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INTRODUCTION



Plate 1: Picnic Bay Jetty, Magnetic Island (photograph: Vandhana)

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of heritage is complex and fluctuating, varying across time and space, between generations, and between social and cultural groups. One of the major developments in heritage understandings over the past 20 years is the recognition that heritage is not just the material ‘things’ around us, but is inclusive of aspects that are intangible. This intangible heritage includes language, myth, ritual, custom, dance, arts and crafts, oral traditions, practices, dissemination of knowledge, food and festivals. It incorporates the symbolic manifestations of culture that are passed on (and changed) over time in a creative process that transmits ideas, beliefs, values and emotions. Intangible heritage represents the general values and world view of a society, and enshrines a community’s character and identity. It is implicated in the things we do and in what we experience. Cultural heritage, therefore, not only comprises places, landscapes, monuments and objects, but also meanings, associations, values, world views and ways of life. Indeed, it is the latter aspects that give context and meaning to the former.

A reconsideration of the focus on sites, objects and monuments has resulted in increased debates on intangible heritage in both international and national arenas. These reflections have reinforced a contemporary understanding that established, globalised heritage management practice, with its roots in a Western scientific knowledge system, can be at odds with culturally diverse lifeworlds.¹ This introspection has increased attention to the way people live their lives and to social practices. There has been a concomitant refocus on ‘community’ heritage, implicit in

¹ The use of the terms ‘Western’ and ‘The West’ is itself problematic. One resolution is to follow Ingold’s definition of ‘Western’ as a knowledge system that acts as a kind of shorthand for a tradition of thought and science (Ingold 1996: 117; see also Gosden 1999: 16). At the same time, I remain conscious that in continuing to use such terms, I perpetuate a particular classification and framing of knowledge that reinforces a hegemony that seeks to ‘delineate the inclusivity or exclusivity of social groups, the definers of us and them’ (J. Kapferer 1996: 27). The further problem is that of determining the criteria for inclusivity, and of assuming a much broader discursive representation of ‘us’ as Westerners than is reflected in the reality of different life experiences. There are indeed many ‘We’s’ in ‘Westerner’.

the understanding that the intangible aspects of heritage found in attachments, world views and ways of life are enmeshed with local expressions, experiences and practices. At the same time there has been a growing awareness that existing cultural heritage management approaches are constrained in their capacity to engage with such local community attachments. The primary challenge is no longer one of understanding that such attachments exist, but of interrogating the values and meanings that lead to such attachments and the social processes that act in their formation, maintenance and transmission.

A second challenge is heuristic in nature. Simply, 'community' heritage – in the sense that it implies contemporary attachments to places – is that which is identified, valued and given voice by the community itself. Foucault reminds us that there is a sense of empowerment in allowing people to speak for themselves: 'It is this form of discourse that ultimately matters, a discourse against power' (in Bouchard 1977: 209). If we accept that philosophically the past only exists in the sense that it is created by people in the present, there can be multiple pasts arising from the various belief systems of the people who conceptualise those pasts. Those engaged professionally with cultural heritage need to do more than acknowledge the existence of these multiple representations of the past. We must also accredit legitimacy to the belief systems within which they are created. The uses and narratives of place consist of multiple representations, sometimes conflicting, and often presented through differentially empowered discourses. The privileging of the powerful and the monumental in heritage discourse has promoted a hegemonic construction of place and landscape that prioritises particular interpretations and values. It has 'led us to neglect the places of the spirit, and the low-key and subtle signs of our past, which can be of great emotional value to ordinary people' (Sullivan: 2003). However, less powerful communities can create and reinforce their own stories, histories and meanings, which are contextualised in a local sense but are often inseparable from global dialogues (see G. Evans 2002).

This thesis is concerned with increasing our understanding of these various representations of the past and of the broader construction of heritage that arises from

the *experience* of 'being' in place. That is, it explores the relationship between communities and their lived environment. This is what Gupta and Ferguson (1997: 6) refer to as 'the processes and practices of place making' and the ways places are invested with significance. In Australian heritage practice this contemporary community attachment to place is more commonly referred to as 'social value'.² A frequently used term is more simply 'a sense of place'. Much use has been made of this phrase, running the risk that its application, without considered intent, can become superficial. One useful definition is that of

... people's subjective perceptions of their environments and their more or less conscious feelings about those environments ... Sense of place is inevitably dual in nature, involving both an interpretive perspective *on* the environment and an emotional reaction *to* the environment. (Hummon 1992: 262)

It is these perceptions and emotions that conceptually create the environment. Ultimately the relationship is one of being *in* the environment, of being *in* place. Feld and Basso (1996: 11) suggest that a sense of place includes

... the relation of sensation to emplacement; the experiential and expressive ways places are known, imagined, yearned for, held, remembered, voiced, lived, contested and struggled over; and the multiple ways places are metonymically and metaphorically tied to identities.

My intent is to investigate how such community-based values can be better understood in the heritage context through an exploration of the fields of social relations that link identity, place and the social practices that 'make' place and create belonging and attachment. What and who we are is implicated with the place we occupy – where we are – whether this is for a brief moment or a more permanent period of time. It does not preclude that our engagement with places can also be one of memory and imagination. Not all of our places are physically experienced (see Raffles 2000: 4). I acknowledge the co-existence of, and relationship between, the material and the imagined of place and landscape and how these act to articulate

² This term is less commonly used in the broader international arena. I also suggest that within Australia it is not well defined outside of cultural heritage practice and is commonly conflated with socio-economic value (see Greer et al. 2000). I prefer not to use the term 'social value' but rely more on 'community value'.

identity at the local level. However, local ways of 'being in the world' are implicated in and enmeshed with broader global processes. Global forces are primarily articulated and experienced in local situations (Henry 1999: 233) in a relationship that is a complex interplay between the global and the local.³ Although implicated in relationships of power, the relationship between the global and local is not necessarily a contest of one over the other (Wilk 1995: 111), but can include local transformations that serve to link localities to the wider world.

The nexus between the local and the global has formed one focus of this research. In exploring local attachments to place, I have considered the impacts of an internationally formalised heritage praxis through the activities of UNESCO and ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites). A dominant area of interest lies in their activities in heritage listing under the UNESCO World Heritage Convention. Although notions such as World Heritage have been exposed on a global scale for several decades, it is debatable that they meet what Hastrup (2002: 34) terms globally 'trusted ideas'. For many people, they are neither 'familiar' nor 'comfortable' concepts and need to be considered at the community level as newer matters that must be approached with a greater degree of thought and flexibility. Although some sort of universal standard may seem politically and morally obvious to 'us' (where 'we' are those familiar with an academic and professional discourse), it can conflict radically with cultural concepts or values, particularly those formed at the local level (ibid). As my aim is to explore this conflict, and particularly how heritage values are formed at the local level, this research is based on a comparative fieldwork program with communities living in three World Heritage listed places: Avebury in England, Magnetic Island (the Great Barrier Reef) in Australia, and Ayutthaya in Thailand.

Heritage and Place Making

One of the key issues in approaches that seek to theorise place is the way in which spaces are transformed to become 'placed' as a result of human actions, that is, how places are socially constructed (Feld 1996: 73, 74). Local theories of dwelling are

³ Arizipe (2000: 32) uses the alternative perspectives of 'the planetary and the village'.

more than living in place, they include the ways in which setting is fused to situation and locality is fused to life-world (ibid: 8). The different ways in which place is articulated and experienced can also be discovered through specific practices, actions and performances, which act to imbue events, acts and objects with significance. Equally, it is necessary to consider how places come to embody memories and hence become important for understanding the construction of social identities (Casey 1987). In this way, the past and temporally distant events can inform present actions and meanings, and 'subjects in the present fashion the past in the practice of their social identity ... the past that effects the present is a past constructed and/or reproduced in the present' (Friedman 1992: 853). Indeed, heritage is not so much about the past as it is about the life of the past as it is experienced in the present.

For cultural heritage to be significant it must unify and transcend, promoting a sense of personal and group identity (Rowlands 1994: 130). Carman argues: 'the realm of heritage is an important one for the construction of identities, not merely their reflection' (2000: 307). Hewison (1987: 45) reminds us that 'the impulse to preserve the past is part of the impulse to preserve the self. Without knowing where we have been it is difficult to know where we are going' (see also Bourdieu 1990a: 135; Gosden 1999: 204; Tuan 1979: 186–187). Urry (1996: 46), following Mead, argues that how societies remember the past is a particular reflection of transformations in and of the present – hence there is a need for a philosophy of the present. The past is continually recreated in the present, and in its transformation and emergence gives sense to the future. Such emergence is grounded in the interaction between people and the environment, and all representations of the past involve remaking in and through the present – not just through the discourses of the so-called heritage industry (ibid: 48). 'The past is the epitome of the imagined community, since it cannot exist coterminously with the present' (Bond & Gilliam 1994: 17). Yet the past acts as a foundation for individual and collective identity. Objects from the past can become embroiled in the identity-creation process. In so doing, they become a source of significance as cultural symbols and create the basis for communities of shared memory. Such objects are often found outside museum settings, and are hence easily accessible. They are readily available to 'fuel the imagination of myth making' (Shack

1994: 115), a process integral to the creation of local narratives that reinforce identity, belonging and 'being in place'. Objects are bound up with being-in-the-world and are enmeshed in the web of relationships in which people are embedded (J. Thomas 1999: 20).

'Heritage' is itself a process of place making, that serves to 'articulate social and economic visions' (Jacobs 1996: 40). Heritage as process opposes the idea of heritage as an immutable set of objects with fixed meanings. Heritage is a fluid phenomenon. It is also a social construction, in that it results from social processes that are specific to time and place (Avrami et al. 2002: 6; Carman 2000: 304). But it is a process that remains formally reliant on the application of hegemonic instruments and discourses. Dissonance is created when attempts are made to introduce new definitions that are outside the hegemonic construct, with implications for the privileging of one definition over another: the question compounding the perennial query of 'whose heritage' becomes one of 'whose cultural significance?' Assumptions of value thereby become the subject of dispute that 'centres on the question of who has the controlling voice in defining the ideological dominance, the hegemony of one social group as the common culture of an entire social formation' (J. Kapferer 1996: 29). In the context of cultural heritage, the 'social group' that acts to determine the common culture that should be preserved as 'heritage' is primarily made up of archaeologists, architects and historians, and of the various representatives of the bureaucratic structures through which heritage is commonly managed.

Those formally involved in cultural heritage are usually practitioners from disciplines whose activities are sanctioned through an appropriate academic qualification. Consequently, the problem potentially facing those involved with managing the past is accepting that the community ascription of 'special value' of an area or place may be incommensurate with the values otherwise ascribed by professionals (Ucko 1994: xvii; see also Avrami et al. 2000; de la Torre 2002). To some extent the solution must involve a shift away from encouraging communities to become familiar with cultural heritage processes, to the recognition that cultural heritage practitioners must have a greater understanding of what communities themselves identify as important. Without

a broader engagement with the attribution of heritage significance, judgements relating to value can become either disenfranchising or potentially meaningless to the communities affected:

If the garbage left by our ancestors is significant to the world, why can't it be significant to us? ... We believe that your statements about 'world significance' are an attempt to reduce our control over our heritage. 'World significance' implies that the material you excavate does not belong to us but to the whole world. But who decides that this material is of world significance? We certainly were not asked, and we doubt if you asked the pastoralist in Afghanistan, the Bolivian cocoa grower or the private in the British army ... when we look at the reasons why the material is of 'world significance' it is obvious that it is your profession who makes these judgements ... we simply want to look after our heritage in the way that we as custodians know to be appropriate. If you have problems with our custodianship, then you should talk to us about it. This is not only courteous, it will also allow you to develop an understanding of our concerns. It might also mean that you discuss and act on issues from a basis of knowledge rather than supposition. (Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council 1996: 294, 297)

These assertions are fundamental to broadening existing approaches to heritage. I contend that contemporary heritage management practice today constrains meaningful contribution by local communities (see Smith et al. 2003: 66). If cultural heritage management is the practice of identifying and protecting aspects of the past and present that we would like to retain for this and future generations, then 'we' must include a wider value attribution than that of heritage practitioners. A further critique of the process of assessing heritage significance has been directed at the enshrinement of places (and sites or objects) as possessing inherent or intrinsic qualities, that is, significance is *part* of the place and not something that is given *to* a place, particularly by those associated with that place (Tainter & Lucas 1983: 711–712; see also Warren 1996: 37–38). Often there has been little perceived need to involve contemporary communities, because it was through the operation of formalised procedures that 'truth' might be discovered (Ellis 1994: 14). Where cultural heritage legislation has generally reflected this ascription of scientific value, the worldviews and intellectual traditions of many communities have been excluded from cultural heritage management practice. In such approaches, there has been little concern for the perceptions of either indigenous or non-indigenous communities about the

interrelationship of places, the interpretation of cultural landscape values, or the attachments that impart a 'sense of place'.

Community identification of heritage is likely to be more inclusive and expansive than that of professional determinations. For example, an Australian project that investigated community concerns, identified a number of issues including ownership, the identification of heritage as non-static and living, the need to recognise both expert and community knowledge and to include communities in management programs and decisions. The community groups particularly identified the need for heritage to be considered from a holistic perspective:

At the non-indigenous community workshops, people identified 'heritage' in its broadest sense ... it was 'lifestyle', 'leaving some of yesterday for tomorrow', 'past and present', 'education'. Similarly, indigenous people stressed the 'holistic' nature of cultural heritage ... it is about 'land', 'stories and oral history', 'teaching children', as well as sites. (Powell 2000: 59–60)

There has been a broad identification of the need for critical examination of existing practices, and for a greater theorisation in cultural heritage – and in particular its relationship with identity and place (see, for example, Avrami et al. 2000; Byrne 1990; Byrne et al. 2001; Greer 1996b: 106; Hummon 1992; Nas et al. 2002: 147; Smith et al. 2003: 66). Talking from an anthropological perspective, Raffles (2000: 3) appositely highlights that these questions are cross-disciplinary:

... despite all the creative energy thrown into scholarship on locality in recent years, there is still no adequate conceptual apparatus with which to describe the ongoing coming-onto-being of this one small place in terms which acknowledge its constitution through the regionally-located projects of globalisation whilst simultaneously giving due centrality to the compelling biographical complexities of 'local' life. How, without such tools, can we effectively approximate the meaning of the local?

These acknowledgments of the timeliness of a critical approach have encouraged the research aims of this thesis, as have my own experiences as a heritage professional. The relevance of this research to current debates lies in its ability to respond to questions such as 'if, in the postmodern world there can be alternative histories why can't there be alternative heritages' (Byrne 1990: 273). I am also responding to the

challenge to critique bodies of accepted knowledge both within the Academy and outside it, and thereby open channels for 'reconsidering historical and social fabrications that invent the past and then constrain it' (Bond & Gilliam 1995: 6–7; Carman 2000).

The Heritage Meta-process

I follow Jacobs (1996: 6) in the belief that we can come to know the variability and complexity of the politics of place and identity through a detailed understanding of the local. By focussing on the specificities of the local it is also possible to explore more-global issues. In terms of the relationship with local communities, the most significant globalising instrument has been the internationalisation of heritage practice and understandings through the influences of ICOMOS and UNESCO, notably through the application of the 1972 UNESCO *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (commonly and hereafter referred to as the 'World Heritage Convention'). In October 2003 UNESCO launched a new standard-setting instrument: the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage*. Through a reliance on the involvement and sanction of 'States Parties', being the ruling political regime of each member nation, these listing processes reinforce national values and memories and accentuate the tensions that may already exist around discourses of identity and the symbolic meanings attached to places. They are often accompanied by impacts from tourism, gentrification and site demarcation that can serve to disenfranchise local communities and deny 'the local' an adequate voice and representation (Bianchi & Boniface 2002: 80).

The establishment of the formal processes of a globalised heritage praxis are discussed in Chapter 2. I review how a Western scientific discourse predicated on the identification and protection of the physical remains of the past, and on the separation between natural and cultural heritage, has influenced global understandings of 'heritage'. While 'what is heritage' is broadly defined and implicated in a range of disciplinary interests, this has become more narrowly applied in the identification and protection of heritage through established cultural heritage management practices and

policies. One impact is the hegemonic privileging of an expert-based approach that can disenfranchise community heritage understandings. Another is the reinforcement of systemic constraints that inhibit the incorporation of more inclusive constructions of heritage.

Within the Australian context a serious self-critique has come out of archaeology in terms of the neglect of intangible heritage (social value) and attachments to place (for example, see Byrne et al. 2001). The reasons appear to have centred on the combined impact of historical practice as defined in 'cultural heritage management', the restricted range of disciplines from which heritage practitioners are recruited and the over-emphasis on a site and fabric-based approach to heritage. Much less attention has been paid to the reasons why disciplines that regularly engage with contemporary communities and place, anthropology and sociology for example, have had and continue to have limited involvement with the core 'practices' of cultural heritage (but see Low 2002; Murphy 1996: 143). Unfortunately, while acknowledging the need for further discussion of the history of this circumstance, more extensive engagement with its particularities is beyond the scope of this research.

Certainly there is an awareness in the Academy and among many heritage professionals of the incongruity of the hegemonic construction of science and of Western knowledge systems as globally accepted practice. Said (1990: 46) suggests that the way in which modern Western scholarship has come to represent the norm 'with its supposed detachment, its protestations of objectivity and impartiality, with its code of politesse and ritual calmness' is a problem for the sociology of taste and knowledge. With somewhat less acerbity, Gosden (1999: 181) suggests: 'Old certainties, linked to the supposed superior nature of western knowledge, have been replaced by the belief that all knowledge is provisional, intimately linked to power relations, so that knowledge in the developed world is not inherently superior to anyone else's' (see also Lyotard 1989). One cannot argue against the assertion that 'contemporary theories in the social sciences can never be truly universal, just as they can never be exclusively or indelibly Western' (Moore 1997: 14). However, to varying degrees, such understandings have been preceded by a history within the

social sciences of Western researchers seeking to attribute universality to their particular approaches, including an idea of progress that advances through an imaginary scale that culminates in 'development', democratisation and 'Westernisation' (Dogan & Pelassy 1990: 9; see also Byrne 1990).⁴ This emphasis on universality was and is integral to the global dissemination of a process of identification, protection and bureaucratic administration of heritage. The 'definitive' international archaeology guidelines (the 1990 'ICAHM Charter' – ICOMOS Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management), enunciates the goal of preserving existing, original physical fabric (above and/or sub-surface) and presents this goal as one of universal validity for its enshrined conservation ethic: that is, that the global population needs and values the material remains of its past (see Byrne 1995).⁵

The emergence of scientifically based paradigms for the determination of cultural heritage was influenced by various factors. These included an awareness of protecting the fabric of the 'large and impressive' (commonly 'monuments'), developments in archaeology and a broadening of approaches to historical preservation.⁶ The first of these was a preoccupation in Europe. In countries with a 'settler' society – such as Australia, South Africa and the USA – there was a primary emphasis on conservation archaeology and a concern (albeit often of lesser degree) with the protection of the historic built environment. Conservation archaeology in particular revolved around the notion of 'cultural resource management' (CRM).⁷ Historic (non-indigenous) heritage primarily attracted the attention of architects, historians and archaeologists. Under the

⁴ See Chadha 1999 for a discussion of how this cultural-evolution approach is still being applied by archaeologists and anthropologists in India.

⁵ See also discussion by Warren (1996: 35) on the 'universalising' social dimensions of conservation: 'As a basis for structural arguments and coherent progress, conservation must share a common framework of mutual presumptions if it is to be carried forward as a coherent social phenomenon'.

⁶ Byrne et al. (2001: 55) caution it should not be supposed that the focus on fabric that informs much of Western cultural heritage management is unrelated to greater historical and social forces, notably the growth of capitalism that led to a tendency for the commodification of things, including the 'thingification of culture'.

⁷ While this term remains in common use (for example, in the United States), a preferred term is 'cultural heritage management'. One of the problems with the former is its association with archaeological sites and relics (see discussion in McManamon & Hatton 2000: 3). For an overview of CRM and various statutory processes in the USA see Haas (1997); Hutt et al. (1992); Keel et al. (1989); McManamon (1992, 1996, 2000); Sherfy & Luce (1998). Recent attempts have been made in the US to refer more broadly to heritage management as 'cultural conservation' (Hufford 1994).

auspices of newly established heritage agencies, in countries such as Australia, archaeology alone was deemed the proper discipline for engaging with indigenous heritage, closely tied to the idea of 'relics' management. One result has been that archaeology, and its practitioners, have come to occupy a privileged position within the cultural heritage management process in many countries (Smith et al. 2003: 67; see also Smith 1994),⁸ including the three countries within which my fieldwork was undertaken: Australia, the United Kingdom and Thailand.

The Problem with Nature

One of the foundations of global approaches to heritage has been the opposition of nature and culture, a topic I also explore in Chapter 2. Together with the opposition of human and animal, this nature/culture dichotomy has emerged from the Enlightenment to become central to contemporary human sciences and used to legitimise and justify their existence as autonomous disciplines. In this process, culture has been marked out as 'a self-enclosed and unified realm of phenomena, set apart from, and opposed to, natural/biological phenomena: a separate "level" of reality' (Horigan 1988: 4; see also Collingwood 1981; K. Thomas 1996). The persistence of oppositions is 'perhaps more of an obstacle than the foundation of knowledge in the human sciences' (Horigan 1988: 7). The effect is a reification of nature and culture as scientific concepts, and the emergence in biology (and later anthropology) of a tradition of objective knowledge that led to the apprehension that our knowledge of nature was independent of our relationships with it (Ellen 1996: 13). It is this separation of knowledge and experience that continues to strongly influence contemporary approaches to heritage.

⁸ Archaeology as science was one of the corner stones of processual (or New) archaeology, the theories of which would have permeated the academic background of many archaeologists influential in the establishment of bureaucratic heritage agencies in the 1970s. Although postprocessual theory sought to break from this 'arid scientism', Smith suggests that it has failed to advance cultural heritage management in terms of challenging the authority attributed to Western intellectual thought and activity, and is little more than a theory that is 'written about archaeologists writing about archaeologists writing about archaeologists ... problematised by the political complexity of the role heritage plays in the formation of cultural identity' (1994: 2). For seminal writings on postprocessual theory and approaches see Hodder (1986, 1989, 1991, 1992); Leone & Potter (1992); Shanks (1992); Shanks & Tilley (1987); Trigger (1991).

I do not suggest that nature and culture are categorically meaningless.⁹ To do so would challenge a history of rigorous anthropological literature. Rather, I follow the argument (see Ellen 1996: 11) that the difference between nature and culture is less well served by positing it as a universally conceived opposition, and that the distinction between nature and culture will culturally vary. The object of interest more constructively lies in understanding the interaction between human individuals and communities and the 'natural' environment (Ellen 1996: 17; see also Descola & Pálsson 1996). In this sense, nature becomes a concept that is multifaceted and complex and difficult to clearly bound. Consequently, maintaining a distinction between nature and culture when considering 'heritage' has become difficult, leading to the recognition of the strong influence of the cultural on the natural. In the most basic ways cultural elements can regulate not only the use of the environment but also the relationships held with it. There is a clear incongruity in attempts to impose a simple dualism (see Hull et al. 2001: 327). The challenge is to overcome entrenched systems of heritage management that not only divide natural and cultural heritage, but fail in either realm to engage with the experiential interaction between people and their environment.

A Matter of Authenticity

Appadurai (1986: 45) suggests that issues concerning authenticity and expertise 'plague the modern West'. The concept of cultural 'authenticity' has provided a dramatic challenge to the Western-dominated construction of heritage. It has had particular resonance across Africa, Asia and the Pacific region. Jokilehto (1996: 71) defines authenticity as 'the measure of truthfulness of the internal unity of the creative process and the physical realisations of the work, and the effects of its passage through historic time' (see also Jokilehto & King 2001). Paragraph 24 of the World Heritage Convention Operational Guidelines requires that nominations of cultural properties must: 'meet the test of authenticity in design, material, workmanship or

⁹ Ellen (1996: 30) reinforces that nature-culture, as with other dichotomies, can be useful or misleading – it is not necessarily true or false. Although remaining a simplifying model for organising thought, it is not a 'way of the world'. Moore (1994: 12) asserts that – as with other binary categorisations in anthropology, dominated as it is by 'a Western folk model' – the nature/culture opposition does not withstand cross-cultural examination.

setting and in the case of cultural landscapes their distinctive character and components'. 'Authenticity' in terms of the Operational Guidelines, however, has not had a simple path in either its definition or application (see Masuda 1998; Pressouyre 1996; Titchen 1995).¹⁰ Indeed, it has been argued that the expression 'the authentic past' is an oxymoron, as 'by singling out, marking, preserving and restoring features of the landscape as relics of the past, we thereby alter the meaning of the landscape as a sign of the past. We cannot notice the past without changing it' (Frake 1996a: 108; see also Lowenthal 1990, 1998, and Hewison 1987).

Critiques of approaches that rely on 'authenticity' include the recognition that in many parts of the world attachments to and the meaning of places hold far more value than any associated material remains. A somewhat different meaning is consequently given to authenticity, particularly by local communities, which emphasises culture and tradition more than material aspects. This has important consequences for the recognition that how things are done is as important as a material end result.

The surge of debate surrounding 'authenticity', including recognition that the word 'authentic' exists only in Indo-European languages, led to the UNESCO-hosted Expert Meeting on Authenticity in Nara in November 1994. This resulted in the *Nara Document on Authenticity* (see K. Larsen 1995) that enshrined the recognition that cultural heritage is characterised by diversity and that authenticity is inseparable from specific cultural and social contexts. It has led to the assertion that in moving towards more expanded concepts of heritage the suitability of the existing World Heritage criteria to recognise this diversity has become questionable (UNESCO WHC 1998: 8). As a consequence of this and other debates, a review of the World Heritage listing criteria has been initiated.

¹⁰ Natural world heritage sites, on the other hand, are required to meet the test of 'integrity', which is based on ecological principles and more closely refers to 'wholeness'. Para 42(b) of the Operational Guidelines lists seven conditions of integrity. One debate suggests that the principles of 'integrity' would be better applied in preference to 'authenticity' in many cultural World Heritage assessments (see, for example, von Droste et al. 1998, particularly papers by ICOMOS, IUCN, Jokilehto, Masuda, Munjeri, Parker & Reynolds; see also Saouma-Forero 2001; for cultural landscapes see Hogan 2000).

Community and Place

Integral to this study is a critical investigation of a series of concepts related to 'being in place', perhaps the most important being identity formation and the relationship between people, practice and locality. In Chapter 3 I present various analytical and theoretical approaches that allow a closer investigation of place and the creation of attachments and meaning.

The primary focus of this research is people and community. By 'community' I refer to a group of people who share a sense of togetherness and cohesiveness, with strong ties to an inhabited area, and who are variously distinguished from other groups, often in a process of self-identification. Communities are visceral in nature, with a sense of belonging that is both highly personal and collective. There is a conceptual, imagined dimension to the construction of all communities. However

... the capacity for empathy and affinity, arises not just out of an imagined community, but in the dynamic interaction between that concept and the actual and limited social relations and practices through which it is realised. People care because they associate the idea of community with people they know, with whom they have shared experiences, activities, places and/or histories. (Amit 2002: 18)

This is a particular theme that runs through the community expressions of place that have been expressed in the course of my fieldwork, and emphasises the importance of knowing and being known as a significant mechanism in the creation of belonging and attachment.

Gupta and Ferguson (1997: 6) ask 'how [are] perceptions of locality and community discursively and historically constructed ... how are understandings of locality, community, and region formed and lived?' They propose that we can try to understand this by focussing on the social and political practices of place making, which are less related to 'ideas' than to 'embodied practices that shape identities and enable resistances'. The making of places and the hegemonic configurations of power

become inseparable. Integral to this is the act of claiming a place as one's own, and thereby symbolically appropriating it.

Places are experienced and lived. Places are not bounded areas, but connected movements in networks of social relations and understandings (Ward 2003: 97). A place attains specificity in its construction out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and interweaving at a given locus. The process engenders strong emotional attachments that can range through self-conscious affiliation and an appropriation of the identity of the community to the formation of personal meanings in a local landscape (Hummon 1992: 274). Posing an intimate relationship between local feelings for place and conceptions of community, Hummon calls for new work that pays attention to the importance and complexity of community perspectives. There is a need to engage with the full range of meanings that local communities may hold. These include those 'grounded in the personal experiences of biography, the shared life of local groups, and the cultural symbols of both local and national culture' (ibid: 275).

The interaction with place(s) is commonly addressed in terms of 'social space' and the multiplicity of spaces – as actioned places – that exist. Moreover, this multiplicity of places and spaces finds resonance in the concept of landscapes. Space and place have been more generally deliberated through the writings of de Certeau and Lefebvre, Heidegger's theory of dwelling (or 'topology of being') and Casey's discussions of memory and place. For Heidegger, the manner in which humans are on the earth is dwelling, and this is the basic character of Being. We inhabit the earth in a way that reinforces the habitual nature of experience (Heidegger 1993: 349). de Certeau (1984: xiv) suggests that sociocultural production and socioeconomic order act to (re)appropriate space through the practices (ways of operating) of 'everyday life' (see also Ardener 1993, Auge 1995). Space is 'used', through activities such as frequenting or dwelling in a place, through domestic activities such as cooking, and to provide 'the many ways of establishing a kind of reliability with the situations imposed on an individual, that is, of making it possible to live in them by reintroducing ... the plural mobility of goals and desires' (de Certeau 1984: xxii). I depart from de Certeau,

however, in his use of 'place' and 'location' as interchangeable terms (1984: 116) and his assertion that space is a practiced place. Rather, I follow various approaches in an understanding of place as practiced and transformed space, and that it is place that is the effect produced by the operations that orient, situate, temporalise and make space function (see Carter et al. 1993; Casey 1993; Lefebvre 1993; Tuan 1979).

I also call on Foucault's discussion of discourse and power and particularly on Bourdieu's engagement with *habitus* and cultural fields. It is through these intellectual engagements that Bourdieu has tried to overcome the subjectivist-objectivist split within social science. Habitus is seen as a set of principles that ground and explain practices in both specific and general sociocultural contexts. It is understood as the absorption of social norms so that they become part of who one is, rather than just acquired knowledge. That is, knowledge is constructed through the habitus, it is not just passively recorded. It is understood as the combined action of the historical and cultural production of individual practices, and the individual production of practices (Bourdieu 1977: 72). As a result arbitrary and culturally contingent ways of doing things become a natural part of habitual practice and are subsequently shared and reproduced (J. Thomas 1999: 49). Bourdieu is also interested in the way in which language can exist as a practice that 'makes the world' and determines how it is understood. In this he follows Nietzsche and Wittgenstein in the understanding that language is not a mirror reflecting a pre-given reality, but is something that determines how we understand the world (Webb et al. 2002: 13). This is important for looking at sets of discourses that can determine what is seen, what is valued and what questions can be asked. It has implications for the creation of power and assertions of authenticity of voice. This becomes tied up with struggles for symbolic power, and the way that one group or institution can impose a particular view of the world on another.

Bourdieu explains the contexts in which practices occur in terms of 'cultural fields'. These are fluid and dynamic entities that include discourses, institutions, conventions, values, rules and regulations. Of importance is his argument that relates to the constitution and distribution of 'capital'. Capital is widely defined to include material things (which can have symbolic value), or intangible attributes such as status,

prestige and authority (symbolic capital) or culturally valued taste and consumption patterns (cultural capital) (Webb et al. 2002: 21–22). Generally, the value (or lack of) a specific form of capital is determined within a particular cultural field. This, for example, is the case with determinations of cultural heritage value arising out of assessments by heritage professionals. Bourdieu suggests that actions of agents who are 'at home' within specific practices and fields can be equated with symbolic violence in their capacity to treat 'outsiders' as inferiors or limited in their knowledge. The recipients are themselves often complicit, construing events to be 'the natural order of things' or the way of the world. In Chapter 7 I discuss how this was a determining issue in the way in which objectors to the Nelly Bay Harbour development were constrained in their avenue of protest.

These points are well illustrated by phenomenological approaches, such as Ingold's ontology of dwelling that takes the human condition as one of being

... immersed from the start, like other creatures, in an active, practical and perceptual engagement with constituents of the dwelt-world ... [this] provides us with a better way of coming to grips with the nature of human existence than the alternative, Western ontology whose point of departure is that of a mind detached from the world and which has literally to formulate it – to build an intentional world in consciousness – prior to any attempt at engagement. (Ingold 1996: 120–121)

The alternative proposed is one that apprehends the world through engagement, not construction; one that is of dwelling, not of building; and one that does not construct a view *of* the world but takes up a view *in* the world. History and the past is hence felt and experienced, not read.

The physical and experiential process of creating a landscape defines an organic and internally 'shaped' territory that becomes the place of belonging for those who shaped it. It is what people do – through a process of social participation – that serves as a form of mortar, bonding the features of a landscape together. The bonds so formed act to provide a model for the multiple systems of social relationships, control and governance (Kenneth Olwig 1995: 317). This is exemplified in the discussion of the elephant rider community at Ban Chang in Chapter 9. The material remains of the past

can be considered as an 'imprint of what Bourdieu calls habitus, the normal, the banal, habitual but nonetheless socially and culturally specific environment in which, and through which, people negotiate their lives. It is also the imprint of more consciously created realms of social knowledge and control' (Bender 1992: 12).

Paradoxically one of problems with 'place' has arisen out of a tendency to take it for granted: 'the meaning of place too often seems to go without saying ... the minefields of conceptualising culture often assume that place is unproblematic. It is simply location. It is where people do things ... the "dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile" in Foucault's lament' (Rodman 2003: 204). However places are not inert, they are not simple stages for performers: they are constructed spatially, they are local and multiple, they are culturally relative and politicised, impacted by agencies that are clearly extra-individual. They are also historically specific and implicated with time as well as space. At particular times a place will hold different experiential realities for its inhabitants, including varying dimensions of power. Places should not be construed as 'mere reflections of society' but by looking 'through' places we can explore why they are constructed in a particular way, how places are representative of people, and how places are linked to each other (ibid: 218).

This 'taken-for-grantedness' and failure to problematise constructions of place characterises much contemporary cultural heritage management practice. The conflicts so engendered are explored in the discussion of the Avebury village community in chapters 4 and 5. Casey (1987: 184) argues that for many years there has been a triumph of site over place, in the way that place has been 'demoted' in the social sciences: 'The significance of place, formerly unquestioned, has been forcibly undercut by a fixation on what I shall call "site", that is, place levelled down to metrically determined dimensions'. In the theoretical and analytical attention given to 'place' (see, for example, Casey 1987) a clear distinction has been made between the theoretical construction of place and that of site. However, I suggest the nuances of this debate have not percolated through to heritage understandings and practice, and that the use of 'place' can for the most part be consistently interchanged with the word 'site': that is, place as a bounded container, that most commonly contains physical

aspects. The result is perhaps a sort of 'mega-site'. Where the problematics of 'site' in cultural heritage parlance have been acknowledged, the attempt to redress them has led to an extremely productive debate on cultural landscapes, and the filling of an analytical and theoretical lacunae in cultural heritage. However, the concentration on cultural landscapes has overshadowed the heuristic struggles inherent in coming to grips with the construction of place. By this I refer more particularly to place and its conceptual capacity, not to bound a piece of land but to contain, hold and preserve experiences and memories and to represent that which is 'the familiar, the small, the "in place", the dense with meaning, sensation and memory' (Bender 2003). This is not to deny the relevance of material 'things' in place, but to acknowledge their capacity to draw memory and place together in a significant way. 'Things can be pivotal points in a given place' (Casey 1987: 205) and these need not necessarily be inanimate objects. They can be people.

Being There, in the Field

Theory and methods that are more commonly found in social science disciplines that specifically investigate the experiences of living communities, such as anthropology and human geography, allow a 'people' oriented approach. I anticipated that an investigation of the social phenomena under discussion could be meaningfully pursued through a program of ethnographically oriented fieldwork, complemented by a review of literature across a broad academic spectrum. Following, for example, Gingrich & Fox (2002), who suggest that the investigation of a more defined aspect of community life can be constructively pursued through a comparative approach, I decided to study a small number of disparate communities.

I wanted to identify places that could illuminate the dissonance between professional determinations of heritage and the values and conceptualisations that are meaningful to the local community. It therefore seemed apposite to investigate locales that are currently exposed to the globalising influences of UNESCO's World Heritage Convention. This allowed the inclusion of a set of questions as to how objectified and politicised phenomena – of which World Heritage is an exemplar – relate to everyday

social practices: do they simply 'overlay other more immediate forms of lived identity that preserve the local in the form of habitus'? Is there a hegemony of public and objectified approaches that marginalise lived practice, or does practice co-opt public rhetoric and absorb larger scale influences (national, international) to (re)form local meaning in a stable and continuous schema? (Wilk 1995: 114). Or does locally constructed meaning exist in a vacuum? My intent in this, however, was to concentrate on community constructions of place and 'heritage value', not to necessarily interrogate how communities understand 'World Heritage'.

I have chosen to emphasise specific issues through a number of case studies that relate to the various fieldwork locations. That there is an overlap in what appear to be otherwise independent situations has proven reassuring in the context of a study using comparisons. In concert, they serve to renegotiate, destabilise, contest and resist existing structures and practices in heritage. Chapters 4 to 9 investigate this understanding and creation of place, through an exploration of people and their expressions of how living in a particular locale, and within a particular community, create place and reinforce identity and belonging. I have dedicated two consecutive chapters to each study location, the first in each case provides a general background and introduces the locale, the community and the issues involved. The second explores these in greater depth, through a specific case study or studies. For ease of reading I have included background details relating to heritage management regimes in an appendix for each study locale.

Each of the locations I chose has provided an opportunity to emphasise a particular arena of investigation. For Avebury, this is the hegemonic dominance of a sanctioned aspect of heritage which attributes significance to the Neolithic landscape, at the expense of the villagers' more recent history. The investigation with the Magnetic Island community challenges the natural/cultural heritage dichotomy and demonstrates that attachments to nature are predicated on experiences, practices and engagements with the environment. It further shows that the voicing of opinions in a prolonged struggle over place was regulated by prevailing discourses and discursive fields. The result was that reliance was placed on scientific, economic and political

arguments about environmental conservation that were ancillary to less articulatable concerns to do with place and identity. Finally, at Ayutthaya, I illustrate the significance of the lived traditions, rituals, ceremonies, skills and practices of the contemporary Ayutthayan communities to a holistic understanding of heritage at both the local and national level.

Avebury

I chose an English site in recognition of the contribution of British intellectual traditions to the establishment of contemporary heritage discourse. As with many European nations, Britain has a long history of awareness of its domestic heritage, introducing early legislative mechanisms for its protection. One of the challenges for contemporary communities is the time depth of histories that inform the past of the United Kingdom, and the tendency to give preference to the more ancient, more monumental and more spectacular manifestations of this past. The discussion of the Avebury fieldwork contained in chapters 4 and 5.

Avebury is a small Wiltshire village on the western edge of the Marlborough Downs of south-central England. The village straddles an extremely impressive Neolithic henge, complete with a series of stone circles. Together with the better-known Stonehenge, which lies 30 kilometres to its south, Avebury was added to the World Heritage List in 1986. In contrast to Stonehenge, Avebury is not a heritage park where the public is kept at a suitable viewing distance, constrained to walking-paths and affectively fenced out. The World Heritage Site of Avebury is an experienced and lived landscape, it is home to the villagers of Avebury, and a place of regular visits by residents of surrounding villages and towns. Many of these people have grown up in the presence of the massive ditch-like henge and its stones, played around them, relaxed in their shade, clambered up them, and absorbed their sun-soaked warmth. To them Avebury is a tactile and imaginary landscape of intensified emotions, vibrant memories and collective experiences.

To understand the way in which the Avebury community engages in place making one must engage with the tensions engendered by multiple interpretations of the Avebury

landscape, and the potential for the more powerful discourse of heritage to subsume the equally important but more ordinary and subtle elements of the landscape. Bender (1992: 11–12) reminds us that ‘in any society, because people are differently located, have different conceptualisations and make different demands, there is always the potential for tension and contestation ... contestation will often go hand in hand with appropriating the past ... this can be done in ways that mask change by stressing continuity, or by a more brutal appropriation’. Tilley (1994: 26) notes that the relationship of individuals and groups to landscapes has important perspectival effects – the experience of places is unlikely to be shared or experienced equally, and the understanding and use of places can be controlled and exploited in systems of domination. The privileging of one or a few narratives of place can result in culture becoming ‘less what Pierre Bourdieu would have called a habitus (a tacit realm of reproducible practices and dispositions) and more an arena for conscious choice, justification, and representation’ (Appadurai 1997: 44).

The Avebury landscape is one that is complex, intricate, and worked-upon; although for many it is an imagined and distant place, for the Avebury villagers it is an experienced, remembered and lived-in place. Landscapes are created by people through their experiences and engagement with the world around them. As their interpretations are historically and spatially contingent, they are always in a process of becoming, and potentially untidy and uneasy (Bender 1995a, 2001), a process that characterises ‘place making’ at Avebury. Landscapes can be places where values and emotions coincide (Morphy 1995: 205), and which form templates for the assertions of identity, knowledge, and power. In this way they act as signifying systems that incorporate and convey multiple discursive fields – often conflicting – or shared meanings, with various context-dependent interpretations (Cosgrove 1995: 281). Although experienced and conceptualised in the present, landscapes can be seen as products of past activity, preserved and reconstructed through constant cognitive attention and behavioural intervention in order to protect those aspects that are valued in contemporary images of the past (Frake 1996a: 91; Ellen 1996: 7). Concepts of the Self and the Other are revealed through landscapes, and are an important component of the way in which adaptive relations between people and the land are continued

(Morphy 1995: 206). Through landscape interpretation and conceptualisation 'we continue to try to create, not *the* past, but *our* past' (Bender 1998: 7). The result of such practices at Avebury is made even more complex by the 're-making' of one aspect of the past – the Neolithic period – that has subsequently become significant in the light of contemporary national and global heritage discourses. The implication for local identity and understandings of place at Avebury is profound.

Magnetic Island

The choice of Australia, while certainly opportunistic for a local researcher, was attractive for additional reasons. In particular, we have a history of professional introspection regarding the validity of imposing a heritage management regime, based on a Western (scientific) knowledge system, on the indigenous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. More recently, this has been tempered by the increasingly diverse backgrounds of immigrants and multicultural responses that serve to decrease the relevance of links with a British heritage. As B. Kapferer (1995a: 69) notes, this creates new narratives, at the heart of which is identity: 'The discourses over identity in Australia as elsewhere challenge and subvert previous conceptions and, most importantly, are vital in the construction and constitution of identity itself'.¹¹ In particular, the practice of heritage management in Australia has engaged for some time with understandings of social value and a 'sense of place', providing a valuable history of practical interest in communities and heritage from which to pursue a critique of heritage praxis.

There is considerable research and publication that comments on issues specifically relating to the subject of contemporary Aboriginal engagement with the past in the present and with place and landscapes. While I have relied on this material, I note there is a relative paucity of cultural heritage writing that is concerned with the way in which contemporary non-indigenous communities form attachments to places. It is

¹¹ This is not to deny the large number of Australians whose origins lie in other parts of the world, particularly in Asia and Africa. But in terms of legislation, cultural heritage is treated as either 'post-contact' (historical) or Indigenous. This division is problematic, if for no other reason than it serves to confuse the issue of post-contact Indigenous heritage and create management perplexity through the creation of separate agencies to administer the two 'types' of heritage (See Byrne et al. 2001 for an overview of the problem).

more greatly represented in research and publication specific to fields such as sociology and human geography. Byrne et al. (2001) reinforce that there is a tendency in the Australian context to place greater emphasis on Aboriginal attachment to place. This is reinforced in practice by approaches taken by various management agencies, for example, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, where cultural heritage values are more strongly associated with Aboriginal than with non-indigenous communities associated with the reef. I do not suggest that the level of attention to Aboriginal issues is excessive, rather that contemporary non-indigenous attachments are worthy of a greater consideration than that with which they are currently accorded. I have therefore elected to place greater emphasis on this in my research, and this is reflected in my fieldwork choices and subsequent discussions. I hope that by doing this, I can refocus cultural heritage on 'ways of life'. As Eriksen (2001: 131) admirably expresses it, in this light buying groceries at the supermarket is neither less nor more cultural than teaching history or participating in a religious ceremony. In an analytic sense, this suggests that being 'cultural' or having cultural 'value' can be found in the mainstream. It does not rely on being exotic, special or different. Macdonald (1993: 8) asserts that 'majorities may have identities too – though perhaps they are less likely to be expressed in a form which is regarded as "an identity"'. We should not assume either that majority identities are necessarily secure, unambiguous or morally dominant.'

My choice within Australia was to work with a community associated with the Great Barrier Reef, which was placed on the World Heritage list solely for its natural values. Magnetic Island lies in the Central Section of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, some 8 kilometres north of Townsville in Queensland. In contrast with many of the inhabited Reef islands, the Magnetic Island community is broadly characterised by 'permanent' residents and is not dominated by tourists or by those supporting tourism and its related activities. Many of the people who live on the island regularly commute by ferry to the mainland for work, school and other activities.

The discussion of Magnetic Island in Chapters 6 and 7 reinforces the understandings of attachment, identity and place found in Avebury, but grounds this in the

relationship between people and the natural environment. Many to whom I spoke identify that the island enshrines a sense of isolation and freedom to explore a way of life that has been lost in the modern urban experience. I explore these interests through an understanding of being 'an islander' and how this gives symbolic significance to places such as the Picnic Bay jetty and has led to community action to protect and retain the structure as an important part of the island's heritage.

However, it is important to reinforce that the islander experience of nature is not separate from the domestic environment, the integration of the two in an enmeshed landscape enhancing the sense of wellbeing and harmony that saturates the island sense of place. Although being 'in nature' is an important aspect of the experience of the bays and the national park, the natural environment is integrated in the more extensive socio-cultural landscape. Meaning in the landscape is thus encoded with the ongoing social and domestic concerns of day to day life, and its physical and emotional accoutrements. Indeed it is this integration between the natural and domestic spheres that makes the island an important place for many.

In Chapter 7 I explore the development of Nelly Bay as a case-study and investigate the protracted public and private protests that unfolded in its wake. The community response engendered over the almost 20 years since the inception of the Nelly Bay Harbour development resonates with the privileging of particular discourses, and with broader issues relating to attachment, identity and the social construction of the natural environment. The community reaction highlights that the nexus between practice and place engenders attachment and meaning, and that this is often articulated through a complexity of mechanisms involving public protest and political representation. Inherent in the debate and in discourse formation was the separation of nature and the environment from cultural matters, the assumption that 'cultural heritage' investigation was primarily a review of archaeological issues, and the conflation of community values and attachments with socio-economic matters. More significantly, heritage and nature were both created as scientific artefacts, and rhetoric was formalised through a positivist debate reliant on the findings of various environmental, social and archaeological studies. The result was a muting of

expressions of the conceptual dimension of the Magnetic Island community, and of the affinity for people and place that is grounded in social relations and practices and inseparable from the experience of the natural environment.

Ayutthaya

Thailand (formerly Siam) is the only country in South-east Asia to have avoided European colonisation. To have escaped occupation by a foreign power at a time when neighbouring countries were suffering the imposition of British, French, Portuguese or Dutch rule is a remarkable political achievement, the discussion of which is unfortunately beyond this project (for an overview see SarDesai 1994). This is not to suppose that Siam was isolated from foreign, particularly European, influence. Since the rise of Ayutthaya as a major foreign port in the 16th century, the 'land of the Thais' has had a close association with the outside world. However, the adoption of foreign ideas, traditions or habits has been overlaid on a Tai culture and ideology with enduring ties to animistic and Buddhist beliefs and traditions. Although this has clearly been shaken today by the impacts of globalisation, a more specific influence is discernible in Thai cultural heritage management, informed and practiced by an increasing number of Western-educated Thai professionals and academics.

Ayutthaya is situated approximately 80 kilometres north of Bangkok. Today it is a thriving regional centre, World Heritage listed in 1991 for the magnificent ruins of the ancient Thai capital of Ayutthaya. The kingdom of Ayutthaya came to power in the mid-14th century, and lasted for 417 years. The modern city of Ayutthaya is home to a vibrant and diverse population: although predominantly Buddhist Thais, the various communities that make up the township reflect a mix of ethnicities and religions, with significant Muslim and Christian groups. Many continue to achieve their living through day-to-day practices that retain links with more traditional occupations and skills, such as fishing, boating and various artisan pursuits.

In Chapters 8 and 9 I explore the significance of such practices in the formation and affirmation of identity and community and the creation of places and landscapes. I show that community assertions of what is valued and of heritage are inseparable from

the day-to-day practices of lived experience and the web of meanings that reinforce notions of community, belonging and of 'being in place'. Inherent in such processes are understandings of heritage that incorporate practices that transmit ideas, beliefs, values and emotions. I have chosen to more closely investigate these aspects of lived experience through the expressions of place found within the Ayutthaya Muslim and Christian communities. Water and elephants are two enduring symbols of Thai life, and remain today as significant aspects of lived experience in Ayutthaya. I have also addressed these as influential themes in daily life.

A more distinctive activity within the historical park is the opportunity to take a tour on elephant back. The elephants and their riders (mahouts) live in the village of Ban Chang, some 3 kilometres north of the 'old' island that is the focus of tourist activity. The village achieves social cohesion through the confirmation of the community's identity, with a shared notion of knowledge, and the transmission and diversification of this knowledge and practice related to living with elephants. The traditions and rituals that give life and meaning to the daily experiences of the village community are active and modern continuations of beliefs, practices and understandings that reach back to ancient origins and connect contemporary mahout/elephant relationships with their early Hindu influences.

There has been a transformation of practice through the importation of new ideas and externally imposed change, including the impact of tourism. Locked in a set of social relationships, which both constrain and enable, the villagers can manoeuvre 'to gain access to and manipulate cultural knowledge' (J. Thomas 1999: 19). Faced with considerable economic and social changes, the mahouts are moulding new definitions that are in fact re-affirmations of identity and of being in place, and of the integral and enduring role of elephants in Thai history and cultural heritage.

The management of Thailand's 'cultural heritage' concentrates on the tangible remains of the past, in either monumental or archaeological form, or as movable items that are properly curated in a museum environment. Traditional handicrafts and artisan skills are relegated more closely to folk-life and local interests. By enforcing a

separation between heritage as practice and tradition, and heritage as architecture and archaeology, a holistic understanding and protection of heritage is compromised at more than the local level. Traditional practices help to provide a sense of historical continuity and a common belonging and identity, and rely on a transmission of skills and practices that have been acquired over a long period. The lived traditions, rituals, ceremonies, skills and practices of the contemporary communities of Ayutthaya complement and give life and meaning to hallowed but otherwise lifeless sites of the archaeological landscape.

It is through living with and interviewing people in these three internationally diverse communities that I have attempted to understand the ways people individually and collectively create a meaningful relationship with 'locales', being the places they occupy. I explore how place and community are mutually constituted through social action and practice and the attribution of meaning. This links with understandings of the way in which environment and its cultural elaborations are mutually constituted through emotion, praxis and narrative, which act to enmesh place in the creation of physical and conceptual landscapes. The processes through which places and landscapes are inculcated with experience and memory, implicate events, people and relationships. The resulting involvement between people, community, experience and place is consequently as important as the place itself. Through this exploration of place and community making, I hope to provide a platform from which to advance our approaches to community conceptions of heritage.

