

Until late 2020 I worked on the AHRC *Heritage in War* project, which was jointly based at the Open University and the Stockholm Centre for the Ethics of War and Peace. After this project ended, I faced several months of unemployment as I looked for work as a philosopher. During this time, my research was largely put on hold as I spent most of my time writing job applications.

Very fortunately, however, in spring 2021 I was successful in my application for a Society for Applied Philosophy Short-Term Postdoctoral Scholarship. This award, for the period 1st June to 30th November, came just at the right time, and relieved much of the financial strain of my situation. It also gave me the freedom to pursue some research projects I had been sadly forced to neglect.

First, I was able to complete and publish the paper “Authenticity and Contact Value” in the *Journal of Value Inquiry*. This paper, inspired by some of my research on the *Heritage in War* project, attempts to analyse the value we find in certain sorts of objects, such as antiques and ruins, amongst other things. Prior to the award, a draft of the paper was written but I had received revisions from the *Journal of Value Inquiry* which I had been unable to look at. The award provided me the chance to address these revisions and secure the publication.

Second, I was able to continue my work as co-editor, alongside colleagues from the *Heritage in War* project, on a forthcoming collection of original essays. The volume focuses on ethical questions arising from the phenomenon of heritage destruction in armed conflict, and will be entitled *Heritage in War: Ethical Issues*. Final drafts of the book’s chapters are more or less ready, and a publishing agreement has been signed with Oxford University Press. The finished manuscript is due to be submitted to the publishers early 2022.

Third, I was also able to spend a significant amount of time reworking and revising an original paper for inclusion in the above collection. The paper, now complete, was co-written with William Bülow and is entitled “Cultural Heritage Protection and the Reconciliation Argument”. It critically assesses the extent to which the value of heritage for peacebuilding can be used to support a moral justification or duty to protect it during conflict.

Fourth, I was able to continue working on two of my other ongoing papers. The first, also related to cultural heritage ethics, investigates the potential harm which widespread heritage destruction could inflict on a community’s sense of meaning in life. I spent some time improving this paper, then submitting it to journals. Most recently, at the start of October 2021, it was sent back with some very useful comments. I believe after making these revisions the paper should be very close to publication. The same is true for a second paper I have been working on relating to meaning in life and the metaphysics of time. This was most recently sent back from a journal on the 30th November with similarly useful comments.

Finally, I am also pleased to report that I was, in the end, successful in my job search. As of mid-September 2021, I have started work as an Associate Lecturer in Philosophy at the Open University.

Publications Referenced:

Thomas, J.L. (2021). *Authenticity and Contact Value*. Journal of Value Inquiry. Springer Link.
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Frowe, H., Matravers, D., Thomas, J.L., & Bülow, W., (eds.). (Forthcoming). *Heritage in War: Ethical Issues*. Oxford University Press

Thomas, J.L. and Bülow, W. (Forthcoming). *Cultural Heritage Protection and the Reconciliation Argument*, in *Heritage in War: Ethical Issues*. Oxford University Press