
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Buildings as Artifacts: Heritage, Patriotism, and the Constructed Landscape

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Architectural collections or reconstructed villages are popular tourist attractions in Europe and the United States, often promoting architecture as a demonstration of national and regional heritages. At times, these sites betray the biases of their creators, perpetuated through methods of display and their public interpretation. The architecture can be used as artifact or backdrop to promote ethics, history, or industry at the hand of curators, particularly when removed from its original context and constructed in a new one. When viewed through the lens of tourism, the collections become a constructed landscape of architectural heritage, experienced by visitors through a narrow understanding of time and place, propagated by fabricated historical connections or purposeful nationalist arrangements. Often accessorizing 'authentic' architectural heritage with reconstructions and reproductions, these collections suggest a skewed heritage landscape to the non-specialized visitor, emphasizing tourism over truth and entertainment over education. Following 19th century examples in Scandinavia and the broader introduction of international architecture through the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, early 20th century American collections at Greenfield Village and the Manitou Cliff Dwellings underscore the intent to capitalize on architectural heritage tourism, and how a diluted history is interpreted through the eyes of the modern tourist.

Introduction

For many travelers, historic or cultural heritage sites provide an opportunity to be transported to a different time or place, immersing visitors in a landscape outside of the contemporary experience. This paper will consider the history of a number of Scandinavian and American open-air facilities that, by making historic architecture available to the international public, aimed to encourage patriotism and civic pride in a shared heritage, and to provide a 'historical' experience for visitors. While preservation and accessibility are prized as modern heritage requirements, these sites were initiated to accentuate the morality or ethics of previous generations, and only later enhanced to encourage tourism.

These sites, therefore, present an interesting interpretation conundrum, juxtaposed between authenticity, reconstruction, and revenue. At the center of this is architectural reconstruction and restoration as a tourism backdrop, where authentic buildings provide imagined temporal scenery. The removal of buildings from their original site, or the restoration of buildings to a selected place and time, contrast with many modern historic preservation practices, particularly the authentic representation of a building's cultural context. These decontextualized buildings can become popular objects of tourism consumption: artifacts representative of

history, but experienced singularly without a broader understanding of their creation.

Heritage, Authenticity, and Tourism

History, simply understood as a documented series of events, is often used as evidence to support particular identities and traditions (Ashworth 1994: 13). While history is not considered to be 'agenda free', cultural production drives the interpretation of personal or shared heritage (Meskell 2002: 293). Where history claims objectivity, heritage is subjective, and often influences an individual or group understanding of history. Heritage participants select historical events, persons, cultures, or artifacts with which to identify, suggesting that heritage is seemingly exclusive to participants; as Lowenthal proposes, 'History is for all, heritage for ourselves alone' (1996: 128). Heritage or shared memory helps strengthen group bonds and a felt connection to history, but as these connections are fostered, the interpretation of history can be skewed as events, people, or places are chosen for presentation.

'Authentic heritage' is an often-contested term (see Larsen and Marstein 1994), yet authenticity is often a determining factor in establishing historic or heritage monuments. Defined by objective facts or truth, according to *Webster's Dictionary*, authenticity can nonetheless be seen as subjective, depending on which truths are subscribed to and which values they reflect. In architectural collections, buildings are removed from their original context and placed in a new one, therefore 'authentically' re-constructed in an inauthentic context. Travelers

view the past through these objects and contexts, which are identified in relation to personal or shared heritage. Visiting sites of heritage or collections of heritage objects constitutes so-called ‘heritage tourism’, yet even this term can be considered subjective in relation to the participating visitor (Poria, Butler and Airy 2003). Architectural heritage can be defined as ‘historic’ based on its relationship to people, places, or moments of cultural significance and may be related to a large heritage group (national or international monuments) or smaller groups (local/personal monuments).

History of Architectural Collections

Collection and display date to antiquity, where the Latin ‘Museum’ and Greek ‘Museion’ (literally, places for the Muses) refer to buildings dedicated to cultural values, often within sanctuaries, such as Delphi and Olympia. Dedicated votive offerings were publicly displayed in treasuries (Fig. 1), which reflected the artistic traditions of individual city-states, creating an assemblage of construction traditions and heritages (Wilson Jones 2014; Partida 2000). International sanctuaries provided collective worship within a visually eclectic architectural experience. They represent one of the earliest precedents for architectural collections as they feature temporal and cultural artifacts within an interpreted space intended for visitors seeking a shared religious identity.

While the Greek sanctuaries facilitated unintentional collections, the purposeful curating of architecture began after antiquity, particularly as related to civic pride. Following the French Revolution, the foundation of the First Republic relied on artifacts to formalize founding principles. Alexandre Lenoir founded the Musée des Monuments Français in 1795, which collected ‘nationalized’ examples of heritage monuments representative of the new Republic (Carter 2007). Nearly a century after Lenoir, Eugène Viollet-le-Duc opened his own Musée des Monuments Français exhibition (1879), assembling casts and original monuments of France and its territories in the Palais du Trocadéro.

While the emphasis in France was on the display of national symbols, collecting architectural examples for

preservation became increasingly common in Scandinavia in the mid-19th century, when concerned preservationists began to acquire and conserve traditional building types, which were beginning to disappear, reassembling and resituating the structures in open-air museums (Rentzhog 2007). These collections exemplified building traditions important to modern heritage groups: familial homesteads, religious structures, examples of early industrial complexes, etc. By the turn of the 19th century, the political boundaries of Denmark and Sweden had been shifting for over 200 years, and Finland and Norway had gained some form of political independence, despite shared folk culture traditions (Eriksen 2012: 31–32). As the national fluidities continued into the 20th century, each entity made a concerted effort to collect and showcase folk building traditions as a form of ownership, using museums and architecture as political ammunition.

Skansen in Stockholm (Fig. 2) is credited as the first of these projects and the foundation of the modern open-air museum, though it was purportedly influenced by parallel developments in Norway (Hillström 2011; Nordenson 1992; Stubbs and Makaš 2001). Skansen’s founding, in 1891, is attributed to Artur Hazelius, a linguist, folklorist, and educator, who began collecting examples of Swedish agrarian architecture and artifacts in the 1870s, believing that Sweden’s national heritage was expressed through its flora, fauna, and cultural output. As an educator, Hazelius believed that the public would benefit from the entrepreneurial education provided by experiencing agrarian life in a controlled but authentic environment (Nordenson 1992). Hazelius’ intentions in collecting artifacts of broad Scandinavian culture were based on his desire to form the United States of Scandinavia, a political vision that could be culturally reinforced through the display of common heritages. Hillström assigns to this Scandinavianist interest Hazelius’ earlier 1873 collection, which was initially named the Scandinavian Ethnographic Collection (Skandinavisk-etnografiska samlingen), and later Nordiska Museet (2011: 38). The collection included regional costumes on mannequins, following Hazelius’ belief that culture was a product of the people and could



Figure 1: Delphi, Greece, with view toward the reconstructed Athenian treasury and the sacred way, along which other poleis’ treasuries were located. Photo by author, 2006.



Figure 2: The Hornborga Cottage with living history performer and traditional homestead in background. Signs such as this describe ‘traditional’ occupations and dwellings as part of the extensive park. Photo by author, 2013.

be encouraged by patrons, and also demonstrating his interest in presenting folk-life scenes inspired by genre paintings of the time (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 1998). By featuring a diverse collection, Hazelius allowed numerous groups to consider the collection as their heritage, thereby making it popular, but also purposefully indefinable (Hillström 2011: 39).

The Nordiska Museet collection presented cultural artifacts from Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Greenland, Iceland, Estonia, Russia, and Germany. Hazelius began reconstructing architectural artifacts as part of the Museet; however, by October 1891, Skansen opened as a separate entity. The complex housed architecture and artifacts from both Norway and Sweden, and served in part as a catalyst for modern social reform, which Hazelius also found important. Bäckström (2011) suggests that Hazelius wanted modern Scandinavian society to be influenced by an ideal 'organic' folk community, and that reintroducing the public to traditional ways of life would inspire this (69). Concerned with the effects of increasing industrialization, Hazelius sought to preserve artifacts alongside lifestyles of cultural importance, and Skansen became the architectural backdrop for these ideas (Aitchison et al. 2000: 99; Hudson 1987: 122). Hudson (1987) suggests that cultural museums help visitors romantically reminisce about the 'customs of the homeland', stimulating a collective memory that is triggered through the nostalgia of rustic and romantic building styles (113–43). Artifacts and other evidence of folk life at Skansen worked in contrast to the rising industrial revolution, encouraging visitors to return to a simpler time and place, rich in important culture or heritage.

While encouraging visitors to experience traditional folk dwellings, Skansen also encouraged 'healthy' nationalist leanings among patrons, despite its original Scandinavianist predilections (Facos 1998: 71; Persson 2010: 326; Sörlin 1998). After Hazelius' death in 1901, the Nordisk Museet and Skansen were purposefully redesigned to deemphasize Scandinavianist associations and instead focus on 'politically convenient' nationalism (Hillström 2011: 40). MacLean suggests that the public accepted the change 'because Skansen occupies a very specific phase in the idea of being Swedish, serving as a focal point for a renewed national consciousness' (1998: 24–25).

Hazelius' collections were influenced in part by King Oscar II of Norway who was interested in collecting examples of vernacular Norwegian architecture, which he displayed near Oslo in 1881 (Conan 2002; Hillström 2011). In 1894, the collection, originally displayed on the royal grounds at Bygdøy, opened as the Norsk Folkemuseum (Fig. 3), also referred to as the Norwegian Museum of Cultural History, under the direction of Hans Aall. Eriksen suggests that the museum was established in part to 'stop Hazelius from exporting Norwegian objects to Sweden' (2012: 34). Conan (2002) also credits Georg Karlin, a 'friend of Hazelius' who drew up a plan for a folk park at Lund in 1880, but was delayed until 1892, as also inspiring Hazelius.

Following the example of the Norsk Folkemuseum and Skansen, Denmark debuted the Frilandsmuseet in 1897,



Figure 3: Examples of two traditional dwellings reconstructed at the Norsk Folkemuseum. Photo by author, 2011.

and Finland followed with Seurasaari in Helsinki in 1909, and Siida, an open-air museum on Lake Inari, in 1960, focused almost exclusively on the Sámi population, which was underrepresented at Seurasaari. The Frilandsmuseet was initiated by Bernard Olsen, who also had nationalist leanings and collected funding for a Danish popular museum. Olsen had been the art director for Tivoli, a popular attraction in Copenhagen, and had visited the 1878 World Exposition in Paris, which displayed examples of national architecture. Like Hazelius, Olsen attributed much of Danish culture to agrarian practices, and sought to feature these in his own museum. Under his promotion, the Dansk Folkemuseum opened in 1885 in Copenhagen with crafts and folk traditions, and in 1896, traditional homesteads were displayed on the grounds of Rosenborg Castle. Citing political motive, the houses were moved in 1901 to the new Frilandsmuseet north of Copenhagen (Zipsane 2011: 216–18). As Denmark had lost Norway as territory in 1814, the country had a significant reason to emphasize its own cultural traditions, particularly alongside Aall's newly established Norsk Folkemuseum.

The American Response to Architectural Collections

By the 1890s, architects and cultural heritage pioneers in the United States of America were also hoping to highlight architecture as a signifier of culture. The earlier Centennial Exhibition in 1876 in Philadelphia provided living history as a form of entertainment, and The World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, held in Chicago, was the first World's Fair to feature national pavilions, many of which exhibited the architectural traditions of their home country alongside goods produced there. The displays included a Dutch windmill, an Austrian Village, an Egyptian Temple, and a Swedish Workshop with tools, as well as American state pavilions, many of which were designed to resemble important buildings from the state's history. An 'Indian Village' with architectural representations of American Indian homesteads was also featured and included a cliff dwelling set into an artificial mountain (Bolotin and Laing 1992). Entertainers in traditional dress performed alongside the displays (Burnham 1989), an early example of

living history actors who would later bring architectural heritage sites to life. The World's Columbian Exposition conveyed both American and non-American examples of architectural reconstruction to American tourism. The economic impact from such an enterprise signified financial promise for projects such as the Manitou Cliff Dwelling in Colorado, Greenfield Village, Michigan, and Williamsburg, Virginia, in the early 20th century, which utilized practices developed in the European heritage parks to create 'American' architectural heritage landscapes.

As one of the earliest architectural reconstructions, the Manitou Cliff Dwelling tells an illustrative tale of heritage interpretation in America at the turn of the 20th century. Intended to represent the traditional architecture of the Ancestral Puebloans/Anasazi American Indians,¹ the Manitou Cliff Dwelling tourism site (**Fig. 4**) began as a preservation project headed by archaeological conservationist Virginia Donaghe McClurg and her friend William Crosby. The site, constructed specifically for tourism, houses a reconstructed dwelling set into an artificial cliff face, allowing visitors to walk through a small complex of buildings. Finley suggests McClurg's husband, Gilbert, convinced her to move an Ancestral Puebloan dwelling to a 'safer' location and open it as a tourism site for visitors, which Virginia supposedly agreed to as it would provide an educational experience (2010: 83–86). At the time, original sites were difficult to access, giving McClurg and Crosby reason to develop a more accessible one for the public (Smith 2002; Weixelman 2004). McClurg had been concerned that Indian sites in the American west would be looted if left in place without protection, and planned to preserve remains *in situ* through the formation of a protected park, which eventually became Mesa Verde National Park in 1906 (Finley 2010). Smith (2002) suggests that McClurg disagreed with the federal control of the project, and this may have spurred her plan to build the cliff dwelling over 300 miles away at Manitou Springs.

In its initial phases, the project was debated in public newspapers, which claimed that the government was investigating to assess whether the removal was in violation of the law (Dean 1907: 2). The exact location of the original ruin is not known, as there are conflicting reports

about where they were purchased from (Lovata 2011: 197). Despite the discrepancy, the Manitou Cliff Dwelling tourism site was initiated in 1904, modeled after the cliff dwellings at Mesa Verde, Colorado, which were remote and therefore difficult for the public to access (**Fig. 5**). It was opened to the public in 1907 and billed as 'Instructive', allowing the public to better understand what was labeled the 'mysterious of the race'. In his book of photographs from the opening of the tourism site, Dean (1907) writes, 'It is a frequent observation of travelers from foreign lands, that we have no ruins in the United States', suggesting that the tourism site helped to meet the needs of demonstrating American heritage to the international community (29). As the buildings were removed from a remote location, the reconstruction near Colorado Springs, an important railroad junction and popular gold mining area with around 32,000 people in 1910, reinforced the tourism potential of the project (Anderson 1916).

The Manitou Cliff Dwelling presents a historical conundrum, as the architecture was placed in a fake context. Lovata suggests that the relocation of the site represents the move toward tourism and away from authentic representation: 'The site is a fake. The site was conceived to match a growing interest in Southwestern prehistory' (Lovata 2011: 195). In this case, the site is configured specifically as a tourism destination, with less emphasis on authenticity than on gaining visitors or revenue.

Further complicating the discourse is that the site includes various types of American Indian architecture from different regions (**Fig. 6**), creating a collection under the broad theme of 'native' or 'Indian', collected by unaffiliated organizers. Outsiders essentially assigned a heritage category to the architectural artifacts through their collective arrangement, insinuating the buildings are more culturally connected than they, in fact, are.

By the 1910s and 1920s, additional collections were initiated to focus specifically on 'American' architectural heritage. Some Americans reacted to the industrial revolution, in a fashion similar to Hazelius, by rejecting the concept of a drastic change in culture, but a few industrialists felt that this represented progress that should be lauded instead of shunned. Henry Ford saw the narrative history, or at least

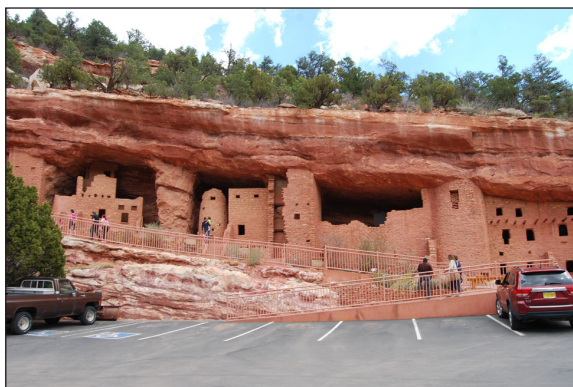


Figure 4: The Manitou Cliff Dwellings tourism site in Manitou Springs, Colorado, showing the reconstructed cliff dwelling moved from near Mesa Verde, Colorado. Photo by author, 2013.



Figure 5: Ancestral Puebloan cliff dwelling *in situ*, as part of the Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado. Photo by author, 2013.

a marketable story, of American industry represented in architecture (Kaufman 1989: 33). His ambition, which was to tell American industrial history through architecture, led him in 1929 to establish the Edison Institute of Technology and Greenfield Village at Dearborn, Michigan, a collection of 'traditional' American buildings (**Fig. 7**) loosely based on the achievements of Thomas Alva Edison, and named for the bucolic village in which his wife, Clara, grew up (Rentzhog 2007: 129). Ford seems to have wanted the village to not only be an experience, but also an act of preservation, and is quoted as saying, 'When we are through we shall have reproduced American life; and that is, I think, the best way of preserving at least part of our history and our tradition', (in Rentzhog 2007: 132). Ford was a businessman, however, not an academic, so he had little knowledge of, or time for, museology, leading him to send his son Edsel to view other heritage museums early in the design process and ensure that Greenfield Village would be 'the best' (Rentzhog 2007: 133). His other son, Henry Ford II, who eventually took over the planning of the Village, visited Skansen for a cocktail party in 1954 as part of a factory assessment and public relations excursion, and may have been inspired to continue Ford's vision in a similar manner (Program for Visit 1954).



Figure 6: Multiple pieces of American Indian architecture at the Manitou Cliff Dwellings site. Photo by author, 2013.



Figure 7: Greenfield Village 'Liberty Craftworks' buildings, Dearborn, Michigan. Photo by author, 2015.

To achieve his vision, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Henry Ford purchased architectural pieces from all over the United States and brought them to Dearborn to create the tourism complex. The centerpiece of the Village was to be Thomas Edison's so-called 'invention factory', which symbolically integrated the complex with Ford's other industrial interests (Israel 1989). Upon arrival in New Jersey, however, Ford and Edison discovered the original buildings were largely in disrepair, necessitating Ford to instruct his museum staff – mainly workers from his auto factories – to reconstruct the complex in Dearborn from photographs and any surviving materials (Rentzhog 2007). As some of the buildings had been completely disassembled and materials used to build local homes, Ford purchased the three houses to bring the materials back to the collection (Ford Working on Edison Memorial, 1929: 16). Ford was unable to find and purchase all the architectural types he sought for his village, so staff were required to build supplementary buildings, often based on Ford's own experiences or ideas, and position them within a carefully planned landscape, as if they were still in use (**Fig. 8**). The site encouraged visitors to interact with the architecture, and later with living history performers, and Ford vehicles chauffeured guests around the park on constructed streetscapes. The purpose was to effectively transport visitors back to a 'simpler' time in America.

During a celebration for the Menlo Park tribute, Ford posited early Greenfield Village to be 'the actual tools and housing used in what I consider one of the greatest achievements in human progress', reasserting his vision of telling the American narrative through industrial history (Ford Working on Edison Memorial, 1929: 16). While Ford presented a clear vision for the Village in 1929, he had earlier undertaken a 'Peace Expedition' to Scandinavia in 1915, which included 'meet and greet' events for local dignitaries and touring local cultural sites. As the Scandinavian museums in Copenhagen and Stockholm were established by then, Ford may have used these as inspiration for his own village (Hopkins 1915). In 1919, Ford established an assembly line in Denmark, and the company expanded in Scandinavia in the 1920s under the direction of William H. Knudsen, a trusted Danish advisor of Ford (Christensen 2014). When Henry Ford II inherited his father's position and once again undertook expeditions to visit the Scandinavian factories, his itineraries included 'sightseeing' in Copenhagen on March 6, 1948, and also in Stockholm on March 8 (Itinerary for Visit 1948). Six years later, in 1954, Ford II's itinerary specifically included a 'Cocktail Party' at Solliden, Skansen, which bore the description: 'World-famous open air museum and zoological garden in an extensive natural park' (Program for Visit to Stockholm 1954). While neither Ford comments directly on their visits to the Scandinavian cultural sites or their impact on the Village, the similarities in design and purpose suggest an important inspiration gained from the European sites over time. The Scandinavian automobile plants were important to the success of Ford Motor Company. Henry Ford's continuous trips, and later those of his son, with sightseeing included suggest an important

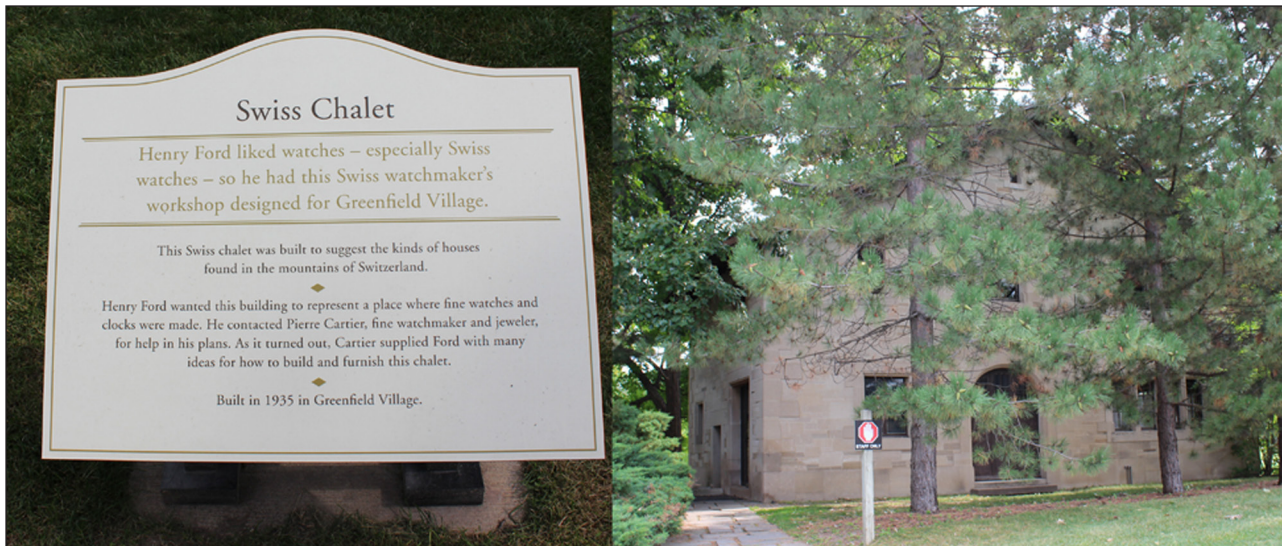


Figure 8: 'Swiss Chalet', an invention of Ford's for Greenfield Village. Photo by author, 2015.

business connection, but also a cultural one felt between the company and Europe.

Although the original theme of the site revisited early industry, when the complex became a publicly held organization in the 1950s, the name was officially changed to Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, reflecting the shift in focus and value to a celebration of Henry Ford himself and of automotive history (Hamp 2006: 46). The collection therefore expanded to include a variety of architectural and industrial artifacts under the theme of 'Americana' (Hamp 2006), effectively reducing each piece down to its simplest typology (Hamp 2006; Shelley 1972: 6). As a museum centered on American life and industry, the selection of buildings was broad, and over time, Greenfield Village and the related Henry Ford museum became the preservation depot of buildings facing demolition, usually associated with famous individuals of the American past. The site now features Henry Ford's birthplace and prototype garage, but also a Connecticut home used as an early dormitory of Yale students, the courthouse where Abraham Lincoln practiced law, and the Wright brothers' bicycle shop from Dayton, Ohio, which has since been the subject of controversy over its removal to the Village.² The collection now represents different periods in American social life, united through architecture, and accessible in a single day.

While contextually unrelated, the buildings were reconstructed into idealized neighborhoods as part of the full villages, visually associating them under a variety of subthemes, such as rural farming. This display suggests a temporal or geographical association of the architecture, when in reality the collection is more thematic. As the buildings were removed from their contexts and reassembled, a new context was created through interpreted connections. The theme is 'Americana', which is not a homogenous concept in itself – effectively nationalist like Skansen, but diluted, particularly because the collection includes non-American buildings and structures built from Ford's imagination (Fig. 9).



Figure 9: Cotswold Cottage from the United Kingdom as part of Greenfield Village. Photo by author, 2015.

'Heritage' in this and similar situations is carefully curated³ through the selection of buildings provided to recreate a cultural experience. Greenfield Village cannot replicate a specific historic town or environment, so individual buildings are arranged to simulate a particular discourse – in this case, industrial history in America. In any collection, the curator presents individual artifacts in positions or sequences to make each appear to its most beneficial for public understanding, and for the collection as a whole. As collectors, Henry Ford and his sons acquired buildings associated with their interests and curated the collections, with an emphasis on industry and American society. The later curators of Greenfield Village continued these emphases in the collection, although the specific interpretation values and mission of the non-profit evolved over time (Hamp 2006).

As the purpose of the collection evolved, the interpretation of Ford's original buildings and later collected pieces also changed. The early educational program followed Ford's own 'McGuffey type' education,⁴ where younger students learned from the experience of older students – each impacts the other, as the older students provided knowledge and wisdom to younger students, who required the

older students to teach these experiences. The Ford program in the 1950s rejected the then-common American streamlined mass education systems and instead heavily addressed individual rural learning, which was integral to the Greenfield Village pedagogy. In 1938, Ford suggested, 'Our schools here... are not city schools, I don't want them to be city schools, for I hope to teach our boys and girls to live in the America of tomorrow, which I think is going to be more rural than it has been for the past generation', noting that the 'flow' is away from cities (in Simonds 1938: 23). According to Olson (1997), Ford associated his rural upbringing, which the McGuffey system exemplified, with hard work, so his suggestion that the country was moving in this direction reinforced his Greenfield Village ideal. Ford's methodology focused on 'education for living', with the reconstructed homesteads and workshops of important industrial figures acting as the backdrop for the educational experience. Like Skansen, Ford's village was also meant to encourage a 'reverent attitude toward life' particularly for students who attended assembly in the Martha-May chapel (Fig. 10) at Greenfield Village in the morning (Simonds 1938: 28). The chapel itself was not relocated, but custom-built from historic brick to become part of the fabric of the site (Rentzhog 2007: 129). Despite Ford's established education program, the village has since moved away from the McGuffey influence, and now includes a public charter high school (Hamp 2006: 48).

Greenfield Village sought to aesthetically symbolize America during 'a simpler time' when people were working hard and leading ethical, moral lives. The focus can be seen in the particular architectural typologies represented



Figure 10: Martha May Chapel, a building created for Greenfield Village at the request of Henry Ford, located in a prominent position on the constructed square. Photo by author, 2015.

there: overwhelmingly, in the 1920s and 1930s, Ford's collection encompasses homes, schools, shops, government institutions (courthouse, etc.), industrial buildings, and religious structures. When Ford could not acquire buildings of a particular typology, he had them constructed, creating what he believed to be an ideal, although ex novo, village largely of his own imagination.

On the other hand, as the village represented an ideal, several architectural typologies are conspicuously absent, while others not contributing to the idealized vision were deemphasized early in the site's history. The 1957 guidebook devotes a small paragraph to two slave huts from the Heritage Plantation near Savannah, Georgia that stand '[i]n the shadow of the [Logan County] Courthouse' (Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village 1957: 19). Limited information is provided about their construction, and they are only described as 'typical in size and furnishings'. The curating of the early village was intended to promote an ethical reflection of industry in life by revising or downplaying particular epochs in American social and industrial history that were dependent on slave labor. Also absent are other typologies specific to less ideal aspects of social life: jails, or correctional institutions. Debtors prisons are directly associated with industrial history, but might have been viewed as not worth collecting as Ford may not have seen them as a reflection of an 'ethical' society.

'I Ain't Gonna Be No Slave': History or Heritage?

Conditions where a tourism complex strives for architectural homogeneity as a stage for living history events can be just as complicated for establishing context as curated collections. Diane Barthel (1990) refers to these as 'Staged Symbolic Communities' (SSCs), in contrast to 'living communities' because they lack permanent residents. SSCs, although fabricated, seem ideal to visitors, as they construct an image of the 'coherent, organic community' that many seek in their own life (Barthel 1990: 80–81). Colonial Williamsburg (Fig. 11) is one of the most popular and visited of these communities. The complex was conceptualized by Reverend Dr. W.A.R. Goodwin, rector of the Williamsburg Brutan Parish Church at the turn of the



Figure 11: Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia streetscape with restored or reconstructed colonial houses. Photo by Humberto Moreno, 2008.

20th century. Goodwin became rector on the condition that he be allowed to restore the church to its original colonial form, with the intent of eventually restoring the surrounding former capital,⁵ which was at the core of his societal value system as a pastor. Although Goodwin initially proposed the project to Henry Ford for financing, Ford was entrenched in Greenfield Village. Instead, J.D. Rockefeller Jr. accepted Goodwin's vision for the public interpretation of pre-industrial society to represent the ideal form of American life and became the financier for the project, while Goodwin persuaded the local population of the benefits of restoration (Greenspan 2002). Like Ford, Goodwin saw Williamsburg as an opportunity for education with the architecture as a backdrop. He was convinced, he said in the early 20th century, that

from an historical point of view this is the greatest teaching opportunity which exists in America... If you have ever walked around Williamsburg... and remembered the things that they did and the things they stood for, and pictured them going into or coming out of the old houses in which they once lived, and remembered the things which they said in the House of Burgesses and at the old College — you would then know what an interesting place Williamsburg is. (in Chorley 1951: 9)

Kenneth Chorley, Restoration vice president and eventually president of Colonial Williamsburg, Inc., believed that Goodwin's goal was to examine the history of Williamsburg through its architecture, while rejecting the modernization of the city, which by then included gas stations, telephone poles, and other conveniences. Williamsburg was also the only original colonial capital in a position to be homogeneously restored. Rockefeller Jr. agreed that restoring only the church would make it a conspicuous object in the modernized surroundings, suggesting that restoring the whole town would 'free [the church] from alien or inharmonious surroundings, as well as to preserve the beauty and charm of the old buildings and gardens of the city and its historic significance' (in Chorley 1951: 9–10). Williamsburg, therefore, became a comprehensive restoration project, requiring the restoration or reconstruction of 150 buildings and the removal of 400 (Campbell 2001). Unlike Greenfield Village, the architecture was not collected, but selected and modified to provide a 'harmonious vision for colonial America' (Barthel 1990: 82).

Goodwin's idea to present a wholesome value system through architectural development met both a powerful ally and opponent in the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA), founded in 1889. By the 1930s, the group controlled many of the surviving historical buildings and had also spurred the municipality to adopt a policy of preservation and restoration of significant structures, in line with Goodwin's intentions. Goodwin and the APVA disagreed, however, in the use of Williamsburg for public interaction and interpretation. Where the APVA sought to preserve ideas of the past through architecture, Goodwin hoped to provide a much more involved educational experience for visitors,

proposing that Williamsburg and projects like it were to provide experiential qualities for reliving the past to promote a better understanding of the future. He wrote, 'Here the value of our free institutions may be measured... [F]or on this soil are the tokens which recall the toil, the tears, the blood, and the birth pangs of our civilization and our liberty' (in Greenspan 2002: 17). In the preface to Goodwin's 1907 publication on the church restoration, A.M. Randolph, Bishop of Southern Virginia, reinforced the patriotic intention, saying that the book was 'designed to convey information and to awaken the patriotic sympathies of our countrymen' (Goodwin 1907: 6). By reexamining collective history through this experience, the American people could re-envision their heritage through a patriotic lens. Goodwin saw the architecture as a way to understand a collective colonial identity, and found a rallying point after the First World War, when patriotism and the understanding of America's political past were entrenched in education, both religious and secular. As Goodwin and Rockefeller felt that the most influential period in Williamsburg history was pre-American Revolution, each building in the town would be restored back to the aesthetic qualities of the 18th century to highlight the early years of the country's founding. Some buildings required a full reconstruction to provide such aesthetic congruency.

The site steadily gained publicity. By 1953 Colonial Williamsburg was a frequent subject in popular magazines, visited by over 6 million visitors. The *Virginia Gazette* (16 January 1953) wrote that the visitors

find here, too, a remade colonial city, portraying the life and mode of living of our earliest ancestors in the exhibition of buildings, so that those great Americans, who... made possible the great democracy which is American today, are brought back to memory and life again in our minds. (in Greenspan 2002: 105)

Despite its public popularity, the reconstruction project faced substantial criticism by preservationists, in part because of the manufactured historical setting. Rockefeller's control over the project meant that his historians and professionals dictated the 'cultural taste that served as the basis for the restored, reimagined city', which many felt was opposed to the wishes of the residents and wholly inauthentic (Handler and Gable 1997: 34). Although Rockefeller's professionals were criticized, the use of archaeological excavation and archival research early in the project was at least able to loosely reconstruct the original town layout, as well as the outline of formal gardens, establishing a conceptual framework for the reconstruction (Bath 1946; Brinkley and Chappell 1996). The popular restoration became an integral part of the early 20th-century house museum development as a commercially viable example and alongside ample Federal and Colonial architectural revivals between 1900 and 1935, which suggested a broad popularity of the patriotic movement (Swank 1990).

Restoring the town to a single period facilitates homogenous living history demonstrations, but is in

contrast to modern preservation practice that acknowledges the continuing lifecycles of buildings and cities. Cities often encompass a chronological and stylistic assortment of buildings; America as an evolving cultural melting pot can be seen in the eclectic architectural styles brought from the home countries of immigrants and combined and modified over time by an early colonial population and their descendants. Restoring all local buildings back to the aesthetic of the 18th century strips the capital of its evolved American legacy, demonstrated in the use and reuse of the buildings since the capital was moved away from Williamsburg. Williamsburg creates an architectural heritage with which to identify, but stops short of being truly historical. Although visitors may identify with these American complexes as citizens, the architecture cannot be experienced in the same way as its first inhabitants did, nor can the complex be understood from that perspective after it has evolved to meet other criteria.

Dichotomies of heritage site perception are not unique to Williamsburg or Greenfield Village. 'Historic' sites can never be experienced with complete context, because modern populations have lived in the modern world, which creates an inherent bias in the perception of place. An example of this is Oprah Winfrey's visit to The Colony, a reconstructed colonial settlement in Machias, Maine modeled after Plimoth Plantation (Fig. 12), which included participants living as colonists in a simulated 17th-century setting. The experiment was taped for the American Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), and premiered in May 2004 as part of the eight-part *Colonial House* series. Although participants were specifically trained as part of the process, modern knowledge and experiences influence human behavior. Modern individuals are not able to participate in an architectural environment in exactly the same way that historical inhabitants would have because modern participants have the benefit of experience with conveniences, such as electronics, that historical inhabitants would not have had. Winfrey viewed the isolation experience beneficial, but was careful to point out that even though



Figure 12: Plimoth Plantation tourism site, Plymouth, Massachusetts. Colonial House was modeled on this site and set in the same time period as the original Plimoth settlement. Photo courtesy of Swampyank, 2009.

she was participating in a colony projected to be in 1628, 'I ain't gonna be no slave'.⁶ In 'historical environments' visitors may experience constructed historical space, but they will never be able to fully experience the architecture as historical inhabitants would have, as a result of their modern understanding of the world. Similarly, while in 1628 many colonists would have not recognized their king, in 2004 they recognized Winfrey, and struggled to remove that bias and treat her as any other participant in the event. This anecdotal evidence is not intended to criticize the exercise of attempting to experience history but instead to illuminate unintentional biases that exist, even when modern patrons are put into a reconstructed historical context.

As Greenfield Village and Colonial Williamsburg demonstrate, many early 20th-century American architectural collections can be seen as practicing a form of revisionist or idealized history, glossing over less savory events or social issues and highlighting specific agendas. The inclusion of slavery interpretation in particular is relatively recent, despite extensive historical research suggesting that the practice was integral to the workings of early settlements. Many public historical sites rely on written charters established by professionals or board members to dictate subjects of interpretation or curatorial focus, meaning that some sites were initially able to ignore slavery by focusing the interpretation on other values which could be exhibited as part of the collections. Jessie Swigger (2014) points out that Greenfield Village's slave huts were initially interpreted by tour guides between 1934 and 1940 as important not because of their social history, but because of their supposed inclusion in the 1915 film *Birth of a Nation*. It was later determined they were not in the film at all (Swigger 2014: 85). Colonial Williamsburg and Monticello, Virginia, both struggled with how to include the life of slaves in their interpretation, as each exposed a significant history of slavery. Recently, both have dedicated tours or demonstrations to this subject through living history performances. Colonial Williamsburg in particular focused on three themes of interpretation in 1977, 'Choosing Revolution', 'Becoming Americans', and 'The New Consumers', which addressed slavery as part of the narrative, a concept that was expanded in the 1985 and 1995 social history charters (Handler and Gable 1997: 115–16).

America or the World in a Day

The preservation and accessibility of architectural heritage sites ensures that future generations will be able to appreciate the built environment of the past and the impact of its present heritage. Architecture is a three-dimensional medium, best experienced in person, and if available, in its authentic cultural, regional, or temporal context, such as restored urban environments or villages. Open-air museums use a 'musealized landscape', where the buildings act as objects within an exterior boundary, much like objects in a constructed museum (Corsane 2005; Knell 2011). A tourism site must appeal in part to popular entertainment culture to survive, providing an experience that visitors are seeking, which is often the replication of 'historical' life.

The authenticity of the context may not matter as much to a modern population, who seeks an entertaining experience as much as an educational one. For collections that provide a variety of cultural or regional architectural artifacts, the draw for many visitors may be the broad cultural experience that can be attained through visiting a single location. As with the sanctuaries in Greece and the folk museums of Scandinavia, visitors can see a wide variety of buildings on a single trip, making these sites popular for one-stop tourists. With many sites turning to increased entertainment to ensure a constant stream of visitors, the 'dumbing down' of history in the interpretation in favor of entertainment has been criticized for creating archaeological or historical 'Disneylands' (Cleere 2005: 14).

These types of projects, however, question just how 'authentic' or 'historical' these architectural collections should be. Most famous among pop-culture tourism destinations are Walt Disney World's Mainstreet USA (Fig. 13) and Epcot World Showcase (Fig. 14), each of which reconstructs architectural heritage for the masses alongside the amusement park. The Orlando, Florida, theme park at Disney World boasts several reconstructed backdrops for a display of world architectural monuments, yet these are not categorized as authentic or historical. Mainstreet USA depicts a 19th-century American facade as a commercial shopping area, and its neighbors, Liberty Square, and Frontierland, each present Disney-fied epochs of American architectural heritage as well. Other Disney World theme parks reconstruct 'world heritage' in a smaller scale, much like the casino strip in Las Vegas, Nevada. Epcot's World Showcase recreates famous world buildings, complete with relocated cast members from each country, and Animal Kingdom park also reconstructs natural world locations, complete with food inspired by these 'exotic' locals. Umberto Eco refers to Disneyland, California (the first Mainstreet USA construction), as a 'toy city', where Mainstreet USA is presented 'as toy houses that invite us to enter them, but their interior is always a supermarket, where you buy obsessively, believing that you are still



Figure 13: Disney World's Main Street USA, Magic Kingdom, featuring a reconstructed 19th-century shop and restaurant fronts in Disney-theme colors. Photo by Joe Shlabotnik, 2006.



Figure 14: China pavilion, Epcot World Showcase, featuring traditional Chinese architecture and a video presentation. Photo by author, 2015.

playing' (1983: 43). M. Christine Boyer refers to them as 'recycled' heritage 'clichés', because they create a narrative the average visitor can understand – a symbol connected to a collective heritage memory that ignites a feeling of nostalgia for these places, despite the fact that they never really existed (1992: 189). The nostalgia connection is strong, as with Greenfield Village and Williamsburg: Although visitors never experienced the places when they were 'original' or 'authentic', the apparent 'simplicity of life' creates a longing for them. Their variety also provides a way to see the world, complete with gentrified cultural immersion, at minimal expense and without leaving the comfort of one's own country – restrooms are available and there is no need to apply for a passport. The reconstructed architectural landscape provides the stripped-down backdrop for a world experience.

Notes

- ¹ At the time McClurg and Crosby were working, the group was referred to as Anasazi, but some descendant groups have requested the name be 'Ancestral Puebloans', as they consider the term Anasazi of negative and imposed origin (Walters & Rogers 2001).
- ² Henry Ford purchased this building and the home of the brothers' parents and dedicated them at Greenfield Village in 1938 (Edison Institute 1938). In the 1960s, the mayor of Dayton attempted to negotiate its return, but the discussion failed and the bicycle shop remains at Greenfield Village (Johnson 2007).
- ³ The Latin term *curator* originally referred to a person who cares for souls, and was later aptly used to refer to the preserver of artifacts or identity. Modern definition recognizes a curator as the creator of meaning in artifacts through the purposeful interpretation and display of information, in contrast to a collector who may organize or preserve it.
- ⁴ William McGuffey's educational method, under which Henry Ford was educated, was popular in 19th-century America, and focused on written 'Readers' in single-room schoolhouses to teach moral values. Ford saw the benefits of the system, which advocated

shame as punishment and emphasized the human conscience to children from a young age (Olson 1997: 14–18). Ford has been criticized by some as an anti-Semite for his strict following of McGuffey education, which often referred to Jews in a derogatory manner (see Baldwin 2003).

⁵ Goodwin identified the church in these terms: ‘a component part of the community life... it stands in an atmosphere created by the past, through which it should be viewed, and by which it is also hallowed and enriched’ (Goodwin 1907: 8). The church was a product of the village and in turn enriched the village, reinforcing the connection between the two entities and the need for a restoration of the entire context.

⁶ The full episode is documented at <https://vimeo.com/2811969>. The quote appears at 4:55 minutes, in a discussion about slavery in 17th-century America.

Competing Interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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How to cite this article: Barry, K M 2017 Buildings as Artifacts: Heritage, Patriotism, and the Constructed Landscape. *Architectural Histories*, 5(1): 3, pp. 1–13, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/ah.189>

Published: 19 January 2017

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