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Introduction
Remembering places of pain and shame

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Most societies have their scars of history resulting from involvement in war and civil unrest or adherence to belief systems based on intolerance, racial discrimination or ethnic hostilities. A range of places, sites and institutions represent the legacy of these painful periods: massacre and genocide sites, places related to prisoners of war, civil and political prisons, and places of 'benevolent' internment such as leper colonies and lunatic asylums. These sites bring shame upon us now for the cruelty and ultimate futility of the events that occurred within them and the ideologies they represented. Increasingly, however, they are now being regarded as 'heritage sites', a far cry from the view of heritage that prevailed a generation ago when we were almost entirely concerned with protecting the great and beautiful creations of the past: reflections of the creative genius of humanity rather than the reverse – the destructive and cruel side of history. Why has this shift occurred, and what implications does it have for professionals practising in the heritage field? In what ways is this a 'difficult' heritage to deal with?

This book has been conceived as a cross-cultural study of sites representing painful and/or shameful episodes in a national or local community's history and the ways that government agencies, heritage professionals and communities themselves seek to remember, commemorate and conserve these cases of 'difficult heritage' – or, conversely, choose to forget them. The book brings together scholars and practitioners from six countries to explore these questions, using case studies of historic places, museums and memorials in the United States, Northern Ireland, Poland, South Africa, China, Japan, Taiwan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Timor-Leste (East Timor) and Australia. The team of authors includes architects, historians, geographers, political scientists and public policy specialists. That they are all heritage practitioners in a variety of ways underlines the multidisciplinarity that is now recognised as necessary for the development of heritage management teams able to produce cohesive heritage management plans and strategies.

The book considers the ways in which these historic sites and their significant heritage values can be and are being interpreted and conserved through planning and management interventions. According to Teresa Leopold (2007: 1), it is the manager of a site who has the most impact on its interpretation through the way in which he/she decides what to say and what to leave out. But heritage
practitioners also need to listen to the affected community's views of the site's significance and management practices are contingent upon how the site is held in the public memory. An effective management plan for such places must be based on an analysis of the way in which the events for which heritage sites are said to be significant are remembered. Sometimes sites gradually change as memories of the past fade or are distorted; even sometimes, it is argued, sites should be actively changed where they merely aid the remembrance of the perpetrators of pain and shame rather than the victims.

It is important, therefore, to determine what aspects of the past are being ignored or poorly represented in the interpretation of the heritage sites. But sometimes whole sites may be missing from the public consciousness and hence from heritage registers, perhaps because the public in question does not want to remember the values associated with such places. Kenneth Foote (1997: 33) in his book on landscapes of tragedy in the United States raises the issue that many sites that played a significant role in the evolution of American society could now be lost from the collective memory and no longer marked at all. The question of what has and has not been marked is important. As Elie Wiesel, Nobel Prize winner, said: 'The executioner always kills twice, the second time with silence' (cited in M. Bouchenaki 1999: 1).

Heritage places are commonly lieu de mémoire, acting, as Pierre Nora (1989) suggested, as sites harbouring memories that serve to maintain a group's sense of connection with its roots in the past. Such places have political functions, used and abused by governments (Graham et al. 2000) for reasons that can be both benign and malign in intent and effect (Logan 2007). A frequent motive is nation-building, which accompanies the formation and strengthening of states. Governments encourage particular memories and provide rituals and venues for memorialisation, which may be benign if such actions promote the development of tolerant states and societies based on human rights.

In many cases, however, state authorities engage in retelling history, inventing traditions and celebrating heritage in ways that serve their own interests, which are often as crude as maintaining a grip on power. Connerton (1989:1) refers to this as the 'wilful distortion' of collective memory by governments, a distortion strategically aimed at manipulating the collectivity by manipulating its history, by 'explaining' its history in order to win support for a particular set of policies or for the maintenance of their hegemonic power in the present social order. For the British historian, Eric Hobsbawm (1997:5), it is in nationalistic politics that wilful distortion is at its worst, and certainly the history of wars and of colonialism shows the centrality of this propaganda ploy of distorting the past. But memory distortion and the fabrication of myths also occurs commonly in postcolonial situations where the creation of national identity is necessary to achieve political and cultural cohesion.

The contestability of memory has implications for the way particular cultural heritage sites have evolved over time. This in turn has implications for contemporary understanding and management of the built environment and sites of significance. Ashworth and Tunbridge (1996: 21) regard atrocity heritage as
'particularly prone to many types of dissonance'; however, while atrocity relates to the worst experiences of inhumanity, all places of pain and shame reveal dissonances, since there are always perpetrators and sufferers and their perceptions inevitably differ radically.

**Growing world interest**

There is a growing interest in the heritage associated with pain and shame at both international and national levels. At the international level, Paul Williams (2007) sees a 'seemingly unstoppable rise of memorial museums' (p. viii) as a 'global rush to commemorate atrocities' (Williams 2007). UNESCO listed Auschwitz as a World Heritage site in 1997 and the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Dome in 1997. Robben Island, the site of Nelson Mandela's imprisonment, was inscribed in 1999. The UNESCO Bangkok Office sees the forced migration of peoples as a useful new theme leading to new places being considered for World Heritage listing. Such a thematic approach, and this theme in particular, has value as a way of putting into operation its 'Global Strategy' of shifting the balance of the World Heritage List away from Western Europe and North America. The slave depot island of Gorée in Senegal was an early inscription (1978). The Australian Government submitted its convict sites as a serial site nomination in 2008 using this theme, and work is being done on the Shimoni caves in Kenya (Kiriama 2005) and other sites associated with the slave trade.

At the national level, the impress of tragedy and violence on landscape has been studied by scholars such as Foote (1997) categorising public responses to violence and tragedy in the United States in terms of sanctification, designation, rectification, and obliteration (pp. 7–8). In 2002 Australia ICOMOS and University of Tasmania co-hosted a conference at the Port Arthur convict prison site entitled 'Islands of Vanishment'. The conference theme was described as exploring the nuances of meaning and memory of such heritage places, which 'tell us much about our origins, history and past way of life. They also resonate with strong emotional themes of tragedy, injustice, endurance and sometimes redemption' (University of Tasmania 2002). It was at this conference that David Lowenthal presented his 'Tragic Traces on the Rhodian Shore' paper in which he outlined a variation on Foote's categories.

What drives this interest in places of past pain, shame, humiliation and the macabre? Clearly, 'atrocity tourism' is booming, a point that led Ashworth and Hartmann (2005) to revisit the management of atrocity sites for tourism. As Katie Young explains in her chapter in this book, more than a million tourists visit Auschwitz-Birkenau annually. Anne Frank's House in Amsterdam, the Daniel Libeskind-designed Jewish Museum in Berlin and other Holocaust memorial sites and museums are also major tourism destinations. Stasimuseum in the central East German Ministry of State Security in Berlin-Lichtenberg is another tourist attraction focusing on the more recent Cold War past. Is it to feel the collective shame, if not the personal pain?
It is said that, paradoxically, we are personally comforted by misfortune falling on others; we are the lucky ones, the survivors, the chosen. How could this apply to genocidal atrocities, the enormity of which one would hope is overwhelming to anyone with any degree of sensitivity? Holocaust sites are visited by Jewish families devastated by the Nazi regime but also by vast numbers of others with no personal connection. Have people become so desensitised by the pictures of horrific war scenes on television news, by Hollywood ‘adventure stories’ and body-blasting electronic games that sites such as these become mere entertainment or sites to tick off on the world tour? Governments, of course, back such tourism because it generates foreign revenue. Two hundred thousand people per year now travel to Australia’s Port Arthur. The pain and shame can be lost in the celebration of other, more commercial, values at sites that have become major tourist attractions.

Battlefield tourism has boomed, as Ryan’s 2007 book demonstrates. Governments, military groups and people who lost family members and close friends in wars over the last century have an interest in keeping memories alive, and war-related tourism to places like Flanders, Gallipoli and the Thai–Burma Railway has grown enormously in recent decades. The need to honour those who perished in World War II is clear and the various commemorations of the end of World War II, as well as the Vietnam War and other more recent conflicts, mean much to people today. Excavating the remains of soldiers missing in World War I over 90 years ago is less understandable since almost no-one alive today has first-hand connections with these men. It is of concern that the continuing focus on more distant conflicts may represent the use of heritage by governments wishing to shape social values along jingoistic lines, readying the population for new wars.

The question of at what point memories can be allowed to fade and memorialisation end is a complex and difficult one. So, too, is the question that faces some communities where it is seen to be important for community identity reasons to keep memories alive but where the generations which experienced the pain and suffering are passing away. How do such communities keep alive the memories for subsequent generations? Heightened commemorative activities, including university and public seminars, the writing of plays and novels, the making of films and television programmes, and the production of museum exhibitions, even the building of new memorial museums, have been among the strategies adopted. According to writers such as Hamilton (1994) and Huysen (1995), much of this has arisen in response to debates in Germany, France and Italy about World War II and, not surprisingly, Jewish scholars and artists have been at the forefront of much of this activity.

**Book structure: the experience of pain and shame**

The aim of the authors of this book is to broaden the interpretation of their case study sites, to take into account their multiple and contested ownership, and to unpack the different layers of meaning. The case studies range in age, size, histor-
ical origins and societal response. At one extreme, some places of pain and shame have come to be regarded with the passage of time as having a quasi-sacred status, often as reminders of the bitter stages of a society's evolution, and warnings of the potential that human beings have for inhumane actions towards one another. Sometimes, these places may come to be regarded as sites of an individual's or group's transcendence over the conditions of unjust treatment in times of war or of resistance to cruel and oppressive political regimes. In such cases there may be little or no dispute about their heritage significance, although the processes of achieving their effective interpretation, documentation and long-term protection remain difficult.

At the other end of the spectrum the book includes some places not celebrated until recently because of their association with pain and suffering in the past. Often today's communities are ashamed of these episodes or fear that probing into them may reopen divisions within the community. Such places frequently become the subject of calls for their demolition in order to erase the shame and fear associated with them. For this reason there is an urgent need to assist in clarifying the processes of identifying, documenting and, where appropriate, physically protecting significant sites that are threatened with obliteration.

In terms of typology, the case studies represent four major kinds of 'difficult' heritage places. Thus Part I of this volume offers five chapters that document the emergence, evolution and current state of massacre and genocide sites, while Part II includes four places related to war, either wartime internment camps or war memorials. Part III considers four civil and political prisons, and Part IV introduces places of 'benevolent' internment. There is not always a clear-cut distinction between the types, so that a place like Hiroshima (Chapter 2) is both a massacre site in which thousands of civilians were killed and a war-related place the bombing of which was justified on military strategic grounds by the perpetrators. The heritage in Timor-Leste flows out of a mixture of international war, massacres and civil strife. Hoa Lo Prison in Hanoi (Chapter 11) survived long enough to have performed several roles – a political prison under the French colonial authorities but later a war-related place housing downed American pilots during the Vietnam War.

**Massacre and genocide sites**

Qian Fengqi's chapter on the Nanjing Massacre Memorial examines the contested and highly politicised process of remembering/denying and interpreting this site of extreme violence, and explores the heritage of intra-Asian postcolonialism and the internationalisation of the rape of Nanjing through the construction and promotion of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial. The chapter shows that public commemoration of the atrocity throughout the twentieth century highlights the shifting attitudes towards what is remembered and how heritage practitioners interpret past violence in the present day. In neighbouring Japan, Yushi Utaka analyses, through a case study of Hiroshima, how the death of a city is remembered
and memorialised. Initially the Hiroshima Peace Memorial was ground zero, yet with time it has become a global shrine for peace with a contentious world heritage listing. This transformative process has in one respect reclaimed the site from its association with atrocity, and in turn enabled a less pervasive sense of remembering the bomb to endure in effect 'moving beyond difficult memories of the past' and to contribute to a reappraisal of Japanese national identity.

Katie Young's contribution on Auschwitz-Birkenau reviews the increasingly complicated heritage significance of a key genocide site. The contestability of interpreting heritage sites associated with pain and shame is examined with reference to the Polish resistance. A contrast to this is the case study of Anlong Veng associated with the genocide in Cambodia. Here Colin Long and Keir Reeves examine the recent efforts to make Anlong Veng, the last bastion of the Khmer Rouge and the site of Pol Pot's grave, into a heritage tourism destination. While the Cambodian government sees tourism as a way of reintegrating this desperately poor region back into a nation finally at peace, Long and Reeves argue that such a strategy reveals how limited are the economic development options for many developing nations. Anlong Veng's Khmer Rouge sites are presented in a historical and moral vacuum that does nothing to commemorate the atrocities committed in the movement's name: guides around some sites openly talk of their approval of Pol Pot and Ta Mok, the movement's military leader.

Both Long and Reeves' chapter and Young's chapter highlight the intersection of political and heritage agendas. However Anlong Veng remains under-researched and the authors' data is mostly limited to rally drivers' accounts and journalists' short political/travel stories. Furthermore the Cambodian conflict is recent, not only in respect of the genocide, but also in that the Khmer Rouge itself was active as recently as 1999. In another contrast with Auschwitz-Birkenau, Brownyn Batten's chapter examines the emotional power of an Indigenous massacre site, Myall Creek, that is older and smaller and, like Anlong Veng, little known by the general public outside the locality itself. This is partly explained by the tendency of postcolonial settler societies to adopt a stance of silence towards treatment of Indigenous Australians in relation to nineteenth-century frontier atrocities.

**War-related sites**

Ai Kobayashi and Bart Ziino explore the enduring contested nature of the Pacific war through the interpretation of the Japanese War Cemetery in the New South Wales town of Cowra. They uncover a hidden history of a little known war episode and show the difficulties faced by a local community in facilitating a process of healing and reconciliation through an overt attempt to memorialise a site of difficult heritage so soon after the conclusion of the war. This is also a feature of Michael Leach's chapter on Timor-Leste where the independence war against Indonesia is barely over and civil unrest between competing internal groups continues. Leach discusses the independence struggle itself as cultural heritage, focusing on efforts to conserve key Falintil sites. As well as the difficul-
ties deriving from the country's extremely limited resources, complexities result from the contestation over memories of the past held by the Portuguese and Indonesian colonial powers and the various communities within Timor-Leste. The key argument is best left in his own words: 'The cultural heritage landscape reflects a major fault line in post-independence politics, in that the contribution of younger East Timorese nationalists in the struggle for independence remains relatively neglected.'

The chapters by Chou Ching-Yuan and Joost Coté deal with the efforts to remember and memorialise the treatment of women in wartime, a subject that has to date received relatively little attention in heritage literature. In her study of Taiwanese comfort women during World War II, Chou explores the taboo of remembering and interpreting a site typified by systemic sexual violence, rape and exploitation of women, and the process of denial by the aggressor. Reading one of the sites—a cave in Shuiyuan Village—as a heritage site enables the sequence of events and victims' memories to emerge, in the process facilitating a redemptive process restoring honour as well as enabling the truth of the horror to emerge through a physical interpretation of the cave site. Coté's case study lies further south in Java. He uses the reading of internment sites as places of individual pain and national shame as the means to interpret the heritage of World War II women victims in Indonesia generally and to show the contestability of the past for constructions of national memory in the present day.

**Civil and political prisons**

The focus of the book shifts in Part III to civil and political prisons. The work of Michael Ignatieff (1978) is useful in order to establish why it came to be considered just, reasonable and humane to immure prisoners in solitary cells. Between 1770 and 1840 this form of carceral discipline 'directed at the mind' replaced a cluster of punishments 'directed at the body'—whipping, branding, the stocks and public hanging. The appearance of a new style of authority within the walls obviously must be linked to changes in class relations and social tactics outside the walls. Hence a study of prison discipline necessarily becomes a study, not simply of prisons, but of the moral boundaries of social authority in a society undergoing capitalist transformation.

Broader and longlasting implications for British and Australian societies followed through the introduction of a policy in which criminals were transported to remote convict settlements in the Antipodes. When the French adopted a similar policy, similar continuing links developed between metropolitan France and antipodean New Caledonia. In her chapter on Port Arthur, Norfolk Island and New Caledonia, Jane Lennon explores the global nature of the convict experience by an investigation of extensive management plans and the importance of site interpretation. Between 1848 and 1863 Port Arthur was a place for recidivists and political prisoners, a prison within a prison. Port Arthur has always been a place where visitors are moved emotionally, sometimes to tears, one of
few such cathartic locations in post-settlement Australia. Like Myall Creek, there are various levels of significance as Port Arthur is an important foundation for Tasmanians' shared sense of identity, evoking intense, and at times conflicting, feelings about who they are and their place in the world.

In his chapter Angel David Nieves investigates the intersection of heritage, politics and public memory in modern South Africa. He analyses places of pain as tools for achieving social justice, particularly in the nation's townships. Nieves contends that today communities struggle still to acknowledge their ignored or hidden histories. Sara McDowell's chapter is set in a different geographical and cultural hemisphere and yet the struggle to find interpretations of the past that encourage the development of a common identity is in many ways similar. She reads Long Kesh (also known as the Maze prison) as a place of pain and shame through an examination of the physical site and its master plan for redevelopment. She outlines both the politicisation of prisoners that flowed in large part from their prison employees' subjective experience of injustice and experience of the penal system. This intangible heritage was reflected physically in the architecture of the site which McDowell sees as confirming the prison's objective to oppress.

The proposal to make a place that housed some of the world's most dangerous terrorists and symbol of sectarian bloodshed into a new national sports stadium has generated much controversy. Some want to keep the prison as a microcosm of the conflict that will both enable reflection on past struggles and help to build future peace. One local politician from the Sinn Fein party, Paul Butler, went further to claim that 'Long Kesh is on a standing with Robben Island, Auschwitz and the Berlin Wall and we cannot afford to lose that history' (Smith 2003). A representative of the Northern Ireland Museums Council, on the other hand, explained that while her organisation recognises the need to preserve the site for future generations, it might be too early to turn it into a museum. Logan's Hoa Lo case study is similar in that the prison complex had outlived its usefulness, but, since Vietnam is one of the few remaining communist states with highly centralised political and administrative structures and a tradition of top-down decision-making, proposals to redevelop the site, turning part of it into a museum, were put forward without opposition and, therefore, quickly implemented. That was in the 1990s, however; since then 'creeping pluralism' has made it more possible for public officers to make statements about the past, including within the Hoa Lo museum, that reflect divergent interpretations.

'Benevolent' internment camps

Part IV sees the focus of study shift to 'benevolent' sites of incarceration where people have been incarcerated 'for their own good'. Examples include mental institutions and infectious disease control areas. The work of Michel Foucault reminds us of the psychological cost and social stigmatisation that occurs with benevolent incarceration. He argued (1991: 198), for instance, that 'the leper gives rise to rituals of exclusion, which to a certain extent provided the model
for and general form of the great confinement. ... The leper was caught up in the practice of rejection.' In her chapter 'Beauty springing from the breast of pain', however, Spencer Leineweber highlights how sites of benevolent incarceration, such as her case study site of Kalaupapa on northern Molokai in the Hawaiian Islands, can be read as a site of pain and shame. Human trauma is not always as easily identified as it is in most of the other cases in this volume and, when it was proposed that the Kalaupapa peninsula should become a national park, the residents were adamant that they wanted to stay on and that their settlement be left 'undisturbed and uncommercialized' (Yong 2003). The patients wanted visitors to know about not only the segregation and suffering of Kalaupapa, but also the lives of the patients. For the residents the process of reclaiming the dignity of their personal story is an important aspect of interpreting the site for future.

Just as some people questioned the opening up of a leper colony to the general public as a national park, so too, in their case study of the Kew Asylum in Melbourne, Keir Reeves and David Nichols indicate that many people find uncomfortable the way in which this iconic Victorian-era 'lunatic asylum' has been put to new uses, in this case as a middle-class residential complex. Nevertheless the adaptive re-use project appears to have been successful and the authors suggest that 'the consolations of the development's cost and exclusivity' cushion [the new occupants] ... from what otherwise might be oppressive or sinister associations with madness and its treatment'.

In the book's final chapter, Sara Wills highlights a tension that resonates through many chapters of this book – a tension between the known and the unknown, the member of the group and the stranger. Esses et al. (2001: 390) read out from this personally experienced tension to see a wide gap between social ideals and policies in support of multiculturalism and those relating to global openness, observing that 'prejudice and bias not only toward minority groups within a country but towards immigrants from other countries still characterize the attitudes of many individuals and nations still carefully restrict immigration'. Although these observations are about Australian society, ideals and policies, they have relevance to many countries around the world, especially in the aftermath of New York's Twin Towers catastrophe in 2001. Wills examines the consistent official denial of racial discrimination in Australian immigration administrative systems and argues that refugee detention centres are effectively prisons (see also Jupp 2002: 8). She contrasts the Woomera refugee centre, only recently closed, with the Bonegilla migrant camp of the post-World War II years and, in doing so, she shows how the cultural politics of emotion is a way that certain histories remain alive. National shame, Wills concludes, is tied to a history of individual migrants hurting. This situation where the personal is also political occurs commonly throughout the case studies in this book and has important implications for the process of heritage interpretation and memorialisation.
Implications for professional practice

Drawing on sites from different areas and cultural contexts the book is intended as a cross-cultural comparative study that identifies heritage values of these ‘difficult’ places and explains the ways in which these values can be interpreted and conserved. The case studies in the book have been organised according to the commonality of experience, which is not, of course, to suggest that all cases are equal or even similar in the degree of barbarity displayed by the perpetrators. The case studies also show the way that societies and heritage professionals have responded differently to the difficult sites in their midst. It is very clear that the interpretation, conservation and management of former places of pain and shame present a particular set of challenges for heritage practitioners. Like all professions, the heritage profession does not operate in a vacuum; its individual members and, more slowly, its institutions respond to shifts in community attitudes and interests – in this instance to the growing urge to explore memory, to remember the past, to re-interpret old stories to suit new times and to commemorate and memorialise.

But a discourse has developed within the profession itself which has a powerful momentum of its own. From an initial monumental approach heritage protection activities moved into heritage precincts with the Loi Malraux 1962 and English towns following the Civic Amenities Act 1967. The powerful World Heritage system was established in 1972, with its dual focus on natural and cultural places. By the 1990s attempts to move away from the Eurocentric concentration on castles, cathedrals and historic towns led the World Heritage Committee to begin inscribing cultural landscapes. UNESCO under Director-General Koichiro Matsuura then broadened the concept further by venturing into the listing, protection and encouragement of intangible forms of cultural heritage – essentially performance skills – again hoping that this would better serve those parts of the world not well represented in the tangible heritage lists and programmes. This trajectory is reflected in global, national and local heritage conventions, laws and guidelines and in the heritage education programs in universities.

The broadening of the cultural heritage concept with which this book deals – a broadening that allows heritage claims to be made for places of pain and shame, the ugly side of history – reflects both the shifts in community interests and the trajectory of change within the profession. But such broadening requires a new philosophical grounding. A key issue raised is whether there are limits to what places from the past we should keep, and, if so, what they are. Part of the difficulty flows from the general adoption of an anthropological definition of culture by UNESCO and the World Heritage system: when all forms of social behaviour can be regarded as part of one’s ‘culture’, setting limits on the concern and purview of the cultural heritage profession becomes problematic. Thus even political behaviour like Ku Klux Clan rituals can be seen as a cultural manifestation – one example of many cultural forms held to be important by communities and groups within various countries. It was no doubt simpler when cultural heritage had a narrower definition focusing on the exotic, the
traditional and the artistic – but then that fails to capture the complexity and richness of human existence.

How would we justify the exclusion of places promoted by their local communities or governments? Recourse to the principles of human rights is one way, but this does not cover all cases (Logan 2007, 2008). In their chapter on Anlong Veng, Long and Reeves offer a further answer, arguing that ‘the purpose of heritage preservation in the case of places of pain and shame is to commemorate the victims’ and therefore ‘there is little role for the preservation of perpetrator sites’. Young’s chapter highlights another requirement of good professional practice in dealing with difficult heritage places – the need to take into account all of the victims of pain and shame associated with a place and to find ways for all to explore their memories and have their stories told. Former director of the World Heritage Centre, Bernd von Droste, once commented that ‘Some sites are so difficult to manage that they are not managed.’ In the case of some sites with various, contrasting meanings to different racial and ethnic groups no-one dares manage on behalf of all the stakeholders. Multireligious sites in many parts of the world are also challenging, especially where the ownership and control has moved from one religion to another in the past. How do heritage professionals act as mediators in situations where values conflict? While the professional response might be to look for ways to see the sites as ‘shared heritage’ or at least to tell parallel interpretative stories about them, often the national or communal politics does not allow this. Cemeteries require sensitive treatment, too. For some religions a cemetery needs management; for other religions burial places are left alone. In the case of genocide sites, the crime against the Jews was so great that other victim groups feel displaced. What sort of training is required when dealing with stakeholders for whom the place remains a source of acute anguish? Young tells us about recent moves to allow a co-existence of values, although it is fair to say that many of the difficulties of dealing with the concentration and death camps at Auschwitz-Birkenau have been side-stepped by a managing the site principally as a place to educate future generations in how societies should not behave.

Given the complicity of governments in perpetrating episodes of pain and shame, it is not surprising that many today continue to resist efforts by community groups and heritage professionals, either within the country concerned or at an international level, to explore the past, to tell a fuller story, especially one that focuses on the victims. There is always a danger that only those places that reflect the official interpretation of historical events are likely to be commemorated and that those places that do not reflect the ideology of the regime in power or the dominant social, ethnic or racial group are neglected. How do heritage professionals respond in such circumstances? Accepting work under such regimes may be seen by critics as sharing in their complicity. In some cases it may be appropriate to continue working in the hope that the political situation will improve and the full significance of the sites of pain and shame can be revealed.

Many of the case studies in this volume demonstrate the need for heritage practitioners to take into account the broader ideological role that heritage sites
have and to recognise that official interpretations will vary over time. Qian, Utaka and Logan see close but changing links between state ideology and museum and memorial policies in China, Japan and Vietnam respectively. Nieves, McDowell and Leach deal with situations in South Africa, Northern Ireland and Timor Leste where conflict continues to break out or the memory of it is still raw. Heritage conservation activities under such circumstances can usefully become tools of conflict management, helping to build in a sense of shared national identity. National economic conditions are also important and heritage protection is clearly more difficult in less developed countries, such as Timor-Leste, Cambodia, Bosnia or Kosovo, especially when the heritage sites are places of pain and shame and the objects of ambiguous public sentiment. It is difficult sometimes for heritage professionals to recognise that heritage conservation is of low government priority in the face of extreme poverty and it is important to find ways to use heritage projects to generate employment in physical restoration and maintenance and through pro-poor cultural tourism.

Another set of difficulties raised in several chapters of this book relates to changes in the level of significance attributed to sites. Sometimes the local community may refuse to accept national or world interest in their past. Norfolk Island, one of the convict settlements discussed in Lennon’s chapter, initially waged a campaign against being included in a convict serial sites nomination to the World Heritage Committee, fearing the political implications this would have. Batten describes the moves afoot to make a place that has been primarily of local significance, Myall Creek, into a national site representing all Aboriginal massacre sites. She is concerned that the detail, accuracy and emotion of the local story may be lost in the process. Wills discusses the Bonegilla migrant camp that is now portrayed as representative of Australian migrant camps in general. The Cowra war cemetery discussed by Kobayashi and Ziino has assumed international status by becoming a site representing reconciliation between once warring nations. In many ways it is a model of best professional practice, although it would appear that Japanese and Australian visitors, while politely acknowledging one another, interpret the site differently and may take away different messages.2 Chou’s cave in Taiwan seems to be valued more highly by a national group, the Taipei Women’s Rescue Foundation, than by the local community, necessitating an awareness-raising campaign among local residents if conservation of the heritage site is to be sustainable. Leineweber’s chapter shows how it is possible, with sensitive consultative and planning processes, for the local community to maintain a satisfactory degree of control over the reclassification of their site as a national park, its opening up to the general public and associated publicity and commercialisation that this will entail.

In other instances it is at the national government level, rather than within the community, that resistance to heritage inscription and protection schemes occurs. Changes of government can, of course, change the situation, as with the way in which the Woomera refugee internment camp in South Australia might be considered as ‘heritage’ by the Howard Government and its successor, the
Rudd Government (elected 2007). Sometimes a national community can agree that a site reflecting a painful episode in its history should be protected but the site is located in another country. Côté’s internment sites in Indonesia are a case in point: there is national shame about the treatment of Dutch female civilians during World War II and Dutch authorities are permitted a role in memorialising those who suffered. In Vietnam, the French and Australian dead from the Battle of Dien Bien Phu and Vietnam War are permitted to have official memorial sites, but not yet the Americans. The Dutch and Commonwealth dead are honoured at war cemeteries and memorials along the Thai–Burma Railway, even though the railway is an almost forgotten episode in Thai history producing little if any emotional response on the part of most Thai visitors. That the Australian Government was able to construct the Hellfire Pass memorial museum reflects the generally strong bilateral relations between the two countries rather than any great emotional commitment to the war heritage, which is essentially seen as non-Thai. On the other hand, the Australians tended to commandeer the Hellfire Pass story, and its initial museum interpretative strategy had to be substantially modified following objections from other countries whose citizens suffered along the railway.

Foreign professionals can avoid or at least minimise problems such as these by adopting a sensitive cross-cultural negotiation approach in all stages of the commemoration process, remembering that they are working on someone else’s land. The same requirement applies, in fact, to all heritage conservation practice where groups from different jurisdictions are involved. This means that, among other things, the education of heritage professionals in universities and other training organisations must include how to deal with stakeholders for whom the particular heritage site remains a source of acute anguish and where various different yet equally valid interpretations can be made. Interaction with the community is indispensable. So, too, is recognition that the context in which professionals work is political. Heritage conservation is a form of cultural politics; it is about the links between ideology, public policy, national and community identity formation, and celebration, just as much as it is about technical issues relating to restoration and adaptive re-use techniques. This view of heritage and its implications for practice is one of the many fundamental issues explored by the authors in this book.

Notes
1 Comment made when chairing a session at the conference on ‘Heritage Education: Capacity Building in Heritage Management’, Brandenburg Technical University, Cottbus, Germany, 15 June 2006.
2 This possibility was suggested by Dr Keiko Tamura, Project Manager, Australia–Japan Research Project, Military History Section, Australian War Memorial, in a personal communication, Canberra, 23 June 2008.
References


