

Things and Patterns – from Pyramiden to Patagonia

Festschrift in honor of Professor
Hein Bjartmann Bjerck

Birgitte Skar, Heidi Breivik og Martin Callanan (red.)



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Om forfatterne / The authors

Birgitte Skar Department of Archaeology and Cultural History, NTNU University Museum
Kjel Knutsson Department of Archaeology, Ancient History and Conservation, University of Uppsala

Helena Knutsson Stoneslab, Uppsala

Heidi Mjelva Breivik Department of Archaeology and Cultural History, NTNU University Museum

Martin E. Callanan Department of Historical and Classical Studies, NTNU

Leif Inge Åstveit Section for Cultural Heritage Management, University Museum of Bergen

Knut Andreas Bergsvik University Museum, University of Bergen

David Simpson University Museum, University of Bergen

Hanne Årskog University Museum, University of Bergen

Silje E. Fretheim Department of Archaeology and Cultural History, NTNU University Museum

Trond Klungseth Lødøen Department of Cultural History, University of Bergen

Daryl Fedje Hakai Institute and University of Victoria Anthropology Department, Canada

Christopher F.G. Hebda Hakai Institute, Victoria, Canada

Duncan McLaren Hakai Institute and University of Victoria Anthropology Department, Canada

Astrid J. Nyland Museum of Archaeology, University of Stavanger

Atilio Francisco Zagrandó Centro Austral de Investigaciones Científicas (CADIC-CONICET), Argentina

Angélica M. Tivoli Centro Austral de Investigaciones Científicas (CADIC-CONICET), Argentina

Jo Sindre P. Eidshaug Department of Archaeology and Cultural History, NTNU University Museum

Bjørnar J. Olsen Department of Archaeology, History, Religious Studies and Theology, The Arctic University of Norway

Mats Burström Department of Archaeology and Classical Studies, Stockholm University

Terje Brattli Department of Archaeology and Cultural History, NTNU University Museum

Ragnar Vennatrø Trondheim

Christopher Witmore Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Literatures, Texas Tech University

Heidrun Stebergløkken Department of Historical and Classical Studies, NTNU

Axel Christophersen Department of Archaeology and Cultural History, NTNU University Museum

Elin S. Sandbakk NTNU University Museum

Elin Andreassen Hertling & Andreassen, Trondheim

Ann-Cathrin Hertling Hertling & Andreassen, Trondheim

Walking Down Memory Lane to the Sound of Bombs and Shells

Axel Christophersen

Memory emerges from the mutual engagement between person and world

ANDREW JONES 2007, 27

Things, memory and remembrance

The remnants of ancient lives, extending over millennia, have evoked enlightenment and contemplation in Hein, prompting introspection and inquiry regarding the potential for human existence and survival through material objects. Hein's perspective is that material objects create engagement in the daily lives of individuals that transcends the many everyday practical obstacles they are made to overcome. They actively influence our lives by providing a framework for the integration of memories and creation of remembrance from our own and our ancestors' lives into our own presence in the world. These realized memories serve as the foundation for our intentions, objectives, plans, and dreams for the future.

Objects and monuments are important parts of our tangible cultural legacy. Residential houses, places of worship, stupas, bridges, castles, etc. are all examples of elaborate creations that evoke recollections of current and distant historical events. Physical representations of memories are represented by elaborate constructions as well as by simple everyday objects, which are crucial in the inescapable fusion of current conditions and past events. Nevertheless, objects are not merely containers of memories, they also induce remembrance which unfolds and stimulates emotions, experiences, and sentiments of affection that have had an enduring personal impact on life (Jones 2007:31–32). The relationship between people and objects is intricate, and its complete potential is fully realized through the engagement or tangible interaction between the two. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which objects cause remembrance, it is necessary to comprehend the ways in which they are intertwined with social practices (Jones 2007:32). In summary, things as actors in social action establish remembrance and affectionate connections between individuals, their

past, and their surroundings. Following on from the discussion above about relationships between things and people, one can ask whether the same mechanisms are relevant if things/objects are replaced with monumental constructions and/or man-made landscapes and environments.

From external experiences to internal emotions

Hein has carried out substantial research on human–thing interactions, leading to a comprehension of their personalized manifestations and implications in our lives. In the book *Persistent Memories. Pyramiden: A Soviet Mining Town in the High Arctic* (2010), Hein collaborated with Bjørnar Olsen and Elin Andreassen to explore the relationship between a modern site, Pyramiden, a dilapidated Russian industrial town on Spitzbergen, and the prevailing notions of heritage. To what extent does the subject's conspicuous placement within the untouched Arctic environment influence our perception and appreciation of it (Andreassen et al. 2010:23)? What was the experience like? An external, objectified construction or an internal, emotional experience? This statement raises questions about how cultural monuments are perceived, experienced, and understood in contemporary society, all subjects that Hein and his colleagues investigated and reflected on during their field research in the deserted mining town of Pyramiden on Svalbard. Hein's book *Archaeology at Home* (2022) delves further into the subject of past material remains, their significance, and their influence on the present by examining the materiality of his own close family and childhood home. In this it appears that Hein's focus has shifted – or developed – from viewing objects and the material environment



Figure 1 and 2. From 1992 until 1996, Kabul's historic districts experienced intense conflict among mujahideen factions during the Taliban's control. Twenty-five thousand individuals perished, and centuries-old edifices were looted and obliterated. Numerous families have been displaced from their residences, disrupted in their routines, deprived of finances, and severed from their social networks. Since 2002, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) and Turquoise Mountain (since 2006) have engaged in conservation, enhancement, and artisan training. The first photograph depicts a restored aristocratic mansion in the Asheqan wa Arefan neighbourhood, whereas the photograph below illustrates the remnants of a comparable building in the same region, remaining in ruins following the civil war in November 2007. The proprietor has relocated to the USA and has not returned. Photo: Axel Christophersen, NTNU University Museum

from an external perspective to recognizing them as integral components of his own life, and that of others. In *Archaeology at Home*, he investigates the way in which objects from the past assist him in consolidating memories from his family's life, thereby embodying his father's presence in the world even when he is absent. Hein's story about his family's belongings and houses is thought-provoking and demonstrates in a brutally honest fashion that things are not only "memory containers" and memorial representations of the past, but are also catalysts for emotional remembrance of past life, as well as being valuable objective sources on how past everyday challenges were overcome with the resources, knowledge, and imagination available. This brings us to the question of whether things, from tiny objects to vast monuments and man-made landscapes, are sources for learning. If so, what do we learn? Or rather, what do we want to learn?

"Situated knowledge" – ignored or unidentified?

The mundane elements of our daily existence are grounded in historical and cultural contexts, thus serving as valuable sources for our ongoing personal understanding of "being in the world". Through personal and/or shared interactions with material objects we can access alternative realms and perceive the profundity of time and spatial distances. The interplay between material objects and memory substantiates the assertion that these encounters are crucial components in the formation of what the American professor of feminist studies Donna Haraway denotes as "situated knowledge":

All Western cultural narratives about objectivity are allegories of the ideologies governing the relations of what we call mind and body, distance and responsibility. Feminist objectivity is about limited location and situated knowledge, not about transcendence and splitting of subject and object. It allows us to become answerable for what we learn how to see ... (Haraway 1988:582–583).

"Situated knowledge" develops when individuals engage in specific contexts where knowledge is practiced, experienced, and adapted, thereby becoming culturally, historically, and geographically "situated". In the same way, John Dewey, a prominent American philosopher and psychologist, maintains that learning happens via individual experience because of social

interaction with the environment. Haraway's concept of "situated knowledge" is a parallel to Dewey's understanding of the conditions for learning from material remains in that she emphasizes person-oriented situated understanding as an active and integral component of the knowledge generation process. She does not reject the existence of so-called "objective knowledge", but she does argue for the possibility of another, equally relevant knowledge that is socially and culturally contextualized and hence subject-specific. Furthermore, Dewey asserts that "...if knowledge comes from the impressions made upon us by objects, it is impossible to produce knowledge without the use of objects which impress the mind" (Dewey 1916/2009:217–218). Here Dewey indicates a central property of material objects that transcends their functional and symbolic properties, namely their learning potential: since material objects have entered various social practices, they also have a learning and memory potential for such practices (Jones 2007:225).

Hein's reflections about his father's things and how they influence his own life can stand as an example of *situated knowledge*: Hein's reflections illuminate how "his father's things" unfold within a specific social context and how the past material objects participate as actors in the construction of Hein's self-image by virtue of the past he bears inside himself and shares with the same objects. Situated knowledge is, in my view, neglected as valuable information about and insight into how individuals establish person-specific relationships to material remains as "authorized heritage", as the term is explained and used by Laurajane Smith: "...aesthetically pleasing material objects, sites, places and/or landscapes that current generations 'must' care for, protect and revere so that they may be passed to nebulous future generations for their 'education' and to forge a sense of common identity based on the past" (Smith 2006: 29). In the subsequent section this will be a subject for reflection and discussion, with a particular focus on authorized tangible heritage in conflict areas and as World Heritage Sites.

Shared things, shared memories

Hein's family's possessions and Pyramiden are both tangible remnants that possess the potential to retain and convey memories from the past. Conversely, they are integrated, as they can be identified in distinct "memorial settings", both in private and public spheres. We must, however, have a clearer understanding of how private and public remembrance are intertwined



Figure 3. In the settlement of Toop Darra, there is a massive, half-collapsed stupa deep in the mountains. The natural and cultural landscapes combine to create an immersive experience with outstanding aesthetic and historical significance. The stupa in Toop Darra is a Buddhist landmark worth preserving, but a lack of care and funding because of the war for protection from rains, frost, and erosion jeopardizes its continued survival. During our visit to Toop Darra in Nov. 2007, youngsters were playing near the stupa and had commenced excavating beneath the foundations in search of buried gold riches. As old narratives asserts... Photo: Axel Christophersen, NTNU University Museum



Figure 4. The bombardment of Kabul by Soviet soldiers from the surrounding mountains devastated the once elegant suburb of Darul Aman, reducing it to rubble, debris, and twisted metal, where the Old Royal Arul Daman Palace, Kabul Museum, and various embassies were situated. The museum was a significant institution in Central Asia, with over 100,000 artefacts from Persian, Buddhist, and Islamic periods. The Taliban obliterated and looted 2,750 invaluable artworks of significant historical interest. Currently, 20% of the museum's original collections have been returned. Taliban gained financial benefit from the sale of numerous museum artefacts, while the royal palace, a substantial dilapidated structure in the background, was consumed by fire. Today, the Darul Aman Palace has been reconstructed and "emerges from ruins as a symbol of peace." (Saalam Times, August 16, 2019). Photo: Axel Christophersen, NTNU University Museum

and how they mutually influence each other in the construction and development of identity through shared memories. Identity is regarded as a fundamental attribute of physical cultural monuments, encompassing both items and structures. Nonetheless, this relationship is not immediately apparent, particularly if one fails to consider that physical cultural monuments serve not simply as public memorials at a national or international level, but also have historically been integral to local communities, such as villages or tribal regions (Smith 2006:30; Wienberg 2021:211–2017). When Hein associates memories with little, inconspicuous objects, the remembrance of these things evokes emotions connected to fundamental and formative aspects of his existence, reinforcing the significance of experiences that have shaped his identity and “being in the world”. However, as previously mentioned, physical objects, regardless of their size or significance, are integral components of social practices (Shove et al. 2014:22–26). Their interconnection with other elements of the praxis

pattern, specifically meaning and knowledge, imparts a “memory potential” that transcends the individual or a specific historical period (Jones 2007:225). Although Hein’s father’s things, such as the small stub of a pencil from his father’s pocket, were small and inconspicuous seen from the outside and belonged to a narrow place and time, they were nevertheless entangled with fragments of the world outside the house, because they had all played a role in his family’s various social practices that unfolded at home, at work, on trips, etc. Consequently, even the most diminutive thing within a private domain encapsulates hints and traces from the vast external world, and as such inevitably internalizes the outside world in the individual’s Memory Lane. These wireless, invisible, but emotionally present associations with past memorable situations bring fragments of a past world into the present domain, thereby becoming an essential multifaceted component of Hein’s remembrance of his past life. However, such “dendritic memories” complicate the perception of memories associated with a

specific place and particular time, as they invariably encompass something beyond a confined, individual sphere. As a result, the identity that is linked to home, family, and kin often (but not necessary always) reaches beyond what immediately is triggered by a view of an object from past times; it is inextricably connected to broader contexts that are relevant to the wider world. This problematizes the notion of “heritage sites” combined with “history”: a cultural-historical monument is intrinsically physically linked to the place of its founding, functioning as an intrinsic aspect of the lives and identities of all people who have relations to it. Equipped with Haraway’s notion of “situated knowledge”, shared memories connected with heritage objects do not necessarily overlap each other; on the contrary, they might differ according to individual social and cultural experiences and relations to the objects or environments in question, and so trigger different emotional reactions. Transferred to a densely populated environment, or a “crowded context”, the Past (with a capital P) will consequently constitute itself with *multifaceted narratives*. If so, a heritage site does not represent *one* specific history, but rather many individually entangled *narratives*. If this hypothesis is anything more than a loose reconstruction, it is essential to distinguish between the individual’s “*dendritic memories of past times*” and the institutionalized or authorized history of the heritage site in question, which at best is a reconstructed history of past realities.

From objects at home to World Heritage monuments: a loss of the personal “Memory Lane”?

When trying to employ “awareness” of local heritage amongst local heritage environments as a strategy for guaranteeing the preservation and safeguarding of cultural monuments that are particularly susceptible to conflict and war (see below), this distinction is pivotal. Those who have lived with past remains as a vital part of their lives and identities experience great suffering when objects become authorized through public decisions or, even worse, are destroyed in wars and conflicts, because they forfeit something deeply intertwined with their personal memories associated with these structures. The disparity between the enriching personal remembrance associated with objects at home and the institutionalized heritage policy that establishes authorized heritage sites, and defines the one and only “big narrative” of the past, at the same



Figure 5. Mez Aynak, a 40-hectare complex of Buddhist monasteries, copper mines, and a copperworkers’ settlement in Logar Province, Kabul, thrived from the 5th to the 7th century AD. In 2007, the China Metallurgical Group and the Afghan Ministry reached an agreement to extract copper from one of the world’s largest copper mines, posing a significant threat to the region’s critically vital cultural heritage. Ironically, these monasteries were responsible for introducing Buddhism to China. A rescue archaeology initiative from 2009 to 2013 engaged archaeologists globally, although encountered numerous challenges. In 2013, the archaeologists were forced to abandon hundreds of statues, wall murals, inscriptions, and unique timber artefacts to destruction. In July 2024, the journal “Diplomat” claimed that China and the Taliban leadership had reached an agreement to resume copper mining operations. On October 9, 2024, “The Art Newspaper” reported favorable news: A Chinese company’s copper extraction in Mes Aynak will prevent harm to artefacts. Photo: Axel Christophersen, NTNU University Museum

time as entangling the past material environment with furnishings and installations that aim to capitalize on cultural heritage and thus alienate and create distance to the past remains, is both ignorant and thought-provoking: Derek Gillman asserts that “... Heritage is profoundly associated with the truth we tell about ourselves” (Gillman 2006: 3). If so, the one-dimensionality of authorized cultural heritage management, particularly on a global scale, jeopardizes or diminishes the potentials of locals and individuals to internalize “their” heritage as individualized objects of remembrance regardless of their significance as “World Heritage Sites”. Furthermore, what occurs with the monuments listed as UNESCO World Heritage when they become encircled by numerous safety and security measures, souvenir vendors, entrance fees, and, more



Figure 6 and 7. Approximately 2000 edifices from the Bagan Empire's capital, spanning from AD 1044 to AD 1287, are located on Myanmar's affluent Bagan plain, situated along a bend of the Ayeyarwady River (photo 6). Since the mid-1990s, the Myanmar military government has endeavored to establish this area as a tourism hub by constructing a luxury hotel, spa, artificial lake, golf course, and airport highway (photo 7). Numerous remarkable structures were thoughtlessly and unwisely restored to enhance their visual appeal for the purpose of attracting tourists. Consequently, the cultural relics were diminished to mere backdrops for a commercial tourism offering. Subsequent to these steps, Bagan was delisted from UNESCO's World Heritage List; however, it was reinstated following legal reforms and guarantees that the site would be safeguarded by the practices and dedication of the religious communities and local populace.

Photo: Axel Christophersen, NTNU University Museum

detrimentally, queues and access routes, and worst of all, when the monuments and landscape suffer deterioration due to mass tourism? Such conditions reduce the potential for the individuals deeply related to the monuments to walk unhindered along their personal Memory Lane, and thus reduce the overall quality of local life. Such changes in the physical environment around heritage sites are due to the increasingly extensive use of methods and tools aimed at ensuring safety and security as well as facilitating economic exploitation of the heritage monuments. Behind this development lies escalating tourism and the local need for financial gain, together with the fact that heritage sites are employed politically to mitigate tensions in our dynamic era of globalization, where time and place are no longer inherently stable components of individual existence. Jes Wienberg has characterized the World Heritage concept as an “Archimedean point” (Wienberg 2021:25–29), as it encapsulates the fundamental principles of institutional heritage management globally, articulating the interrelationship between place, monument, and distinctive “big narratives”, while simultaneously enabling the commercialization of heritage sites. Cultural and natural environmental heritage, and particularly the interplay of these two fundamental factors inherent in all societies’ existence, significantly influences the current unpredictable global dynamics affecting life circumstances and lifestyles. The striking increase in interest in preserving cultural monuments and making them accessible to the public is attributed to a notion that *the Past* is essential for the establishment of identity, affinity, and cognizable time depth. In recent decades this approach has appeared as a widely practiced cultural and political strategy, obviously fuelled by global migrations, cultural contradictions, unequal resource distribution, and escalating climate-related natural disasters: in a world that is chaotic and lacks a sense of direction and fixed points of reference, the post-modern society appears to be in search of historic roots in order to endure. However, as we have attempted to articulate above, it prevents, or at the very least makes it difficult, to foster regular and free interaction with local historic remains that are subject to the political and practical interventions of authorized heritage management. This is done to prevent mass tourism from devouring the unsustainable heritage resources. Regrettably, a contradiction between intentions and anticipated outcomes is apparent in this endeavour to leverage the past to promote stability and mitigate rootlessness and loss of identity. To summarize this argument: it

is my contention that the multitude of infrastructure surrounding authorized heritage sites, related to preservation, logistics, and facilitating mass tourism, can cultivate a sense of remoteness and alienation which is significant enough to affect individual remembrance and physical interaction with historical remains and/or environments. If so, this should influence the manner in which professional cultural heritage administrators communicate with local residents regarding awareness and preservation of their own heritage resources. It is likely that a more comprehensive understanding of the local people’s experiences of being excluded from their physical heritage by legal, safety-related, and physical barriers will generate more inspiration and motivation than solely focusing on the significance of the heritage monuments and their specific requirements. This is critical for understanding how authorized cultural heritage management works, along with the knowledge foundation on which preservation and initiatives for communication are implemented within that regime. Laurajane Smith’s book *Emotional Heritage: Visitor Engagement at Museums and Heritage Sites* (2021) presents an in-depth investigation of this subject.

The intrinsic contradiction in cultural heritage

One could hypothesize that having a distinct and unmistakable mooring in the past is indicative of a search for a stable foundation in one’s existence. If this is the case, tangible cultural heritage serves this function in our collective memory, in contrast to the private belonging of Hein’s family, which played a role in the development of a private and individual sense of belonging and identity through personalized remembrance. But this is not the only way heritage affects the human mind and triggers actions: cultural heritage possesses a dual nature, with both good and negative dimensions. “Thus, while heritage can unite, it can also divide”, it has been claimed (Silverman et al. 2007:3). This is one of the many contradictions linked to globalized cultural heritage management: while functioning as markers of identity in some situations, cultural heritage monuments and objects do not necessarily generate a sense of unity and affinity in others – on the contrary. Cultural heritage sites located in areas with opposing cultural, religious, or ideological beliefs are frequently caught in the crossfire when identity and belonging are properties used to weaken the enemy’s resilience and will to fight. The same potential for negative emotional agency also exists for things belonging



Figure 8 and 9. The Rakhine, or Arakan kingdom was established between 1429 and 1434 following the dissolution of the Pagan Empire and persisted until 1784/1785. The capital was Mrauk-U, which was one of Asia's wealthiest cities due to its strategic location close to the Bay of Bengal. Mrauk-U, acknowledged as a cultural heritage site in Asia, is difficult to access; the final leg of the journey requires a half-day boat excursion deep into the bustling delta. The majority of Mrauk-U's royal palace and 700 pagodas and temples are overgrown and in a severely deteriorated state of preservation (photo 8). Peasants inhabit villages and work hard on the vegetable fields that are interspersed with ruins. This is a World Heritage Site which is endangered by rampant tourism, significant new construction, including a railway line, inadequate upkeep, looting, and violent conflicts. Residents have denounced the administration for its neglect of this distinctive cultural heritage environment, although their concerns are disregarded as these are not considered "Myanmar" cultural treasures. However, the monks rejuvenate certain monasteries and solicit sustenance from the surrounding populace (photo 9). The monks and townspeople inhabit a culturally meaningful environment with substantial identity and emotional resonance, severely neglected by the authorities, obviously to culturally suppress the Rakhine minority. Photo: Axel Christophersen, NTNU University Museum.

to the private spheres. This is why, for example, close relatives become enemies in inheritance settlements, fighting over objects that several of them want precisely because they are essential for family identity and familial belonging. Regardless of whether the context is private or public, and the objects are classed as World Heritage monuments or objects of local significance, the objects accompanying us down Memory Lane are intertwined with emotional connections, often at a profound and personal level. In *Archaeology at home*, Hein provides us with a depiction of the material world encompassing objects, structures, and natural environments that evoke a profound emotional connection to a past where the remembrance of people and events that are close to him intertwine past and present, thereby influencing his identity and self-image. For me the main effect of the book is its impact on my interactions with, and experiences of, heritage sites and monuments in areas of war and conflict, where they are subjected to destruction, used for propaganda, and commercialised to fund continued fighting. They are protected by international treaties, organizations, and physical infrastructure, but nevertheless the media's coverage of the

devastation of heritage sites in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and other conflict zones primarily emphasizes the loss of *global* heritage value, while neglecting to acknowledge that the most significant loss is experienced by those who have inhabited these cultural monuments, environments and sites as integral components of their physical surroundings. The demolition of a global heritage site is a significant loss for the authorized heritage system; yet, for individuals who have coexisted with these monuments for generations, the devastation constitutes a personal loss that impacts their quality of life, both emotionally and practically. Finally, I will briefly discuss this issue drawing on my own encounters with heritage in conflict zones.

Afghanistan, the Taliban and The Heritage in Conflict project

The Taliban, under Mullah Omar's leadership, destroyed two Buddha sculptures in Afghanistan's Bamiyan Valley in March 2001, an occurrence that had considerable personal ramifications. This religiously driven act was considered despicable by global society. Upon reading

about it in the press, I could hardly fathom that such a catastrophic event could befall a treasured heritage site, and the rationale provided by Mullah Omar only intensified my response. However, a review of European history reveals a similar pattern, as it can be said that the Catholic churches in Europe endured significant adversity during the Reformation due to unyielding persecution by Protestant leaders, leading to iconoclasm and the destruction of invaluable ecclesiastical art that had been preserved for generations, which we shall not enter into further here (regarding iconoclasm, see i.a. Jenkins 2023). The fundamental causes of these devastations were rooted in religious extremism, akin to that currently exhibited by the Taliban; yet, the passage of time has obscured this horrific reality, which inflicted lasting harm on Europe's material cultural heritage. However, the demolition of the two Buddha statues signified the beginning of increased awareness of the annihilation of cultural heritage as a strategy in conflict areas to weaken local morale and loyalty. One positive outcome of the event's aftermath was UNESCO's observation that it highlighted the fundamental links between heritage preservation and the well-being of individuals and communities.

The Taliban's demolition of the two Buddha statues initiated a prolonged personal discourse on the phenomenon of heritage destruction in war-torn regions: how and why is heritage obliterated, what are the underlying motivations, and what are the repercussions in the post-war context? In 2007, social anthropologist Kim Sørenssen and the present author launched a project funded externally, partly by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, named *Heritage in Danger*, to address the systematic destruction of cultural assets in Afghanistan and other areas of conflict and war which have received insufficient media attention and contextualization. It was carried out as a photographic project with the goal of recording the destruction of tangible cultural heritage in conflict zones as a result of military operations, inadequate security measures, limited access to resources, and loss of knowledge. Afghanistan (photos 1–5), Myanmar (photos 6–9), and China/Xian (photo 10) were visited to witness the various harms to tangible heritage of political, ideological and religious origins. One of the goals was to organize photo exhibitions to enhance local, but in the long run also national, awareness. Local awareness is necessary for many reasons, but primarily for caretaking, monitoring and safeguarding heritage sites by enabling the local population at a basic level to potentially reduce the amount of damage caused by

archaeological looting, the illegal appropriation and sale of antiques, and the demolition of cultural heritage monuments in order to repurpose building materials or rebuild them to align with the historical and cultural roots of the incumbent ruling elite. Furthermore, during a post-conflict phase the cultural heritage assets unquestionably play a beneficial role in promoting reconciliation and reuniting a split society.

The *Heritage in Danger* project commenced with a visit to Afghanistan, which was followed by a second trip in 2011 (Christophersen et al. 2009, Christophersen 2012, 2013b). Fieldwork was also conducted in China/Xian in 2008 (Christophersen et al. 2009) and in Myanmar in 2011 (Christophersen 2012, 2013a, 2014). From 2008 to 2012, dedicated photo exhibitions aimed at enhancing awareness of local tangible heritage were held in several locations in Norway and internationally. My contribution to this *festschrift* includes a compilation of images (photos 1–10) from the project conducted in the countries visited. They illustrate conditions pertaining to individuals, the community, memory, cultural heritage, war, and conflict zones addressed in the essay. Interactions with individuals and locations did not advance as far as systematic research and knowledge acquisition due to local implementation challenges. However, they provided us with experiences that will perpetuate the necessity to share insights and pursue a deeper comprehension of the role of cultural heritage in zones of conflict and reconciliation.

“More than scholarly ...”

Documentation and analysis are fundamental elements of knowledge advancement. The initial phase of this process involves observing the environment, engaging with it through all sensory modalities, contemplating the fundamental reasons for its existence, and subsequently pursuing potential solutions by deriving inspiration and formulating analytical strategies from personal experiences. Unless data and information gathered based on the concept of situated knowledge are analysed, this will not result in knowledge which greatly enlightens and deepens understanding of the emotional and affectual aspects contained in objects, monuments and surroundings from the past. This kind of knowledge rooted in personalized contexts is essential for improving local involvement and long-lasting maintenance of its physical legacy.

As a scholar one consistently endeavours to identify and disseminate unique points of view and results

which attract interest. Hein's research includes exceptional studies precisely of this nature: his *bromme* project metamorphosed a simple bone object from a neutral state into an exquisite sound generator, while his cave phenomenology-inspired work amalgamates individuality, location, perception, and enigma to construct a multidimensional narrative regarding the utilization and purpose of the cave, particularly concerning the darkness and the oppressive, anxiety-laden atmosphere deep within the caverns. Material remnants from a previous existence facilitate the reconstruction of a hypothesized former practice. Hein's research is driven by a quest to uncover this marginal potential; yet it becomes evident that the present encompasses the past, thus creating a veil or filter that obstructs our access to the intricacy of past life. Hein's research suggests that this is not a definitive obstacle to achieving balance and factual accuracy, but rather an unexploited opportunity for deeper understanding: "... I think all disciplinary engagement includes more than what may be defined as scholarly..." (2022:193), he contends in

the book *Archaeology at Home*, and with this statement he aligns himself with Haraway's ideas about situated knowledge. In a globalized world, private objects from the past as well as authorized heritage on UNESCO's World Heritage List are more than just representations of a memorized past; they are each in their own way pathways to remembrances of experiences, people, and events that have contributed to our curiosity and (imagined) insight into our presence in the world.

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