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Heritage Tourism after Conflict

Starting Philosophical Thoughts

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1. Introduction

Tourism to sites of war, conflict, terror and violence is hugely popular. All manner of tours and visits are organized worldwide, every day, to both current and historic conflict sites. Some are once-in-a-lifetime events, such as tours of current conflict sites in the Middle East or to the battlegrounds of the Second World War, some are routine family visits, such as day trips to local castles. Some visits focus on war and battles themselves, others focus on sites that were the centres of conflict in a broader sense, such as notorious prisons or torture chambers. This is part of a wider trend labelled 'dark tourism'—that is, tourism to sites of death and tragedy. Not only are conflict tourism and dark tourism popular, they are also big business. For example, a 2014 article in *The Atlantic* estimated tourism to conflict sites to be worth approximately US$263 billion. The figure will no doubt have increased in the years since (Kamin 2014).[1] Further to the phenomena, dark tourism is an established academic area, formed at the intersection of tourism studies, cultural studies and business studies.[2] This academic area considers the finances, cultural mores and norms, and human psychology related to sites of death and suffering.

What strikes us is the absence of sustained, critical attention to conflict tourism from philosophers. This chapter narrows matters into a more manageable form. We focus on the idea of tourist visits to conflict heritage sites, some of which are adapted for mass, regular, safe tourism. We treat 'war' and

[1] At time of writing, the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in 2020 halted travel and will have affected this figure. Assuming travel returns, so will the conflict tourism industry.

[2] Stone et al. (2018) is an excellent place to begin. It covers some of the ideas and examples we offer and could have been cited many more times over. See also the 2018 Netflix travelogue series *Dark Tourist*, written and presented by David Farrier. See also Lisle (2000, 2016), which focus on 'war tourism', and O'Rourke (1988), which is a popular account of the phenomenon.

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'conflict' together; for our purposes they raise the same or similar issues, and we use the term 'conflict heritage tourism' to cover all cases.[3] We focus on sites of past conflict, where the conflict is one of the main reasons for a site's being a tourist heritage site. We do not discuss tourism to current conflicts, nor past tourist visits to conflict sites that were contemporary to such visitors.[4]

Despite narrowing our focus we still have many complicated phenomena to discuss. In this chapter we have three aims: first, to raise awareness of the phenomena and show they merit sustained philosophical interest; second, to outline some relevant philosophical questions; third, to offer some initial responses to these questions. Our overall claim, voiced at various intervals, is that one can, at most, develop general, defeasible ideas both about the phenomena and about what one should do. We do not argue for anything more detailed than this. We make this claim both because there is a large range of conflict heritage sites and because such sites raise many issues to which site curators and philosophers need to be alive.

2. Some Examples

We begin with some illustrative examples of the phenomena.

English Heritage, Historic Scotland, Cadw and the National Trust in Great Britain operate numerous sites, many of which have a strong association with war and conflict. Yet, most sites are perceived to be nice days out, often seen and marketed as places of 'family fun' with associated merchandise and events. Here are two examples. The 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings held at the English Heritage site of Battle Abbey in 2016 featured plenty of activities for families to enjoy. The centrepiece was a mock battle between the Normans and the Anglo-Saxons, with the crowd encouraged to pick a side to cheer. English Heritage also organize World War II family fun days at Dover Castle, a site of military significance from Bronze Age times to the Cold War,

[3] 'War tourism' can be construed narrowly as tourism concerned only with battles and wars, whereas 'conflict tourism' also includes cases concerned with, for example, violence that falls short of war, such as state oppression.

[4] Both categories raise questions and contain rich examples. There are many companies that arrange visits to current conflict zones, raising complex issues concerning tourists being in harm's way and whether tour operators should profit from conflict. The history of war tourism also has interesting case studies. For example, many tourist companies grew or were created because of military conflict, and in some cases the military relied on local tourist operators. Some tour operators existed in sites of military conflict because earlier conflicts had become sites of historic interest. Lisle (2016) shows how the military and tourism relate, and explores whether and to what extent military personnel can be seen as tourists themselves.

seeing war and conflict on its own site and nearby, as well as being the centre of significant military decisions. These events offer visitors the chance to dress as soldiers and participants from the period, to view mock weapons and transport, and participate in educational activities such as code-breaking and rations-tasting. Such events are popular and routinely hosted by many heritage sites.

Internationally there are many other examples of past conflict sites that are important visitor attractions and which exemplify a range of approaches to presentation. For example, The Chinese Eighth Route Army Culture Park in Shanxi province is named after the communist military unit that fought the Japanese in the 1940s in the area. Visitors can dress as troops and blast each other with toy guns (Fung 2012). The park's entertainment aspect seemingly far exceeds any educational purpose; the main point seems to be nationalist propaganda. In contrast, consider the countless tours to sites such as Auschwitz and Hiroshima. The presentation of these sites clearly aims at remembrance, respect and education.

As indicated in the introduction, there are also numerous examples of sites and events that come under the heading 'dark tourism', from tours of disaster sites such as Chernobyl to tours of sites relevant to organized crime.[5] These examples raise issues similar to those raised by conflict heritage sites.

3. The Moral Tension

There is, plausibly, a moral tension involved in creating, sustaining and visiting conflict heritage sites. We can frame this tension as follows:

> *Moral Tension*: a moral tension arises when agents derive valuable benefits from moral wrongdoing or morally bad events, or act in particular ways in relation to such events.

Creating and visiting conflict heritage sites often produces morally valuable benefits, such as enjoyment and education. A tension arises because such benefits are intrinsically connected to bad things, such as conflict, suffering and death, and such things may be morally bad.[6] Similarly, whilst the very act

[5] Stone et al. (2018) discusses many examples from across the world.

[6] We distinguish between moral wrongs and bads in order to capture a broader range of suffering, for example, the killing of soldiers engaged in unjust wars might be morally bad but not morally wrong.

of creating a heritage site may be seen as positively morally valuable, no matter what the consequences, the act of creating a *conflict* heritage site may be seen as impermissible, because of the nature of the events depicted. Hence the tension arises again.

This disquieting tension animates much of our discussion and generates other questions. For example:

Creation: When and why is it morally acceptable to create, sustain and adapt conflict heritage sites for people to visit as tourists?

Participation: When and why is it morally acceptable to visit conflict heritage sites as a tourist?

Time: Does the passage of time make a moral difference to creating and participating in heritage sites? In other words, is there a morally significant difference between, say, visiting the site of a conflict that happened centuries ago and visiting the site of a more recent conflict?

Other matters arise, which we do not pursue. For example, assuming that part of the problem concerns respect for others, one can ask how respect should be shown to living individuals and communities affected by a site's events, and how one shows respect to one's ancestors. As in other arenas, one can ask what occurs or ought to occur when people show respect for the dead.

Throughout this chapter we speak of 'the tension's being resolved'. This resolution might take various forms depending on one's broader commitments. For example, and as just mentioned, some non-consequentialists might hold that the very nature of the creative and participatory acts in relation to *conflict* heritage sites renders such acts impermissible no matter what the benefits. The tension is resolved by prohibiting conflict heritage tourism. However, other possible resolutions support what strikes us as the intuitive verdict that such tourism is at least sometimes permissible. For example, some non-consequentialists might argue that whilst there is something bad about the tourism itself, this can, at least sometimes, be overridden when the benefits are sufficiently important. Similarly, some consequentialists might say that there is nothing wrong with the creation of, and participation in, conflict heritage sites provided that the creation of such sites produces more good than other treatments. There will be other stances, of course. We do not defend any particular resolution of the tension here, but rather, explore the kinds of benefit and forms of engagement that might bear on the permissibility of creating and participating in conflict heritage sites.

4. Creation and Participation

Why might people create, sustain and adapt conflict heritage sites, or visit such sites? Here are some suggestions:

(i) education on specific matters (such as the history of the site or how people were affected in connection with that history);
(ii) broadening horizons (related to the general history of a people or a time period);[7]
(iii) specific remembrance and contemplation (such as remembering a relative who died, or how a whole people were affected);
(iv) remembrance and contemplation about conflict in general;
(v) pilgrimage and/or religious obligation;
(vi) enjoyment and fun;
(vii) relaxation;
(viii) bonding as a family and/or as friends; creating a site in which these things can happen.[8]

In addition, there are various broader reasons. For example:

(ix) financial reasons. Sites might exist, or be sustained and adapted, to generate money for investment in the site or relevant research, or for commercial gain. They might be supported by outside funds because having conflict heritage sites is good for the local or national economy. Similarly, there are some visitors who pay to visit so they can support the site and associated research;
(x) political and national reasons. Some countries or groups might create sites in order to sustain or further political narratives and ideals. Similarly, some people might visit because of the messages conveyed;
(xi) symbolic and identification reasons. Some sites are symbols of some general event, person or group, or fundamental idea, with which some tourists may identify;
(xii) the site and/or its history need to be protected from hostile forces. This set of reasons will likely sit alongside (x) and (xi).

[7] Education is routinely given as one of the most important reasons for the existence of heritage sites; we ourselves have already mentioned it. The mission statement of one of the USA's most important sites, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, summarizes this well: 'That the Future May Learn from the Past' (Colonial Williamsburg 2022).

[8] We focus on people who want to visit a site, rather than cases of reluctant visitors who go because of other reasons, such as children who visit because they are bribed or coerced.

In many cases these reasons overlap. We do not pretend this list is exhaustive. Even so, it suffices to indicate some of the main explanations of both the creation and popularity of conflict heritage sites.[9] With these reasons in mind, we can turn to the question of whether and how the tension might be resolved, such that we can vindicate the view that both the creation of conflict heritage sites and visits to them are morally permitted (or, perhaps even obligatory).

Consider a general case so as to think about a starting question: what reason is there to create and sustain conflict heritage sites *at all*?[10] Imagine a bloody, long-running war that involved the horrific massacre of innocents, with survivors enduring arduous lives thereafter. Answering both *Creation* and *Participation* will be fairly straightforward, and will therefore help to guide action, since there is a strong set of overlapping reasons—normally pointing to moral permissibility, often to moral obligation—to educate people about the horrors of war, to memorialize people's suffering, and to create opportunities for reflection and remembrance. Better this than silence and forgetting. Of course, we have deliberately described a case which is horrific, but the general idea also holds in less dramatic cases. Whether conflicts are large or small, involving innocents or others, they are terrible. Their terrible nature gives us reasons to remember them. These reasons are sufficient at least to start us thinking that the moral tension of conflict heritage tourism can be resolved in a way that reveals such tourism to be morally permissible.

However, it is not clear that these reasons show that the site *itself* needs to be preserved and visited. Why not just read about the events in a book or watch a documentary? Why not have a memorial site elsewhere? We grant, of course, that things other than conflict heritage sites can be morally valuable in memorializing and educating about events. Our claim is not that conflict heritage sites are the only or even always the best way to achieve one's aims. Moreover, some conflict heritage sites do fail to memorialize or educate as they should, as we will show. Nevertheless, conflict heritage sites often *are* good ways of memorializing and educating. Further, they offer something that books, documentaries and memorials in other places simply cannot: a tangible connection to what happened through physical place.[11] In some cases this

[9] There is much written in heritage and tourism studies relating to the reasons listed, and much produced by heritage organizations themselves, both for conflict and other sites. For a flavour, see the following reports and policy documents: Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (2008), Global Heritage Fund (2010), and Historic England (2022). See also Poria, Butler and Airey (2004). It is worth noting there will be cultural differences, with groups and countries emphasizing some reasons more than others.

[10] In reality, many heritage sites are created *because* there are visitors, but we ask this question first.

[11] For insightful discussion of the significance of historical sites and artefacts, see Korsmeyer (2018).

itself will have positive (moral) significance. Nothing can substitute for being in the presence of the hills on which soldiers were massacred and upon which memorial stones now stand. Nothing can quite replicate the feeling one has when in the very courtroom where judgements were passed on innocents before they were taken out and shot. Handled in the right way, such sites can bring home to visitors what happened and thereby underline the significance of the events in a way that books or documentaries alone cannot do.[12] Similarly, remembrance can take on extra significance if it occurs in the place where people died, and might lose significance if undertaken elsewhere.

We now introduce more complications. The concentration camps of the Second World War seem to offer an obvious illustration of how *Moral Tension* is to be resolved. These sites seem to require preservation to remind us of the atrocities that occurred. They expect—*demand*—quiet respect and reflection, and this influences their presentation. They are places for education and memorialization of the horrors both of a particular war and of war generally. Indeed, these sites have been created, sustained and adapted to ensure these are the dominant themes. The opening remarks of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation website summarize this well:

> If one Place could address the conscience of humanity in the 21st century, this Place is Auschwitz-Birkenau. The last of the enormous extermination centers which is tangibly preserved. The largest of all the Nazi German concentration camps. If the world we would like to build is to be safer, peaceful and more welcoming, it is imperative that we keep the authenticity of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial viable and palpable. No one can change the past; however the future is in our hands. Help us to preserve the authenticity of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Help us to warn humanity against itself. Do not allow history to become a deafening silence. Save the memory.
>
> (Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation 2022)

These remarks suggest that, far from being wrong, appropriate engagement with past wrongs can be morally demanded of us. However, even this straightforward example illustrates controversies. First, there is a debate about Auschwitz's preservation. There was a burgeoning tourist industry in the war's immediate aftermath, with former prisoners showing organized groups around the main parts of the site after it was partially destroyed. In the decade

[12] A further point. If one is morally queasy about heritage sites profiting from suffering and death, one can level the same charge at authors and documentary film-makers.

following the war, officials made decisions about how the site would be preserved, with some parts reconstructed out of the remains. No one thinks we should forget and obliterate all remains of the site, but some historians think that *the destruction* should be preserved and the site not altered for mass tourism: that this would make for a more powerful warning and better memorialize what happened. This taps into a question from above. Even in cases where a site should be 'preserved', what does this mean, and in what way and for what reasons should it be adapted?[13]

A second issue arises regarding the reasons for creating and visiting the site. Do we have moral reason to create, sustain and visit because we should memorialize the dead and, relatedly, because we should show respect for those who are still living who experienced these horrors? Or are the reasons different, as the passage above suggests? Rather than respecting past and present suffering, are we trying to educate and memorialize so as to prevent future suffering? This way of setting up the discussion seems right, even if philosophically clichéd. Plausibly, heritage sites based on concentration camps exist for a range of reasons, both retrospective *and* forward-looking. However, philosophers and curators need to ask of every site why it has been created and sustained, and how it is being visited.

Our purpose is not to resolve either issue just outlined, but rather to show that even in a case in which we might think *Moral Tension* is straightforwardly resolved, there is complexity. And, although we have started to appreciate the set of general reasons for creating conflict heritage sites, as we continue we will see these reasons come under pressure.

So, some sites may successfully resolve or navigate *Moral Tension* and address *Creation* and *Participation*. But there are some sites and visits that get things hopelessly morally wrong.

A case of a site which is created and presented such that the tension remains resolutely present is the aforementioned Chinese Eighth Route Army Culture Park. Despite its claims to be educational, reports suggest that it is little more than jingoistic entertainment. It involves live role-playing, in which the Japanese are portrayed as comedic villains at whom tourists are encouraged to take potshots. So, in keeping with our previous remarks, whilst it would have been possible to create a morally justifiable heritage site centred on the Chinese–Japanese war, this site does not seem to be it. Rather, we have a site of an atrocious war presented in a highly inappropriate manner whereby

[13] Lisle (2016: 130–141) discusses this general question and the details of both Auschwitz and Hiroshima.

visitors gain pleasure directly from imagining historic suffering. These benefits do not seem to respect the nature of the historical events. In addition, current tensions between the two nations may be exacerbated by the site. Both of these are the contraries of what is happening at Auschwitz.

What of morally inappropriate visits? The Culture Park appears to be intended to encourage visits that can be deemed inappropriate, but there are also inappropriate visits at Auschwitz, despite the sombre attitudes encouraged by its custodians. In recent years there have been problems with some tourists taking 'selfies' of themselves and friends, provoking outrage. Selfies speak of fun and enjoyment, and a focus on the individual and their experiences. A heritage site based around a concentration camp seems the very opposite of these things.[14] The outrage seems to reflect the mismatch between the reasons why these tourists visit and the site itself.

Even in seemingly straightforward cases, matters become complex. Education at a concentration camp can be viewed as a positive experience. Whilst such education can be positive under some descriptions, if done in the right spirit it will not be *enjoyable*. It will be disquieting or upsetting, and it is this that seems to be morally appropriate to the situation. But whilst there might be a range of acceptable visits and experiences, there is also a range of morally inappropriate experiences and visits, and not just visits where people are treating the whole experience as a fun time. One might be morally disquieted if, for example, tourists identify too readily with victims; a false association may be morally disrespectful. However, complete uninterest bordering on detachment is also inappropriate in the case of concentration camps, similar to the indifference that underlies selfies.

The character of the site also matters. A degree of indifference or fun might be wrong at one site but acceptable elsewhere. A further point is that, despite our earlier remarks, it may be that even if the educational aims or intentions around memorialization are positive, the history of the site and the majority of likely visits are such that it is morally safer not to create it. There may be no guarantee that visitors will appropriately respect the people who suffered and died. This is something that philosophers and site curators need to take seriously, human nature being what it is.[15]

[14] The phenomenon of selfies at Auschwitz and other sites has been lampooned, where that lampooning has itself come under attack, partly through misunderstanding. See, for example, Margalit (2014). Note, this is related to other modern phenomena, for example 'selfies at funerals'.

[15] As well as these types of case, there are other cases where authorities should discourage tourists despite a site's historic importance, such as sites where chemical weapons were tested.

We are beginning to identify some general ideas and issues which invite caveats as to how one should create and participate in conflict heritage sites. One might find that *Moral Tension* can be resolved, but such resolutions will need to address the specific character of the history of the site, the reception by certain visitors, the current social context, and other matters. It will likely be hard to arrive at principles which are exceptionless, widely applicable and detailed, demanding precise site presentations or ways of visiting, and which cover many or all cases. Perhaps there is simply some general injunction of creating and visiting conflict heritage sites in ways which are morally appropriate to the events with which a site is concerned, relying on judgement to adapt to features as one moves from case to case. Such features may help site curators focus on how to shape and present sites in morally justifiable ways. Even if true, this on its own may seem unsatisfactory when it comes to offering practical guidance. We have already mentioned education as a reason for creation and participation. To make a little more progress, then, we think briefly about some other reasons from our list above.

5. Enjoyment, Fun, Remembrance and Financial Gain

Enjoyment and fun are to be had at many conflict heritage sites, some of which we have mentioned above. The World War II fun day (or 'Fun Day') at Dover Castle is a good example. As well as recalling the Castle's significant military history, the hosting of a World War II Fun Day can be taken as marking the war generally. The Castle's Fun Days involve dressing up and displays of military hardware, plus permanent activities such as interactive events revolving around bombing raids in South-East England. There is an immediate moral issue here. Are such Fun Days, focusing on something that was the cause of so much suffering and death, morally permissible? Might they, or something like them, be obligatory?

In order to respond, consider first a different example. Consider comedic depictions of historic atrocities. No one can say the Spanish Inquisition was fun. Modern estimates put the number of people prosecuted at around 150,000 with around 3,000–5,000 executed. Yet many people also believe that it is morally permissible for *Monty Python* to use the Spanish Inquisition as a source of humour. Indeed, some might argue that comedic representation of such events is morally necessary. It may be a matter of psychological release or comfort to laugh at death and war, and it may be necessary to make fun of

authority figures. Further, it can be argued that many learnt about the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition only because of *Monty Python*.

As we know, *Monty Python*'s depiction of the Spanish Inquisition is part of a larger wave of comedic representation in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, covering topics such as witch-burnings, human sacrifice, plague and poverty, as well as war and conflict. A good example is the popular twenty-first-century UK children's television show *Horrible Histories*, which uses sketches and songs to depict all manner of historic violence and suffering. The books on which the series is based are routinely sold at heritage sites with the stated aim of education about the past through humour, a well-respected and effective method of teaching.

This returns us to Dover Castle and the general idea of enjoyment at conflict heritage sites. An opening set of thoughts goes like this. People routinely enjoy many artistic depictions of negative things, including war and conflict, and believe that some such depictions and experiences are justifiable. Why single out conflict heritage sites for different treatment? Individuals learn, grieve, and react in many ways to negative events. Whilst not all reactions will be appropriate—amusement at depictions of Auschwitz, for example—anything that may be said in general about what responses are morally desirable at conflict heritage sites, and how they might be encouraged by presentations at such sites, needs to account for the range of ways in which we respond to events. We need to think, at least for some sites, in terms of a spectrum of responses that are morally permissible. (We come to obligations below.)

This is a powerful opening thought, which, we think, carries in the end: it can be morally permissible to create certain conflict heritage sites at which people have fun, even when this fun is robustly connected to morally significant harms. Correlatively, it can be morally permissible for tourists to have fun at such a site. But there is complexity here, which requires reflection. Sometimes having fun is not morally acceptable, despite what some curators and visitors might think. Here are four indicative points.

First, and echoing an earlier thought, there is at least one difference between conflict heritage sites and (other sorts of) fictional depictions of conflict. In the case of the former, one is typically having fun at the *very place* where the conflict, death and suffering happened. For some philosophers and others, this will make no moral difference: what matters is simply the nature of the suffering and death itself, not the place. For others, place will make a moral difference, often based on the fact that routinely people *do* think and feel that it makes a difference, even if it may be hard to rationalize such an

everyday thought or reaction.[16] There are plenty of sites whose creation is morally acceptable, but where the custodians and presentation should not encourage fun or enjoyment, or at least certain sorts of enjoyment, and this seems to have something to do with the events having happened at the places themselves.

Second, we have talked generally about enjoying conflict heritage sites and concomitantly about how one curates a site to encourage such enjoyment. But what of *the source* of the enjoyment? It is one thing to admire some decayed, romantic battlements, but quite another to take enjoyment in death and suffering (and, similarly, to encourage such thoughts and feelings). One can be more specific than this. It might be fine to enjoy seeing an obviously fictionalized version of a battle with mock, over-the-top suffering just as one does in a theatre, but not fine to enjoy the thought of the *actual* suffering as depicted by actors.[17] 'Having fun at a conflict heritage site' is a broad phrase, disguising plenty. Again, this will require more thought, but one could easily imagine a general, defeasible principle emerging: 'It is normally fine to have fun at a conflict heritage site, so long as one is not *directly enjoying* the *actual* suffering that happened', and similar principles regarding a site's creation and presentation. Similarly, it might be morally fine to laugh along with *Monty Python*'s surreal, exaggerated depiction of the Spanish Inquisition, but not to enjoy the thought of the *actual* horror.

Third, we have talked blithely about enjoying a heritage conflict site where there was suffering and death. But the identity and character of those who suffered may matter morally, or at least affect how one presents a site and therefore how one encourages visitors to engage. Even if one thinks that no one should enjoy suffering and death, no matter who died (be they a serving General or an innocent civilian), the differences between the people involved may affect how a site is presented. Perhaps some people in certain conflicts should not be depicted in cartoon panels explaining what occurred, but others may if handled sensitively.

Lastly and following on, we have talked in general about enjoying depictions and presentations. But, as we know, these come in a wide range, affecting visitor

[16] Consider the fact from our introduction that tourists visit current conflict sites. How would one feel having fun at a conflict *heritage* site compared with having a similar experience at a *live* conflict site? Would the Spanish Inquisition sketches have been as funny if *Monty Python* had deliberately recorded them at the very sites of torture and death?

[17] At this point we do not go further, but one might then reflect on whether and why people can enjoy fictional depictions of suffering (which undoubtedly people do, and which seems morally permissible) and how this contrasts with enjoyment of the actual suffering as depicted in fictions (which seems morally dubious). Thanks to Helen Frowe for encouraging us to raise this point.

reactions. When considering the moral permissibility of conflict heritage sites and the actual events of a conflict, philosophers would do well to consider them as part of a set of examples: historical books, 'factionalized' accounts, theatrical productions, people playing with model soldiers, historic enactors recreating battles, computer games, and the like.

These four points are important in and of themselves, and they also speak to the complexity we have indicated. They should not be seen as fatally undermining the idea that it is morally permissible to have fun at conflict heritage sites where the fun is connected to the conflict. The moral tension with which we started can be overcome in morally permissible ways. But there is much to consider in developing more specific ideas that can be useful as practical guides, and in deciding what one should do as a site curator.

One last point. Could one mount a case for a moral obligation to create a conflict heritage site which was developed so as to encourage people taking fun and enjoyment, and mount a concomitant case for there being a moral obligation to visit such sites? Quite possibly. One would need to address the points just made. One would be on shaky ground in talking about obligations to have fun deliberately aimed at the suffering of innocents, say. The most fertile route for arguing for such an obligation likely lies in other, previous thoughts, namely the educational benefit there is in such sites and in the fact that people often need education to be enjoyable in order to learn. One would also have to show, echoing an earlier concern, that the education value of the fun activity hosted at the site could not be easily replicated by alternatives because one would lose something important without the site itself.

These thoughts return us to the theme of sombre reflection and remembrance. The point of focusing on enjoyment is to show that not all (permissible) conflict heritage sites need be sites of such reflection or even sites of education offered and taken in that spirit. Whilst such attitudes have their place and are the most or only appropriate reactions in some contexts, such a *global* obligation seems incorrect. It can be fine for many reasons to enjoy in some fashion difficult past events which were themselves horrific. This is true in the case of historical sites of suffering and death, just as it is in the rest of our lives. Whilst some events involve suffering, there can be aspects that are humorous. Perhaps the person who loaded the cannon really was a buffoon who slipped and caused himself and others fatal injuries. We repeat the thought that humans often need humour for psychological reasons in case the enormity of the suffering overwhelms them. Humour, fun, and joy may all be justified even at a conflict heritage site. Such responses help us cope with what occurred and such responses can help us to better understand the

site. Further, there is some obligation for historians and curators to tell the truth of what happened and to ensure their presentations tell much that is relevant. War and conflict often have amusing aspects. Why always leave them out?

Lastly in this section we turn to financial reasons for creating and visiting conflict heritage sites. Heritage sites cost money to create and run; conflict heritage sites are no exception.[18] Several questions follow, which again we merely raise. First, is it morally permissible to create a conflict heritage site simply or primarily to make money? We think not. Intending solely or primarily to profit from the suffering of others seems impermissible.[19] What does seem morally permissible is running a financially sustainable site where surplus is reinvested in the site (or research, or partner sites if part of a group), where the primary aims of the site are not financial. This may not be the end of the matter. It may also matter what or how one is memorializing. Earlier we listed 'political reasons'. The general guidance just given may look dubious if the main, non-financial reason for the site's existence and continuation is a controversial ideological view of history.

There are further difficulties when it comes to the wider economy. There are some conflict heritage sites that define their local area and dominate the local economy, with many other businesses dependent on tourists for their own trade. What moral obligations do conflict heritage sites have towards other organizations and businesses? In addition, an issue just mentioned returns in a different guise. Whilst the conflict heritage site may not exist to make a profit, the independent tearoom next door may well be trying to do so, and their trade arises because of the conflict. A full account of the relationship between heritage and financial gain will need to illuminate these indirect gains, as well as the more direct cases of profiting from conflict sites.[20]

6. The Passage of Time

If these issues were not enough, the passage of time adds further complications.

First, there is the issue of determining which conflict sites are 'in the past' and why. For example, whilst some conflict heritage sites are in the very

[18] Plenty of groups advocate for heritage sites based on economic benefits to a region and to support preservation of heritage generally. For example, see Maeer, Robinson and Hobson (2016: 20–28).

[19] The literature on war profiteering comes to mind (see Bazargan 2018).

[20] Elizabeth Scarbrough (2016) writes about a different but related case, namely so-called 'ruin tours' of inner-city Detroit. She considers the exploitation of current residents who have such tours in their city and how such exploitation can be avoided.

distant past, some sites are in the recent past, and some are past but have current effects. There are established tourist trails in Northern Ireland that visit sites of the worst of the Troubles, for example. Whilst it is true that some of the more extreme acts of war and violence are in the (recent) past, there are still localized outbreaks of violence, the causes of which may lie in the Troubles, even if these might not form part of any tourist trail.[21] Similarly, there are some places of conflict where there is currently no conflict occurring, but where there is a possibility of future conflicts erupting that can be seen as continuous with the recent conflict because the underlying reasons are the same. Even if one could rule out these cases, we may have other residual effects. Many people living in or near conflict sites of the recent past are likely to continue to suffer the indirect consequences of that conflict, such as poverty, displacement, and low levels of education and health. These cases still raise the question from above: is it permissible to visit and create tourist sites in places enduring the ongoing harms of a conflict?

Imagine, however, that we are considering cases where such worries have been satisfied and the conflicts and at least their immediate indirect effects are agreed to be 'in the past'. Even then there is a concern. At times it seems natural to think that conflict, death and suffering carry the same moral weight whenever they have occurred, and the passage of time makes no difference. Yet, sometimes it feels just as natural to think the opposite: the passage of time *does* matter. After all, it seems unlikely that every visit to every conflict heritage site is in some way morally dubious such that it needs some moral justification. So, should the passage of time affect visits to sites and whether the sites exist?

The broad answer to the question is, again, 'it depends'. It depends on what happened at the site, how those events are to be represented and what they did and now symbolize, how people may be affected by representations, and so on. We think, however, some points can be stated with a degree of certainty. First, there is, again, no exceptionless, specific principle of the form, 'it is easy to justify creating and visiting heritage sites based on past conflicts (certainly those from long ago) in a positive (for example, fun and enjoyable) way, but those in the recent past must be presented and visited in a sombre, reflective fashion'. Even some long past events have current resonance and can be

[21] The consequences of the Troubles in current criminal activity in N. Ireland is well-documented and a source of media reports. Even the Northern Ireland Direct (2022) government website on organized crime in the province acknowledges this by beginning, 'Organised crime involves a group of people involved in serious criminal activities, to make large profits. They use violence or the threat of violence. In Northern Ireland, organised crime groups might have paramilitary connections.'

reanimated, as we shall indicate. However, second, a similar principle, worded more generally and with some appropriate qualifier, *seems* more plausible. For example, one might plausibly claim the following: *by and large*, the further in the past the conflict which a heritage site represents, the easier it will be to justify creating and visiting it in a positive (for example, fun and enjoyable) way. Third, one likely has more latitude in how one represents and engages with matters in the distant past because these are matters that one cannot influence and which influence us far less; so much history has happened between then and now. Lastly, there is still the large question hanging over all of this. We may well engage in more positive fashion with brutal and horrible events of long ago, but should we? This is the broad point, already touched on, concerning the interplay between how in fact people feel and think and what any moral theory might prescribe.

To illustrate, consider some cases. First, we return to the Second World War and Dover Castle's Fun Day. Such days see large numbers of people; war re-enactment is a profitable business and a serious hobby. We visited such a Fun Day, and when we did so, most of the re-enactors were British, many of whom were dressed as Nazi officers and German soldiers. Most were in small groups in their own camps, dressed and displaying various war memorabilia. There is educational benefit to this and it lends a site atmosphere.[22] What was worrying and upsetting during our visit was the enthusiasm displayed by some dressed as Nazis who revelled in some assumed glamour.

A similar event in Haworth, England in 2012 was visited by residents of Hamm in Germany. The German visitors were upset by the presence of two people in Nazi uniforms, something which is illegal in Germany. The visitors reported the incident to the local authorities, leading to its being picked up as a national news item in both the UK and Germany (BBC News 2012).[23] We are sure the German visitors would have been similarly appalled by what we saw at Dover Castle.

From these examples one can see how a conflict's effects can resonate and how they can reanimate a site. There are, broadly, matters of offence that can easily slip into matters of harm, particularly where the issue of Nazism is concerned.[24] That such issues and presentations have the power to offend and

[22] The educational benefit can be high but can also sometimes be doubtful as the presentations may not be scrutinized by anyone other than those in the groups.

[23] One local councillor is quoted as also being appalled. One of the organizers, who also notes it is distasteful, defends the action because the UK is a free country. He also points out that there were only two people in Nazi uniforms out of around 20,000 attendees. (The Dover Castle event we refer to had quite different numbers.)

[24] See Feinberg (1984, 1985) for a classic modern discussion of harm and offence.

harm, even after a number of years, is clear. This general point is sharpened when one considers how a site should be presented and responded to, particularly once one realizes that there has to be selectivity of both presentation and memory.[25] This has added significance again once one realizes that historic sites, if they are to have educational value, have a role to play in both advancing and challenging memories and historical narratives.[26] The presentation of a site and its perception show the multiple tensions we have discussed. How does one remain faithful to a site and its history, and respect the dead and those who feel a connection to the site, whilst allowing for a (reasonable) range of reactions, some of which might include explicit displays of enjoyment, thus creating a site that people want to visit?

More specifically, these examples indicate how an overall view of each example can be reached. For a start, there might be good reason to have people in Nazi uniforms at a Second World War event, but one can distinguish Dover from Haworth. From what we can see of the two examples, there may be far more reason to have people present in Nazi uniforms at the Dover event, since it is trying to display and balance a range of different military units and cover 1940s wartime generally. In contrast, the Haworth event seemed to be a recreation and celebration of the war *in* Haworth and its surrounds, so a Nazi party presence is inappropriate. A second point is that any such events should be alive to the fact that the Allies in the Second World War can also be accused of atrocities. Indeed, whilst it may be a difficult balancing act in what is supposed to be a family event, some acknowledgement of the horrors of war and the tragedies that some groups faced seems necessary, especially given that the events mentioned here are within living memory.[27] Similarly, the overall aim of such events, and how they are marketed and presented, sets the tone. Are we aiming to *commemorate* a set of discrete events? Are we *celebrating* the culture of the period and the positive changes that occurred? Plenty of Second World War event days are simply celebrations of 1940s culture, with singers and bands appropriately dressed. (The Haworth event seems closer to this, which is why the presence of people in Nazi uniform seems wrong.)

[25] These and other themes are explored in Harrison, Bergqvist and Kemp (2016).

[26] At time of writing there is controversy in the UK and elsewhere concerning how various organizations deal with the historic associations that sites have with the slave trade. An extended version of this chapter would consider more examples, discuss the nature of commemoration, and show how memory and presentation affect each other. Auschwitz and Hiroshima are key examples of commemoration and memory, much discussed and debated in tourism studies (again, see Lisle 2016 and Stone et al. 2018), but there are many examples worldwide.

[27] At a large site there is more scope for this to happen, of course.

We have used the phrase 'living memory', which requires further specification. It might mean only that there are people alive who were directly affected by the events depicted at a site. It might be extended also to cover people who have personal memory of a now-departed relative or friend who was directly affected by the events. However this phrase is specified, many events at conflict heritage sites are not within living memory, but that does not mean one has complete moral latitude to act as one wants. It also means that one should pay heed to the '*by and large*' qualifier given above when considering how sites are presented and visited.

Some more examples illustrate this and other points above. If one takes our suggested principle, it implies two things: that, by and large, the nearer in time an event of war and conflict is to living memory, the more one should err on the side of sombre reflection or education and, correlatively, that pleasure-seeking is best suited for conflict sites that are settled and far in the past. Whilst one can think of illustrative examples in both categories, we can show why the principle is nonetheless defeasible and needs to be applied appropriately. For example, no one could think that the 1746 Battle of Culloden was in the recent past. However, the current interpretation of the site errs on the side of respect and reflection. The reason is that Culloden is seen as a touchstone event in the history of Scotland, emphasizing its importance as a nation. A few people may overly politicize this for current and future purposes, but it is a good example of when it is important to mark events in a certain way so they remain in the memory.[28] An example of a recent conflict, certainly one within living memory (with attendant local consequences), where a site privileges enjoyment but does so in a justifiable manner is again found at Dover Castle which hosts a Cold War 'escape room', marketed as an interactive, fun experience, targeted at families and friendship groups.

Even when marking events of the distant past, such as the 950th celebrations of The Battle of Hastings at Battle Abbey, one cannot do whatever one wants. There has to be respect shown for the brutal events and their aftermath, even if one is celebrating and not (only) commemorating. This was another celebration we visited. The mock battle really was a piece of theatre, and no one was encouraged by the site or the events of the weekend to revel in the thought of the actual suffering experienced. The materials provided to the visitors reflected the details of the battle itself, the historical build up to the

[28] Thanks to Jeanette Kennett for the example. Derek Matravers gave us another example, the storming of Clifford's Tower in York in 1190, which has a modern anti-Semitic resonance and which seems to resonate in a way the Battle of Hastings does not.

Norman invasion and its consequences, and did so in a sensitive way, whilst incorporating some measure of enjoyment. Imagining oneself into the lives of those who lived through the battle, for example, can be of educational benefit. With that said, there are some difficulties. If someone had come forward who took offence because of the enjoyment gained from the site and the weekend's events, and furthermore made the case that they were psychologically harmed as a result because they claimed some long-dead ancestor from the conflict, we would think they had an unusual reaction.[29] But what if a retired soldier, who had experienced a very harrowing and recent conflict, had had the same reaction, concerned that the death of soldiers was being treated merely as a form of entertainment?[30] This latter reaction might also be unusual, but the matter of which reactions require adaptions to a presentation, or even the cancelling of events or closure of sites, still requires consideration.

No doubt further reflection on the significance of the passage of time will identify more complicating factors and we imagine there is much to take issue with in what we have said. But the passage of time nevertheless generates a rich vein of debate and demonstrates our claim that, at most, one can develop general, defeasible principles about conflict tourism to help guide judgement and action.

7. Conclusion

Every heritage conflict site presents a complex range of moral issues, sometimes unique or rare, and each must be judged on its merits. Nevertheless, in raising many questions we have outlined some fundamental ideas and considerations that have general, if defeasible, applicability and which both aid understanding of the moral tension connected to conflict tourism and potentially serve to reduce or resolve it. Even the limited number of examples that we have considered show the breadth and complexity of the issues that arise and the potential for further philosophical exploration of the idea of conflict heritage tourism. Such tourism raises important moral issues concerning

[29] Unusual but not unheard of. Some people do struggle in such situations, such as some children with special needs. This point and others (such as the range of inappropriate reactions at Auschwitz) call to mind the philosophical literature on sentimentality. See, for example, Tanner (1976–1977). Thanks to Derek Matravers for this thought.

[30] Thanks to Helen Frowe for the example.

profit, education, commemoration, celebration, pleasure and grief, all of which would benefit from more philosophical attention.[31]

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