

# Preface

What a pleasure it is to write these brief remarks presenting the next volume in the publication series on cultural heritage undertaken by the Collaborative for Cultural Heritage and Museum Practices (CHAMP) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign through the extraordinary vision of our editor at Springer, Teresa Krauss. Volume 1 dealt with *Cultural Heritage and Human Rights* (Springer, 2007). Volume 2 was concerned with *Intangible Heritage Embodied* (Springer, 2009). This volume, as its eponymous title indicates, considers *Contested Cultural Heritage* from the perspective of that which is erased, excluded, religiously laden, and politically fraught in the context of globalization today. Volume 4, forthcoming under the editorship of Dr. D. Fairchild Ruggles, explores *Heritage Cities*.

As cultural heritage becomes increasingly (indeed, inexorably) significant across the world, the number of issues for critical analysis and, hopefully, mediation rises in tandem. The literature has exploded in size and scope as my introductory essay attempts to indicate. Projects are burgeoning. These vary dramatically in size and scope, encompassing academic studies conducted by individual scholars or research center teams (the latter may be housed at universities or be private entities), large governmental and inter-governmental initiatives, NGOs from small and single-site or single-country-focused to regional to mega institutions such as World Monuments Fund and Global Heritage Fund, supra-governmental agencies such as UNESCO, ICOMOS, and ICAHM, and self-starting grassroots organizations. The projects themselves range from theoretical to applied. They may be ethnographic appraisals of a particular heritage situation (such as how people living in a particular place perceive their relationship to the local historic past), development work (such as how to rehabilitate an ancient irrigation system), politically empowering (such as assisting a historically disenfranchised group to assert land rights), religiously mediating (the work of the Department of Landscape Architecture–University of Illinois at the Indian site of Champaner-Pavagadh comes to mind), touristic (such as the multi-nation Ruta Maya and Qhapaq Ñan projects), and so on. Typically, every project is challenged by the inherently contested nature of cultural heritage.

This volume, like the others in the series, is the product of a conference held at the University of Illinois, funded through the generosity of a number of campus sponsors, among which the Center for Global Studies is most especially thanked

for its consistent support and encouragement since CHAMP's founding in 2005. As with most academic conferences, not all speakers ultimately wrote up their papers for publication. To the presenters at the conference leading to the present volume, I offer my sincerest thanks for their patience during the production process. I trust they will be pleased with the final product.

Urbana, Illinois

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