

Chapter 1 A history of heritage

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Early conservation legislation and practices were formally defined by intellectual currents of European thought which created a 'world view', or discourse, about what heritage is. Heritage was valued for being tangible and monumental. The dominant discourse also reshapes heritage in its own image, as the case study by Jacqueline Ansell shows. Her investigation, as a dress historian, of the encounters between wealthy English tourists and working Welsh women demonstrates how the idea of 'traditional' Welsh female costume came about. Dominant European heritage discourses were exported with colonialism, but in recent decades international heritage practices have responded to challenges. These include the recognition of a range of cultural values and community knowledge that make tangible heritage significant. Intangible heritage is the most recent field of cultural activity to receive international recognition.

Introduction

A leading goal of the international heritage movement, expressed in such bodies as UNESCO, ICOMOS and the Australian Heritage Commission, has been to objectify, professionalise and systematise the process of heritage assessment and evaluation. In the hands of professionals and bureaucrats much of the heat and subjectivity – and perhaps some of the enthusiasm too – has been taken out of heritage business.

(Davison, [2000] 2008, p. 36)

A history of heritage can be set out in many ways, perhaps working through a series of notable **conservation** successes in saving sites and landscapes, or detailing the complex development of national and international legal frameworks for conservation. Some recent commentators have offered a more critical review of conservation history, seeing it as overly controlling, exclusive of social diversity and narrow in its judgements of value. Other narratives suggest that conservation movements have a history of vibrant grassroots activity, emphasising the role of communities in making sense of what heritage means to them, and successfully challenging professionals to respond to indigenous peoples' heritage and African-American heritage on a global scale (Byrne, 2008; Samuel, [1994] 2008; Smith, L., 2006). There is considerable divergence, then, across different possible histories of heritage.

¹ Jacqueline Ansell published the research on which the case study is based under her unmarried name Jacqueline Lewis.

This chapter gives you a timeline for a history of heritage, beginning at the phase when there were enthusiasts collecting and representing the past but no professionals. Though museums (private and institutional) have the longest history as heritage institutions, truly public museums emerged only in the mid-nineteenth century in the West. The case study in this chapter is about how the modern idea of 'traditional' Welsh women's costume emerged *unofficially* but became official. It is a reminder of how much we still use inherited ideas of what the past should be. In this case many ideas about 'traditional' Welsh dress come down to us not from its wearers but from the English ruling classes.

There are three major phases to consider on a timeline: the enthusiasts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the new professionals of the nineteenth century and the rise of world organisations of the twentieth century.

However, this is not just a 'names and dates' history. More interesting is to follow changes in the thinking around how and why objects of heritage have been identified and presented. We will follow early approaches to collecting and categorising the past, the rise of the architectural monument and archaeological site as the dominant types of heritage, the high point of this approach with the establishment of the **World Heritage List** and subsequent challenges to this dominant mode of thinking about heritage. These intellectual positions are **discourses**, or world views, and we will be considering the evolution of an official discourse about what heritage is and who takes responsibility for it.

The enthusiasts

The practice of heritage may be defined as the management and conservation protocols, techniques and procedures that heritage managers, archaeologists, architects, museum curators and other experts undertake. It may also be an economic and/or leisure practice, and/or a social and cultural practice ... of meaning and identity making.

(Smith, L., 2006, p. 13)

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the West are a convenient time to begin this brief history of heritage since these centuries saw the intellectual origins of modern science and its foundation principles of observation and testing. The search for knowledge in the arts and sciences was accompanied by greater interest in collecting and displaying objects, searching out new sources (often as part of colonising expeditions), and circulating descriptions and images through a new range of publications. The activities of collecting, understanding and representing the past were very much in the hands of

those with the private economic means and leisure to pursue their interests. These privileged men (women begin to feature more by the later eighteenth century) were strongly involved in social and cultural practices of meaning and identity making, as the quote above, from the cultural heritage critic Laurajane Smith, reminds us.

Early uses of heritage

A powerful motive for investigating the past came from a desire to write authoritative national histories to account for the origins of a nation and its inhabitants. We might think of this as a desire for national foundation myths. Early researchers working in the British Isles before the mid-sixteenth century based their understanding of the history of the nation (itself a fluctuating construct) on Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* (Geoffrey of Monmouth, 1973). Writing in the early twelfth century, he asserted that Britain was first settled by a Trojan prince, Brutus, after the sack of Troy. This was not the only foundation myth: Stonehenge and fossilised dinosaur bones were explained as the remains of a race of giants, or else the land was settled by descendants of Noah, neatly tying it in to biblical chronology (Royal Society of Arts, 2007).

The term '**antiquarian**' became an established title for those with a keen interest in collecting, sorting and displaying aspects of the past: the first enthusiasts for heritage. The big questions about national foundation myths and the subsequent development of society through law, custom and institutions were highly political. In England, the first formal society for antiquarians began to meet during the reign of Elizabeth I, at the end of the 1500s. However, the next monarch, James I, suppressed this group by 1607, worried by its potential for finding undesirable answers to contemporary debates over the extent of the power of the Crown and of Parliament.

During the period of the Enlightenment, spanning roughly the later seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century, the interests of British antiquarians extended to all aspects of the known world. As the term implies, contemporary researchers during this period deployed the new scientific methods in a search for light to shed on cultural and natural research problems.

Methods established during this period for collecting and classifying objects survived well into the twentieth century, for instance the sorting of objects from the same region into a chronological order, or the sorting of objects of the same type but different regions into comparative groups. Material culture could be treated in ways similar to the emerging science of botanical classification, to show how the cultures of the world could be understood in a hierarchy of simple to complex, crude to refined.

It is important to bear in mind that sorting, ordering and ranking anything involves methods of selection that may not be based entirely on factual distinctions. This argument is developed in Chapter 2. Western intellectual history identified ancient Greek and Roman societies as the intellectual foundations of their own, later, society, particularly during the Enlightenment. The surviving classical material culture of statuary and architectural ruins were treated as the artistic model for contemporary artists and architects to aspire to (the **canon** of most highly regarded works). Although western knowledge of other societies expanded considerably during this Enlightenment period, through trading contacts and colonisation, other cultures were slotted into this hierarchy of canonical and non-canonical works.

Encyclopedic knowledge

The collections of private collectors and semi-private societies began to be introduced to a wider public during the eighteenth century. In England, King George II and the government supported the creation of the British Museum, which opened to visitors in 1759 and which claimed to be the first public *national* museum in the world. The purpose of the museum was to act as a three-dimensional encyclopedia of the state of all branches of knowledge of the world, demonstrating the Enlightenment view of recognising no division between understanding of the arts or the sciences.

The creation of the national museum, whose purpose was to represent knowledge of the world, came at a time of international battles over which European nation would dominate expanding world trade and colonisation. By 1759 Europe was half-way through the Seven Years War (also known as the French and Indian War, and the War of the Conquest), a global series of battles fought by the major powers of Britain, France, Prussia, Austria, Spain, Russia, their allies in Europe and in their colonies. Colonies at the time were established in North America (USA and Canada), India, the Caribbean islands, the Philippines and coastal Africa. While the treaty that concluded the wars in Europe did not alter the national boundaries, the Treaty of Paris (1763) significantly altered the disposition of colonial lands (and their peoples). The UK emerged as the dominant European (and by extension, colonial) power. We might pause to acknowledge the huge loss of life directly attributable to the wars (Winston Churchill called this period the 'first' world war). However, contemporary politics was not the sort of knowledge to be represented within the collections of the British Museum of the time. Instead, the British colonies and other regions open to travellers were treated as sources of new artefacts which could be research materials for Enlightenment questions.

How could Hindu temple sculptures be understood against Roman portrait busts or an Egyptian sarcophagus, all on display in the British Museum? Were they all artworks or should they be categorised for their place in a history of world religions? The later eighteenth-century philosophy of aesthetics suggested that it was extremely difficult to value objects as artworks away from the established canon of classical Greek, Roman and European masters (see Chapter 2). According to this view, Hindu sculptures, to take one example, could certainly be classified for their religious context but did not have a claim to rank highly in a narrative of progress in the visual arts.

Here we see the origins of a particular view of the 'natural order of things', a view generated inside Enlightenment culture which, this book argues, continues to be influential in heritage decisions in the present. The archaeologist and cultural heritage critic Laurajane Smith calls this world view the authorised heritage discourse (AHD): 'a certain set of Western elite cultural values as being universally applicable' in defining what is heritage (and why) (Smith, L., 2006, p. 11). Towards the end of this chapter we will look more closely at the way in which the AHD might operate and how other world views have challenged it in the later twentieth century. Although Smith prefers to see the AHD as emerging by the late nineteenth century, there is an argument that this is rather late (Smith, L., 2006, p. 17). The dominant categories for understanding heritage emerged because they could be investigated by Enlightenment researchers' techniques for making scientific knowledge: heritage had to be collectable, classifiable and comparable. It had to relate to the big questions in the Enlightenment about the origins of nations, religion and human progress. Eventually, natural heritage began to be used to answer the question of the origin of the world. The reasons for privileging material culture over intangible works, the grand and the elaborate over the small and the plain, the oldest over the newest, the monuments of power over the traces of the powerless, have very old roots, to the mid-eighteenth century at least. It is from this point that western discourses or world views about the inevitable progress made by successive civilisations up to the present (the canonical approach) became dominant.

The following case study acts as a bridge between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It also relates its subject matter to the present, and shows the enduring nature of the cultural work done by the lady and gentlemen tourists of the past. The historic tourists, the English leisured classes, brought their class outlook and values to bear on the objects of their scrutiny. Just like earlier antiquarians, they interpreted what they saw in terms of their pre-existing views of what was appropriate for working women. This is a neat example of the operation of an AHD, the discourse arising from the English elite to create a projection of their **aesthetic** values on to a different group *and have it stand for the group's own values*.

Case study: travellers' tales of Welsh national dress

The history of Wales's warring forefathers is written on the landscape. Its ancient castles – vital to the tourist trade – bear witness to English attempts to subdue the natives by force. Wales and England were peacefully united by the sixteenth century, but the stereotype of the hot-tempered Welshman brandishing a leek was still prevalent, as seen in Shakespeare's play *Henry V* (Act V, Scene 1). Depictions and descriptions tell us that the idea of the Welshman eating cheese and riding a goat lived on until the eighteenth century. By the late twentieth century the daffodil had largely replaced the leek and the red dragon had a rival as the national symbol of Wales. Now girls in Welsh dress smile prettily from postcards, peaceful in the shadow of ruined castles (Figure 1.1).



Figure 1.1 Welsh national costume postcard. Unknown photographer. Photo: © Judges of Hastings, www.judges.co.uk.

Visitors to contemporary Wales soon find themselves familiar with the image of the Welsh lady in her 'traditional' costume. Dolls, tea-towels, postcards – even logos – show lace-trimmed bonnets, high-crowned black hats and long skirts of checked or striped wool, usually red. Shawls and aprons complete the costume that many girls wear on St David's Day as an assertion of national pride. When did this 'national dress' emerge? Has it



Figure 1.2 J.C. Rowland, *Jenny Jones*, songsheet, The National Library of Wales, P5874. Photo: by permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales.

remained unchanged over centuries – as a fossilised fashion? If not, what factors shaped its revival or re-invention?

Contemporary authors have sought to address these questions and in doing so to interrogate a sense of Welsh identity linked to ideas about the ancient Welsh language and an agrarian past. There are few surviving articles of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century working-class dress, and the voices of the wearers are similarly absent (they were presumably predominantly Welsh speaking and illiterate). We can, however, hear what visitors to Wales thought of this costume. Via their published travelogues we can glean some evidence about the form and function of the dress, but more importantly we can chart the moral, social and aesthetic values that such dress was felt to embody, for the tourist, if not for the wearer (Lewis, 1995).

Most travelogue authors came from England and were first-time visitors to Wales. They struggled to make sense of what they saw in terms of their own experiences and identities of class, gender, profession and nationality. Such responses, then, were structurally ‘foreign’ and when read together illuminate the tourists’ own value systems. The first stage of tourism to Wales (up to 1800) reveals a desire for evidence of ‘primitive simplicity’ as wealthy visitors sought to muse on the state of mankind and interrogate their own position in the face of increasing ‘civilisation’. As tourists looked for traces of the Ancient Briton in the dress and habits of the modern Welsh, they were seeking their own common heritage as inhabitants of modern Britain. The term ‘national dress’ came to be used increasingly as the nineteenth century and industrialisation progressed, and by the 1820s the idea of dress as ‘costume’, composed of essential elements worn together at particular times and places, had really taken hold (Lewis, 1995, p. 38). Interest in national dress increased (for example Scottish tartans and Breton costume), and by the 1850s the image of the ‘Welsh lady’ was complete. Published costume prints, Staffordshire figurines and the popular song sheet image of ‘Jenny Jones’ meant that you did not need to travel to Wales to be familiar with Welsh costume and customs (Figure 1.2).

‘In Search of Wales ...’ – the published travelogue

In 1821 a Reverend Newell sought to ‘introduce more generally to the public taste ... the natural beauties of our own island’ by asserting that ‘Wales is indeed, almost a foreign country within our own’ (Newell, 1821, p. 2). Other writers endorsed this and stressed the economic advantages to be had when tourists spent their money within Britain. In search of novelties with which to tempt his readers, Newell argued that ‘the language, manners, and customs [of Wales] are so very different from those of England, that the Cambrian traveller is abroad – a stranger, yet at home’ (Newell, 1821, p. 2). He required the peasants to be as picturesque as their mountains, finding that ‘the dress of the

women, a blue cloak and a man’s black beaver hat, makes them good figures in a landscape, though a RED cloak would be better’ (Newell, 1821, p. 61). Could this preference be a factor in the predominance of red in modern ‘Welsh national dress’? Tourists flocking to Wales in search of novelty introduced new fashions, accessories and ideas that were – in some cases – eagerly taken up by the ‘unspoilt’ natives. The ways in which both tourists and natives were shaped by this encounter is the key theme of this case study.

The fashionable tourist destination was Italy, but in the late eighteenth century continental wars made foreign travel difficult and improved turnpike roads made ‘home tourism’ easier. Mountainous North Wales was soon christened the ‘British Alps’ and South Wales received a boost from a visit by the Reverend William Gilpin whose watercolours subsequently inspired a fashion for the ‘picturesque’. By 1800 the Royal Academy in London had exhibited thirty Welsh landscapes.

The Napoleonic Wars and industrial revolution meant that much of Britain was in a state of social and economic transition from the late eighteenth century onwards. The Welsh gentry were becoming more international in outlook while the forces of Romanticism were encouraging those from outside Wales (whether Welsh, fellow Celts or English) to examine its language, culture and antiquities with renewed interest. Published accounts of travels in Wales began in the 1770s, proliferated in the 1790s and peaked during the Napoleonic era (when patriotism was a useful selling point). Non-travellers liked to read such accounts and travellers liked to be guided by them. In 1810 one visitor observed that

Wales and the Wye are visited by all tourists, we are precisely in the tract, and meet them at all the inns, stalking round every ruin ... and climbing every high rock for a prospect; each with his Gilpin or his Cambrian guide in his hand, and each, no doubt, writing a journal.

(Simond, 1817, pp. 272–3)

He found all this ‘rather ridiculous and discouraging’ – as he noted in *his* journal (Simond, 1817, p. 273).

Dress and value systems

When travellers offer up opinions on costumes or customs they give us valuable insights into their own value systems and norms. Early eighteenth-century visitors to Wales noted distinctions in dress (probably due to extreme poverty); this, combined with a startlingly different language from their own, made them view the Welsh with distrust (Lewis, 1995, p. 31). Late eighteenth-century commentators reveal the influence of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his fashionable novel *Emile*. Rousseau believed that civilisation had corrupted mankind from an ideal ‘state of nature’ inhabited by ‘noble

savages'. The idea of the noble (or ignoble) savage informs an account by the Reverend J. Evans of entering Merioneth and glimpsing 'human nature in almost its rudest state'. After commenting on the shapeless dress of the females he observed that 'at sight of us they fled to certain distances ... which brought to our recollection, the first reception of the Spaniards by the transatlantic Indians' (Evans, J., 1804, p. 53). Clearly he wished to emphasise the gulf that separated impoverished Welsh native from wealthy English traveller.

Homespun garments formed the whole of the Welsh wardrobe and many tourists were quick to attribute moral superiority to this, stressing its links with the past and pronouncing Welsh women 'Virgin descendants of the ancient Britons' (Lewis, 1995, p. 31). The contrast between high fashion and peasant dress is evoked in J.C. Ibbetson's *The Market*, one of a series of watercolours made when this artist was paid to accompany a wealthy tourist in 1792 (Figure 1.3).



Figure 1.3 J.C. Ibbetson, *The Market*, 1792, watercolour, 22 x 29 cm. Photo: Laing Art Gallery, Tyne and Wear Museums.

In 1793 Viscount Torrington remarked of North Walian churchgoers, 'never did I see a more decent congregation; in manners, looks, and dress, they are sixty years behind the English; while they retain their tongue, they cannot emigrate, and must keep up ancient customs' (quoted in Lewis, 1995, p. 35). Washable cotton garments were thought preferable to uncomfortable wool, and worn by all those who could afford them (in England at least). As part of their wages servants were often given 'cast-off' clothing made of cotton or silk. This they either adapted for their own wear or sold to secondhand clothing dealers. Returning to England from his 1784 tour of North Wales the viscount commented adversely on this custom which he perceived to have the potential to destabilise class distinctions. Meeting with a party of 'gay-dress'd out' folk in England, he noted that 'dress lost with the great – and aspired to by their inferiors – leads to equality – and to put my lord, and the cotton-weaver upon a footing' (quoted in Lewis, 1995, p. 35). That the Welsh poor seemed content, even proud, to wear egalitarian woollens was a potent point in their favour.

The shocking sight of bare feet

One aspect of Welsh dress that drew a very strong moral and aesthetic reaction from many travellers was lack of shoes. Edward Clarke observed in 1773 that 'the generality of the common people despise the use of shoes or stockings', but he admired the economy of this practice: 'I have often met Welsh girls upon the road, who were dressed for a visit to their friends in a clean white petticoat tucked above the knee, trudging along the hard road, barefooted with their shoes and stockings under their arm' (Clarke, 1793, pp. 214–5). To the expensively shod tourist, shoes were a potent symbol of civilisation, and bare feet were signifiers both of poverty and immorality. However, in the wet Welsh climate bare feet were so essential when descending grassy mountains and fording streams that even eminently respectable tourists had to adopt them (Lewis, 1995, p. 34).

One female first-time visitor to Wales aimed to convince her genteel English reader that the display of bare feet had 'not such a disgusting appearance, as persons unacquainted with it are apt to conceive' (Lewis, 1995, p. 33). As the wife of a Welsh cleric she argued defensively that 'the innocence and modesty of their countenance plainly prove that they are as unconscious of any impropriety as we are when we shew our arms' (Lewis, 1995, p. 33). It is possible that lascivious fascination as much as moral indignation caused so many travellers to dwell on what the majority saw as a peculiarly Welsh custom. The first image of a Welsh country woman to appear in a travelogue clearly shows bare feet (Figure 1.4) and the second shows bare legs (Figure 1.5), perpetuating this powerful signifier of difference.



Figure 1.4 A.-L.-B. Maudet de Penhouët, 'A Welch Country Woman', in Maudet de Penhouët, A.-L.-B. (1797) *Letters Describing a Tour through Part of South Wales by a Pedestrian Traveller*, London. British Library, London, 792.h.21. Photo: © British Library Board. All Rights Reserved.



Figure 1.5 Louis Simond, 'Welch Girl', in Simond, L. (1817), *Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain during the Years 1810 and 1817*, Edinburgh. British Library, London, 1609/10. Photo: © British Library Board. All Rights Reserved.

The unisex hat

By the early nineteenth century peasant women in most parts of England wore bonnets. That Welsh women wore the same style of black hat as their menfolk was perceived as *the* distinguishing feature of Welsh dress. In the eighteenth century such hats were often made of felt and low in the crown. If crowns were malleable and low they could offer a convenient shelf on which to steady a load, leaving hands free for knitting (as in Figure 1.5). Men, women and children knitted stockings for their own use or to be sold at market (or even to tourists). Travellers rarely considered the economic necessity of this practice – designating clumps of knitters ‘picturesque’, and viewing the industrious Welsh peasant as deserving of sympathy and charity. It is not surprising then that ‘Jenny Jones’ is shown knitting (though her hat is too stiff and high in the crown to help support the pail, which now weighs heavy on her arm).

Costume prints from the 1830s onwards show hats similar to that worn by ‘Jenny Jones’. High-crowned beaver hats were fashionable for both men and women in England in the mid- to late seventeenth century and were worn by Quakers well into the eighteenth century in Britain and beyond. The modern Welsh hat is reminiscent of these (and may carry some overtones of dissenting religious sects). In the early twentieth century it was believed that the high-crowned hat represented an unbroken link with the seventeenth-century past, but eighteenth-century travelogues (and surviving visual and documentary records) carry no evidence of a continuous tradition of wear. Hats were practical in the Welsh climate, protecting the wearer from rain, wind and sun. I will continue the story of the distinctive Welsh hat after considering the dynamic of tradition versus innovation in debates about Welsh dress.

Mantles and cloaks

In 1791 a Mrs Morgan was struck by the antiquity of what she termed ‘The hereditary dress of the Welsh women’ and declared it ‘one of the most commodious, comfortable, and simple that I ever saw adopted’ (Lewis, 1995, p. 34). Her belief that it was an ancient form of dress appears to have been reinforced by her comments on the women’s mantle. She describes this as ‘nothing more than a square piece of white flannel, bordered with coloured binding. This they throw carelessly over their shoulders, and fasten with a hook and eye, or tie with a piece of binding’. She added, ‘They do not put it on cross-ways as we do a handkerchief, but with the straight side about the neck’ (see Figure 1.4). She commented that ‘it is very warm, and they can guide a horse, or do any kind of domestic business ... as it does not, like most other warm clothing, impede their motions’ (Lewis, 1995, p. 34).

In most of England, and in some areas of Wales, the red hooded cloak had superseded the undyed mantle. This transition was referred to in the journal of

Iolo Morgannwg, who visited Carmarthenshire in 1796. On the issue of comfort he disagreed with Mrs Morgan, claiming ‘Llandarrog women wear whittles [mantles], a very old fashion and bad, not for its age, but because the modern rural cloak is much more convenient and comfortable’ (Etheridge, 1977, p. 22). In a rush of Rousseauesque sentiment he exclaimed, ‘But let the Carmarthenshire lasses, retaining their perfect innocence and simplicity of manners – wear their whittles forever rather than run like some of the Glamorgan hare-brained wenches into the follies of fashion’ (Etheridge, 1977, p. 22). Perhaps an idle hope! The cloak required more material and more manufacture and so lent itself to becoming an expensive status symbol.

Blue dye was relatively cheap, so blue cloaks and whittles were often worn in Wales. Red dye, derived from shellfish or imported sources, was more available in the coastal areas and always expensive (and therefore highly prized). An added reason for Welsh women to retain red whittles is described by Samuel Rush Meyrick (in 1810). He referred to ‘the oblong piece of red flannel’ worn in Pembrokeshire, which had, ‘since the taking of the French who landed at Fishguard last war ... been termed the “Frenchman’s terror”’ (Lewis, 1995, p. 37). There is not space here to describe the last invasion of Great Britain in 1797 (when a small and poorly-equipped group of French soldiers landed, aiming to head inland). Contemporary letters tell how locals repulsed them with pitchforks, but it was peasant women who scared off the invaders (who mistook them for soldiers in their red flannel and tall hats). This tale is often re-told in modern times and adds a patriotic slant to the retention of red clothing and the tall black hat.

Fashion and anti-fashion

By 1803 it was possible to conceive the gulf widening between the Welsh rural poor and their English counterparts. As industrialisation increased so did demand for reminders of the rural past and its supposedly superior moral values. In 1803 J.T. Barber asserted that ‘Wales may be considered as exhibiting almost the sole remnant of “the good old times” existing in Britain’ (Lewis, 1995, p. 32). Despite extravagant claims for the uniform and unchanging nature of Welsh dress, it is clear that it did admit innovation. Mrs Morgan was disappointed to note that the ‘common people in the large towns deviate widely from their primitive simplicity, and imitate, in a very slovenly and awkward manner, the English mode’. In 1796 Catherine Hutton endorsed this, observing townswomen in ‘printed cotton gowns’ – but still wearing the distinctive beaver hat and blue cloak (Lewis, 1995, p. 36).

It appears that heavy, homespun woollens were fast losing their appeal: though warm and waterproof, they were bulky and appeared unhygienic when contrasted with light-coloured, flimsy and washable fabrics of fashionable circles. In 1803 William Hutton wrote of Welsh dress, ‘Ambition seems

wholly excluded. The dress of the inhabitants is of that kind which never changes for ages. It is made to cover, not for show' (Lewis, 1995, p. 36). By 1813 Richard Ayton could not contain his disgust at the dress of the female peasantry (disliking all aspects thought admirable by earlier writers – namely, its uniformity, simplicity, and independence from fashion). He was the first to term these features 'national dress', when he wrote of Welsh women:

Their beauty is not set off by their national dress, and indeed it is strong proof of its transcendancy, that it appears so striking in spite of it. They indulge in no showy and sprightly colours, no gay ribbons, nor finery of any kind, such as distinguishes the country lasses of England: rough, dark, woollen garments form both their summer and winter clothing. Add to these a dark blue or brown cloak of coarse cloth, and a man's hat, and you have a Welsh beauty in all the pride of her dress.

(Lewis, 1995, p. 36)

It is by no means certain that an impoverished population wedded to work on the land (but not able to travel much around or out of it) would have been able to conceive of 'Wales' as a whole. For a self-conscious transformation of peasant dress into 'national dress' I must introduce Lady Llanover.

From peasant dress to national dress – Lady Llanover's intervention

The 1830s heralded a frivolous and flirtatious phase of fashion that saw Welsh women adopt frilled caps under their hats. Tourists delighted in describing the 'extravagant vanity' (effort and attention) required to keep pristine linen starched and crimped, and beaver hats glossy black (Lewis, 1995, p. 40). It was at this time that the English were introducing cotton manufactories which threatened the native woollen industry, and the rising tide of light cotton garments, frills and ringlets informed Lady Llanover's essay *The Advantages Resulting from the Preservation of the Welsh Language, and National Costumes of Wales* which won a prize at an Eisteddfod in 1834 (Gwent, 1836).

Augusta Hall, who called herself Lady Llanover after her family home, was the wife of industrialist Sir Benjamin Hall and a member of an educated circle who took an active interest in Welsh language and literature. Eisteddfods (from the Welsh for 'to be sitting down') were and still are today celebrations of the best of Welsh culture (including song, poetry and craftsmanship). Under the Welsh pseudonym *Gwenynen Gwent* ('the Bee of Gwent'), Hall was one of two respondents to the topic set by her local Eisteddfod committee. Her essay was subsequently published, though it probably had limited circulation. Clearly, she recognised the value of dress as a tourist attraction, referring to 'the loss "artists" would experience by the destruction of the costumes of

Wales' and 'their value to the traveller, after the "picturesque"' (Lewis, 1995, p. 42). She published watercolours of women in Welsh costumes – interestingly they all dress differently from one another (in brown, black, red and blue), and the unisex hat is the main common feature (Figure 1.6).

Lady Llanover took elements from all the clothes that she observed and sought to preserve them as 'Welsh national dress'. One of her principal aims was to protect the Welsh woollen industry, and to this end she set up a mill on her estate and dressed her servants in 'Welsh costume'. She also wore the costume herself at church and on special occasions, and seems to have encouraged many other 'ladies of quality' to follow suit. She evidently identified strongly with this visible sign of 'Welshness', which reinforced her energetic acquisition and promotion of the Welsh language. She had herself painted in 1862 wearing a hooded cloak and tall-crowned hat over a white-frilled bonnet, evidently understanding the power of leading by example.

Most late nineteenth-century travellers responded positively to Welsh costume. At Builth Wells in 1847 Charles Knight noted that 'Smart damsels from the South and West, in fashionable attire mingle with the steeple-hatted maids and matrons from the inner parts of the principality' (Knight, 1847, vol. 1, p. 254). At Conway Knight found that 'lively groups in their best native costumes ... increase the uncommon character of the scene [and lend it] a genuine antique air'. He observed of the town, 'Here is no modern antique; no smooth-polished and pretty revival or imitation of what an old place might have been; it is the old place itself, decayed indeed but still itself; not defaced by modern embellishment nor softened into insignificance by modern taste' (vol. 3, p. 337). The values that he perceived in the town could equally be those sought by admirers of 'traditional' Welsh dress. Increasingly though, as working garments gave way to prettified versions reserved for the Eisteddfod platform, debates about **authenticity** cast a shadow over the history of Welsh national dress.

A comparison of 'Jenny Jones' in Figure 1.2 and her eighteenth-century counterpart in Figure 1.4 highlights the self-conscious presentation of 'national dress' in the late nineteenth century, from which all signs of poverty have been removed. Neat dancing slippers protect 'Jenny Jones's' feet from the flinty road, and the hat – formerly helping to support a load on market day – is now a hindrance. In 1861 Mr and Mrs Hall were the first to make an explicit link between clothing and Welsh national pride when they noted that 'these hats must be a sad encumbrance to a woman who is laden with a large heavily-freighted market basket on her head; but on such occasions, a genuine daughter of Cambria would not be restrained [...] from the pleasure of wearing her national headdress' (Lewis, 1995, p. 44). They were alluding here to the high cost of the hat – an important factor in its status perhaps?



Figure 1.6 Lady Llanover, *Welsh Girl in the Costume of Cardiganshire* (number 11 in series of *Cambrian Costumes*), 1843, postcard. The Museum of Welsh Life, St Fagans, Cardiff, PB472. Photo: By permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales.



Figure 1.7 W.R. Lynch, *Welsh Costumes*, c.1850. National Library of Wales, PA9097. Photo: by permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales. Published as a print by H. Hughes, Bangor.

Prints of 'Welsh costume' aimed at the tourist market proliferated in the 1840s and 1850s, and by the 1860s the image of 'Jenny Jones' was firmly rooted in the public imagination (Figure 1.7). The sketch by Stanton (Figure 1.8) suggests that a glimpse of her was as much a part of the attractions of Wales as the mountains she was believed to inhabit. The railway age meant that tourists flocked to Wales in ever-increasing numbers, giving rise to 'tourism as an industry – an industry which would come to employ more people than the iron and coal industry put together' (Davies, 2007, p. 396). Increasingly tourists recorded with regret that only a few older women could be seen wearing the tall-crowned hat. It is impossible to say whether it was worn as part of an obsolete fashion system (a reminder of fashions of their youth) or as a deliberate assertion of national pride. Modern communications served to consolidate a sense of national consciousness and may therefore have led to a deliberate retention of a fashion that had been imposed in the eighteenth century by poverty and utility.



Figure 1.8 Horace Stanton, *Over the Welsh Mountains*, c.1870. National Library of Wales, P5269. Photo: By permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/The National Library of Wales.

As the UK industrialised rapidly Wales became a convenient geographical entity on which to fix images of a peaceful rural past – a past that had once been common, but that was now lost to the urban dweller. The nostalgic value of its supposed historical associations was certainly utilised by the tourist industry, as evidenced by H.V. Morton's reactions when he went *In Search of Wales* in 1932:

A young woman stood beside a post-card kiosk dressed in the national costume of Wales. She wore a High top-hat and a red cloak and a check apron over her skirt. I believe the Welsh hat dates only from Stewart times. It is exactly the same kind of hat that Guy Fawkes wore.

'Is that an old hat?' I asked.

'No' she said, taking it off.

Inside was the name of a well-known London hatter!

(Lewis, 1995, p. 46)

Towards the twenty-first century

The best 'Welsh' beaver hats had probably always come from England, but were they any less 'authentic' for that? In considering the complex question of cultural identity it is the values placed on the clothing that matter, not its origins. In *Wales! Wales?* Dai Smith argues that 'The paradox of nationalism is that it is a future vision wrapped up in the legitimising clothes of the past, real or mythical it scarcely matters' (Smith, D., 1984, p. 43). Although his reference to clothing here is metaphorical it seems a useful concept to apply to so-called Welsh 'national dress'. As the question mark in Smith's book title suggests, much research has been undertaken in the last twenty-five years into Welsh identities and how best to express notions of Welsh nationhood.

By 1900 the tall-hatted, red-shawled female stereotype had been transformed into 'Dame Wales' by J.M. Staniforth (Lord, 2000, p. 165). This was a figure who would have been instantly recognisable in Staniforth's political cartoons (in Britain at least) as a counterpart to 'John Bull' (England) or 'Uncle Sam' (America). By 1909 English-born artist Curnow Vosper's iconic image *Salem* (Figure 1.9) had found an appreciative owner in Lord Lever (after its display at the Royal Academy in London), and prints of the painting made their way into many British homes as a 'free gift' in bulk buys of soap. Its use as the cover of a Welsh language calendar throughout the 1950s further ensured that the image of tall-hatted chapelgoers entered many Welsh homes – and hearts. The costume in this image was not as 'authentic' as it seems. The shawl was borrowed from the wife of one clergyman, the hat from the grandmother of another (Williams, T., 1991, p. 17). The women all wear identical hats, which



Figure 1.9 Sidney Curnow Vosper, *Salem*, 1908, watercolour on paper, 78 × 70 cm. Photo: Lady Lever Art Gallery. © National Museums Liverpool.

could be read as indicating strict adherence to traditional 'Welsh dress', but in fact all four were painted from one original worn by each model in turn.

In 1964 Ffrancis Payne's definitive account of Welsh costume was published, acknowledging Lady Llanover's contribution. Since 1983, when Hobsbawn and Ranger edited their famous book on this subject, most students of history have become familiar with the concept of *The Invention of Tradition*. Recent research by Helen Forder and Christine Stevens, among others, has sought to re-evaluate and celebrate Augusta Hall's contribution to Welsh heritage. Through research into her own family history, Forder has even uncovered evidence that Lady Llanover's female servants hated wearing their Welsh woollens and would change out of them as soon as they left the estate (Forder, 2004; Stevens, 2002, 2005).

The establishment of the Welsh Assembly in 1999 gave Wales a sense of legal separation from England for the first time since the Acts of Union in the sixteenth century. Marxism and feminism have both offered tools with which to analyse the notion of national dress and the iconic image of the 'Welsh lady' and to evaluate her place in our 'postcolonial' postmodern society in which identities are a key focus for debate (Beddoe, 1986; Lord, 2000; Wood, 1997). The late twentieth century saw an explosion of Brit Art and the concept of Cool Britannia. In response to the Union Jack mini-dress worn by Spice Girl Geri Halliwell, Wales offered its own version of 'girl power' referencing the Welsh flag – a red and green mini-dress emblazoned with a red dragon.

This Cool Cymru dress now finds a home in the former Welsh Folk Museum (re-named in 1995 the Museum of Welsh Life) (Mason, 2004, p. 18). The mini-dress is displayed in Gallery One (which replaced the 35-year-old 'Material Culture Gallery' and opened with an exhibition called 'Belonging' in 2007) with the purpose of involving visitors in 'the process of collecting and reflecting on what Wales means to people today' (Williams, N., 2006, p. 13). Placed alongside an example of 'traditional' red woollen checked dress (worn by the donor on her wedding day), it stimulates debates concerning the relevance of a 'costume' worn to signify the values of the (pre-industrial) rural past in the urban (post-industrial) present (Figure 1.10).

In 2007 National Eisteddfod organiser Hywel Edwards questioned the retention of Welsh national dress when he argued that 'shawls and hats give the impression [to a global audience that] Wales was "stuck in the past"' (Wightwick, 2007, p. 5). His call for Wales to be seen as 'the modern, dynamic country it is' echoes a nineteenth-century cartoon in the satirical periodical *Welsh Punch* which showed a woman in Welsh costume standing in front of a steam engine (impeding progress). Many parents and teachers reacted strongly to Edwards's suggestion, stressing how important it was to 'understand Welsh heritage, especially in multi-cultural schools'. One mother from Cardiff said of her daughter, 'Elin loves dressing up for St David's Day. The costume is 75 years old and was worn by my mother and me. It is nice to pass it on. It's part of our heritage. We know Wales has moved on but this is for fun' (Wightwick, 2007, p. 5).

My own memories as a child growing up in Cardiff are that 'dressing up' in Welsh costume for St David's Day was never just 'fun'. I remember being acutely aware from an early age of the hat and daffodil as potent symbols of nationhood and, as my parents were English, became increasingly troubled by my entitlement to wear them. An acquaintance of mine who describes herself as being from 'North Welsh gentry stock' has said that she never wore 'Welsh costume' growing up in the late 1950s and never would do so, perceiving it to be the product of 'outsider representation'. My ethnically



Figure 1.10 'Cool Cymru' dress (centre), designed and made by Jill Salen, on display next to a 'traditional' dress in Gallery One of The Museum of Welsh Life, 1999. Museum of Welsh Life, F99.28. Unknown photographer. Photo: © National Museum of Wales.

Welsh friends and acquaintances (monoglot English- or Welsh-speaking) express no such anxieties – secure in their sense of self and nationhood, they dress daughters and nieces in such costumes with pride (and perhaps at times with a tiny bit of postmodern irony).

Clothing as a cultural marker has one distinct characteristic (a disadvantage to the historian but sometimes an advantage to the wearer) – its impermanence. The identities that we fashion for ourselves through our dress can change from day to day, depending on place, time and mood, and the desire to rebel or conform, which are influenced in turn by discourses of age, class and gender. It is when such transient images become permanent and reach a wide audience (a photograph, a print, a published comment in a traveller's account, for example) that extreme caution is needed. Hywel Edwards is right to be wary of 'images that are broadcast around the world'. At least now, with a greater understanding of the value systems that underpin Welsh 'national dress', its wearers can begin to make an informed choice about the image they present to the wider world, and to reflect on it as a badge of 'belonging'.

Reflecting on the case study

The story of the way in which working people's dress came to stand for a nation is a powerful reminder that the European heritage discourse of the Enlightenment and later could be found within European societies as well as between Europe and colonised peoples. The political relationship between Wales and England has been a long-contested one and some Welsh citizens might suggest that it has been a colonial experience. Certainly it is possible to read the English re-shaping of Welsh female dress as a form of colonisation of the mind, in that the fashion-driven 'Jenny Jones' image of a Welsh woman has become incorporated into Welsh representations of their own heritage. The components of an unofficial living heritage (hats, mantles, the practicalities of bare feet) became abstracted into an official but no longer contemporary heritage. But as the case study concludes, there are ways of seeing that modern Welsh approaches to costume give it a dynamic element again. This pushes us to consider issues of authenticity: should we conclude that historical investigation produces conclusions that undermine the authenticity of 'traditional' Welsh costume? Or should we recognise that heritage operates as living traditions that are organic and changing? Who is in control of determining when to fossilise these traditions?

The first professionals

Empire and knowledge

By the 1850s a major transition was taking place as newly created public institutions began to take over the lead from private individuals in collecting and displaying the past. The Enlightenment world view of a single time-line of human progress (determined by a Christian god) was becoming increasingly difficult to sustain. Intellectually, the arts and sciences separated out in a way that a seventeenth-century antiquarian would not have recognised.

European colonial expansion was still in progress by the 1850s and would continue until 1939. Britain had already colonised Canada (from 1763), controlled India (it declared direct rule in 1859), formally taken over the Cape Colony at the tip of South Africa (by 1806) and declared Australia to be a colony (in 1829). It would join other European nations in competing to acquire more African territory from the 1880s. By the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 the British empire was administering the lives of over 400 million people. To give just one other example of a colonising nation, France retained some Caribbean islands, and also looked east, to acquire territories in East Asia, South-East Asia, the Indian Ocean and Oceania (towards Australia). It was highly competitive with Britain in Africa, occupying North African territory from 1830 and extending down West and Central Africa by 1900. This list emphasises the ubiquity of European colonisation, except in the Near and Middle East which was emerging from the decline of the Ottoman (Turkish) empire. The political discourses that justified European national interests in constantly extending their claims to other territories acted to normalise this process. Now referred to as colonial discourses, they are a form of colonisation of the mind: the world view of dominant Europeans being made to stand for any indigenous sense of order (after Said, 1979). The near global export of European intellectual hierarchies through the processes of colonialism largely explains the success of western values about *what* objects of heritage could be and *who* would take responsibility for understanding them.

For example, in 1784, soon after the British established economic and political control of Indian provinces, an institution similar to the Society of Antiquaries of London, the Asiatic Society, was founded in Calcutta. The Asiatic Society started publishing its members' researches in a journal from 1788, and by 1814 it was ready to establish a museum for its own natural and cultural collections. These collections were transferred to a new public museum in Calcutta in 1866, the Indian Museum. Back in London the British Museum made clear to curators in the colonies that it had first claim on objects of interest for its own collections (this was before the Natural History Museum housed the natural heritage collections after 1883). The Asiatic Society's

geological collection included meteorites. Meteorites found in India were highly prized by international museums, including the Imperial Museum in Vienna. These fragments offered the only access to tangible evidence from astronomical bodies. The Indian Museum staff became increasingly confident about the quality of their own research and the need to maintain the best possible collections, so they began politely to establish their independence during the 1860s, despite political pressure (Nair, 2006, p. 118).

The oldest government inventory

The European heritage protection story began in France during the 1790s revolutionary government, with a first attempt to survey the national historic assets. This failed venture was revisited in 1830 when a government body was set up to investigate the French nation's stock of historic buildings. This body still exists today. The Commission des Monuments Historique started to make an inventory of buildings in 1837, defining its selection according to date, architectural style or associated historic event. The same **criteria** dominate the twentieth-century approach to selection. This selection process tends to create categories of superlatives: the best, the oldest, the most historically significant. It can be thought of as the establishment of a canon of national monuments (a parallel to literary canons of 'great literature'). Prosper Mérimée took over as the inspector general of historic monuments in 1840. This extraordinary man was a polymath: linguist, writer, traveller and courtier under the re-established French monarchy. He threw his energies into the commission, with a very wide brief to assess buildings, **archives** and museums, and by 1849 nearly 4000 monuments were listed.

A French critic of the 1920s noted the paradoxical turn of [Mérimée's] life. He had been 'a young man who had put everything into trying to write like Voltaire and dress like Beau Brummell, yet who became the most diligent of bureaucrats and the most zealous of archaeologists'. A further paradox was that this convinced atheist, who had not even been baptised, was responsible for saving large numbers of ecclesiastical buildings – first from falling down, and then from the bright decorative vandalism of know-nothing restorers and proprietorial clergy.

(Barnes, 2007)

The monuments were medieval or earlier, and this again would be a set of values that other nations would follow. Under Mérimée and his protégés, including the renowned medievalist architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, the French Gothic style became newly appreciated as an essential expression of national history and character.

The French state was not, at this stage, offering to fund much conservation or indeed to threaten sanctions if the listed buildings were damaged or destroyed.

It hoped to inspire local investment and appreciation of what came to be called the national *patrimoine*, or heritage. Behind the inspectors came the first generation of architects interested in conserving historic buildings, replacing like for like. This followed Mérimée's own conservation philosophy: 'It is better to consolidate than repair, better to repair than restore, better to restore than embellish, and in no circumstances knock down' (Barnes, 2007). Consolidation still means the technique of retaining original material where possible, for instance re-pointing a wall to protect the historic bricks rather than re-building it. This philosophy was to be picked up by British campaigners for the sympathetic treatment of old structures. It is an expression of the value of authenticity, a quality believed to reside in original material that cannot be replicated. Chapter 2 of this book explores this and other conservation values further.

The rise of the 'ancient monument'

Turning to the UK for a more detailed look at the emergence of legislation for heritage, we see that this too focuses on built heritage. Portable works of art and antiquities became part of the story in 1903, when the National Art Collections Fund was set up to distribute grants to public museums trying to purchase objects that were likely to be bought by foreign interests. However, there was no legislation for export controls until the outbreak of the Second World War prompted the first licensing of all exports. Nor was there any UK legislation for **natural heritage**, although public demands for the creation of national parks and wide access to the countryside were strong through the 1930s, including a celebrated mass trespass on an English mountain called Kinder Scout in 1934. UK natural heritage was not legislated for until 1949 (with the exception of earlier bird species protection Acts (Evans, D., 1997)).

The pioneering piece of legislation for the UK came in 1882, the first Ancient Monuments Protection Act, in which a short list (schedule) of medieval and earlier monuments and buildings were named 'ancient monuments' deemed worthy of government inspection and monitoring (regardless of their ownership). The Act also created the role of inspectors of ancient monuments as part of the civil service. The sites were selected as illustrative of national history and gained their place in the canon of 'great historical sites'. Subsequent monuments still have to fulfil the criterion of being nationally significant (although current definitions of this have expanded). These sites gained their legal protection through the presumption that alterations and development were undesirable.

The UK, France and Germany took the lead in further heritage legislation, but western Europe generally adopted similar definitions of ancient monuments and similar processes for defining and protecting them. In 1905 Baldwin Brown published a comparative assessment of European responses to the

acceptance of state care and protection of monuments. He contrasted a British 'laissez-faire' attitude of reluctance to interfere in the rights of property owners (and a refusal to contemplate compulsory purchase for monuments under threat) with 'the right of the community over monuments in which is written the common history, and which in centuries past have been the centres of the common life', expressed particularly strongly in Italian and French legislation (Brown, 1905, p. 5). Brown's short discussion is still well worth reading, as it touches on the range of conservation debates that continue to challenge professionals today. He also argued for the intangible meanings of monuments, citing the importance of the collective memories they can evoke, memories that go beyond references to named individuals and draw in wide associations with an era.

Natural heritage before 1945

We noted above that the UK did not have a system for identifying and protecting landscapes or natural sites before 1945. The Nature Conservancy Council was not established until 1949, the same year that the first national parks in the UK were set up by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. However, a former colony led the way at the end of the nineteenth century. The USA designated the first national park, Yellowstone, by Act of Congress in 1872. It was 'for the benefit and enjoyment of the people' (and is discussed further in Chapter 3). In 1916 the National Park Service was created to provide a single agency for managing the parks. The designation of national parks on federal land was supported by the Antiquities Act 1906, which empowered presidents to declare objects of historic or scientific interest on federal lands as national monuments. This use of the term 'monument' is different from the European tradition, as it views large tracts of land as monuments. Importantly, the Act enabled **indigenous people's** sites to be recognised as the prehistory of the USA. A quarter of the current national parks were first designated as national monuments, including the Grand Canyon. The Historic Sites Act 1935 made explicit public policy the federal acquisition of historic buildings, sites and lands 'of national significance' (Jameson, 2008). As with European historic buildings legislation, the regional and local scales of **significance** were not yet dealt with. This, then, was a rather crude instrument of protection, but it led the way.

Commentators on the early history of conservation in the USA have variously interpreted the first national parks as economically worthless lands, as a narrow attempt to set limits on refuges for wildlife and wilderness, and as the imposition by an economic elite of particular desires for order and control (Runte, 1997). These critiques need a closer investigation of historical interpretations of the politics of the period than can be supplied in this chapter. However, we should remember that native Americans of the time would

have no representation in the selection, designation and management of nationally significant landscapes, or in determining the criteria for national significance (see Chapter 3). Natural heritage processes are just as open to interrogation for the operation of 'Establishment' discourses or AHDs as are cultural processes.

A different political context, New Zealand's British colonial period, has some parallels with the early natural conservation history of the USA. New Zealand was declared to be a British colony after Māori chiefs signed the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. The natural resources of the colony, particularly New Zealand's forests, were exploited for the benefit of the empire. In the absence of any forest management, this was simply environmental destruction. Later nineteenth-century Europeans began to realise that extraction needed to be limited to preserve something of the Māori landscapes, but decisive action was taken by the Māori. The country's first national park, Tongariro, was established in 1887, the gift of a Māori chief. It is now a World Heritage cultural landscape. The Land Act 1892 included provision for appreciation of scenery. Today, 27.5 per cent of the land area is officially protected, mostly in mountainous areas. By 1910 New Zealand legislation protected nearly all native birds and there were three reservations. The growing importance of international tourism for New Zealand's natural heritage prompted a focus on animal protection and the extension of landscape protection before 1945 (Young, 2004).

International heritage after 1945

Once we move into the era of recent politics following the Second World War, the canonical approach to **listing** and collecting becomes globalised. The most powerful international body is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This is the executive body for the elected members of the World Heritage Committee and sponsors the other international conservation institutes (and see Donnachie, 2010). Over-arching global heritage frameworks do not have the force of national legal instruments; they are devised for members of international bodies to subscribe to in the expectation that members will monitor each other's behaviour. Agreement that a heritage framework should exist does not guarantee that member states of the UN will sign up to it; the unpopular Convention for Underwater Cultural Heritage (agreed in 2001) only came into force on 2 January 2009 after a sufficient number of member states eventually subscribed to it.

The era of global frameworks is an expansion of the processes we observed above, facilitated by new international discussions that result in agreed standards for professional activities. As you can see from Table 1.1, international agreements take their names from the location of the conferences

Table 1.1 Summary of international conservation bodies and agreements

International Museums Office (1922–46), League of Nations (1920–46)	Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments, adopted 1931 Covers: international advisory organisation; national legislation; techniques to enhance monuments' settings; permissible modern materials and their use; value of education; need for national inventories
States of the American continent	Treaty on the Protection of Artistic and Scientific Institutions and Historic Monuments (Roerich Pact), Washington, 15 April 1935
UNESCO 1946	Creation of International Council on Museums, successor body to International Museums Office
UNESCO 1948	Creation of ICA: International Council on Archives
UNESCO 1954, The Hague	Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict with Regulations for the Execution of the Convention 1954 (entered into force 1956)
UNESCO 1956	1) Recommendation on International Principles Applicable to Archaeological Excavations, New Delhi, 1956 2) Creation of ICCROM: International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
UNESCO 1964	1) Venice Charter: International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites 2) Creation of ICOMOS: International Council on Monuments and Sites created as non-governmental agency funded by UNESCO
UNESCO 1970	Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (entered into force 1972)
UNESCO 1972	Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (entered into force 1975)
UNESCO 1997	Resolution 23 creates the Proclamation of the Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity; 90 examples proclaimed in 2001, 2003 and 2005
UNESCO 2001	Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (entered into force 2009)
UNESCO 2003	Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (entered into force 2006)
UNESCO 2005	Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (entered into force 2007)
UNESCO 2008	Sofia Conference: Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage becomes operational; first inscriptions due 2009

at which they are ratified. This is the language of diplomacy applied to conservation practices. These international agreements include the Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments (1931) and then the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (1964) (known as the **Venice Charter**). These two charters set out a philosophy and recommendations for the conservation of historic sites and monuments, and the Venice Charter remains the benchmark for professional standards. Chapter 2 explores the assumptions behind these charters. Similar standards for archaeological excavations were established in the New Delhi Recommendation on International Principles Applicable to Archaeological Excavations (1956). There are also important regional frameworks; for example, the Council of Europe also promulgates heritage charters which are ratified by members, such as the Granada Convention for Architectural Heritage (Council of Europe, 1985).

The Burra Charter and the meanings of places

The great growth of national legislation for natural and **cultural heritage** in the twentieth century and then the expansion of international frameworks have undoubtedly resulted in an intensification of the number and nature of heritage processes. These are devised by professionals largely to be used by other professionals involved with defining, managing and maintaining objects of heritage. All this activity takes place at varying scales, from the international committees assessing proposals for World Heritage status down to a team refurbishing a protected building. Common principles have been developed, however, to assist in the documentation of interventions such as scientific conservation treatments, the results of historical background research or proposals for new visitor facilities. These can all be thought of as projects, and as such they are amenable to being managed in similar ways. The language of project management is highly generic; it is transferable to the creation of heritage processes in which heritage projects can be defined, delivered and evaluated. A unique form of project planning for the heritage sector is the conservation plan, sometimes referred to as a conservation management plan. This has developed in recent decades. As a tool it is unremarkable, but its contents have gradually expanded to include more intangible qualities behind physical heritage.

In 1979 heritage professionals working in Australia adopted their own charter that tailored the international principles for the conservation of sites and monuments in the Venice Charter to an Australian context. The Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance, known as the Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS, 1999), created an international impact on how heritage professionals make decisions about the meanings of heritage sites and places. It did so by renaming the heritage

category 'sites and monuments' as 'places of cultural significance'. This switched the emphasis from 'stones and bones', material culture, towards the meanings of places, the significance that humans attribute to material culture. The Burra Charter definition of significance was 'aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations' (Australia ICOMOS, 1999, Article 1.2). The first three values were already integral to judgements about heritage significance that had been made since at least the eighteenth century, as traced earlier in this chapter. Chapter 2 explores the changing understandings of aesthetic value in western heritage practices.

However, **social value** was an innovation, defined in Section 2.5 of the guidelines that support the charter as 'the qualities for which a place has become a focus of spiritual, political, national or other cultural sentiment to a majority *or minority* group [emphasis added]' (Australia ICOMOS, 1988).² In the context of Australian settler society, the indigenous peoples had become minorities. The values arising from their cultures, particularly spiritual values, remain very different from western post-Enlightenment understandings. The Burra Charter was the first heritage framework to open up the range of meanings for **tangible heritage** and request that heritage professionals include community understandings of the value of place. Chapter 7 explores social value further and discusses the example of the meanings of place for the Muruwari people of western New South Wales in Australia.

The impact of the Burra Charter's use of values to determine a more holistic approach to significance has gone far beyond Australia as it has been picked up by other official agencies. This occurred because a leading heritage practitioner in Australia, James Semple Kerr, linked the aims of the charter to their application in practice: he created a guide to writing conservation plans for places of European cultural significance (Kerr, 2004). Both the charter and the conservation plan guide have gone through several revisions. In the UK, the methods set out in Kerr's guide were adopted and adapted for use initially by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the distributor of grant aid from the National Lottery, and they have now been formally adopted by government agencies such as English Heritage (English Heritage, 2008). It is the principles behind the plan that carry into practice the Burra Charter's range of values.

Kerr reminds us that methods per se are not the point; he asks that we think of the conservation plan as a 'story that reveals the cultural values and character of the participants and the way these have shaped the fabric and

² Note that the Australia ICOMOS guidelines to the Burra Charter 1988 are directly compatible with the previous revision of the charter, adopted in 1988. They are not directly compatible with the 1999 version, a more heavily revised form of the charter, but at the time of writing (2009) new guidelines are not available. Minor revisions to the 1979 charter made in 1981 and 1988 have not altered the main aims or concept of the original text.

function of the place', and he goes on to 'propose how the story should be continued in the future' (Kerr, 1999, p. 19). The Burra Charter has pushed on the heritage debate from finding heritage sites that match up to the established canon of official monuments towards selecting a wider range of places that represent broader social interest. This is often referred to as the **representative** approach, in which material heritage is recognised not because it is 'the best' example but because it has a range of points of interest that represent its type.

World Heritage

The 1972 **World Heritage Convention** (UNESCO, [1972] 2009a) was the first international attempt to create a list of heritage sites, going beyond the national inventory practices that originated in the nineteenth century. This is not of itself particularly innovative, in that the sites selected for World Heritage status emerge from individual national evaluations of their significance which tend to be highly canonical. The reasons for their selection are set out in the World Heritage criteria, which remain within the long-standing western discourse of material, monumental heritage (see UNESCO, 2009b). However, the arrival of World Heritage as a new set of activities for individual nations who subscribe to the convention has created a focal point for further discussion.

For example, the early operation of the convention distinguished between natural and cultural sites, which overlooked the long-standing human presence in outstanding landscapes designated for their natural value. This oversimplification and failure to recognise the relationship between landscape and its inhabitants became particularly apparent in settler societies where indigenous peoples still occupied 'natural sites'. In Australia, a key site for addressing this argument was Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. The park was nominated by the Australian government for both natural and cultural criteria, but only the natural criteria were recognised in its World Heritage inscription of 1986. This was corrected in 1994 when the religious and spiritual significance of the landscape (particularly the geological formations Uluru and Kata Tjuta) for the Anangu people and their continuing management practices of the physical site for its spiritual values were firmly re-stated. The park is now inscribed as a dual natural-cultural site or 'mixed property'. However, it is more accurately described as a **cultural landscape**, a concept recognised by the World Heritage Committee in 1992 for landscapes that bear significant cultural meanings (and see West and Ndlovu, 2010; Harrison and Rose, 2010). Chapter 3 explores further the relationship between natural heritage and human activities, from indigenous occupation to deliberate reversion to wilderness.

Intangible heritage

A further innovation came about from an increasing recognition that the material emphasis of the World Heritage convention offered no means of documenting intangible practices. These practices can be broadly defined as heritage that lives through human action, perhaps in song, performance, worship or celebration. Art, craft or language skills are also intangible and very vulnerable to being lost if the next generation does not learn them. The Proclamation of the Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity was a preliminary process, initiated in 2001. The Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity derived from the proclamations (2001, 2003, 2005) now stands at ninety examples from around the world (UNESCO, 2009c). Some of these traditions are fascinating hybrids, such as the Maroon heritage of Moore Town, Jamaica. Enslaved people from West and Central Africa who had been taken to Jamaica escaped in the 1600s and successfully established autonomous communities in the mountains of eastern Jamaica. Their cultural backgrounds became fused into a distinctive set of practices and beliefs, communally owned lands and a unique horn used for long-distance communication. Threats to the present culture include economic emigration and Christian missionary interventions. The Masterpieces List has been a test-bed for the viability of a new convention.

The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of 2003 is an attempt to document and protect examples of 'living heritage' – social practices that create distinctive cultural communities. It defines domains for grouping intangible heritage, such as **oral traditions** (including languages), performing arts, rituals, craftsmanship and knowledge concerning nature and the universe. The latter is particularly relevant to our earlier example of the significance of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park: the Anangu people's cosmology is expressed through their care of the landscape. The purpose of the convention is to devise strategies to minimise threats to living heritage (such as the erosion of associated natural resources) and to enhance the social contexts for these expressions. It is perhaps the most complex international heritage project yet attempted, and it is too early to follow examples in practice (at the time of writing, the first inscriptions to the list have not been made). However, it is a bold attempt to extend the official categories of what heritage is and to see it as living cultural processes rather than as the cold stones of de-populated monuments. It too extends the selection of heritage away from the canonical and towards the representative. These issues are picked up in later chapters, particularly on tourism and performance, where ideas of ownership and change in living traditions such as carnival, are considered. For now, the official recognition of intangible heritage as a major category of global heritage is a key shift of position away from the established discourse around monuments and artworks.

Conclusion

This chapter has ranged widely over the centuries and across the globe to examine how one particular way of thinking about heritage became dominant (the canonical approach) and has been challenged (by the representative approach). We have traced this western discourse (the AHD in Smith's critique) through the evolution of heritage practices. For the first private enthusiasts of the past, and later for the first professionals, collecting, displaying and protecting objects of heritage meant portable or monumental heritage. The bureaucratisation of heritage is a characteristic of its twentieth-century history, as nations enacted a wider range of heritage legislation and the accompanying means to administer it. This has been taken up at international levels, initially by the League of Nations and since the Second World War by the UN.

Ideas about what heritage could be – in official terms – did not change until recent decades. Perhaps the ambitions of the World Heritage programme, to identify places of such importance that they are conceptualised as a common heritage for all, provoked critical reactions and questioning. As we saw, World Heritage criteria have continued to develop and now recognise the concept of cultural landscapes. A more innovative response to official processes of tangible heritage has emerged from Australia in the form of the Burra Charter and the definition for the first time of socially inclusive values. The processes of documenting heritage, such as a site description, have been expanded to include the meanings that different communities attribute to places. The conservation plan, in Kerr's formulation, facilitates community knowledge as well as rendering **official heritage** opinions transparent. The impact of the 'values-led' approach to heritage management is probably most strongly seen in UNESCO's recent interest in intangible heritage. The future of intangible cultural heritage will be a series of huge challenges to sustain distinctive cultures. For the first time, a holistic approach to heritage as something that is meaningful because of what people think and do has received recognition at the highest institutional level. The dominant discourse of official heritage is changing, not least because it now recognises other discourses.

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