Chapter 9
Empty Gestures? Heritage and the Politics of Recognition

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Introduction

The politics of identity cannot simply be dismissed as empty or abstract gesturing. The conflicts that occur around the rights to control the expression of cultural identity have important material consequences for struggles over economic resources and struggles for equity and human rights. This chapter examines the role that archaeologists, often unwittingly, play in the arbitration of identity politics and the consequences this has for both the discipline and, more specifically, Australian Indigenous communities. Drawing on a critical reading of Foucault's later work on governmentality (Foucault 1979), this chapter provides a theoretical framework for understanding the conflicts that arise when archaeological knowledge and expertise about the material past intersects with the use of that past as indigenous heritage. This analysis is used to inform a discussion of the ways in which the Waanyi community of far northwest Queensland has asserted an oppositional understanding of the nature and meaning of heritage. In these conflicts, heritage becomes a political resource around which archaeologists, indigenous peoples and other interests negotiate and play out struggles for political recognition and legitimacy. Challenges to received notions of heritage are actively used by the Waanyi to help underpin their demands to access and control of land. In this challenge, the role and authority of archaeological expertise is redefined and renegotiated in more politically useful ways. In short, this chapter argues that heritage is both a resource in, and a process of, negotiation in the cultural politics of identity. Archaeologists and other heritage "experts" are therefore required to make conscious and informed choices in the ways in which they define and engage with heritage, and those communities who have a stake in heritage management.

The Politics of Recognition

Indigenous struggles for equity, sovereignty and land are political conflicts undertaken in the context of the history of colonial disenfranchisement and continuing institutionalized inequity. Conflicts over rights of access to, and control over, heritage

H. Silverman and D. F. Ruggles (eds.), *Cultural Heritage and Human Rights*.
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objects or places are often denounced as simply identity politics of little real material relevance for overcoming inequity. For instance, Appleton (2003) from the British independent political organization “Spiked” has criticized demands by Australian Indigenous communities for the repatriation of human remains held in British museums. She states that archaeologists and museums who supported repatriation requests were indulging in empty “feel good” gestures of little material consequence beyond depriving scholars of important data and knowledge. She also points out that the gestures underlying repatriation do little for indigenous disenfranchisement and struggles for equity and rights, and notes that the return of human remains cannot help provide equitable housing, education, healthcare or welfare to Aboriginal communities. Of course heritage issues have no direct consequence on these issues, yet political struggles over cultural recognition do have important consequences in wider struggles for equity, that will feed back to specific struggles over resources. Certainly, when the archaeological community and other heritage practitioners divorce their attempts at recognizing indigenous issues and cultural concerns over the management of culture heritage from the material and institutional realities of indigenous inequity and discrimination, such recognition can be an empty gesture. However, recognition tied to an explicit awareness of wider political conflict can be significant. Nancy Fraser (2000), for instance, argues that identity politics can represent important emancipatory responses to injustice, and that culture and identity are often significant terrains of struggle in their own right. The issue here is that identity politics should not be seen as replacing struggles for resources. Rather, the redistribution of resources and the struggle for political and economic equity are interlinked with struggles for recognition. Properly conceived, the politics of recognition will work to validate and facilitate wider negotiations for the redistribution of power and resources.

It is important to note that governments and their bureaucracies – the state – do attempt to deal with social problems and conflicts through legitimizing or delegitimizing particular conflicts and the various parties or interests engaged in that conflict. The state tends to listen only to those interests and interest groups that they believe have enough political legitimacy to warrant their attention. However, interest groups gain political legitimacy through their access to, or control over, various political resources, including, ironically, the ear of the state. The political resources that are drawn on in the negotiation of political legitimacy are many and varied, the most obvious being access or control over financial resources, and the ability to claim democratic representation on a particular issue or concern. However – and this is where the politics of recognition become critically important – political legitimacy may also be gained through the explicit recognition of identity and cultural claims. Subsequently, conflicts over the control of heritage objects and places may be understood to occur in an arena where the symbolic recognition of the legitimacy of indigenous identity claims diffuses out to inform and validate other claims to equity based on claims to cultural identity, cultural knowledge and experiences. Heritage objects or places, and human remains, are often held to be representatives of community identity, and as such, become important symbolic resources in underpinning claims to cultural identity, which in turn have a consequence in wider negotiations for political legitimacy.

In dealing with social conflicts and problems, governments call on various forms of expertise to help them make sense of competing claims and of the various interests and interest groups making claims and demands. Archaeological knowledge is one of the many forms of expertise that the state may call upon to help make sense of particular social problems and conflicts. Consequently, it is important to recognize that archaeological knowledge and expertise do not represent just another interest group in debates over the disposition and management of cultural resources. Rather, archaeologists hold a special position in the disposition of heritage items, due to the way governments and bureaucracies use archaeological knowledge to help make sense of, and regulate, those social problems that intersect with or are based on particular interpretations of the past and its material culture.

Governing Heritage

I have argued elsewhere that conflicts over the control of cultural heritage must be understood as existing within the wider parameters of political negotiations between the state and a range of interests over the political and cultural legitimacy of claims to identity (Smith 2004). Drawing on Foucault's thesis of "governmentality", archaeological knowledge must be understood as a "technology of government", that is, a body of knowledge that the state deploys to help policy makers and legislators understand, make sense of, regulate and govern demands and claims based on appeals to the past. The governmentality thesis recognizes that the governance or regulation of certain social problems and populations can rest on the development of *mentalities* of rule – where populations and the problems they pose are rendered subject to regulation and governance through the way they are defined and represented. Certain "truths" about the representations of populations can more easily be entered into political calculations than other forms of knowledge. In short, the intellectual authority and power of so-called objective, neutral and rational knowledge finds synergy with liberal forms of governance. The mobilization of this knowledge to regulate, translate and render populations and social problems "thinkable" – subject to calculation and the disciplined analysis of rational thought – means that intellectual knowledge becomes directly implicated in the governance of certain populations and social problems (Rose and Miller 1992: 182). Thus, intellectual fields become part of the mechanics or technologies of government (Rose and Miller 1992; Miller and Rose 1993; Dean 1999).

Archaeology's adherence to claims of scientific neutrality and objectivity are central in enabling its deployment as a technology of government. The processual discourse, together with claims to professional pastoral care over the past through the discourse of "stewardship", has been important in both defining and authorizing the discipline's role as a technology of government. This role has also been facilitated by the development of Cultural Resource Management (CRM) policy, legislation and processes.[1] It was no coincidence that CRM, and the pivotal role that archaeology plays within this, was established in many Western countries at the same time as processual theory was gaining ground and giving the archaeological discipline "scientific" gravitas (Smith 2004). The rhetoric of archaeological science and the so-called professionalization of the discipline that dominated much of the theoretical literature of the late 1960s and 1970s were central in demonstrating, through the mechanism of archaeological lobbying for cultural resource legislation and policy, the utility of archaeology as a technology of government. The "common sense" view of science that became embedded in the discipline at this time found synergy with bureaucratic understandings and cultural expectations about the legitimate nature of "knowledge". As Fischer (2003: 4–5) observes, public policy development in this period was dominated by the "rational" model of decision making.

Through the process of CRM, and the various associated policy documents and pieces of legislation, archaeological knowledge and expertise is actively institutionalized as a technology of government. CRM regulates the use, value and meaning given to a range of cultural objects and places, and provides clear procedures and processes through which archaeological knowledge and expertise may be called upon and deployed. In this context, cultural and social conflicts that rest on, or intersect with, understandings of the past become "merely" technical issues of site management or preservation rather than fraught socio-cultural conflicts. In short they are de-politicized.

Nonetheless, conflicts over the disposition of objects and the management of sites and places are part of a wider process in which governments and their agencies confer, withhold or otherwise regulate claims to political and cultural legitimacy. Archaeology benefits in this process by having its authority as a discipline continually underlined and reinforced through its role as a technology of government, and because the discipline's privileged position over the management of material culture assures access to the database. However, to maintain this access, archaeologists must continually invoke the discourse of processual or scientific rationality or risk undermining their authority as intellectuals and the usefulness of their discipline as a technology of government. In effect, archaeological discourse and knowledge become themselves regulated and governed by this process – although often to the advantage of the discipline itself.

It is important to stress that the mobilization of archaeology as a technology of government does not produce a static set of relationships. Nor does the mobilization of archaeology as a technology of government *always* mean that archaeological wishes are upheld. Indeed, archaeological expertise and authority will itself often be marginalized against more powerful economic interests in CRM. Furthermore, from time to time and in certain political contexts, indigenous knowledge may also be granted greater legitimacy than archaeological pronouncements. Nonetheless, the deployment of archaeological knowledge in helping policy makers understand and regulate certain problems or conflicts ensures an overall primacy of place in knowledge claims over the past. Nor is the use of archaeological knowledge to regulate indigenous conflicts over the past necessarily or inherently negative. For instance, during the 1970s the then Australian Labor Government explicitly called on the new archaeological discoveries at Lake Mungo (which suggested that human occupation of Australia was at least 40,000 years old) to help legitimize its attempts to bring in radical land rights legislation (Smith 2004: 154). That this legislation eventuated only in very limited form in 1975 rests more on the fact that this government was overthrown by the nefarious activities of the Australian Governor General and the Conservative opposition party that ousted the Labor Government from power, than the fact that public sympathy had not been sufficiently mobilized to support the legislation. However, the point here is that the authority of archaeological knowledge is used to help legitimize (or refute) indigenous cultural claims. Whether this has positive or negative outcomes is somewhat beside the point, since for the politics of recognition it is vital that recognition flows from an organic expression of identity – that is, that those proclaiming their identity are in control of its expression and thus have a greater chance of influencing how that identity is recognized, while decreasing the possibilities of its misrecognition. Moreover, the archaeological governance of heritage, and the claims to identity associated with that heritage, disallows any acceptance of the legitimacy of *difference* – rather all things must be understood through the lens of archaeological science. Yet, the acceptance of the legitimacy of difference is vital if indigenous knowledge, identity and experiences are to be recognized. This is not to say that indigenous knowledge must always be uncritically accepted or that it must always take precedence over archaeological knowledge, but rather that we accept as a base line that it is legitimate for different knowledge systems to coexist, and moreover to acknowledge and understand the extended political and cultural consequences that will occur when one knowledge system is given greater authority and legitimacy over another.

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[1] Cultural Resource Management (CRM) is the term used in North America for the legal and technical processes of preserving, protecting and managing "cultural resources" or tangible heritage items. In other regions of the world, this process is referred to as Cultural Heritage Management or Archaeological Heritage Management.

This theorization of heritage as a resource of power leads us to recognize that archaeology is not simply another interest group in conflict over the interpretation of the past and the management of heritage, but that archaeologists have a vested interest in maintaining their privileged access over "their" database. It also reveals the extent to which certain forms of knowledge have become institutionalized, not only in terms of their incorporation in public policy, heritage legislation and management and preservation practices, but also as self-evident knowledge. They seem natural. Embedded in the heritage management process are certain dominant or authorized discourses that both draw on and underpin the position of technologies of government. The naturalization of these discourses also facilitates the regulation of competing knowledge about the past and conceptualizations about the meaning and nature of heritage places and objects.

In the West, the authorized heritage discourse stresses the material, or tangible, nature of heritage, along with monumentality, grand scale, time depth and aesthetics

(Smith 2006: 29f). While it identifies the symbolic importance of heritage for representing social and cultural identity, it pays scant recognition to the dynamics of how identity is actively constructed or created in association with heritage. This is because the dominant discourse of heritage naturalizes the assumption that heritage is inextricably linked to identity to such an extent that how and why these links occur are hardly ever considered – the heritage/identity dyad just "is". The authorized heritage discourse, informed by archaeological concerns with materiality and assumptions about the representational relationships between material culture and identity, obscures or marginalizes or misrecognizes those identities created using conceptualizations of heritage that sit outside of the authorized heritage discourse.

However, the existence and nature of the authorized heritage discourse does more than render certain identities or populations as subjects of regulation and governance. The authorized heritage discourse not only defines what is or is not "heritage", but also stresses and authorizes a particular ethic. In this ethic, current generations are put under a moral obligation to care for, protect and revere heritage items and places so that they may be passed to future generations for their "education" with the assurance that a sense of common identity based on the past is being maintained. The idea of inheritance, which is embedded in authorized definitions of "heritage", is very important here. "Heritage", synonymous as it is with concepts of "legacy", "tradition" or "birthright", is a discourse that inevitably invokes a sense that the present has a duty to pass on unchanged its inheritance from the past, to protect that legacy and ensure that it remains unsullied by the present so that the next generation may benefit from the past. Subsequently, current generations simply become caretakers of the past, disengaged from an active use of "the heritage". The appropriate experts, who act as stewards and trustees, ensure that heritage is protected and that the present does not actively rewrite the meaning of the past and thus the present. In short, the continuity of the past is maintained, its influence on the present is maintained and, as "the present" becomes "the past" of future generations, social values and meanings represented by "the past" are perpetuated. The symbolic values of heritage, identified, documented and preserved by the stewardship of heritage experts, such as archaeologists, are thus maintained, and competing interpretations or active utilization of heritage to create and recreate identities of relevance to the needs and aspirations of current generations are made problematic.

Another crucial theme of this discourse is the idea that heritage is innately valuable – heritage is inevitably about "the great", "the good" and "the important" that contributed to or "created" the cultural character of the present. Assumptions about the innate significance and value of heritage are also interlinked to assumptions about its materiality. In Western authorized heritage discourse, heritage *is* material: it is an object, place or landscape.

However, it is useful to consider here that heritage is ultimately *intangible*. The idea of intangible heritage is one that has taken on some urgency within recent heritage debates, particularly following UNESCO's adoption of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* in 2003. This convention recognizes that not all heritage is represented by physical objects, but can also include intangible events (Aikawa 2004). However, the idea of the intangibility of heritage is one that is difficult to accept within the Western authorized heritage discourse, as witnessed by the ambivalence many key Western countries have towards the convention (Kurin 2004).

Moreover the idea of intangible heritage that I have developed elsewhere (Smith 2006) and revisit here, rests on the idea that while heritage may be represented by a tangible thing or an intangible event recognizable under the 2003 UNESCO Convention, heritage is also usefully conceived as a point or *moment* of negotiation. This negotiation may occur at places or in association with objects identified as having important cultural or social symbolism, or during the performances of intangible heritage events – but that heritage is a process in which identity and social and cultural meaning, memories and experiences are mediated, evaluated and worked out. This negotiation may occur within groups who share a common and collective sense of identity, or between different collective cultural or social identities. This is not to negate the importance of the physical place or object, but rather to de-privilege it. Sites, landscapes or objects of heritage provide a sense of place, or borrowing from Raphael Samuel (1994) a "theatre", in which to negotiate and work out cultural and social identities and the values that underpin them in response to changing cultural, social, economic and political needs and circumstances. The ability to control the moment of heritage – the cultural processes and negotiations that occur at heritage places – becomes vital in projects concerned with the self-determination of identity construction and expression. However, the process of negotiation and mediation of identity and cultural values and meanings, is inevitably arbitrated not only by the authorized heritage discourse, but also by the technologies of government who validate and deploy that discourse.

Challenges to the Authorized Heritage Discourse

The cultural and political "work" done by the authorized heritage discourse is inevitably contested by community groups as they assert their own sense of heritage and identity in negotiations over resources. We see this exemplified in the work the Waanyi community has undertaken in their attempts to assert the legitimacy of their claims to land and resources in far north Queensland, Australia. Waanyi are one of the local community or interest groups who are asserting their rights to have a stake in the management of the Riversleigh World Heritage area and surrounding Boodjamulla (formally Lawn Hill) National Park (Fig. 1).

Riversleigh is part of the Australian Fossil Mammal Sites World Heritage Area, which was listed by UNESCO in 1994 for its outstanding natural heritage values. The Riversleigh fossil fields have been identified as possessing the world's richest Oligo-Miocene deposits of mammalian and reptile fossils (DEST 1993). The well-preserved fossils occur in discrete locations in limestone deposits – although to untrained eyes they are often difficult to recognize. The deposits span a period from 25 million years ago through the Pliocene and into the Pleistocene to possibly about 20,000 years BP (Archer et al. 1989; DEST 1993: 14).

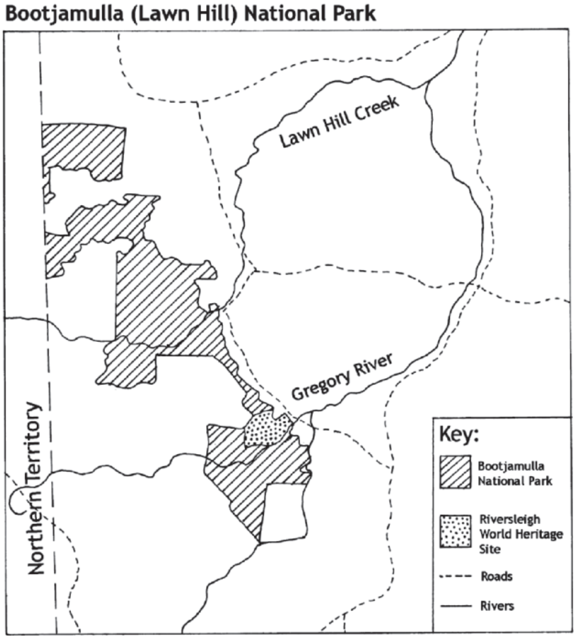
Bootjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park
Lawn Hill Creek
Gregory River
Northern Territory
Key:
Bootjamulla National Park
Riversleigh World Heritage Site
Roads
Rivers

Fig. 1 Location of the Riversleigh World Heritage and adjoining Boodjamulla National Park (drawn by Anna Marshal)

The semi-arid landscape of Riversleigh is characterized by vast limestone plateaus with sparse Eucalypt woodland and spinifex grasslands. This landscape has particular cultural resonance in dominant constructions of Australian national identity: the rugged dry landscape and its eventual taming by early pioneers has come to symbolize a number of national narratives and mythologies about Australian history and cultural identity (Lattas 1992; White 1992; Curthoys 1999). The large Gregory and O'Shannasy Rivers cut through the region, and their narrow bands of riparian forests provide an oasis in the landscape. The strips of forest along the banks of these rivers recall a sense of the rainforests that paleontologists describe as having covered the region at the time when many of the fossilized animals were living (Archer et al. 1996).

This is a highly symbolic landscape because the Riversleigh fossils have captured wider Australian cultural imaginations. Discoveries of exotic animals amongst the fossils – carnivorous kangaroos and marsupial lions, and the whimsically named "weirdodonta" and "thingodonta", the latter possessing large protruding incisors – have drawn significant public attention to the region. Although the Riversleigh landscape has a cultural resonance to mythologies underpinning Australian national identity, the cultural values of the landscape and the fossils are masked by the characterization of the Riversleigh landscape and fossils as "natural" resources (Head 2000; Smith and van der Meer 2001).

Riversleigh is highly significant to Australian paleontologists whose scientific concerns, needs and aspirations drive its management (DEST 1993; Luly and Valentine 1998; Manidis Roberts 1998). In a very real sense, paleontologists are perceived to "own", at least symbolically, the Riversleigh landscape. While some Waanyi people feel marginalized in debates and negotiations over the management of both Riversleigh and the surrounding Boodjamulla National Park, both are areas of cultural significance to Waanyi and within their cultural custodial territories (see Manidis Roberts 1998; Smith et al. 2003a for the extent of these debates). To assert their legitimate right to a voice in management decisions, some Waanyi representatives have started to talk about the repatriation of fossils back to keeping places in the Riversleigh area on the basis that they are part of their cultural heritage (Manidis Roberts 1998). The Waanyi conceive of the Riversleigh fossil fields as part of a landscape defined by personal histories, individual and collective memories, kinship relations and cultural knowledge (Smith and van der Meer 2001: 56). The fossil fields were known to the Waanyi prior to paleontological "discoveries" and investigations, and Waanyi cultural knowledge of the region includes accounts of large kangaroos inhabiting a region in which paleontologists have also uncovered fossils of giant macropods (Smith and van der Meer 2001: 57; Smith 2006: 162f).

Any request for fossils to be held in or "returned" to keeping places at Riversleigh based on "cultural" understandings of the fossils can be incomprehensible to those who privilege "scientific" knowledge as culturally neutral. Animal fossils are not often identifiable as cultural, let alone *cultural heritage* to many scientists and land managers – a conceptual issue that is made all the more difficult by the listing of Riversleigh as a site of *natural heritage* on the World Heritage list. Waanyi requests for fossil repatriation to keeping places can be understood as symbolic demands for recognition of their cultural custodianship over the landscape in a way that challenges Euro-Australian cultural conceptualizations of both the landscape and heritage. Here the Waanyi are asking that land managers not only recognize the validity of their claims to land, but also the validity of the ways in which they conceive and understand that landscape. Their challenges to the authorized heritage discourse demands that policy makers recognize the legitimacy of their cultural difference – and all that subsequently flows from that in terms of economic and political equity. In this, Waanyi are challenging the governance of their identity – by challenging the foundational knowledge and concepts that are drawn on in that governance. As such, this becomes more than an assertion of Waanyi identity. It also becomes a specific challenge to their marginalization in land management practices, through a challenge to the way heritage is defined and meditated by the bodies of expertise that are deployed as a technology of government.

Another challenge to the ways in which heritage is used to govern or regulate Waanyi identity and cultural knowledge was a project initiated by a group of Waanyi women. The Waanyi Women's History Project was concerned with the recording of sites of cultural and historical significance to Waanyi women within Boodjamulla National Park and the Riversleigh World Heritage Area (Smith et al. 2003a,b). Prior to the project, some Waanyi women were concerned that the cultural sites and places within the National Park important to women had not been adequately identified or managed. This situation is exacerbated not only by the colonial history of the region, which has seen many Waanyi people relocated away from their custodial lands, but also because women often have been overlooked in a land management system that has tended to assume that men are the primary spokespersons for cultural issues (O'Keefe et al. 2001; Smith et al. 2003a: 73). Further, much of the information about the sites is knowledge that cannot be imparted to men, and the women were concerned that their sites either were not known by the park managers and thus inadvertently in danger, or that they were being inappropriately managed. At one level, the aims of the project were to identify sites, provide map coordinates for the park managers, and establish protocols for managers to liaise with Waanyi women over their long-term management. On another level, the aims of the project were firstly to allow women to get back in touch with their heritage and to pass on information to younger women and, secondly to assert the legitimacy of the role of women in the management of their cultural sites (O'Keefe et al. 2001; Smith et al. 2003a,b).

The project was carried out by senior Waanyi women in association with three female archaeologists. The archaeologists, of whom I was one, had worked previously in the Riversleigh region, and participated in the project through the invitation of the senior Waanyi women. Our role was to record and map sites identified by the Waanyi women, record oral histories and information about the sites and the region, then discuss and write up management and liaison protocols for use by Park managers. It was agreed that information about the sites and the oral histories would not to be published or used by the archaeologists. The material results of this project were that Park managers became aware of the existence of important sites to women and the need to consult with senior women about site management. The Waanyi women involved in the project have stated that the project had reaffirmed their connections with their heritage and given them some control over its management, and the Waanyi women who initiated the project have been asked to talk about their experiences by other communities in northern Queensland (O'Keefe et al. 2001). The results of the project appear very straightforward; however, what needs to be stressed is the degree to which the women consider that they have increased their authority in negotiations over the management of Boodjamulla and Riversleigh (O'Keefe et al. 2001).

The point to be made here about this project is that the archaeologists involved did not control it; they simply facilitated the collection of data. However, our presence as archaeologists did give the project some intellectual or "scientific" "legitimacy" both in the eyes of the bodies that funded it and the Boodjamulla land managers. However, our role as archaeological "experts" was modified so that the project's primary non-archaeological and community values were met. The archaeologists were not in control of the knowledge produced, nor how it was or was not used. To some extent, the role of archaeological expertise was modified so that we as the archaeologists involved did not regulate or legitimize the content of the knowledge produced – having no control over it or any ability to comment upon it. What we did legitimate by our presence on the project, however, was the legitimacy of the existence of the women's knowledge. The role of archaeology as a technology of government was modified by the Waanyi in such a way that the Waanyi were able to subtly use the archaeological presence to get their message across to the non-indigenous audiences they needed to influence, but yet ensured that they did not surrender control of the knowledge itself. In controlling the project the Waanyi women were able to use our identity as archaeological "experts" to facilitate their aspirations for recognition, and subvert or reorientate the authority and role of archaeological governance to meet their own needs.

As archaeological heritage managers, our role in facilitating the management of women's heritage was entirely redundant in this project. The ways in which women "managed" their heritage centred on the passing on of cultural knowledge to younger women, and in taking opportunities simply "to be" in the landscape and to remember collective and individual memories and experiences (see Smith et al. 2003a for further discussion of this point). None of these things required archaeological knowledge or our recording skills. We simply became a political resource that women used, with our consent, to gain recognition and acceptance of women's cultural knowledge and ways of managing and caring for their cultural heritage.

Conclusion

At the crux of the issues raised by this volume is the definition of "heritage". Certainly, heritage plays a symbolic role in the creation and recreation of a range of cultural and social identities. The argument advanced above is that these identities are important in helping certain populations, in this case an Indigenous Australian community, assert the cultural and political legitimacy of their claims to land and its management. Heritage is utilized as a focal point by governments and their bureaucracies to help them make sense of certain cultural claims. Bodies of expertise, such as archaeology, that have a claim over heritage sites, are called upon to help regulate, interpret and ultimately govern these claims. It thus becomes important in the politics of recognition for subaltern communities to challenge the nature of the knowledge that is deployed in their governance. The Waanyi, in a number of ways, have done so through their attempts to redefine authorized ideas of heritage and its management. The idea of heritage is often a focal point in these conflicts, either as a point through which governance is attempted or though which it is challenged. But what *is* heritage?

One of the things that emerged in considering the cultural and political conflicts that revolve around heritage is the dissonant and negotiated aspect of it. To begin to engage with subaltern ideas of heritage it is useful and necessary to question the dominant or authorized accounts of heritage. To do this it is essential to de-privilege the idea of heritage as a place or thing – as an inanimate object whose meanings and values are immutable. It is perhaps more useful to consider the real *moment* of heritage: this is what is both done at, and with, heritage sites, objects and places. If we take account of this, then heritage is not something in trust for future generations, but rather something we use to address the cultural and political needs of the present. If we conceive of heritage as the intangible process of negotiating cultural identity, value, and meaning in and for the present, then we open the way for challenging the governance not only of subaltern groups, but also our own governance as archaeological and heritage "experts".

Acknowledgments I thank the participants and organizers of the Waanyi Women's History Project for allowing me to participate in that project. Gary Campbell and Emma Waterton read and commented on drafts of this chapter.

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