AHD side-lines the values of most of the stakeholders. Meanwhile, the ways in which negative histories of traumatic and genocidal pasts are negotiated are one that can be called displayed withholding (Onciul 2015, 190). That is to say that objects may be present and portions of histories shown, but the sorrowful and negative spirits belonging to them are curated into silence. For the multivocality that exists in the weaving of heritage, power dynamics are very real matters, as in every other part of life.

If, as critical heritage writers express, heritage is a process undertaken by everyone, then Grosfoguel's (2013, 74) question remains: "[w]hy is it that what we know today as social, historical, philosophical, or Critical Theory is based on the socio-historical experience and world views of men from [France, Germany, Italy, England, and the United States]?" It is not as if knowledge does not exist outside of the minds of these people, in other worlds. And this draws to a fundamental issue in heritage regarding expertise and knowledge creation. Holtorf recognized at an inter-disciplinary conference that "no matter how unconventional and innovative everybody wished to be, most of those present also felt very strong ties to their home disciplines of social/cultural anthropology or archaeology and their respective repertoires of methods and approaches" (2009, 310). These are the same methodologies that were questioned as being "simply new technologies of cultural assimilation, of governance and the disciplining of knowledge" (Smith et al. 2016, 133). In other words, using the same tools and knowledges undermines both would-be well-meaning experts and 'democracy' of heritage by pretending that we are all the same.

This issue of sameness also pervades the cultural tourism industry, impacting the heritage narratives that we are exposed to. There is research and consideration for the 'typical' tourist—perceived as white, middle-class, and Western—and their needs, and motivations (see Chambers and Buzinde 2015; Wijesinghe et al. 2019). Despite there being a massive number of tourists who do not fit this normalized image, the belief that tourism is the permit of white, middle-class people influences the production of attractions. These destinations and the heritages they weave get focused through this lens of the 'tourist' and industry strategies of branding to attract those tourists and their money to heritage properties.

Heritages as Brands

The weavers of heritage are numerous and with their own designs in mind. These designs become images that aim to fulfil differing needs and desires as brands. Beyond the tools of intellectuals and politicians, brands like these are underlying forces to the advancement of national narratives, tied to shared myths and identity. States are even ranked on their brand, a 'Nation Brand'. The 2010 Nations Brand Index (NBISM) rated the UK at number 4 of 50 and 4 in 12017HE (Waterton 2013, 69; Place Brand Observer 2017). Nation branding is "the application of corporate marketing concepts and techniques to countries, in the interests of enhancing their reputation in international relations" (Kerr and Wiseman 2017, 354). The NBISM is partly calculated through 'cultural and heritage' and 'tourism'. The concerns of heritage, tourism, and the 'brand' are highly interwoven.

By adopting specific imagery, be they national or regional, these brands can be tapped into by localities searching for access to new revenues to rejuvenate their economies (Brandth and Haugen 2011). Considering them from a 'brand' perspective can help to facilitate relations and impact broad areas and peoples.

Smith (2006, 43) recognized that all heritage is intangible. The idea of 'place' itself is incredibly important to heritage tourism, be that the mythology of place (Shields 1991) or the 'sense of place' (Schofield and Szymanski 2011). Through the concept of the AHD, Waterton stated that groups and agencies invest in and give power to places and use them as social cement of a state/nation that is all-encompassing (2013, 67). I do not ignore that powerful groups invest time, money, and effort to the heritages they prefer to weave, but I would remind that even with their investments, other (potentially oppositional) groups can and do find ways to weave their own strands.

It would be easy to state that the investments made at locales and into cultural brands by agencies are done with the goal of enforcing the coloniality of power (as initially defined in Quijano 2000); however, this is an oversimplification. Barillet et al. said, "heritage has today become a powerful instrument in the economic and territorial development of a community, when properly valorised and promoted, often in the context of tourism related activities" (2006, 26). The tourism industry makes up a massive portion of the world economy, tourism making US\$1.7 trillion in receipts (UNWTO 2019, 2). When Hudson and Miller wrote their article, tourism was the main source of foreign revenue in at least 38% of the world and among the top five in 83% of states (2005, 384). In the United Kingdom, heritage-based tourism is an industry that is worth over £20.6 billion and sustains the equivalent of over 386,000 full-time jobs (Oxford Economics 2016, 3). Cultural tourism is said to account for 84% of the visitor economy, with some 30% of international tourists citing 'heritage' as their main reason for visitation (Waterton 2013, 69). To the UK, this tourism is more valuable than the motor manufacturing, advertising, and electric industries (HLF 2010, 8–9; Bewley and Maeer 2014, 242). Tourism in 2019 was the third largest export industry after chemicals and fuels (UNWTO 2019, 2). The importance of the industry to states, like the United Kingdom, is driving forces to the investment in certain places, brands, narratives. Gould noted that "From the cultural economist's perspective, heritage may be viewed as a tangible or intangible property right that is capable of generating a flow of economic benefits to its owner, who may be either the public at large or a private party" (2014, 68). Certain sites and stories get advanced because of the brands linked to them, not out of a direct Machiavellian desire to create mono-cultures, but out of a connection to economic (and brand) benefit.

Reflecting brands onto the considerations of expert-led and Authorized Heritage, it becomes easier to see that gravity of fostering mono-narratives is not limited simply to a desire for control by the powerful. The image is more complicated, as a strong brand can translate into tourism money and in making international relations a smoother process (with the understanding that those outsiders have an ‘understanding’ of the other). The lure is great for the elite mono-narrative. However, like any brand, a heritage or cultural brand is always recreated and re-negotiated (Harrison 2013, 165). And, as said previously, the AHD is not passively accepted or devoid of being acted upon. In their meta-study of heritage tourism articles, the Loulanski and Loulanski (2011, 841) found that “[t]he relationship between heritage and tourism is ... most often described in terms of interdependency, complexity, inherent tensions, dynamics and conflicting values”.

The brand of the ‘Viking’—for example—has been contending with being taken by white supremacy for decades. While the brand—as advanced by many Western states—is not directly advocating white supremacy in the ways it has, the image still struggles with this in more ways than in the strictly social and political. The use of symbols and images depicting ‘Viking’ culture by white supremacists “has put on edge everyone from tour operators who sell Viking-themed tours to the archaeologists, runologists and historians who study the Viking era, concerned that the adoption of Viking symbols by fringe groups could toxify the meaning of a brand, a museum exhibition or an act of worship” (Martyn-Hemphill and Pryser Libell 2018). With concerns of the colonization of cultural brands by toxic elements potentially impacting the social and economic health of that brand, the stakeholders who should be invested in addressing this expand more directly into the realm of tourism. If not out of moral obligation, then out of the realization that a tainted brand is a less lucrative brand. Still, determining what is and is not tainted is up for consideration. To those in power, certain uses of the past may not be an issue, but to those in the margins it may have severe implications.

Consuming Pasts

The division between conflict and cooperation views to heritage tourism development are a matter of power and who has it. Indeed, there are numerous stakeholders with their own views for what the present and futures of the resource, the heritage narratives taking place, and the stakeholders themselves should be. An attitude of conflict emerges through the desire to assert power over others. Imbalances of power result in businesses or governing entities determining themselves to be the spokesperson of

communities, who are thereby marginalized or have their interests ignored to serve the business in question (Hoffstaedter 2008, 146; Gould 2014, 90). The Loulanskis' concluded their meta-study, saying that "heritage should be re-established as the primary side in the relationship, fully recognizing its capacity not just as a valuable tourism resource but as an important and largely irreplaceable complex form of capital (cultural, social, environmental and economic), to be wisely used, preserved, sustained and enhanced instead of being irretrievably consumed by tourism" (2011, 855). While Finley stated that through tourism, "memory itself becomes a commodity—a thing to be bought, sold, and traded" (2004, 113). These resources and the industry of memories, pasts, and heritages are enforced and enabled through the authority of the word authenticity. This word holds a power behind it that heritage and tourism have tapped into (Waitt 1999, 836; Kidd 2011, 24–26). An authentic experience is one that is proudly announced, from the sentiment that a restaurant cooks the 'most authentic' ethnic cuisine in the area, to a tourism package promising that one can experience the 'real' France or Bali if only those people select the services of the travel company.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation considers heritage tourism to be primarily "traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past ... [it] can include cultural, historic and natural resources" (Gibson 2015). Authenticity is one feature that is often raised in opposition to tourism. It has been levelled as a reason that heritage is a problem of society. Authenticity is, to some, a philosophical ideal from which to challenge what *is* and *is not* a proper heritage product to offer to society (Adorno 1964; Watson 2007, 54). Interestingly, it is not only used against heritage, but also within the heritage tourism industry itself. The desire to escape from the inauthenticity of their normal lives, it was argued by MacCannell (1973), advanced the cause of tourism. To him, tourism's spirit is devoted to providing authenticity. This belief spurred considerable debate with conceptions of authenticity falling into differing ideologies (see Chhabra 2010, 32–36).

Immovable heritage sites (eg. ruins, historic buildings/landscapes) are focal points for the ever-occurring struggle over authority of narratives and the negotiation of what is 'authentic'. They are often locations for coloniality, for the power of one narrative against another. In the instance of the Cambodian site Angkor, the narrative that is advanced is largely from a Western viewpoint. The 'discovery' of the site by the naturalist Mouhot (along with his subsequent delivery of the Khmers from their 'cultural decay') ignores its visitation by previous Europeans and the presence of numerous nearby villages (Winter 2004, 333). Angkor and places like Machu Picchu are fit into blatantly Eurocentric lost-found stories. These stories are, at their least harmful, insulting to the manifold peoples who

were well aware of the sites without the help of the white Westerner. Thompson (2004) highlighted the depth of history that had to be narratively bulldozed to manufacture and cater to the Western gaze. Angkor to people more local to it is startlingly different. It is a capital of imperial power (a narrative that does still find a place in Western narratives). It is the representation of one of the most important premodern states in the area, a pinnacle of Buddhist pilgrimage history, a social centre for inter-state commerce (Winter 2013a, 179); yet this narrative is made secondary. There is often a privileging of a single culture/time over others at heritage sites, despite that a site may have a multi-cultural and multi-phased past. Many of those are neglected or forgotten to advantage a specific narrative. This may be a case of the wilful washing of a past. Many sites with colonial inheritances neglect to tell stories of slavery, or genocide that took place—or are indebted to those actions—in that location (eg. Hann and Dresser 2013). Just as well, it may even be an instance of the narrative power of a certain time or culture.

This gaze, from the West, to be consumed by the ‘typical’ tourist (white, affluent, Western) necessitates the adaption of the physical to fit the perceived needs of these tourists. This leads to the build-up of infrastructure and development of the locations for use. Development, of course, is another ground of struggle between the ‘expert’, the locality (and people associated with it), and the development agencies (governmental, private). The archaeologist Lafrenz Samuels (2009) argued that the usual understandings of development come at the expense of alternative perspectives. Development is the language of colonization when it does not feed back social benefits to those who are impacted by it. This is much the same in the industries that tap into heritages as resources. Sharpley’s (2014) review highlighted the ambiguity of the results from numerous models that attempted to understand local communities’ perceptions of tourism or its impact on them. This all falls under the contested nature of debates in heritage itself, and it seems only natural that differing opinion would exist in the use of the resources that the practice makes. McKercher et al. (2005, 539) considered opposing views of development of heritage tourism: conflict and cooperation. In the former, values are seen as being compromised, be those the cultural values selling out to tourism, of touristic values abandoned by operators bowing to other concerns. The latter (cooperation) views the ability to share a resource to a mutually beneficial outcome for all stakeholders. If one is to consider heritage tourism from an angle of conflict, then the suggestion is that one set of stakeholders is ‘right’, while the other’s views and desires are a corrupting force. Certainly, tourism development can be damaging, with the investment of money failing to achieve many benefits to local stakeholders. Swatuk (2008, 128) found that 60% of foreign money spent visiting South Africa never reached the local

economies. Adams (2010) noted that money spent by visitors to World Heritage Sites often gravitates towards the socially, politically, and financially elite. And Reeves (2008) identified developed heritage tourism resources as direct causes of gentrification. Heritage tourism development that does not view the needs of local people—heritage weavers, themselves—with critical importance is little more than the theft of their stories to make money. It is colonization.

Beyond the potential coloniality underlying the development of physical properties to heritage tourism resources, mass tourism to heritage sites is a destabilizing force to the infrastructure made to support it, as well as the archaeological remains themselves (Fletcher et al. 2007, 396). The famous case of Petra in Jordan highlights the impact that mass tourism has on the physical integrity of immovable heritage: the report for the International Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management identified the negative impacts of tourism on sites, including damage and pollution caused from the installation of tourist infrastructure into the landscape (Comer 2014, 29–30). Many such sites face deterioration or increased susceptibility to catastrophic loss, matter which draw into sharp contrast the at-times confrontational desires of the archaeologist/expert and the heritage tourism agencies (as well as local interests). Winter (2013b) said that conservation practice is reluctant to acknowledge issues in the heritage industry, while critical heritage itself seeks to grapple with them. In many ways, the position that conservation professionals hold is one of physicality and the enduring preservation of it. This, though, places an undue primacy to materials that have for whatever happenstance have survived to our current times. This also places conversations of heritage and the past into the realm of loss and endangerment. This language was noted by Holtorf as being similar to the feelings that people have for endangered species of animals: “[p]eople enjoy helping them [animals and artefacts] to survive as such but would not want them to become too common” (Holtorf 2005, 134).

Narratives of loss and scarcity are disingenuous at best but are supported by ideals of ‘authenticity’. The Historic Centre of Warsaw was almost entirely destroyed in 1944; only around 5% of the city’s architecture remained after devastation carried out as punishment for a failed uprising (Dziewulski and Jankowski 1957, 212). After extensive reconstruction, it was controversially nominated as World Heritage in 1978 (Cameron 2008; Kuznicki 2013). In the process of rebuilding an urban area to be liveable (and to create a viable local tourist industry), updated infrastructure and modern facets—like central heating—were installed (Kuznicki 2013). Opponents called into question the ability of the rebuilders to reconstruct the centre ‘authentically’ (Cameron 2008, 20), maintaining that the integrity of the location (and its heritage) had been lost by destruction and

could not be regained by reconstruction. Academic anxieties over what is and is not 'authentic' have been bound into Western ideals of original fabrics, with reconstructions like The Historic Centre of Warsaw presenting a slippery slope. If heritage resources could be reconstructed, then the scarcity narrative presented to support ongoing archaeological research and conservation could not be true. Then casting the notion of scarcity aside, many other locations could 'be heritage'. Lowenthal (1998, 94–102) decried the 'endless eclecticism' that would result from the increased admission of what can be considered heritage, ultimately rendering the term hollow. This viewpoint, while levelled against perceived commodification and 'Disneyfication' of the past, can easily descend into elitism and gatekeeping whereby only specific agents are permitted to weave our heritages and tell us what strands people may use.

Anxieties over commodification and commercialization, whitewashing and Disneyfication have been challenged and engaged with (see Hebdige 2003; Meamber 2011; Larkin 2016). In addition, charges like Lowenthal's were disputed with the drafting and adoption of two documents. With the writing of the Nara Document on Authenticity in 1994, a multiplicity of authenticities was officially included and understood as equally valid (Jerome 2008, 3–4). This perspective validated authenticity as being something rooted within those who observe it, not imposed from without (Filippucci 2002, 75–6). Further, the Faro Convention (Council of Europe 2005) insisted that each person be allowed to take part in the cultural heritage of their choosing and should be able to be included in the ongoing definition of and maintenance of heritage.

Immovable heritage resources like archaeological properties and museums have limitations. The former have their challenges of conservation, which are not few. They are geographically limited, and they also may not support a multiplicity of pasts. Additionally, they, along with museums, have been disproportionately balanced in order to favour certain narratives (see, for instance, Smith 2006). These pasts are privileged for numerous reasons. It has been suggested through Smith's (2006) Authorized Heritage Discourse that narratives of the past are skewed to advantage those in power. While there is much to say for this, there is still another reality at play: economics.

There is a finite amount of money that can be spent on conservation, development of, and marketing of heritage resources. It may be that certain pasts have been advanced for nationalistic or elite reasonings; the pull of cultural brands should not be overlooked. Brands and bias for or against them are based on stereotypes and clichés (Anholt 2008; Tasci and Kozak 2006; Widler 2007). The build-up of these stereotypes is something which is marketable and therefore a financially logical choice from which to develop tourism. Still, the tourism industry is fragmenting (O'Regan 2014).

The ‘typical’ tourist has been a reality for many years and younger tourists bring with them a growing demand for new experiences; for alternatives. And in striving for an answer to this, there is perhaps an opportunity to address multiple other challenges.

Re-creating Pasts, Re-negotiating Authority

As the curated authority of cultural brands frays and the acceptance of a ‘typical’ tourist consuming the same resources cannot be guaranteed, options for renegotiation appear. Mass tourism may not readily change, and the Stonehenges and Pompeiis will continue to find a place on ‘must-see’ lists, alternatives may be viable. The Loulanski and Loulanski (2011, 851) meta-analysis found that “[d]iversification of both targeted markets and heritage tourism products is noted as a necessity”. It has also been suggested that small-scale tourism enterprises—the localities and those employed as a result of the resource—benefit the greatest from financial support (Van Der Sterren 2008, 1). Smaller, alternative tourism is often described as “tourism [that] no longer concentrates on economic and technical necessities alone, but rather emphasises the demand for an unspoiled environment and consideration of the needs of local people” (Fennell 1999, 9). This has been set up in opposition to potentially exploitative mass-market tourism. Cultural tourism, along with ecotourism, adventure tourism, and rural tourism are connected together within this scope of sustainable ‘alternatives’ and development (Varju et al. 2014). However, as discussed, some aspects of cultural tourism may not be as sustainable as others.

The archaeological open-air museum (AOAM), however, offers a potential solution to a number of these difficulties. The organization, EXARC—which is the ICOM affiliate that represents such attractions—has defined an AOAM as:

a non-profit permanent institution with outdoor true to scale architectural reconstructions primarily based on archaeological sources. It holds collections of intangible heritage resources and provides an interpretation of how people lived and acted in the past; this is accomplished according to sound scientific methods for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment of its visitors. (EXARC 2008)

The term, archaeological open-air museum, originated to conceptually link sites with a diverse set of names (OpenArch 2015, 30). This is part of the trouble in categorization for these attractions. Paardekoooper (2012, 54) listed a series of sites that fall within the remit of an AOAM to greater or

lesser extents and commented on the plethora of names like in “the British Isles, archaeological open-air museums are rarely characterised as museums, but rather as centres, heritage visitor centres, farms, parks or villages”. Of these sites, it can be said “that no one single place resembles another, but each in one way or another is something special” (Ahrens 1990, 33 translation in Paardekooper 2012, 27). AOAMs are reconstructions that are, in EXARC’s own definition, providers of interpretations of how people lived in the past through research and archaeologically gained means. This offers would-be consumers with new options, just as much as it does for the public archaeologist and historian. So long as the “connection between scientific research and any specific archaeological open-air museum is provided by the active role of a trained archaeologist among the staff or an archaeological counsellor belonging to an affiliated organisation” (EXARC 2008), it is conceivable that one could potentially build attractions to depict hundreds of pasts. This can offer a chance to diversify heritage tourism for those tourists who want a novel, or unique experience. Not only that but while responding to an opportunity in the tourism market, it is also possible to address the perception(s) that would-be visitors have of peoples of our pasts. The fragmenting of the tourism industry can be utilized for individuals to re-negotiate the past, to reimagine, and to reconstruct themselves and heritage (Jamal and Hollinshead 2001, 64).

Detractors of these destinations, typically those who are focused on privileged, authoritative notions of authenticity have suggested that “the reconstruction of past lives is dangerous in such that it almost inevitably leads to faking the past” (Ahrens 1990, 50 translation in Paardekooper 2012, 64). This very notion is striking in its view that any interpretation of the past is ‘real’. Harrison’s (2013, 32) phrasing sums an appropriate response to this: heritage is “a production of the past in the present”. The past is not one thing, it is many; not only that, but our needs from the past are manifold. Engagement with the pasts we learn about can be an enriching experience. Research at an AOAM in New Salem, Illinois, found that “tourists, as we have seen, bring their own concerns and interests to the interaction. The result is a very open format, more like a discussion than a lecture, one that allows for improvisation and that facilitates the constructivist process” (Bruner 1994, 410). The AOAM, Lejre changed from a research platform to a place where visitors can perform the past because, “After conducting their own visitor-studies, time-travel experiences and story-telling had been identified ... as two significant realms for further development” (Holtorf 2014, 786). The origins of these sites inform how they engage publics or permit them to engage with pasts in our present.

The ‘AOAM’ is not a singular entity with the same set of options available to them. They come from their own roots and have forces that moti-

vate them. It has been noted that many of the founding groups behind living history museums and the major sources of non-visitor related funding have leaned towards the conservative and elite side of a cultural and political spectrum (Handler and Gable 1997, 229–230; Teunissen 2016, 78 and 84–88). Additionally, some AOAMs have been funded by and maintain special relationships with special groups of elite lineage-based power: Colonial Williamsburg is in-part supported by the Daughters of the American Revolution social group, and Plimoth Plantation has been similarly so by the Mayflower Society (Magelssen 2007, 7; DAR Williamsburg Chapter 2019; Plimoth Plantation 2019). These attachments have been argued to result in a reluctance to problematize the constructed narratives, that just so happen to be to the social advantage of those in power (Handler and Gable 1997, 25 and 123). Nor is it the case that these types of museums and attractions can be described as revolutionary. Representations of the past at sites like Colonial Williamsburg have changed. They have because of the times surrounding them. AOAMs expanded their narratives, as Agamben (1993, 91) argued, not as the revolutions that have been claimed, but very much as a—sometimes reactionary—response to what was happening in contemporary society (Magelssen 2007, 21–22).

An auction of slaves was re-enacted, suggested by the AOAM's African American Department, to "teach the history of our mothers and grandmothers so that every one of you will never forget what happened to them" (Horton 1999, 31). This effort, however, was met with resistance and groups of people interrupted the 'auction' because they believed it was trivializing or glorifying slavery. Indeed, the event was controversial. Some critics changed their stance as to whether it sensationalized systematic dehumanization (Braxton cited in Teunissen 2016, 96). Others remained sceptical, like Stupp (2011, 62) who argued that "contemporary reenactments often fail to recast historically overdetermined narratives that, while perhaps evoking empathy for slaves, ultimately add little to discussions about the legacy of slavery in the United States". Ultimately, the auction was not even centred on black people, merely their bodies; the agents within the narrative being—in accordance with tropic depictions of antislavery—white (*loc cit*). This draws into focus disparate and potentially colonial outcomes to AOAMs, depending on the motivating forces of the agents in the founding and function of the sites. Their approaches to engaging or eliding pasts can be as diverse as the sites themselves: options to re-negotiate—missed or otherwise. At their worst, an AOAM can dehumanize and trivialize, but at their best they can conjure powerful emotions to engage tourists with very human narratives.

Weaving

Increasingly, heritage work(s) considers the many weavers and woven strands in the process. There is a recognition of power dynamics and of state/national uses and silencing of other narratives that feed into heritage. The process of heritage may involve ‘all’ people, and we must recognize that the presence of ‘experts’ is a significant facet in the weaving. There are many roles to be played, many spirits to navigate, by both the ‘expert’, and those from all positions within the societies that heritage is being woven. We must remember that to some, ‘democracy’ can be tyranny. The use of Medieval heritages (such as ‘The Viking’ and ‘Saxon’) by white supremacists is, frankly, an aspect of the multivocality and ‘democracy’ of the heritage process. From this position, the role of ‘experts’ should not be dismissed as oligarchy. Just as well, the roles of the tourism agents cannot simply be dismissed as cynical Disneyfication. We exist in a world of global markets and strands being drawn together to tie people in closer together. Cultural resources are placed onto these markets as a product through commodification (Díaz-Andreu 2013, 226). Some attractions can be the images of commercialization that draw criticism for presenting the artificial as authentic, ultimately diminishing the integrity of cultures and even negatively impacting the humanity of the peoples within them (Middleton 2009, 113–116; Timothy and Nyaupane 2009, 60–63). And while it would be tempting to revolt against the process of selling the past and culture as a product on the market, like many critics have (Breen and Rhodes 2010; Herrera 2013), that is not the world that we live in. Commodification is not a culprit, nor an evil, but rather a symptom of modernity. The root is power and the devices which are in place to keep it in hands that will re-affirm it.

To Hooper-Greenhill (2000, 21), museums are not merely sites of potential contestation and strife; they are also places that allow the chance at democratizing the past, arenas of struggle, and change for the better. However, Fleming (2014), the former director of the National Museums Liverpool wrote “Museums may have been set up in an atmosphere of enlightenment, but this does not mean that they were democratic in nature, and I believe that exclusivity is in their DNA”. For these reasons, many museums have distanced themselves from the colonial inheritances they hold. But, particularly in the case of those that house stolen collections, such detachment is nothing less than evading responsibility. The negotiations and contestations at traditional museums do not necessarily transfer onto the AOAM; though they share similar DNA, AOAMs diverge from the innate colonial nature of the cabinet of curiosities and collections from scientific research. Collection and progressivism are indeed in the

foundations of many sites that fall into the category; however, many do not share these motivations. Some have been constructed as research, as experiments, and some are even set-pieces.

Archaeological open-air museums are often landscapes divorced from linear time. The fabrications may certainly be recent and prone to change, but they play with Eurocentric notions of time (that is, a progression from a distant point behind us, towards an unknown future point). Visitors to these places enter scenes of narration, places where interpretations and interpreters can enact stories of a past. These stories are informed by the needs of those who operate the sites, entertainment, and educational. While certain sites have washed over complex, controversial, and tension-causing subjects, not all do. Visitors can make up their own minds about sensitive, or contested issues (Bagnall 2003; Kidd 2011). So, the pasts that challenge beliefs and privileges should not be dealt with in a timid manner. Instead, they should be viewed as an opportunity. Museums are not for everyone, they never have been. And I believe they never will be. Still, those heritage sites have a use, just as do conserved ruins and monuments. But an archaeological open-air museum can weave stories of life; they can put a hand, body, and face to the person who used a stone tool otherwise viewed behind glass. Of course, this is not 'real' but what story of the past is? Allegedly dispassionate and 'fact-oriented' linear understandings of history are not the only approach to meaning-making. The emotional and humanizing spirits that these sites can weave are real to the people experiencing pasts at AOAMS, particularly at sites where visitors are not merely passive, but can interact with the narrative. AOAMs are not a replacement for history education, museums, or the Pompeiis of the world. They are alternative spaces, ones that can talk to and envelop people into heritage narratives of worlds that are no longer readily visible. Many pasts and heritages have been and are rendered invisible through coloniality. Marginalizing pasts is an act of violence, especially when those pasts speak to inhumanities enacted by a still-living society against another (or the ancestors of either). Bringing these colonized, 'vanished' pasts out into the front through emotional, humanized re-tellings is an act of decoloniality if done compassionately. They can play with time and can re-negotiate who has the authority to tell stories, and how we can tell the very human stories of pasts that are not told by a cabinet of collected, stolen, hoarded objects. An AOAM can be a place that does not speak of the past as a singular, finite, and non-renewable resource.

The scarcity model of the past and archaeology is not sustainable. Certainly, some physical remains are at risk of loss; however, this is not everyone would suggest this to be a negative thing, merely natural. Just because the physical remains of a past may not viewable does not mean that we should consider re-imagining these pasts as somehow lesser. It is a privi-

leged and Eurocentric position to maintain a primacy of the ‘original, physical fabrics’. It is one that does not even ring true: when people from Western societies speak of authenticity regarding physical objects, the intangible relationships to these items often become focal points (Jones 2010). This is not an argument against site conservation or on the development of and much-needed renegotiation of traditional museums. Rather, it is to embrace diversity; to embrace the options of engaging with the many pasts of the worlds we come from. By creating heritage destinations that depict multiple pasts, we can seek to address marginal pasts—if done bravely and mindfully.

I have spoken of the action of weaving in relation to heritage, with many actors contributing their strands and designs into the work. The action of weaving is ongoing and important in its own right. Some stories are only retold in the process of weaving, crossing threads symbolically reminding of events in the tale. The ongoing working of heritage is, just as well, a story. Still, in the process of weaving we must not lose sight of its purpose: to create. Not just creation, but mindful creation; it should create baskets to hold and carry nourishment to people, clothes and blankets to keep people warm, but never mats for the powerful to sit upon.

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