HISTORICAL BUILDING
Traditional Environments in a Post Global World
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Re-ordering & after: Editing ecosystems & history in the restoration of heritage landscapes under globalization
INTRODUCTION
It has often been said that ‘history is for the victors’. But who has ‘won’ and ‘lost’ under globalization of the flows of capital, natural resources, labour and culture?
How have such victories, if they can be conceived as such, been played out in heritage conservation initiatives or lack thereof for landscapes that invariably contain a wide range of signs and relicts from more localized tribal and other traditional cultures to those of societies more national and globalized?
This discussion explores alternatives to the often limited set of possibilities for heritage conservation that are perceived where there are pressures for commercialization of historical landscapes under globalization.
Too often, if restoration of a heritage site cannot be linked to some kind of short-term income generation, its historical significance is ignored. In this stark dichotomy, heritage interpretations are often reduced to cartoons in highly commercialized cultural market places referred to derisively as “theme parks.”
Globalization and heritage conservation involve a re-ordering of material and human resources that can only be partially contained in market-based transactions. Today, much of the heritage conservation in the world is in spite of the globalization of market places.
Yet there are still numerous opportunities to forge initiatives for the conservation of material heritage that rely on and foster other kinds of transnational and intercultural relationships.
The central argument of this discussion is that the notion that there are only stark alternatives for material culture and what can be protected, between theme park commercialization and obliteration, is erroneous. We argue that there is a wealth of other possibilities.
Developing approaches, and beginning to codify methodologies, to identify a wider range of workable configurations, practices, and interventions for landscape conservation is the focus of this essay.
We begin to explore a secondary argument that the wide array of possible interventions for landscape conservation constitutes a distinctive form of contemporary cultural production. While focused on restoring the past, landscape conservation is derived from constructing new interpretations of today’s culture and dialogues between social groups.
PROBLEM STATEMENT: CONCEIVING OF CRITICAL INTERVENTIONS FOR CONSERVATION OF HERITAGE LANDSCAPES UNDER THE CURRENT PHASE OF GLOBALIZATION
How can we envision protection of material cultural across landscapes and begin to conceive of viable interventions?
How can we construct integrated frameworks for identification of possible interventions of landscapes, typically holding buildings and other human structures, in a manner that is critical to the power relationships that result from the globalization of culture, capital, natural resources and information?
Is it possible to construct a relatively transparent process for setting restoration goals for landscapes that acknowledges cultural editing (including as a form of cultural expression) while recognizing and not avoiding, obscuring or obliterating problematic aspects of landscapes and history?
FIVE HERITAGE LANDSCAPES
BEING
RE-ORDERED
If the obstacles to protection of configurations of indoor and outdoor heritage resources have not become evident so far, the following examples confirm that landscape preservation, outside of well-known historical sites, remains a marginalized and constrained set of practices.
A new set of relationships, which have often intensified in this phase of globalization, can often function to obscure nuanced interpretations of heritage and history.
In exploring a theoretical framework for conceiving, organising and carrying out interventions to conserve and restore heritage spaces in this time of intensified globalization of capital, we explore the contexts and prospects for five landscapes:
Vancouver, Canada
a pedestrian corridor along a reconstructed shoreline with historically and ecologically oriented public art in the recently re-developed False Creek area
Street Light by Alan Tregilov, 1996, on Vancouver history
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a traditional aboriginal food production landscape, Belly-Rising-Up on the Indian Reserve of the Tsawout Nation on Vancouver Island, at a time of increased interest in aboriginal re-engagement in traditional areas,
the contrasting treatments of two of the older neighbourhoods of Dubai: the Bastakaya and Satwa neighbourhoods;
Makbarat al Sahabi, a battlefield and cemetery straddling the border of the United Arab Emirates and Oman which is of considerable significance in the early development of Islam;
The Makbarat al Sahabi battlefield and cemetery is split across three jurisdictions:
1. Dibba Hisn, part of the Emirate of Sharjah of the UAE;
2. Dibba Muhallab, part of Fujeirah, another of the UAE emirates; and
3. Dibba Bayah, which is part of the Sultanate of Oman and its northern enclave of Musandam.
The last example is from the Salt Range of the north-western Punjab of Pakistan with its dense configuration of Islamic and Hindu sites (along with those of Buddhism and Sikhism) with a recent proposal from a group with associated with the Government of India to restore some Hindu sites.
CONSERVATION, PRESERVATION & RESTORATION AS CULTURAL EDITING
Protection of material culture, *in situ*, and any more comprehensive programmes for landscape restoration begins with some perceived need to re-order the present through re-establishing a subset of relationships (and things) that are thought to have occurred at some point of interest in the past.
In returning to the heritage landscapes that are already being re-ordered under this phase of globalization, there are forms of cultural editing taking place today with no new conservation initiatives.
In this way, heritage conservation is a response to some perceived vulnerability of a resource in the present through establishment of relationships between the past and the future. Neglect and wilful ignorance also can function as forms of re-ordering and of editing cultural memories across landscapes.
The cultural editing that invariably takes place through new conservation initiatives typically warrants some kind of revision or revisiting of history and new information and metaphors that cause ruptures in the previously dominant view of an event, social history, and landscape.
We can begin to examine the sometimes contradictory editing processes at work on the five landscapes in this discussion through identifying the threats to resources and present gaps in heritage conservation.
What cultural resources are conserved today and tomorrow very much represent a kind of operational map of the stakeholders of the present: some local, some national, some global.
How effectively are sets of resources conserved largely reflect of the accumulated interpretations, technical expertise, resources, power and linkages with other groups of particular stakeholders in heritage conservation.
False Creek, Vancouver: Lookout - Dikeakos & Best 2000
NOT EVEN A MEMORY
False Creek, Vancouver: Welcome To The Land of Light,
Henry Tsang, 1996
Saanich, Canada: Belly-Rising-Up
Satwa
CONSUMPTION & PROTECTION OF HERITAGE LANDSCAPES UNDER GLOBALIZATION
Has the playing field for initiatives for conservation of heritage landscapes changed fundamentally with this phase of globalization? Certainly, there have been attempts to constrain the role of the state along with the political influence of citizen groups and related nongovernmental organizations.
But the prospects of the project of making the power of the market supreme over politics remain unclear. The theoretical work on heritage landscapes under globalization remains underdeveloped.
There is nothing in the current phase of globalization that precludes fundamentalism and medievalism that obliterates the sense of place. There is much in the current emphasis on open markets and flows of capital that does contribute to the obliteration of sense of place.
AND AFTER:
PROSPECTS FOR LANDSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVES UNDER GLOBALIZATION
It would be easy to digress into a polemic arguing that the current globalization processes embody, almost inherently, a threat to heritage landscapes. But there is no conclusive evidence to support some kind of essential relationship between specific losses of material culture and the loosening and intensification of the forces of capital.
Capital can often be managed and sometimes even be appropriated for the conservation of material culture as part of broader social infrastructure.
The greatest danger to heritage landscapes is the rapid rate that capital can fund destructive activities before cultural resources are fully detected or understood. But there are also many new opportunities for the cross-cultural and global exchange of knowledge, perspectives, strategies and interventions.
For new, critical interventions for conservation of heritage landscapes under globalization to be successful, we offer the following principles.

1. Restoration of heritage landscapes constitutes cultural expression that is inherently cross-disciplinary – as much art as science.
2. Realism in stakeholder analysis requires recognition of a broader set of interest groups and bodies that could be motivated to engage around a site.
3. Conservation of material culture, *in situ*, always involves components of space, divergent cultural and cognitive maps, and decisions that be classified as urban or rural planning and design, a kind of dialogue between groups as a form of environmental planning.
4. Restoration of heritage landscapes always involves unresolved questions of ownership.

5. New initiatives in conservation of material culture involve recombining alliances between stakeholders and individuals.
6. Notions of sustainability, as part of conservation of heritage landscapes, must be locally defined.

7. Histories and cultural memories are often so contentious that interventions must recognize and reference competing interpretations.
8. For a conservation and restoration proposal to be successfully implemented, the operational biases of owners and managing agencies will be illuminated, often at the displeasure of certain stakeholders.
Perhaps the most difficult task in critically conceiving of heritage interventions will be in constructing a vision of urban space and site-based cultural resources that is independent of, thought not necessarily always in opposition to, the shorter term dictates of profit and the interests of local owners and merchants.
Satwa
All heritage resources existing *in situ* typically are in mixed configurations of indoor and outdoor space that comprise portions of ecosystems, neighbourhoods, and landscapes.
Thus successful landscape and neighbourhood preservation strategies must be cognizant of broader ecosystem and landscape processes including regional development trends and specific forms of globalization.
The five examples we have outlined are linked in a way that we did not mention previously and which make them particularly appropriate for this discussion. These sites were last re-ordered in the late 1840s and 1850s in a previous wave of globalization.
Under the guise of the rule of law and protection of human rights, these five areas were integrated into the British Empire in somewhat different and uneven ways. The discourses of these acquisitions were less focused on control of certain groups and more on supposedly opening these areas to certain advantageous ways of doing things along with trade links.
YOU HAVE NOW ENTERED THE PROPERTY OF THE TSAWOUT FIRST NATION

OUR MEMBERS ARE EXERCISING THEIR DOUGLAS TREATY RIGHTS AS DEFINED IN THE TREATY BETWEEN JAMES DOUGLAS AND THE SAANICH TRIBES DATED FEBRUARY 11, 1852.

THE TREATY READS:

OUR VILLAGE SITES AND ENCLOSED FIELDS ARE TO BE KEPT FOR OUR OWN USE, FOR THE USE OF OUR CHILDREN AND FOR THOSE WHO MAY FOLLOW AFTER US.

IT IS ALSO UNDERSTOOD THAT WE ARE AT LIBERTY TO HUNT OVER THE UNOCCUPIED LANDS AND TO CARRY ON OUR FISHERIES AS FORMERLY.

PLEASE EXERCISE CAUTION IF WALKING ON OUR RESERVE
YOU HAVE NOW ENTERED THE PROPERTY OF THE TSAWOUT FIRST NATION

OUR MEMBERS ARE EXERCISING THEIR DOUGLAS TREATY RIGHTS AS DEFINED IN THE TREATY BETWEEN JAMES DOUGLAS AND THE SAANICH TRIBES DATED FEBRUARY 11, 1852.

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Today’s new ordering of power, historical interpretation, and flows of goods and culture, warrant new landscape preservation initiatives and may well be as profound a shift as that of a century and half ago.
Any new landscape preservation initiatives for these areas will be marked by and in turn have impacts on today’s various forms and uneven applications of globalization. Of course, we may be in for shorter, and more contradictory, convulsions of global, or at least imperial, reordering.
There are many ways to conceive of new kinds of interventions for the conservation of heritage landscapes even under the constraints of the current phase of globalization. It is possible to envision critical forms of interventions under globalization: approaches that work with but remain critical, and at times oppositional, to local political economies.
The core of developing critical approaches to conservation of heritage landscapes is recognition both the processes of social editing and of multiple and often contentious cultural and historical narratives.
Any landscape conservation process that is preoccupied with only one cultural narrative is far more vulnerable to either failure or appropriation by commercial interests.
In closing, we are lead back to the question of how can local communities use the new resources and links made possible by these new forms of globalization to reassert their values and better protect their material culture *in situ*?
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HISTORICAL BUILDING
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