UNESCO, CULTURAL HERITAGE, AND OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

Value-based Analyses of the World Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage Conventions

SOPHIA LABADI
UNESCO, Cultural Heritage, and Outstanding Universal Value
In recent decades, archaeology has expanded beyond a narrow focus on economics and environmental adaptation to address issues of ideology, power, and meaning. These trends, sometimes termed “postprocessual,” deal with both the interpretation of the past and the complex and politically charged interrelationships of past and present. Today, archaeology is responding to and incorporating aspects of the debates on identity, meaning, and politics currently being explored in varying fields: social anthropology, sociology, geography, history, linguistics, and psychology. There is a growing realization that ancient studies and material culture can be aligned within the contemporary construction of identities under the rubrics of nationalism, ethnoscapes, and globalization. This international series will help connect the contemporary practice of archaeology with these trends in research and, in the process, demonstrate the relevance of archaeology to related fields and society in general.

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UNESCO, Cultural Heritage, and Outstanding Universal Value

Value-based Analyses of the World Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage Conventions

Sophia Labadi
A mes parents
To Ken and Elaine
Contents

Acknowledgments ix
Introduction: Dissecting Outstanding Universal Value 1

1 Theoretical Perspectives on Outstanding Universal Value 11
2 Outstanding Universal Value: International History 25
3 National Constructions of the Past 59
4 Cultural Diversity and Inclusion 77
5 Sustainable Tourism and Development: Realistic Outcome or Wishful Thinking? 95
6 Authenticity and Post-Authenticity: Keeping It Real? 113
7 The Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention: Complementing World Heritage? 127

Conclusion: The World Heritage Convention at Forty 147
Appendix: Nomination Dossiers Selected 157
Bibliography 163
Index 185
About the Author 191
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Introduction

Dissecting Outstanding Universal Value

The 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (henceforth the World Heritage Convention) is unquestionably one of the most prominent and recognized legal instruments in the protection of natural and cultural heritage sites worldwide. In the process, the World Heritage List it established has become one of UNESCO’s most popular and celebrated programs. Indeed, as of July 2012, a total of 962 properties (745 cultural, 188 natural and 29 mixed sites) located in 157 States Parties have obtained this coveted status on the basis of what is deemed to be their “outstanding universal value.”

Despite its renown, however, the World Heritage Convention and its subsequent application present many unanswered questions. I first became aware of these gaps and grey areas in the discourses and policies surrounding World Heritage sites when I found myself asking the same questions over and over during my own work in this field.

Over the past ten years that I have been involved in UNESCO’s programs, I have listened again and again to its successive director-generals insist on the importance of the Convention not only as a tool for heritage conservation, but also as an instrument for pursuing noble goals like peace, postnationalism, social cohesion, cultural diversity and sustainable development. For instance, just such an understanding of the Convention was highlighted by Irina Bokova (the current director general of UNESCO), who emphasized in her opening speech of the thirty-fifth session of the World Heritage Committee in 2011:
Introduction

Heritage is a building block for sustainable development, a vector for social cohesion and reconciliation, and a catalyst for regional cooperation. In a world of change, world heritage is a reminder of all that unites humanity. It is a reminder also of the ties between culture, nature and societies. (UNESCO 20 June 2011)

Listening to lofty speeches such as this one, I consistently find myself wondering exactly how States Parties have understood “outstanding universal value,” the central notion of the Convention that nonetheless seems to leave ample room for a multiplicity of interpretations. Above all, I ask, have States Parties truly associated outstanding universal value with collective and postnational histories, cultural diversity and sustainable development? If not, what principles have States Parties tied to notions of outstanding universal value in their place? How do their articulations of outstanding universal value inform their obligations to protect heritage sites for future generations? Can dissonances be detected between these official, high-level UNESCO discourses on World Heritage and their subsequent national implementation? Most crucially, have States Parties considered the past in nomination dossiers as something dead and unconnected to the present, or have these histories been embraced as key aids to solving pressing societal concerns?

In an effort to offer a response to these questions, this book focuses on three major themes that structure it as a coherent whole.

1. In-depth analyses of the evolution of official understandings of outstanding universal value (as produced by the World Heritage Committee) and the association of outstanding universal value with wider issues such as the construction of the nation, cultural diversity and sustainable development.

2. Analyses of States Parties’ understandings and interpretations of these official texts in nomination dossiers of sites for inclusion on the World Heritage List with an eye to how these documents have shaped their presentation of the nation, cultural diversity, sustainability and authenticity.

3. Postcolonial consideration of these dossiers through an identification of those which represent an ambivalent and hybrid space, one that maintains but also transgresses dominant European concepts of heritage.

Since the turn of the millennium, the World Heritage Committee has indeed officially recognized the need to pursue this kind of in-depth reflection on the history and impact of its documents and programs. The result of this recognition has been a number of meetings and publications that explicitly address these questions, especially with regard to the concept of out-
standing universal value. However, the products of these discussions—for instance, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) compendium titled “The World Heritage List: What Is OUV?”—does not truly explain how States Parties themselves have understood outstanding universal value, or indeed whether and how they have related it to broader topics such as social cohesion, cultural diversity and sustainable development (ICOMOS 2008).

These shortcomings certainly justify further research on the subject, particularly in tracing the articulation of outstanding universal value, clarifying its varying uses in different contexts and offering some thoughts about potential future directions. This present volume—working in the same vein as official World Heritage Committee studies but pushing these discussions further than before—seeks to do just that. In doing so, it contributes to wider reflections on value-led heritage conservation and management as a field, working from the premise that the identification of values is a fundamental step in the long-term conservation and management of sites (Sullivan 1997; Mason 2003; de la Torre 2001). Specifically, this volume identifies both the central and marginalized values implied within nomination dossiers (considered to be statements of significance that detail the reasons for which sites should be preserved for future generations) and provides some explanations for these patterns.

From an academic point of view, this research is nourished by studies on the notion of outstanding universal value conducted from the standpoint of the World Heritage Committee (see, in particular, Titchen 1995; Titchen 1996, 235–42; Cleere 1996, 227–33). It also situates itself within recent critical analyses of the use of the Convention for the construction of the nation (see, for instance, Labadi 2007; Askew 2010; or Hevia 2001, 219–43), of dissonances between international discourses on (world) heritage as fostering peace and their national implementation (see Beazley 2010; Van Krieken-Pieters 2010; or Layton, Stone and Thomas 2001) and of the exclusionary nature of heritage (see Langfield et al. 2010; Labadi 2007; Merriman 2000). Moreover, it embraces the growing literature on heritage as sustainable tourism and development (see, in particular, Boccardi 2007; Lafrenz Samuels 2010; Winter 2010), as well as the considerable resources on heritage and authenticity, with particular reference to Larsen (1995), Stovel (2008) and Jones (2009).

While the research presented here certainly draws inspiration and support from such existing publications, it represents a departure from prior studies in its comprehensive considerations of the complex relationships between the global institution of the World Heritage Committee and national/local institutions represented by States Parties, especially in terms of their respective use of heritage for building national identities, enhancing cultural diversity and promoting sustainable tourism, development and authenticity. Thus, this
research extends its scope beyond what has been published previously through engaging simultaneously with a diversity of discourses across the humanities and social sciences, as well as with related issues pertaining not only to heritage conservation but also to political sciences, social theories, tourism and development studies, economics, cultural studies and feminism or gender studies.

Moreover, borrowing from valuation and postcolonial theories and implementing the concept of reiterative universalism, this book goes into uncharted territories by analyzing whether a broad universalist framework can be indeed understood in a diversity of ways by States Parties themselves. In doing so, it departs from simplistic considerations of the Convention as Eurocentric, providing instead a complex analysis of official narratives relating to non-European and nontraditional heritage as subversions of dominant, canonical European norms.

DATA AND METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

Data collection for this volume has been based, first of all, on an intensive study of UNESCO’s archival documents, which provided detailed information on the evolution of the implementation of the World Heritage Convention from the standpoint of the Committee.

This book has also benefited from discussions with UNESCO, ICOMOS and International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) colleagues, past and present, as well as observations and active involvement in the work of the secretariat of the World Heritage Convention and of the Intangible Heritage Convention and active participation in major UNESCO publications (primarily the “World Report on Cultural Diversity” and the International Social Science Journal) over the past ten years. Also, as a Getty Conservation Guest Scholar in 2006–2007 and a fellow at Stanford University in 2010–2011, I was able to take a step back and to analyze the World Heritage and Intangible Heritage programs in a more academic, critical and distanced manner. This positioning, I would argue, has provided me with a privileged viewpoint, locating my analyses on a third way that is uniquely both inside and outside UNESCO and the academic world, and from which I have been both an observer of and a professional embedded within the organization’s programs. It is hoped that this privileged positioning has enriched the reflections presented in this volume.

More precisely, the actual data for this publication focuses on nomination dossiers, considered to be States Parties’ official understanding of the World Heritage framework. They have been selected because they “should provide all the information to demonstrate that the property is truly of ‘outstanding universal value’” (UNESCO February 1997, Paragraph 10). By the Commit-
Introduction

teetee itself, they are considered the best documents to explain States Parties’ understanding of outstanding universal value, as they compel these countries to clarify in explicit terms the values and attributes that make their nominated properties so special. I consider these as statement of significance that serve as the basis for later decisions concerning the conservation and management of sites.

To consider the questions and themes put forth above, purposefully sampled nomination dossiers of sites for inclusion on the World Heritage List were selected.

The logic and power of non-probability sampling lies in choosing information-rich cases for in-depth study and enabling multiple comparisons that can allow patterns to be identified easily. Two primary sampling strategies were used in selecting the nomination dossiers for analysis: typical case sampling, on the one hand, and extreme case sampling, on the other. The rationale behind this sampling strategy is that, beyond a mere reduction of the variables, comparing extreme and more typical cases can better highlight patterns, evolution and differences. In this instance, religious heritage was chosen as a typical case. “Religious” here has been understood broadly as encompassing those qualities human beings consider “holy, sacred, spiritual or divine” (New Encyclopedia Britannica 1995, 1016), regardless of whether a specific god is being worshipped. Thus, “religious heritage,” in this research, refers to a wide variety of cultural properties including cathedrals, mosques, early Christian monuments, sacred archaeological sites, grottoes, temples, pilgrimage routes and cemeteries. Religious sites can be considered as being at the historic core of the definition of heritage since, in a number of countries, they were the first structures and places to be considered and labeled as heritage. This can partly explain the fact that this category is, according to single- and multi-category analyses of the World Heritage List, one of the most represented groups on the World Heritage List (ICOMOS 2004). In addition to being a typical case, this category raises a number of interesting issues apropos to the themes explored in subsequent chapters. For instance, while religious sites were used by former colonial powers as instruments of expansion and domination, it is important to ask whether they have been transformed, in postcolonial times, into sites of contestation against European hegemony and hitherto dominant narratives. In addition, the popularity of some religious sites as places of pilgrimage raises several problems for their sustainable development, conservation and management.

Industrial heritage was selected as an extreme case in this study, as it is a nontraditional category of cultural heritage numerically and thematically underrepresented on the World Heritage List (ICOMOS 2004). Industrial heritage is a recent branch of cultural heritage. It is only in the past forty years that coordinated movements and policies for documenting, recording and listing that type of heritage have been developed, mainly in Europe
(Labadi 2001, 77). (Other nontraditional categories of cultural heritage—modern heritage, for example—were not considered for this research because they are so few in number that they would not have provided a large enough sample.) It was expected that the nomination dossiers of industrial heritage sites would present diverging values to religious sites by focusing on humble and negative versions of history, as well as the working classes who tend to be marginalized from official discourses. In addition, the conservation and authenticity of industrial structures, heavily transformed over time and often considered as temporary buildings or even eyesores, pose many original challenges that may require new methods and definitions.

The first step in the identification of the sample was to select the industrial heritage sites to be analyzed because it was the smallest group. The second step was to select the religious properties. To reduce the variables, it was decided that, whenever possible, religious properties analyzed would be selected from States Parties that also possessed examples of industrial sites. Because of the numerical importance of European religious properties in comparison to those in the rest of the world, I also chose to further sample the traditional heritage sites according to their geographical region. Such an extended sampling of religious heritage has facilitated the postcolonial study of the resulting data. Hence, in total, three categories of cultural heritage on the World Heritage List, amounting to 114 nomination dossiers, have been considered (see appendix for the list of the properties considered). The first group corresponds to the most typical sites: European religious sites, also referred to in the text as the “European religious group.” This category is composed of forty-six dossiers of sites located in twelve countries. The second group corresponds to typical sites found outside this regional scope—that is, non-European religious sites, also referred to as the “non-European religious group.” This category is composed of thirty dossiers located in five countries. The final group contains underrepresented sites: industrial heritage properties, referred to as the “industrial heritage group.” This collection includes thirty-eight dossiers located in nineteen countries.

Each sentence of each nomination dossier selected was coded using ATLAS/ti, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). Using ATLAS/ti facilitated the coding of texts more systematically and thoroughly than doing so manually (Fielding 1994), helped to manage the data and assisted in the mundane task of ordering this material (Kelle 1997, 15). I am not aware that CAQDAS has ever been used in a published academic project in the field of archaeology (understood in its widest sense as encompassing cultural resource management, cultural heritage and material studies). The coding of the dossiers was based on a system of values and sub-values that reflected the themes of the different chapters of this volume, as well as the content of nomination dossiers (see table). In addition, references to “authenticity,” “conservation,” “restoration” and “reconstruction” in
nomination dossiers were also recorded. The results of the coding of nomination dossiers were then analyzed and interpreted in light of the international discourse on outstanding universal value and the criteria defined by the Committee, as well as of previous academic publications and the theoretical framework of my own research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social value</th>
<th>Architectural and aesthetic value</th>
<th>Economic value</th>
<th>Informational value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference to the lower classes/women</td>
<td>Architectural and aesthetic value of religious buildings, works of art, remains</td>
<td>Touristic venue/visitor numbers</td>
<td>Research value/documentation on the property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to the lower classes/men</td>
<td>Architectural and aesthetic value of secular buildings, works of art, remains</td>
<td>Visitor facilities and activities</td>
<td>History and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to the lower classes/collective citation</td>
<td>Layout of the town/settlement</td>
<td>Development project/regeneration</td>
<td>Importance and influence of the property in the region/country/world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to the middle and upper classes/women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Influence from other countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to the middle and upper classes/men</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Comparison with other sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to the middle and upper classes/collective citation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Relation between cultural and natural elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local population</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Political value</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious value</td>
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Value System Developed

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

Chapter 1 clarifies the theoretical framework that structures and guides the analyses of the data and the conclusions drawn from it. It discusses the notion of values, arguing that they are necessarily extrinsic and relative and that they change with time, individuals, frames of mind and geographical locations. It adopts “reiterative universalism” as a structuring concept that guides the book’s subsequent interpretations of the selected data. This concept recognizes the possibility for common understandings of the World Heritage Convention framework, while also leaving room for the interpretation and translation of this framework into different cultures and divergent frames of reference. This chapter finishes by introducing the notion of the nomination dossier as a contact zone, another structuring theme that enables one to recognize that narratives on outstanding universal value can be copied by States Parties or, on the contrary, rejected and transgressed.
Chapter 2 details the birth and historical evolution of the concept of outstanding universal value from the international standpoint of UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee. It is based, as stressed above, on intensive archival work and analyses of documents of statutory meetings. This chapter demonstrates that the evolution of this core World Heritage concept is not linear, but rather complex and circular, having been at varying points the result of contradictory recommendations and decisions. Taken as a whole, chapter 2 outlines the official discourse on heritage against which subsequent analyses of States Parties’ nomination dossiers are positioned.

Chapters 3–6 examine how these variegated international evolutions of the notion of outstanding universal value have been understood, interpreted, represented and used by States Parties in selected nomination dossiers for the inscription of sites on the World Heritage List. These four chapters interpret the results of the value-based analyses of the sampled nomination dossiers. They highlight, as much as possible, the dominant, marginal and subverting narratives that run through these documents, using the ideas of reiterative universalism and the contact zone as structuring and interpretative concepts.

Moreover, these chapters are organized thematically to reflect the three sets of core questions this book seeks to address. Specifically, chapter 3 analyzes how the selected States Parties have used outstanding universal value in the construction and representation of the past and the nation. This is the first thematic chapter since one of the central functions of heritage is to assist in the construction of the nation. Chapter 4 investigates how cultural diversity has been constructed through the justification of the outstanding universal value of nominated sites and how different groups have been represented in dossiers. Cultural diversity is the subject of a whole chapter because of the prominent place it occupies within UNESCO discourses, as also highlighted in the first pages of this introduction.

Chapter 5 examines how outstanding universal value relates to, and is affected by, sustainable tourism and development. Tourism is a key phenomenon at World Heritage sites, and the way in which it is handled can be a major factor in the success or failure of the preservation of a site’s outstanding universal value. Finally, chapter 6 analyzes how different definitions of authenticity relate to and impact upon the outstanding universal value of nominated properties. Authenticity is the focus of an entire chapter since it is one of the key criteria used in justifying the inscription of sites on the World Heritage List.

Chapter 7 widens the scope of this book by analyzing whether and how the 2003 UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention can provide an alternative model and framework to reply to some of the salient issues of the World Heritage Convention, including its lack of inclusion of local communities or its monumentalist and elitist bias. Indeed, within UNESCO, the
2003 Convention has been presented as providing just such a remedy to these concerns.

Lastly, the conclusion draws together the three major themes of this book and provides an in-depth reflection on the past thirty-nine years of implementation of the World Heritage Convention. These reflections are then used to make a number of suggestions for the future implementation of this international legal instrument, in line with current official reflections on the future of the Convention.
“Outstanding universal value,” the key concept of the World Heritage Convention—and the focus of this book—raises many theoretical questions. Do universal values (and reliable systems by which to identifying these values in actual sites) exist? Why does the idea that values are intrinsic to properties occupy such a central position in heritage discourses? Is a professed belief in the existence of universal values necessarily Eurocentric and exclusionary of non-Western viewpoints? Can relativist perceptions of values be justified? Ultimately, can the ongoing debate between universal and relative values ever be transcended?

This chapter aims to shed light on these questions and to clarify the theoretical stances that will be adopted in the rest of the book. In so doing, it also highlights some of the unresolved theoretical tensions under consideration in this volume and suggests original responses to these various points of contention.

THE PERSISTENCE OF INTRINSIC VALUES

Outstanding universal value is at the heart of the World Heritage Convention. As a guiding tenant of UNESCO’s attitude toward heritage, it posits that some sites are so exceptional that they can be equally valued by all people around the world and, therefore, must be protected for mankind as a whole. Following this logic, human beings—regardless of their differences in socio-economic status, geographic origin or cultural frame of reference—should share the same values concerning specific, extraordinary places and appreciate them in an identical manner. These special sites are thus assumed to
possess objective intrinsic values that do not change over time and can be disconnected from various peoples’ interests in the present (Laenen 2008, 101; Lafrenz Samuels 2008, 72). Key UNESCO documents, such as the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, repeatedly describe outstanding universal value using the adjectives “intrinsic” and “objective.” Paragraph 116 of the 2005 version of these guidelines refers, for instance, to the “intrinsic qualities” of nominated properties. The Great Pyramids of Giza in Egypt, for instance, could be considered to possess intrinsic value because they seem to have been appreciated in both ancient and modern times, through to today. Indeed, they were part of the original Seven Wonders of the World selected by Philon of Byzantium in 200 B.C. and, two millennia later in 1979, were one of the first sites included on the World Heritage List.

This association of art and heritage with the notion of intrinsic value can be traced back to key European philosophical texts. Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* (1790), for instance, begins with an account of beauty. He argues that aesthetic judgments are disinterested because individuals take pleasure in what they find beautiful rather than judge objects beautiful because they find them pleasurable. Moreover, these disinterested judgments are cast as universal: they are products of the human mind, correspond to a shared notion of “common sense” and form a consensus among individuals concerning the artistic value of certain art pieces. Since the Enlightenment, and particularly the *Critique of Judgment*, it has been widely held that the “experience of art, and the values that derive from that experience, are available to all people equally and individually, in, say, the ‘public’ museum, and, further, that good taste is innate (a sort of secular state of grace)” (Koerner and Rausing 2003, 421). More recently, theorists such as Bourdieu (1984) have deconstructed such an approach and demonstrated that aesthetic appreciation is a learned disposition acquired through academic and personal/familial channels; it is not a predisposition. Individuals therefore have varying appreciations and experiences of both art and heritage according to their academic, personal and socioeconomic background.

A number of factors can help explain the persistence of this belief in the intrinsic value of art and heritage, as well as its central position in heritage discourses. For B. H. Smith, these “intrinsic” values concern, first and foremost, canonical works and sites such as the Pyramids in Egypt or Roman and Greek buildings, which have been “repeatedly cited and recited, translated, taught and imitated” (1988, 53) for centuries in diverse contexts. In other words, these are sites that “everybody knows about,” as stressed by Jokilehto (2006, 6). These sites are not obviously the subject of heated public contestation and therefore seem to have acquired objective and intrinsic values universally agreed upon by all.
Normative activities carried out by various institutions help to maintain these canons of art and architecture. The World Heritage Convention and List frequently perform this same function. Indeed, members of the World Heritage Committee and World Heritage experts often make reference to iconic works in an effort to clarify the notion of outstanding universal value (UNESCO, 15 June 2005; Francioni 2008, 19; Cleere 2011). As further explained in chapter 2, Christina Cameron stressed in her keynote speech at the 2005 expert meeting on the concept of outstanding universal value (UNESCO, 15 June 2005) that, in the initial years of the Convention’s implementation, these famous sites were some of the first to be inscribed on the list. Such iconic structures and places (considered by Cameron as “best of the best”) are believed to possess an intrinsic and unquestionable outstanding universal value because they have constantly been referenced and lauded over the centuries, particularly within the occidental world, which has often dominated the official history of arts and ideas.

This persistence of the notion of intrinsic value might also be due to “the fear of proliferation of meaning” concerning heritage significance (Byrne, Brayshaw and Ireland 2001, 59). Indeed, objective values are typically defined as the immutable characteristics related to the fabric or history of a particular property. They tend to be identified and ascribed to properties by designated “experts.” If values are not intrinsic to cultural heritage but rather are produced through a process undertaken and influenced by diverse individuals, then the heritage professional’s point of view must make room for the interests and beliefs of other, equally invested stakeholders. Within this context, the expert viewpoint loses its specificity and supremacy, ultimately becoming of equal value to the opinions of laymen. Conversely, if values are considered to be intrinsic, then the significance of sites derives from that which professionals identify as being of importance. Intrinsic value is then used to regulate and limit the proliferation of meaning by granting to “experts” the authority to identify the “true” significance of properties. This official, often unambiguous understanding, interpretation and representation of heritage, termed by L. Smith the “authorised heritage discourse” (2006, 29–34), contributes to disengaging local populations that are considered to be ignorant of their own heritage’s significance and in need of enlightenment on this matter from outsiders (Chirikure and Pwiti 2008, 474). As further analyzed in chapter 3, such authorized heritage discourse frequently serves to reinforce national narratives and national identities (De Cesari 2010, 309; L. Smith 2006; Meskell 2002b, 282; Di Giovine 2009, 77).

Western approaches to understanding and conserving heritage sites, central to the formal discipline of heritage preservation, can further explain the current prevalence of the belief that intrinsic values reside in these places. These dominant approaches have led such heritage sites to become isolated from their wider social environment, as well as from the shifting and con-
Chapter 1

Flicting values different individuals might ascribe to them. Often, sites are valued solely for their original architecture and the intentions of the creator and/or builder. This can lead to “stereotyped” (Francioni and Lenzerini 2008, 407) representations of the meaning and importance of sites, as will be further clarified in following chapters. This overreliance on Western conceptions of heritage also leads to the significance of these sites being considered as separated from present-day concerns and values (Meskell 2010, 192; L. Smith 2006, 29; Matero 2004, 69). Such valuation of heritage can be traced back to key texts in Western conservation theory, such as those of Ruskin, who is of the belief that sites belong “partly to those who built them. . . . The dead have still their right in them: that which they laboured for, the praise of achievement or the expression of religious feeling, or whatsoever else it might be which in those buildings they intended to be permanent, we have no right to obliterate” (1928, 201). Ruskin therefore insists on the importance of the original intentions of the architect and material features of structures, asserting that these should be respected by present generations, who are not owners but only stewards of the past’s remains. As also expressed by Ruskin, a moral imperative compels the conservation of these monuments in their original form and function without any alteration, in order to ensure that they can be handed down in their “inherent” condition to subsequent generations. This idea is repeated in Article 4 of the World Heritage Convention, which stresses that States Parties are responsible for ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission of cultural heritage to future generations (UNESCO 1972). This insistence on our current society’s obligation to care for natural and cultural resources in a sustainable fashion and with the purpose of passing these on to our descendants is a basic principle of intergenerational equity and ethics.

This valuation of heritage primarily for its original meaning, condition, form and use also plays a critical role in traditional definitions of authenticity (see also chapters 2 and 6 for in-depth discussions of the concept of authenticity vis-à-vis the framework of the Convention). In the context of heritage management, this term is typically understood as the need to preserve sites in their initial, historical state. According to this definition, the closer a site is to its original form, design, workmanship and material, the more authentic it will be. Importantly, key international documents for the conservation of cultural heritage, such as the Venice Charter (particularly its Article 11), do insist on retaining later developments and changes, which together constitute the historical stratification of a given site. However, these more recent transformations are frequently undermined and discounted, being seen as less important than the original building and its primary form and use. This is a distinctly Western interpretation of the significance of sites. Indeed, as was discussed during the Nara Conference and Document on Authenticity (see chapters 2 and 6), non-Western frameworks do not strictly confine authentic-
ity to the original form, design, material and workmanship of cultural heritage sites.

THE RELATIVISM OF VALUES

The World Heritage Convention, and, in particular, its universalist and objective dimensions, has been increasingly criticized in the past few decades by those who consider it representative of a Eurocentric system imposed upon non-Western cultures (Meskell 2002a; Hodder 2009, 192; De Cesari 2010, 306–7; Byrne 1991, 274; Cleere 2000, 101). This is further detailed in the following chapter, which presents a genealogy of the concept of outstanding universal value based on the official texts and discussions of the World Heritage Committee and its secretariat. This chapter demonstrates that the key criteria for the evaluation of the outstanding universal value of sites, such as authenticity, were indeed defined from a European view in the first thirty years of the Convention’s implementation. This might partially explain the quantitative overrepresentation of sites from the Europe region included in the World Heritage List (see also Labadi 2005, 89–99; Cleere 1996, 229).

As a recent move away from this objectivist and Eurocentric approach, values have increasingly been recognized as “contingent, being neither a fixed attribute, an inherent quality, or an objective property of things but, rather, an effect of multitude, continuously changing, and continuously interacting variables, or, to put it another way, the product of the dynamics of a system” (B. H. Smith 1988, 30). Because values are in our minds and not inherent to objects, site valuation is fundamentally an extrinsic process. It thus considers the association of qualities and attributes (positive or negative) given to sites by diverse individuals and communities (Laenen 2008, 104–5; Jokilehto 2006, 2). Additionally, values in this relativist perspective are not static; they evolve over time according to the different groups of people who hold them, their frame of mind, their culture and their geographical location. The history of the Eiffel Tower is but one example. It is nowadays the symbol of France, one of its most visited monuments and part of the World Heritage List since 1991. However, during its construction at the end of the nineteenth century, this monument faced strong opposition, and vehement articles and letters of protestation were published against it by some of the most famous artists of the time, including Guy de Maupassant and Charles Gounod. Valuation can therefore be understood as an essentially relative exercise.

At a specific moment in time, varying individuals or communities can also associate different values with a specific site that as a result concentrates webs of meaning (Lafranz Samuels 2008, 83; Benhabib 2002; Laenen 2008, 105; Silberman 2012; Meskell 2010; Di Giovine 2009, 77). These values
held by specific groups of society are never all encompassing and, as such, always exclude other versions of the past or statements of significance. Barbara Bender aimed to chart these changing, and sometimes conflicting, values that different groups and individuals affixed to Stonehenge (a World Heritage site since 1986) in her traveling exhibition “Stonehenge Belongs to You and Me” (1998, 10). These different groups included archaeologists, free festivalers, druids, locals and landowners (ibid., 158–62). This exhibition revealed tensions in the values associated with this archaeological site and its utilization by different stakeholders. The official and academic values and uses of Stonehenge as a site for research through archaeological excavation and carbon dating stand in stark opposition to the values and uses of this site by the druids or free festivalers who believe that there exist “psychic forces at Stonehenge—energy fields, leylines—or that it is a temple for the worship of the sun and the moon, for the renewal of seasons” (ibid., 128). This example demonstrates that a particular heritage property can simultaneously encompass a plurality of layers of significance (see also Clark 2010, 92; Mason 2003, Winter 2007; Winter 2010; Darvill 2007, 436–57). Underlined in this case study is also the difficulty of arriving at a single holistic and consolidated statement of significance that would take account of the multifarious values that different people associate with a single site. Some theorists are even of the opinion that it is virtually impossible to have an all-encompassing statement of significance for a site because of the diversity of values that can be ascribed to it (Tainter and Lucas 1983, 715; T. Williams 2010, 197–208; Poulilos 2010, 173).

However, not all value systems, understandings and representations of heritage are credited with the same degree of truth or credibility. Some members of societies and institutions are publicly considered as having more power and legitimacy in producing truth and knowledge on a particular subject than others. “[Truth] is produced and transmitted under the control, dominant if not exclusive, of a few great political and economic apparatuses (university, army, writing, media)” (Foucault 1986, 73). Foucault has argued that knowledge and truth produced by human sciences are also tied to power because of the way in which they are used to regulate and normalize individuals (ibid., 74). To benefit from a certain degree of truth and credibility, one also has to have a certain degree of official knowledge and formal training, such as being an academic or being recognized as an expert by prestigious organizations (Hodder 1998, 137; Bakker 2011; Holtorf 2005). Truth might also be invented to help a specific sector of society retain its political and economic power (Seif 2009, 283–85; Chirikure and Pwiti 2008, 473–74; Di Giovine 2009, 83). The interpretation of Great Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe, over the past two hundred years clearly illustrates this viewpoint. In the nineteenth century, white British settlers provided a specific interpretation of Great Zimbabwe (figure 1.1). For them, Great Zimbabwe could only have been
built “in a distant past by a race, preferably white, superior to the country’s indigenous population” (Pwiti 1994, 339). The recognition by British settlers that this archaeological site had been built by the indigenous population was impossible as this would have contradicted the foundation of their colonial rule and their claims that Africa had a “long history of barbarity and backwardness” (ibid., 338–39). Black nationalists subsequently used Great Zimbabwe and the recognition of its local origin as a potent symbol in their quest for independence.

This example of Zimbabwe also demonstrates the difficulty in understanding the past as a linear evolution of events. As stressed by Foucault (1972), any studied period of history has “several pasts, several forms of connection, several hierarchies of importance, several networks of determination, several teleologies” (5). For this reason, it is impossible to consider history as linear, progressive and as presenting one truth. It is also difficult to arrive at one single version of history and set of values to associate with the remains of the past. The Ayodhya case illustrates the fact that a simplistic evolution of history does not exist, but rather is replaced with several competing pasts (see Layton and Thomas 2001, 2–3; Lal 2001, 117–26; Sharma 2001, 127–38). Babri-Masjid, a 450-year-old mosque located in Ayodhya, India, was destroyed in December 1992 by Hindu fundamentalists. Since the

Figure 1.1. The Great Enclosure, part of Great Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe), a monument with many pasts. (Photo courtesy of Jan Derk)
nineteenth century it had become an object of dispute and conflict between Hindus and Muslims. Hindus believed that the mosque was built on a former Hindu temple originally erected over the site of the Hindu deity Rama’s birthplace. In this case, it is obvious that different versions of the past are competing against each other, some supporting the possibility that a temple preceded the Babri-Masjid, others opposing it. Hence the difficulty in defining one single history, and thus in identifying all the values for which a site should be conserved and one single statement of significance established.

TRANSCENDING THE DEBATE BETWEEN INTRINSIC AND RELATIVIST VALUES

The previous section is not without any underlying conceptual tensions. If it is recognized that there exists no basic universal value, that any value can be associated with a site and be part of its statement of significance, then, by extension, any way of caring for the past should be accepted, including its neglect and willful destruction. However, the widespread condemnations of recent destructions of cultural heritage properties such as Mostar Bridge, the Muslim heritage of Bosnia during the war in Yugoslavia or the Buddhas of Bamiyan in Afghanistan might denote a consensus toward basic common ethical values, including the widespread disapproval of the use of the past and heritage to erase cultural diversity and promote one ethnic, religious or political agenda (Meskell 2002a, 561; Meskell 2002b, 293; O’Keefe 2004, 197–98). The UNESCO Declaration concerning the Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage adopted in October 2003 as a reaction to the destruction of the Buddhas of Bamiyan reflects this common desire for the diversity of heritage to be safeguarded and provides a number of universal statements and basic steps that should be taken for its protection (UNESCO 2003a). Within the realm of movable heritage, the central place occupied by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) Code of Ethics for Museums also demonstrates the need for commonly held ethical tenants for museum professionals. This document sets minimum standards of professional practice and performance for museums and their staff. Each member of ICOM abides by this code of ethics. These basic ethical stances might not necessarily be neutral; they might reflect the agenda of dominant political and military nations (see Meskell 2002a) but nonetheless represent basic stances shared by diverse groups and individuals. Besides, they certainly help to promote the adoption of individual and collective ethical stances on heritage (Meskell and Pels 2005, 5; Marks 2005, 44).

The concept of reiterative universalism, adapted from Benhabib’s “democratic iteration” (2006, 47–67) and originally developed by Walzer (1989), makes space for taking into account universal as well as more relative values.
Human beings can, first of all, relate to and use common principles and theories in their implementation of universalist frameworks, even though these may not have originated from their own culture. Let us illustrate this point within the World Heritage Convention framework. As touched upon earlier on and further developed in the next chapter, the concept of outstanding universal value has been primarily understood and interpreted by the committee according to European conservation and management theories. Those implementing the Convention at national levels can surely, in their majority, be considered versed in these theories and therefore as sharing a common understanding of outstanding universal value and of the framework of the Convention. These common understandings are acquired through education, experience and shared expertise (Sutch 2009, 520). The standpoint that the Convention cannot be understood or interpreted by non-European individuals and societies can lead to the essentializing of these cultures, considered as separate entities incapable of entering into dialogues with one another. However, cultures have, more often than not, defined themselves in relation, and often in opposition, to others. In doing so, the agents constructing such culture often need to understand European frames of reference to be able to refer to Western values or, on the contrary, to differ from them.

Second, reiterative universalism recognizes that any concept needs to be interpreted and translated into one’s own culture and frame of reference to make sense (Benhabib 2002, 384; Benhabib 2006). This leads to a variety of possible understandings, interpretations, representations of and responses to a universal framework that can be considered to fit into the individual’s own worldview. Meaning is indeed never fixed; it can change and be adapted to different situations. “The word does not exist in a neutral or impersonal language . . . rather it exists in other people’s mouths, serving other people’s intentions; it is from these that one must take the word and make it one’s own” (Bakhtin 1981 [1935], 293–94 quoted in Hall 1997, 235). In other words, any existing concept with attached universal meaning can be subverted and transcoded—that is, appropriated for new meaning (Hodder 2009, 184; Benhabib 2002; Hall 1997, 270; Meskell 2002b, 293). Under these conditions, it cannot be assumed that the universalist framework of the World Heritage Convention is going to be understood identically by all those responsible for implementing it. On the contrary, we should pay attention to unraveling the different ways in which this framework has been understood and interpreted over the years within specific cultural contexts. In the process of reusing a concept or framework, the original meaning is indeed never reproduced identically. In the words of Benhabib, “every iteration transforms meaning, adds to it, enriches it in ever-so-subtle ways” (2006, 47). This notion of reiterative universalism thus makes it possible to reassess the World Heritage system and its implementation by analyzing how it has been understood, reinterpreted and associated with new meanings.
One of the aims of this book is to undertake such an assessment through analyzing States Parties’ official understanding and representation of outstanding universal value as detailed in their nomination dossiers of sites for inclusion on the list. This research focuses on analysis of such official documents because they are the backbone of the World Heritage system. Nomination dossiers “should provide all the information to demonstrate that the property is truly of ‘outstanding universal value’” (UNESCO February 1997, Paragraph 10). They therefore should present detailed explanations of the values that are considered to make the sites in question both outstanding and universal. The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) bases its evaluation and the World Heritage Committee its decision to include a site on the World Heritage List on these dossiers. Furthermore, the values identified in these documents should form the basis of long-term conservation and management of World Heritage sites. These documents, understood as the “voice” of States Parties, might display a diversity of interpretations of outstanding universal value. While the framework of the Convention can be understood to an extent as being Eurocentric, it is the responsibility of each State Party to submit nomination dossiers of sites located within its boundaries for inclusion on the World Heritage List. The production of knowledge and an official discourse (understood as the social, economic and political systems of representation concerning a specific subject) on nominated sites is the responsibility of the States Parties where they are located. The World Heritage Convention is thus not a neo-Orientalist or neo-colonialist system with which Europeans would construct other non-European regions “politically, sociologically, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively” (Said 1978, 3). This is a misrepresentation and simplification of the World Heritage system. Indeed, this system is above all the result of the visions and agendas of the States Parties, and not of a monolithic or overbearing international structure (Askew 2010, 22; Di Giovine 2009, 90; Labadi 2007). This thus highlights the importance of using the notion of reiterative universalism to analyze States Parties’ understanding of the World Heritage Convention.

However, the dominant position of Europe as the referent within the World Heritage framework and the asymmetrical relations of power in international relations between this region and the rest of the world are beyond a doubt important points to take into account. For this reason, in addition to reiterative universalism, the concept of the “contact zone” can be useful in this research. Pratt defines contact zones as “social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination” (1992, 6). Nomination dossiers can be considered as contact zones because they have to be written in relation to existing sites on the World Heritage List and in relation to a universalist framework rooted in European philosophy and conservation
theory. These documents are interactive encounters, reflecting relations between different countries as well as with a Europe that, for many of them, represents the specter of former colonial power. While up to now World Heritage was understood in terms of separateness between the West and the rest, I adopt a new approach that focuses on co-presence, interaction and contact. In so doing, I recognize the existence of a center (Europe) and a periphery (non-European countries) that is also a determining element of the contact zone. This recognition does not, however, prevent the existence of a diversity of smaller centers of powers that might resist this dual and fixed positioning.

In order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the World Heritage Convention according to reiterative universalism and the contact zone, this research analyzes dominant and marginal discourses adopted by different States Parties as reflected in their nomination dossiers. These include strategies employed by non-Europeans for copying European ways of representing and interpreting the framework of the Convention. In doing so, these countries can produce “autoethnographic” texts in which “people undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them” (Pratt 1991, 35). In other words, nomination dossiers can contain stereotyping and dominating discourses used purposefully by non-European States Parties.

Nomination dossiers as contact zones can additionally show distinctive signs of difference through the construction of hybrid models, which enable other positions to emerge between the fixed boundaries of dominant and dominated discourses (Hodder 2009, 201). These hybrid approaches help to destabilize the principal models of World Heritage developed in European nomination dossiers and the binary logic through which Europe has been constructed, such as black/white, self/other, dominant/dominated. In addition, these hybrid approaches can shed a critical light onto some of the key notions analyzed in this book, including the construction of nationalism and gender, the representation of ethnic and social minorities, and the rhetoric of sustainable development and authenticity.

Considering nomination dossiers from the angle of reiterative universalism and the contact zone will help to address a number of key questions: Can non-European nomination dossiers represent an ambivalent space maintaining but also transgressing the dominant European concepts of heritage? Or are they mere copies of European discourse and representations? Do nomination dossiers reflect spaces where hierarchical positions between the West and the rest are being overturned, where discrete structures of opposition are at play? Can nomination dossiers display subjugated knowledge? Can the subaltern speak and, if so, under what conditions?

The rich sample of 114 nomination dossiers of sites for inclusion on the World Heritage List, the selection of which is justified in further depth within
the introduction, aims to reply to such questions through focusing on three types of nomination dossiers submitted over the past thirty-eight years: first, traditional heritage that is overrepresented on the list, corresponding to European religious heritage sites; second, traditional heritage that presents the potential of transgressing this traditional model, corresponding to non-European religious sites; and third, a recent and hitherto excluded genre of heritage, that which is represented by industrial properties. Such analyses of these dossiers should be understood as my own interpretation and do not reflect necessarily the original intention of their authors, which would have been difficult to establish considering that the dossiers are anonymized.

SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed a number of theoretical issues inherent in the notion of outstanding universal value. It has questioned the existence of an intrinsic quality in cultural heritage sites that is implied in this notion. Rather, it can indeed be argued that valuation is an extrinsic and social process undertaken by individuals and communities who associate qualities both positive and negative with a given site. Values change according to specific frames of mind, evolution of knowledge on a particular subject, cultures and time. Recognizing the extrinsic and relativist dimension of values and following this framework to its logical conclusion, however, can give rise to troubling outcomes—in particular, the position that all ways of caring for the past, including its willful destruction, are acceptable.

Reiterative universalism has been adopted as a structuring concept in this research since it simultaneously takes account of universal and more relative values. This concept recognizes the possibility for common understandings of the World Heritage Convention system as well as for translating them into one’s own culture and frame of reference.

“Contact zone” is another key structuring concept of this research. Nomination dossiers, analyzed in this book, are considered to be a form of contact zones. These documents are the voice of States Parties, and as such must explicate the outstanding universal value of sites for the advisory body concerned and the World Heritage Committee. Furthermore, nomination dossiers can be considered as contact zones because they are written in relation to existing sites on the World Heritage List and in reference to the universalist World Heritage framework rooted in European philosophy. Taken as a whole these documents reflect the underlying tension in heritage preservation between satisfying a universalist framework and serving more localized (and often nationalistic) interpretation.

Using these concepts of reiterative universalism and the contact zone, the following chapters will identify those values that have been given more
prominence and credibility in selected nomination dossiers. These chapters will also pay particular attention to unfolding strategies developed by non-European States Parties and to the nomination dossiers of nontraditional sites that either reproduce dominant discourses or transgress and transcend them.
Chapter Two

Outstanding Universal Value: International History

This chapter complements the preceding one by examining the genesis of outstanding universal value as a concept and its development from the official standpoint of the World Heritage Committee. It is based on intensive archival work and analyses of documents concerning statutory meetings, including all reports leading to the adoption of the World Heritage Convention, reports of the World Heritage Committee meetings and its bureau, revisions of the Operational Guidelines, reports of the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention and reports from expert groups and the advisory bodies. Through these analyses, this chapter aims to shed light on the factors that led to the adoption of the notion of outstanding universal value as well as the evolution of the criteria of authenticity, considered to be one of the key elements clarifying outstanding universal value. It also presents recent reflections linking outstanding universal value to community participation and sustainability, which are structuring themes of this volume. This chapter subsequently investigates whether and how the theoretical issues presented in the previous pages have been tackled and resolved by UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee. As such, it will serve as a referent point for the rest of this book and its analyses of how States Parties have understood, interpreted and negotiated outstanding universal value at national levels in their nomination dossiers.
Chapter 2

GENESIS AND ADOPTION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION

From 1948 onward, initiatives were undertaken to protect cultural heritage of world importance in accordance with Article 1, Paragraph 2(c) of the Constitution of UNESCO. This text states that UNESCO should “maintain, increase and diffuse knowledge; By assuring the conservation and protection of the world’s inheritance of books, works of art and monuments of history and science and recommending to the nations concerned the necessary international conventions” (UNESCO 1945).

Titchen provides detailed accounts of more than fifteen different meetings held in the 1950s and 1960s by committees or expert groups established by UNESCO to discuss a potential suitable international system for the protection of sites of exceptional value (1995, 36–74). Reports of these meetings reflect the difficulty in establishing an international legal system for the protection of the cultural and natural heritage, as testified by the number of projects discarded (UNESCO 28 June 1963, 2; Titchen 1995, 44).

These reports also provide interesting insights into the context in which the World Heritage Convention was written. They indicate that the phrase “outstanding universal value” was only crafted at the end of the drafting process of this legal text. Indeed, in the majority of cases, these reports refer to cultural heritage of “world-wide importance” (UNESCO 17 April 1950, 38) or of “universal interest” (UNESCO 22 August 1952, 5). The preliminary drafts of the Convention prepared by UNESCO likewise only referred to sites of universal value. Reports of these meetings held in the 1950s and 1960s indicate that UNESCO member states tended to associate this germinating notion of World Heritage with monuments of grand scale, dating from the great and/or ancient civilizations and requiring important multinational or international funding campaigns to protect them (UNESCO 1 March 1968).

A report from March 1963 discussing the possible appropriate form that an international system for the protection of heritage sites could take noted, for instance, that “monuments of world interest almost always consist of extensive and massive groupings, and the work of preserving them involves large sums of money” (UNESCO 1963, 4). This particular understanding of sites of universal value is mirrored in the “International Campaigns for the Preservation and Safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage of Mankind” launched by UNESCO in 1959. The first international campaign was initiated to safeguard the Abu Simbel Temples in Nubia in 1959. Its success led to other safeguarding campaigns, such as Venice in Italy (1966) and Borobudur in Indonesia (1970). Although these international campaigns developed separately from the World Heritage Convention, they had a common inspiration and illustrate international coordinated efforts to protect and save famous and grand-scale monuments of past civilizations (UNESCO 1985, 4).
This narrow understanding of sites of exceptional and universal value as grand monuments of ancient civilizations was however criticized as being exclusionary of other types of properties. In 1964, commenting on the “advisability of preparing a list of monuments of worldwide interest,” the National Advisory Committee for UNESCO in Australia highlighted that the tangible remains left by the Australian Aboriginals were so little that they would not be able to qualify for consideration. This committee also added that these places were too fragile to withstand tourism and its encouragement, underlining the threat and damage that such a list could cause (UNESCO 16 June 1964, Annex II:10).

The 1968 offer by Sweden to host a United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (to be held in 1972) was a turning point. This conference was proposed both as a way of discussing the emerging threats to the environment and of agreeing to actions, including the adoption of legal instruments. Working groups were set up as part of the preparation for the Stockholm Conference, and drafts for a potential convention on the protection of “World Heritage” were prepared for discussion by International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), UNESCO and the United States. The United States took an increasing interest in this idea as demonstrated by President Nixon’s 1971 address to Congress on the need for nations to cooperate in the active protection of both the cultural and natural heritage of “unique worldwide value” (Nixon 1971, 18). In April 1972, a Special Committee of Governmental Experts was set up by UNESCO to finalize the text of the draft convention for presentation at the Stockholm Conference and then at the General Conference of UNESCO to be held later that year. One hundred and twenty-eight draft amendments to this draft convention were submitted to this committee. One of these amendments adopted by this committee was the addition of the adjective “outstanding” to the phrase “universal value” so as to limit the application of the Convention. Outstanding universal value was thus adopted as the core concept of the Convention with the aim to help to reduce the properties suitable for protection under this instrument.

The June 1972 Stockholm Conference adopted Recommendation 99, which states that UNESCO’s draft convention constituted an important step for the protection of the environment at the international level and recommended its adoption by UNESCO’s General Conference. Following further amendments, the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage was adopted at the seventeenth session of the General Conference of UNESCO on 16 November 1972. The Convention came into force in December 1975 when twenty nations had ratified it, as specified in its Article 33.
PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION

As already stressed, outstanding universal value is the central concept of the World Heritage Convention (see, for instance, Article 11[2]; Article 15[1] or Article 19). This phrase was not explicitly defined in the Convention. This lack of precise definition gives some flexibility in the types of properties that can be nominated for inclusion in the World Heritage List. Article 11.2, which defines the World Heritage List, indicates that it is to be composed of properties that the Committee “considers as having outstanding universal value in terms of [the] criteria” (UNESCO 1972). Analyses of the changes in the criteria over the past forty years are detailed throughout this chapter. This Convention excludes the protection of movable cultural heritage. The artifacts of the museum of the Hermitage, part of the “Historic Centre of Saint Petersburg and Related Groups of Monuments” (Russian Federation, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1990), for instance, are not protected under the terms of this Convention.

The spirit of the Convention reflects that of the Constitution of UNESCO and is an expression of the Enlightenment philosophy of “Western political, intellectual and moral values; democratic, rational, optimistic, humane, tolerant and free” (Finn 1983, 41). These ideas are highlighted primarily in the preamble to the Convention, which conveys the optimistic idea that, through cooperation of the international community, the world’s cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value can and will be protected for future generations (UNESCO 1972). Ideas of democracy, tolerance and equality between all people in the world are also implied in this section of the Convention. Indeed, sites of outstanding universal value are important for “all the people of the world” and need to “be preserved as part of the world heritage of mankind as a whole” (ibid.). There is also an implied belief that, through the use of human reason and science, properties that mankind considers as being of outstanding universal value will be protected. The previous chapter provides a critique of the Enlightenment paradigm and its tendency to engender exclusion. However, criticism of and disbelief in this paradigm were not reflected in the World Heritage Convention.

One of the most original aspects of the World Heritage Convention is the explicit link between natural and cultural heritage made in Article 1, which defines cultural heritage. This article defines three types of cultural heritage: “monuments,” “groups of buildings” and “sites.” “Sites” are defined as “the works of man or the combined works of nature and man” (UNESCO 1972). This is an original aspect of the Convention, as natural and cultural heritage are traditionally considered to be separate, even opposite, entities (Plachter and Rössler 1995, 15). This important aspect of the Convention is further discussed below, in relation to the 1992 adoption of the category of cultural landscape.
The World Heritage Convention also maintains a difficult balance between national sovereignty and international intervention and cooperation (Cameron 1992, 18). The preamble of the Convention highlights that sites on the World Heritage List belong to the whole of humanity. It also defines a system of technical and financial international cooperation and assistance, spelled out in articles 19 to 26 (UNESCO 1972). At the same time, the Convention is a powerful text because it clearly details the duties of States Parties vis-à-vis their heritage. The Convention makes clear in articles 3, 4 and 5 that States Parties are responsible for selecting, nominating and ultimately conserving World Heritage sites (ibid.). Article 5 of the Convention, in particular, clearly indicates that States Parties have the duty to take the appropriate financial, technical, legal and administrative measures to create inventories, to adopt all the essential measures for the conservation and presentation of sites to the public, to facilitate research and study of their heritage and to withdraw from taking deliberate measures damaging to it (ibid.).

The World Heritage Convention also encourages States Parties to involve local communities and the wider population in the appreciation and conservation of their heritage. Article 5(a) encourages States Parties to “adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community” (ibid.). Articles 27 and 28 of the Convention also encourage States Parties to develop educational programs to strengthen their citizens’ appreciation of and respect for their World Heritage and to increase their awareness of the potential threats to the continued survival of those sites (ibid.).

However, the Committee has no power to force a State Party to comply with the requirements of the Convention (Cameron 1992, 21). Moreover, mechanisms of international assistance and protection can only be triggered by the States Parties upon whose territory World Heritage sites are located. This can lead to problems, as further highlighted in the subsequent chapters. The Committee also has no power to compel a State Party to nominate sites that might be of exceptional and universal significance. Indeed, a state may refuse to nominate sites because they represent the heritage of minority groups toward which it is hostile or indifferent (Francioni 2002, 4). This does not seem to have been a problem foreseen by the drafters of the World Heritage Convention. Nonetheless this issue has become increasingly important, especially since the 1992 adoption of the category of cultural landscapes.

Article 8(1) of the World Heritage Convention establishes an Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the Cultural and Natural Heritage of Outstanding Universal Value, called the World Heritage Committee (UNESCO 1972). This article further indicates that the Committee should be composed of fifteen States Parties that have been elected by all States Parties during the General Assembly. It also indicates that the number of States
Parties constituting the World Heritage Committee should be increased to twenty-one following the ratification of the Convention by at least forty states. By August 1978, forty states had ratified the World Heritage Convention, following which the Committee was enlarged to twenty-one members. The Committee is responsible for selecting sites on the basis of nominations submitted by States Parties for inclusion on the World Heritage List, for monitoring the state of conservation of these World Heritage Sites in liaison with States Parties, for inscribing sites on the List of World Heritage in Danger and for distributing the resources of the World Heritage Fund to assist States Parties in need.

The General Assembly of States Parties includes all the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention. It meets every two years during the ordinary session of UNESCO’s general conference. During this meeting, the General Assembly elects the World Heritage Committee, examines the accounts of the World Heritage Fund and discusses and decides policy issues. Article 9(1) explains that members of the World Heritage Committee are elected for a six-year term of office. Each General Assembly replaces one-third of them, so seven seats become available every two years. According to Article 8(2), the “election of members of the Committee shall ensure an equitable representation of the different regions and cultures of the world” (UNESCO 1972). Explanation of the election of the members of the World Heritage Committee is detailed in the General Assembly Rules of Procedure. As outlined in Rule 12(1), each State Party to the Convention has one vote. Rule 13 explains that the secretariat should ask all States Parties whether they intend to stand for election to the World Heritage Committee at least three months prior to the General Assembly. However, States Parties who have not paid their mandatory contribution to the World Heritage Fund (calculated at one percent of the country’s contribution to UNESCO, which is to be paid every two years) cannot present themselves for election to the World Heritage Committee (Article 16[5]).

As explained in Article 14 of the Convention, the World Heritage Committee is assisted by a secretariat. From 1975 to 1992 the secretariat depended on two different UNESCO sectors, the Science Sector (dealing primarily with natural heritage) and the Culture Sector (dealing primarily with cultural heritage; Pressouyre 1996, 37–38). This physical separation made the implementation of the Convention difficult to coordinate. The creation of the World Heritage Centre in 1992 has provided “a positive structural modification” (ibid., 38) and has helped to centralize all activities related to the implementation of the Convention in one location. Article 14.2 of the Convention identifies three advisory bodies to the Committee that have had close links with UNESCO: ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and
OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE: INTERNATIONAL HISTORY

Restoration of Cultural Property) and IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature).

THE FIRST VERSION OF THE OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION

The first version of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (henceforth referred to as the Operational Guidelines) was drafted in 1977 (UNESCO 20 October 1977). They constitute the basis for all decisions regarding the implementation of the Convention (Slatyer 1984, 6). As a flexible, working document, the Operational Guidelines can be revised at any time by the World Heritage Committee and indeed have been modified more than twelve times over the past forty years. These guidelines illustrate the principle of evolutive interpretation—that is, the meaning of a treaty provision is not identified in the light of the original intent and circumstances existing at the time of its adoption, but in light of the present legal and social context (Francioni 2002, 3).

The Operational Guidelines prescribe the format and content of the nomination dossiers. They further describe the procedure and calendar for the evaluation of nominations of sites for inclusion on the World Heritage List. Until the 2005 revised version of the Operational Guidelines, the procedure for evaluation of nomination dossiers was as follows: States Parties first had to write a Tentative List to be sent to UNESCO. Such Tentative Lists included cultural and natural sites that States Parties planned to nominate in the next five to ten years (Article 11 of the World Heritage Convention). Sites inscribed on Tentative Lists could then be nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List. Once received by the secretariat, nomination dossiers were sent to the advisory bodies for independent evaluation in September (ICOMOS for cultural and IUCN for natural sites). The third advisory body, ICCROM, provided expert guidance on technical issues. Taking the advisory bodies’ views into account, recommendations on individual nomination were prepared for the Committee by its bureau, which met in June. The committee then made the final decision on each site during its annual session in December. This complicated process was simplified in the 2005 version of the Operational Guidelines.

Most importantly, the Operational Guidelines contain ten criteria (six referring primarily to cultural heritage and four to natural heritage) on the basis of which a property may be included in the World Heritage List. Properties nominated for inclusion on this list should fulfill at least one of these criteria. This chapter focuses only on the evolution of cultural heritage crite-
ria, which until 2005 onward were considered distinct from natural heritage ones.

According to the 1977 version of the Operational Guidelines, cultural heritage properties needed to fulfill one or more of the following criteria:

i. represent a unique artistic or aesthetic achievement, a masterpiece of the creative genius;

ii. have exerted considerable influence, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on subsequent developments in architecture, monumental sculpture, garden and landscape design, related arts, or human settlements; or

iii. be unique, extremely rare, or of great antiquity; or

iv. be among the most characteristic examples of a type of structure, the type representing an important cultural, social, artistic, scientific, technological or industrial development; or

v. be a characteristic example of a significant, traditional style of architecture, method of construction, or human settlement, that is fragile by nature or has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible socio-cultural or economic change; or

vi. be most importantly associated with ideas or beliefs, with events or with persons, of outstanding historical importance or significance.

(UNESCO 20 October 1977, Paragraph 7[i] to [vi])

The scope of these 1977 cultural heritage criteria was wide. References in criterion (iv) to “important cultural, social, artistic, scientific, technological or industrial development” made these criteria applicable to virtually all types of properties. Furthermore, the use of broadly encompassing notions such as “a masterpiece of the creative genius” (cultural heritage criterion [i]) or “human settlement(s)” (cultural heritage criteria [ii] and [vi]) further facilitated the nomination of all types of property. Cultural heritage criterion (iv) explicitly referred to the significance of “technological or industrial development.” This reference was removed in the 1980 version of this criterion—ever since, sites representing industrial and technological development have been underrepresented on the World Heritage List. Cultural heritage criteria (iv) and (vi) also contained important references to the social dimension of nominated properties. Cultural heritage criterion (iv) referred to properties representing important “social development,” and cultural heritage criterion (vi) made a direct reference to “persons of outstanding historical importance or significance.”

In addition to these six cultural heritage criteria, a nominated site was expected, as an essential criterion, to meet the test of authenticity “in design, materials, workmanship and setting; authenticity does not limit consideration to original form and structure but includes all subsequent modifications and additions, over the course of time, which in themselves possess artistic or
historical values” (ibid., Paragraph 9). The 1977 Operational Guidelines neither defined these four aspects of authenticity further nor explained the conditions under which reconstruction or restoration was to be acceptable. This lack of specificity regarding these four aspects of authenticity has since led to individual and subjective interpretations (Stovel 1994, 105). Over the years, representatives of States Parties have also raised concerns pertaining to the lack of guidelines on the implementation of this concept within national frameworks. Moreover, this definition of authenticity is also considered by many to be biased toward European and monumental heritage (Parent 1979, 19). In the mid-1990s Pressouyre reaffirmed these concerns and stressed that the requirement of a “test of authenticity in materials” excludes the use of perishable and fragile structures such as wood or adobe, mainly employed in non-Western countries, which require regular restoration or even replacement (1996, 12). As further explained below, it was not until 1994 that changes to this definition of authenticity were officially proposed. The explanation, in the 1977 definition of authenticity, that all subsequent modifications to a building are valuable and should be conserved, is in respect of the principles of Article 11 of the 1964 International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (henceforth referred to as the Venice Charter).

During the 1977 session of the World Heritage Committee, some delegates insisted that changes to the original function of the building did not violate its authenticity. The Committee nonetheless recognized that the authenticity of a building should be considered as lost when this new function necessitated irreversible changes to the original form and to the material used in its construction (UNESCO 17 October 1977, 5). In addition to the test of authenticity, Paragraph 13 of the 1977 version of the Operational Guidelines indicated that information must be provided on the property’s state of preservation in nomination dossiers (UNESCO 20 October 1977). This paragraph indicated that the state of preservation of the property should be evaluated relatively, in comparison to the state of preservation of other similar sites.

1980–1992: CONTRADICTORY EFFORTS TO FULFILL THE CONVENTION’S DUAL REQUIREMENT OF REPRESENTATIVENESS AND SELECTIVITY


From the beginning of the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, concerns were expressed that sites lacking “truly” outstanding universal value could be nominated and subsequently inscribed on the list (UNESCO 29 September 1980, 7). These concerns led to the substantial revision of the six cultural heritage criteria in 1980. According to this 1980 version of the
Chapter 2

Operational Guidelines, cultural heritage properties needed to fulfill one or more of the following criteria:

i. represent a unique artistic achievement, a masterpiece of the creative genius; or
ii. have exerted great influence, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture, monumental arts or town-planning and landscaping; or
iii. bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a civilization which has disappeared; or
iv. be an outstanding example of a type of structure which illustrates a significant stage in history; or
v. be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement which is representative of a culture and which has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change; or
vi. be directly or tangibly associated with events or with ideas or beliefs of outstanding universal significance (the Committee considers that this criterion should justify inclusion in the List only in exceptional circumstances or in conjunction with other criteria). (UNESCO October 1980, Paragraph 18 a[i] to [vi])

In comparison to previous versions, the scope of the 1980 version of cultural heritage criterion (ii) was reduced. Indeed, the broad reference to the concept of “human settlements” in the 1977 version of this criterion has been removed (UNESCO 20 October 1977, Paragraph 7[iii]). This 1980 version of criterion (ii) focuses primarily on architecture and monumental art. The scope of this 1980 version of criterion (iii) was also reduced compared to its previous version from 1977 (UNESCO 20 October 1977, Paragraph 7[iii]). The addition of the temporal phrase “which has disappeared” limits its application and excludes living traditions (UNESCO October 1980, Paragraph 18 a[iii]). This phrase encourages, moreover, nominations of sites belonging to the great civilizations of antiquity.

Cultural heritage criterion (iv) was also substantially modified. References, in the previous version of this criterion, to a wide variety of heritage properties under the phrase “important cultural, social, artistic, scientific, technological or industrial development” (UNESCO 20 October 1977, Paragraph 7[iv]) were removed. By 1980 this criterion only referred to “outstanding example of a type of structure” (and from 1984 onward to “a type of building or architectural ensemble” [UNESCO January 1984, Paragraph 21 a(iv)]), strongly favoring the nomination of monumental properties. The use of the phrase “a significant stage in history” in criterion (iv) also reflects a Eurocentric understanding of the past as linear and progressive (UNESCO October 1980, Paragraph 18 a[iv]).
Furthermore, the 1980 version of criterion (vi) no longer referred directly to the social dimension of properties because references to “persons” had been removed. The unequivocal addition that the Committee would only consider this criterion “in exceptional circumstances or in conjunction with other criteria” strongly limited its scope (UNESCO October 1980, Paragraph 18 a[vi]). This limitation was discussed in a report by Michel Parent, rapporteur on the third session of the Committee in 1979 (UNESCO 30 November 1979, 8, 21). It was feared that a potentially overwhelming number of nominations could be made under the 1977 version of this criterion. Furthermore, it was feared that properties illustrating nationalistic and chauvinistic events might be nominated. Such sites would stress particularities and differences between cultures and would be in contradiction with the spirit and vision of the Convention. This 1980 change in the scope of cultural heritage criterion (vi) might therefore have been seen as reflecting the concern of the World Heritage Committee to be “objective” and nonpolitical in its selection of sites for inscription on the World Heritage List. This effort to be nonpolitical was highlighted as characteristic of other UNESCO programs (Dutt 1995, 18), but has since been widely discussed and strongly criticized (ibid.; Hoggart 1978, 57; Wells 1987). This aspect of the implementation of the World Heritage Convention is further discussed in chapter 3.

Hence the scope of the 1980 version of the cultural heritage criteria was reduced. These revised criteria focused primarily on the architectural and artistic value of sites. Important notions had been removed including direct references to the social value of nominated properties. The types of properties directly referred to in these criteria had also been reduced, particularly with the removal of direct references to technological or industrial heritage sites. These criteria, including cultural heritage criterion (iv), presented a Eurocentric understanding of heritage and history. Despite all these contestable issues, the cultural heritage criteria would not again undergo any major revision until 1992. This is rather puzzling, seeing as a number of issues that were to worsen over time—including the World Heritage List’s geographic and thematic imbalances—might have emerged partly due to these restrictive criteria.

The criterion of authenticity was also revised in the 1980 version of the Operational Guidelines (UNESCO October 1980, Paragraph 18[b]). The phrase referring previously to the importance of subsequent modifications and additions was removed. A new sentence was added providing guidelines on reconstruction: “the Committee stressed that reconstruction is only acceptable if it is carried out on the basis of complete and detailed documentation on the original and to no extent on conjecture” (ibid.). This addition has since remained part of the definition of authenticity. Neither the report of the 1980 session of the World Heritage Committee nor that of its bureau records the reasons for this added guideline on reconstruction (UNESCO 29 Septem-
ber 1980; UNESCO 28 May 1980). It might have resulted from the inclusion of the “Historic Centre of Warsaw” on the World Heritage List in 1980. The “Old Market Place and Adjacent Buildings” in Warsaw were entirely rebuilt following their total destruction during the Second World War. As indicated by Pressouyre, this property was included on the list as a unique example of an excellent and careful reconstruction of historic buildings to their original condition (1996, 12). However, the Committee might have feared that an increased number of reconstructed properties would be nominated for inclusion on the list in the wake of such a precedent, as the Warsaw case significantly expanded the boundaries of the notion of authenticity. Indeed, with this inscription on the list, authenticity could then be defined as to include its antithesis—that is, what is false or reconstructed (Robert 1995, 8). This issue is further analyzed in chapter 6.

In 1983, Michel Parent, then president of ICOMOS, presented some reflections on the notion of authenticity to the seventh session of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee (1983, 4). He stressed, in particular, that erroneous or fanciful restorations should be condemned. He also discussed the philosophical problems caused by some restorations and additions to buildings from different centuries. The Venice Charter recommends that all contributions from succeeding centuries should be retained. Nonetheless, Parent argued that some restorations, including those by nineteenth-century architects such as Viollet-le-Duc, were not respectful of the multiple layers of history contained within these sites. These architects attempted to restore sites to their original state, sometimes in a fanciful manner that ignored or erased the contributions from interceding centuries. Parent asked whether these fanciful restorations of ancient monuments should be regarded as betrays of or contributions to the past (ibid.). He then explained that the World Heritage Committee and ICOMOS had not always been rigorous in their evaluation of nominated sites that had been restored, in the past, in a fanciful manner. In more recent years, Pressouyre echoed these views: on the one hand, the “Historic City of Carcassonne” was deferred in 1985 because of the interventions by Viollet-le-Duc. On the other hand, the “Medieval City of Rhodes,” which was restored in a fanciful manner in the fascist era, was nonetheless inscribed on the list in 1988 (ibid.).

Interestingly, in 1984, Parent also published an article on the implementation of the World Heritage Convention where he noted that authenticity was a relative concept (1984, 39). He stressed that the authenticity of a site can only be judged and understood within its own specific context and culture. This was a precursory idea that was further discussed and reflected upon at the 1994 Nara Conference on Authenticity.

The 1988 version of the Operational Guidelines included an additional, and essential, criterion that nominated sites should “have adequate legal protection and management mechanisms to ensure” their conservation
Outstanding Universal Value: International History

These guidelines also request States Parties to provide information in nomination dossiers on measures to manage the site and to strike a balance between attracting tourism and conserving the property: “In order to preserve the integrity of cultural sites, particularly those open to large numbers of visitors, the State Party concerned should be able to provide evidence of suitable administrative arrangements to cover the management of the property, its conservation and its accessibility to the public” (ibid.). However, the World Heritage Committee did not define “suitable administrative arrangements.” Because of this lack of definition one might assume that the level of “suitable administrative arrangements” has been interpreted in a subjective manner by States Parties when nominating sites and by the advisory bodies when assessing them.


During the first decade of the implementation of the Convention, the World Heritage Committee also increasingly discussed the need and means by which to achieve a World Heritage List that would contain sites of truly outstanding universal value and equitably represent the world’s diversity of cultural heritage. This is rather ironic considering that the 1980 revised version of the cultural heritage criteria significantly reduced the types of properties that could be inscribed on the list and favored traditional heritage sites from Europe. The World Heritage Committee agreed that sites of outstanding universal value could only be selected after careful comparison with similar properties, those located both within the territory of the State Party in question as well as within other countries. This was clearly stated in the 1980 version of the Operational Guidelines, which indicated that nomination dossiers should provide an evaluation of the nominated property’s state of preservation and compare it to the condition of comparable properties (UNESCO October 1980, Paragraph 19[a]). These guidelines furthermore highlighted that this comparative analysis would guide the Committee in its subsequent decision-making.

From 1980 onward, and to correspond to the text of the Convention, the Operational Guidelines also requested States Parties to submit a Tentative List of sites situated within their territory (UNESCO October 1980, Paragraph 7). This is in accordance with Article 11(1) of the Convention (UNESCO 1972). One aim of these Tentative Lists is to allow the World Heritage Committee to compare nominated properties with similar ones that might be nominated in the future, so as to select only the most outstanding sites (UNESCO 29 September 1980, 7). These Operational Guidelines specified that Tentative Lists should contain the name of each property, its geo-
Chapter 2

graphical location, a brief description and justification of its outstanding universal value and a reference to the cultural or natural heritage criterion it fulfills.

From 1983 to 1987, following difficulties expressed by States Parties in selecting sites of outstanding universal value, ICOMOS, with the support of the World Heritage Committee, organized ten regional meetings for the harmonization of Tentative Lists of cultural properties in countries belonging to the same geographic and cultural region. The main aim of these meetings was to facilitate States Parties’ selection of properties of outstanding universal value. The objectives of these meetings were to evaluate the importance of the properties in the cultural region concerned, to arrive at a more stringent selection of properties suitable to be proposed for inscription and to encourage States Parties to select sites representing a wide range of cultural heritage (Leblanc 1984, 26).

However, this initiative from ICOMOS was not as successful as one would have hoped. The Committee requested States Parties, at each of its annual sessions, to submit a Tentative List in conformity with Article 11(1) of the Convention. Nonetheless as of 1987 only eighteen out of the ninety-nine States Parties had submitted a Tentative List of potential cultural heritage properties of outstanding universal value (UNESCO 20 January 1988, 2–3). This strictly limited the work and comparative analysis that ICOMOS could undertake. The methodology adopted during these meetings was also not consistent. Finally, the outcomes of these workshops were not well disseminated to all those who worked at national levels on the selection of potential sites for nomination to the World Heritage List.

Following the slow progress of the harmonization of Tentative Lists, an expert group was formed at the eleventh session of the Committee in 1987 to examine the development of a global list of sites of potential outstanding universal value, known as the Global Study. It shared similar aims as the regional meetings for the harmonization of Tentative Lists: to help the World Heritage Committee in evaluating nominations received from States Parties against the wider background of regional or global cultural significance as well as to facilitate States Parties’ selection of properties of outstanding universal value (Cleere 1993, 9). The objectives of the Global Study were to identify gaps on the list and encourage the nomination of those underrepresented categories, to guide States Parties in the preparation of Tentative Lists and nominations and to aid the World Heritage Committee in the examination of cultural properties by providing a comparative analytical framework (UNESCO 29 November 1989, 1).

The methods developed for the implementation of the Global Study differ from those for the harmonization of Tentative Lists. From 1987 to 1993, most initiatives undertaken as part of the Global Study were based on global thematic studies providing an analytical framework of the world’s cultural
heritage, including studies of the Greek, Roman and Byzantine, Islamic, pre-Inca, Aztec, Polynesian, Melanesian and Micronesian civilizations and cultures. These studies mainly rearranged sites that were on the World Heritage List and Tentative Lists, chronologically and/or thematically.

In the early years of the 1990s, the framework of the Global Study came under increasing criticism during the World Heritage Committee meetings (UNESCO 12 December 1991). The Global Study was condemned, in particular, for being “based on historical and aesthetic civilizations, which once again excluded less formally acknowledged cultural phenomena and regions” (Cleere 1993, 14). Some members of the Committee feared that the work undertaken and the methodology devised during the Global Study had attached too much importance to the traditional categories of classical art history, which were already overrepresented on the list. Moreover, the different studies produced as part of the Global Study did not result in the better representation of the diversity of cultural heritage on the list. Furthermore, the outcomes of the reports written as part of the Global Study were not well disseminated or circulated at national levels and hence could not have had an impact outside the restricted circle of those attending the World Heritage Committee sessions. Thus, the World Heritage Committee abandoned the Global Study with the adoption of the Global Strategy at its 1994 session.

1992–1995: INITIATIVES TO EXPAND THE LIMITS OF OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

1992: Goals and Objectives and Adoption of the Category of Cultural Landscape

Reviews of the first twenty years of implementation of the World Heritage Convention were conducted in 1991 and 1992. These reviews resulted in the adoption of strategic goals, objectives and recommendations for the future implementation of the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 14 December 1992; see also figure 2.1).
Chapter 2

Figure 2.1. 1992 Strategic Goals and Objectives

The adoption of the new category of cultural landscape in 1992 can be considered as fulfilling goals 1 and 2, since it aims to help to identify new categories of cultural heritage for potential nomination on the World Heritage List. The question of landscape protection, which links natural and cultural heritage, was first discussed in the early 1980s. During its eighth session in 1984, the World Heritage Committee discussed the evaluation of rural landscapes (UNESCO 2 November 1984, 7–8). At its next session, it discussed the possibility of modifying the criteria to include cultural landscapes (Rössler 1995, 42). However, it was not until its sixteenth session in 1992 that the Committee reached an agreement by adopting the “Report of the Expert Group on Cultural Landscapes” (UNESCO 1992). This meeting, held in October 1992 at La Petite Pierre in France, identified three main categories of cultural landscape, which were subsequently laid out in Paragraph 39 of the Operational Guidelines:
1. The most easily identifiable [cultural landscape] is the clearly defined landscape designed and created intentionally by man. This embraces garden and parkland landscapes constructed for aesthetic reasons which are often (but not always) associated with religious or other monumental buildings and ensembles.

2. The second category is the organically evolved landscape. This results from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative and has developed its present form by association with and response to its natural environment. Such landscapes reflect that process of evolution in their form and component features. They fall into two subcategories:

   a. a relict (or fossil) landscape is one in which an evolutionary process came to an end at some time in the past, either abruptly or over a period. Its significant distinguishing features are, however, still visible in material form.

   b. a continuing landscape is one which retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress. At the same time it exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution over time.

3. The final category is the associative cultural landscape. The inclusion of such landscapes on the World Heritage List is justifiable by virtue of the powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent. (UNESCO February 1994, Paragraph 39)

These definitions of cultural landscapes introduce important ideas and themes that were previously omitted from the World Heritage Convention, or past versions of the Operational Guidelines. These definitions represent a shift from a narrow understanding, illustrated by the six cultural heritage criteria, of cultural heritage as European and monumental to include a prominently non-monumental understanding of heritage. The definition of associative landscapes refers, for example, to the intangible dimension of properties and intangible links between specific communities and their natural environment, such as sacred landscapes for indigenous groups. These definitions of cultural landscape also denote concern for the human and anthropological dimensions of sites, as illustrated by the concept of continuing landscapes. Finally, the types of cultural landscapes referred to in these definitions are wide-ranging and encompass properties developed because of “social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative.”
At its sixteenth session in 1992, the World Heritage Committee did not draft new criteria for the inclusion of cultural landscapes on the World Heritage List. As “the combined work of nature and man,” cultural landscapes correspond to the definition of cultural heritage provided in Article 1 of the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 1972). For this reason, the World Heritage Committee felt that cultural landscapes should be evaluated primarily according to cultural rather than natural heritage criteria (Cleere 1995a, 65). Nonetheless, in 1992 the cultural heritage criteria were revised to facilitate nominations of cultural landscape. By this revised version of the Operational Guidelines, cultural heritage properties needed to fulfill one or more of the following criteria:

i. represent a unique artistic achievement, a masterpiece of the creative genius; or
ii. have exerted great influence, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture, monumental arts or town-planning and landscape design; or
iii. bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a civilization or cultural tradition which has disappeared; or
iv. be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history; or
v. be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change; or
vi. be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance (the Committee considers that this criterion should justify inclusion in the List only in exceptional circumstances or in conjunction with other criteria). (UNESCO February 1994, Paragraph 24[a] [i] to [vi])

These revised cultural heritage criteria contain explicit references to cultural landscapes or characteristics of cultural landscapes. Terms such as “landscape design,” “landscape” and “land-use” are mentioned in cultural heritage criteria (ii), (iv) and (v) respectively. The added references to “cultural tradition” in cultural heritage criterion (iii) and to “living traditions” in cultural heritage criterion (vi) underline the importance of the social aspect of nominated properties and the importance of sociocultural continuity. Cultural heritage criterion (iv) also refers to more than one stage in the history of the property, reducing its linear and Eurocentric dimension. Cultural heritage criterion (v) introduces the term “culture” in a plural form. This addition recognizes the existence of multi-layered landscapes inhabited, over time, by different groups. The scope of cultural heritage criterion (vi) was also ex-
tended to include “artistic and literary works.” While the scope of the cultural heritage criteria was expanded to facilitate and favor the inclusion of cultural landscapes on the World Heritage List, some problems remain in the wording of these criteria. These problems will be further detailed and analyzed below, in the section on the Global Strategy.

The two additional criteria relating to authenticity and protection of the nominated property (UNESCO February 1994, Paragraph 24 [b][i] and [ii]) were also revised to include references to this newly adopted category of cultural landscapes. Guidelines on authenticity were amended as follows: “meet the test of authenticity in design, material, workmanship or setting and in the case of cultural landscapes their distinctive character and components” (UNESCO February 1994, Paragraph 24 [b][i]). Paragraph 24 (b)(ii) underwent only slight changes with the addition of the need for “well-established traditional protection” (ibid.). This addition recognizes the key role played by local communities, particularly indigenous people, in protecting their landscapes according to long-held customs and beliefs.

At its sixteenth session in 1992, the Committee requested further guidance on this new category of cultural landscape. A meeting was thus organized in 1993 in Templin (Germany) where an “Action Plan for the Future” was drafted and subsequently adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its seventeenth session (UNESCO 4 February 1994, 56). This action plan recommended that States Parties revise their Tentative Lists in the light of this newly adopted category of cultural landscape, that assistance be offered to States Parties in this exercise and that regional meetings be organized to support the national selection of cultural landscapes. This action plan also made States Parties aware of the possibility of renominating sites already on the World Heritage List as cultural landscapes. Within the past ten years, only two States Parties have followed that suggestion and renominated a site as a cultural landscape: New Zealand with Tongariro National Park (inscribed originally as a natural heritage site in 1990 and re-inscribed as a cultural landscape on the World Heritage List in 1993) and Australia with Uluru-Kata-Tjuta National Park (inscribed originally as a natural heritage site in 1987 and re-inscribed as a cultural landscape and under cultural heritage criteria on the World Heritage List in 1994).

In 1993, the first cultural landscape to be inscribed on the World Heritage List was Tongariro National Park (New Zealand), an associative landscape. Tongariro was originally inscribed on the World Heritage List under natural heritage criteria (ii) and (iii) in 1990 (since 2005, criteria viii and ix). However, Tongariro is not only a natural heritage site but also a cultural one due to its being a sacred landscape for the Maori people. Indeed, the natural features of Tongariro are closely related to Maori mythology and beliefs and are expressed in traditional oratory, songs, chants, prayers and dances. The identity of the Maori people and their chief (Te Heuheu) is thus related to the
volcanic landscape in which they live (Titchen 1995, 226–31). A new nomination dossier for the inscription of Tongariro National Park as a cultural landscape was submitted in 1993. This new dossier took into account the important relationship between the Maori people and their environment. At its seventeenth session in 1993 the World Heritage Committee inscribed Tongariro National Park on the list under natural heritage criteria (ii) and (iii)—since 2005, criteria viii and ix—but also under cultural heritage criterion (vi) in recognition of the sacred dimension of this landscape (UNESCO 4 February 1994, 39).

At this 1993 session of the World Heritage Committee, this renomination gave rise to discussions concerning the possibility of inscribing a cultural landscape solely under cultural heritage criterion (vi). As previously explained, the Committee had tended to reduce the use of this criterion in isolation. The World Heritage Committee agreed that a property could be inscribed under criterion (vi) when used in conjunction with one or more natural heritage criteria. This decision is problematic: cultural heritage criterion (vi) is the only criterion that most associative landscapes would fulfill (Cleere 1995a, 56). Indeed, they often do not have any cultural features and sometimes no natural feature of exceptional significance; rather, they are important solely for their intangible dimensions. This demonstrates that the 1992 revision of the six cultural heritage criteria still accommodates primarily monumental sites.

The reasons why only two sites have been renominated as cultural landscapes since 1992 are diverse and complex. One possible explanation is that indigenous people have not yet been actively involved in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. In 2000, a proposal to establish the World Heritage Indigenous Peoples Council of Experts (WHIPCOE) was prepared. This proposal originated from the World Heritage Indigenous Peoples Forum held in 2000 in conjunction with the twenty-fourth session of the World Heritage Committee in Cairns (Australia). At the World Heritage Committee meeting in 2001 in Helsinki, the proposed purposes of WHIPCOE were outlined: to allow active participation of indigenous people in the protection and promotion of World Heritage, to bring complementary competencies and expertise and, upon request, to make recommendations for improvement (UNESCO 8 February 2002). Nonetheless the World Heritage Committee did not approve the establishment of WHIPCOE as a consultative body of the Committee or as a network to report to the Committee. One of the stated reasons was that a Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues had already been created following adoption of Resolution 2000/22 by the United Nations Economic and Social Council. One of the purposes of this forum has been to give expert advice and recommendation in the cultural field.
The Global Strategy for a Balanced, Credible and Representative World Heritage List

A meeting was convened in 1994 to continue the reflections and discussions of the Global Study. This meeting fulfilled the first of the 1992 Strategic Goals, which aim to “promote completion of the identification of the World Heritage,” the objective of which is to “complete the Global Study and appropriate thematic studies” (UNESCO 14 December 1992). The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the “representative nature of the World Heritage List and the methodology for its definition and implementation” (UNESCO 13 October 1994). The experts made a number of observations, bringing particular attention to a number of imbalances in the types of properties inscribed on the list. They stressed the overrepresentation of traditional categories of cultural heritage including European monuments, historic towns, Christian sites and elitist architecture in comparison with other types of properties. In fact, in 1993 a study of the World Heritage List by the then ICOMOS World Heritage Coordinator demonstrated that 40 percent of the cultural and mixed cultural and natural heritage sites on the list were located in Europe (Cleere 1993, 3). These experts noted that the World Heritage List projected a very narrow concept of cultural heritage that excluded many types of heritage sites and living cultures, particularly those from non-European and non-monumental cultures (UNESCO 13 October 1994).

These experts called for a rectification of the imbalances on the list between regions of the world, types of monuments and historical periods. It has often been stressed that the term “balance” as mentioned in the text of the report of the Global Strategy is not about numbers but about the representativeness of the world’s diversity of cultural and/or natural heritage sites on the list. These experts also encouraged a move away from an architectural and monumental conception of cultural heritage to one that would recognize the anthropological and multi-vocal values for which sites are protected. They encouraged the understanding of cultural heritage not as monuments in isolation but as holistic entities, part of a wider social and spatial context.

From a methodological point of view, the experts proposed to move from the typological approach of the Global Study to a more thematic and regional approach. They also identified the following themes they believed to be underrepresented on the list:

1. Human coexistence with the land
   a. Movements of people (nomadism, migration)
   b. Settlement
   c. Modes of subsistence
   d. Technological evolution
2. Human beings in society

   a. Human interaction
   b. Cultural coexistence
   c. Spirituality and creative expression. (UNESCO 13 October 1994)

These experts believed that the inclusion of sites representing these broad themes on the list would enable gaps to be filled while also resulting in a wider recognition of the nature-culture continuum. They recommended a methodology based on the organization of regional meetings and comparative studies on these broad, yet underrepresented themes. They also suggested that the World Heritage Centre should encourage countries to ratify the Convention and participate in its implementation, to establish and harmonize Tentative Lists and to prepare nomination dossiers of properties indicative of these hitherto-neglected themes for inclusion on the list. The framework and method developed at the expert meeting on the Global Strategy is not based on any detailed analysis of previous reports written as part of the harmonization of Tentative Lists or the Global Study. As previously explained, the programs of harmonization of Tentative Lists and the Global Study came under general criticism. Nonetheless, no report has provided a detailed analysis of the reasons why these programs failed. Despite these problems, the World Heritage Committee adopted this report and recommendations at its eighteenth session in 1994 (UNESCO 31 January 1995, 42–43).

The 1994 expert group on the Global Strategy also recommended the revision of the criteria in order to encourage nominations of properties on the list belonging to these underrepresented categories of heritage. This revision fulfills one of the objectives of the second of the 1992 Strategic Goals—to “refine and update criteria for evaluation of natural/cultural heritage nominations” (UNESCO 14 December 1992). The reference to a “unique artistic achievement” in criterion (i) was removed as this phrase favored aesthetically pleasing buildings (UNESCO February 1994, Paragraph 24[a]). The replacement, in cultural heritage criterion (ii) of the phrase “have exerted great influence, over a span of time” with the broad and encompassing phrase “exhibit an interchange of human values” (UNESCO February 1995, Paragraph 24[a]) widened the scope of this criterion. The use of the term “interchange” also suggested that cultures influence and interact with each other. Hence, in this new version the idea that cultural influences occur only in one direction was removed. The removal from cultural heritage criterion (iii) of the phrase “which have disappeared” facilitated the nomination of cultural heritage from living cultures (ibid.).
The 1994 Nara Conference and Document on Authenticity

Concerns were raised during the 1980s and early 1990s at the World Heritage Committee sessions that the notion of authenticity was difficult to understand and interpret (UNESCO 14 December 1992). The World Heritage Committee, therefore, called for a conference on authenticity at its sixteenth session in 1992 (ibid., 8). This conference, organized by the Japanese government and held in Nara (Japan) in November 1994, had two aims. The first aim was to define better the concept of authenticity and the second was to give a new dynamic to the World Heritage Convention and make it more relevant to the diversity of world cultures (Von Droste and Bertilsson 1995, 7). Its location in a non-European country symbolized a move beyond the Western definition of authenticity in the Operational Guidelines. The participants in this meeting recognized that while the word “authenticity” did not necessarily exist in all languages, the concept itself of being true or genuine existed (UNESCO 21 November 1994). During this meeting, a number of problematic issues were discussed. It was recognized that most historic buildings are altered by the actions of nature and utilization and that these changes are part of their historic stratification, thus contributing to their history. This is a very important statement that recognizes even fanciful restorations—those undertaken by nineteenth-century architects such as Viollet-le-Duc, for instance—as important elements in the history of the building. As previously explained, the nomination of “The Historic City of Carcassonne” was deferred by the World Heritage Committee in 1985 because of the interventions by Viollet-le-Duc. This property was however renominated and subsequently included on the World Heritage List in 1997 since it was recognized that the restoration campaign by Viollet-le-Duc was an important contribution to the history of the site.

The Nara Document on Authenticity (henceforth referred to as the Nara Document) was also adopted at this meeting. It recognizes that the values for which sites are conserved provide a basis for assessing all aspects of authenticity (UNESCO 21 November 1994, Article 9). Article 11 recognizes that authenticity is a relative criterion that can change from one culture to another. It further recognizes that the authenticity of a site is rooted in specific sociocultural contexts and can only be understood and judged within those specific contexts (articles 11 and 12). According to Pressouyre, for instance, the conservation of wooden buildings in Japan is traditionally based on complete dismantling and reconstruction using new wood (1996, 12). As explained by Pressouyre, the authenticity of Japanese wooden buildings is “essentially attached to function, subsidiary to form, but by no means to material” (ibid.). Article 13 of the Nara Document details that the assessment of the authenticity of a building is based on a multiplicity of aspects, including “forms and design, materials and substance, use and functions, traditions
and techniques, location and setting, and spirit and feeling, and other internal and external factors.” This article demonstrates that the guidelines on authenticity provided in Paragraph 24 (b)(i) of the Operational Guidelines, which focus on “design, materials, workmanship and setting” are too narrow to judge the wealth and diversity of the world’s heritage (see UNESCO February 1995, for example). The definition of authenticity provided in the Operational Guidelines also overemphasizes the protection of the material aspect of cultural heritage. Indeed, according to this text, the principle of authenticity of a building excludes the replacement of any old materials by new ones (Parent 1983, 4). The example above of the conservation of Japanese wooden buildings contradicts this definition, as new material is periodically used in the complete reconstruction of the structure. Within its own sociocultural context, the authenticity of this heritage is thus based on culture, tradition and function more than on its strictly material aspects.

Despite the importance of the Nara Document and the key paradigmatic shift it provides of authenticity, the World Heritage Committee did not modify Paragraph 24 (b)(i) of the Operational Guidelines (see UNESCO February 1996, for example) until their 2005 revised version (UNESCO 28 May 2002, Paragraph II.C.7). The 1994 report of the World Heritage Committee did not provide any explanation for not modifying the definition of authenticity in the Operational Guidelines at that time (UNESCO 31 January 1995). Notably, the 1998 second and latest edition of Management Guidelines for World Cultural Heritage Sites by Feilden and Jokilehto (first version 1993) also did not take the Nara Document into account. The section on authenticity and treatments relating to authenticity is exactly the same as in its 1993 edition. This section only refers to authenticity in terms of material, workmanship, design and setting and does not relate to other forms of authenticity detailed in the Nara Document.

1996–2011: FURTHER EFFORTS TO FULFILL THE CONVENTION’S DUAL REQUIREMENT OF REPRESENTATIVENESS AND SELECTIVITY

1996 Revisions of the Six Cultural Heritage Criteria

The scope of the 1996 revision of the six cultural heritage criteria was further expanded to reflect the Global Strategy. References to “technology” and “technological ensemble” were added to cultural heritage criterion (ii) and cultural heritage criterion (iv) respectively (UNESCO February 1996, Paragraph 24). This revised cultural heritage criterion (ii) read “exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design” (ibid.), while cultural heritage
criterion (iv) read “be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history” (ibid.). This expansion reflects the underrepresentation of industrial heritage.

In December 1996, at the twentieth session of the Committee in Merida (Mexico), the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome, Japan) was inscribed on the World Heritage List on an “exceptional basis” under criterion (vi) only (UNESCO 10 March 1997, 69). Unfortunately, the report of this session of the Committee did not provide further information on the reason for this inscription under exceptional circumstances (ibid.). This inscription gave rise to some debates. Some delegates noted that war sites might not be suitable for inscription on the World Heritage List as they could be used to propagate political and nationalistic messages contradictory to the spirit of the convention. Some delegates were also concerned that the inclusion of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) might lead to other similar inscriptions that could harm the credibility of the list. As a result, the use of cultural heritage criterion (vi) was further restricted during this twentieth session of the Committee so that it could only be used in exceptional circumstances and in conjunction with other cultural or natural heritage criteria (UNESCO 10 March 1997, 105). This small change dramatically reduced the types of properties that could be nominated for inclusion on the list. This rewording favored traditional sites already overrepresented on the World Heritage List. This reduction also excluded the possibility of inscribing intangible heritage sites that are of outstanding universal value for symbolic or sacred reasons but that do not have tangible and exceptional cultural and natural features. This reduction of cultural heritage criterion (vi) contradicted the spirit of the Global Strategy and the 1992 Strategic Goals 1 and 2. The reduction of the scope of this criterion was subsequently criticized at regional meetings of experts organized as part of the Global Strategy’s implementation. The meeting “Authenticity and Integrity in an African Context” held in May 2000 in Zimbabwe, for example, recommended the revision of the wording and expansion of the scope of this criterion (UNESCO 9 October 2000). As further explained below, the scope of this criterion was expended in the 2005 revision of the Operational Guidelines.


In 2002, as part of the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention, the Committee adopted the Budapest Declaration with the following objectives to guide the future implementation of the Convention:
1. strengthen the *Credibility* of the World Heritage List, as a representative and geographically balanced testimony of cultural and natural properties of outstanding universal value;

2. ensure the effective *Conservation* of World Heritage properties;

3. promote the development of effective *Capacity-building* measures, including assistance for preparing the nomination of properties to the World Heritage List, for the understanding and implementation of the World Heritage Convention and related instruments;

4. increase public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through *Communication*. (UNESCO 28 June 2002)

These objectives are better known as the “four Cs” for credibility, conservation, capacity-building and communication. In 2007, following New Zealand’s proposal, a fifth strategic objective focusing on communities (the “fifth C”) was adopted (UNESCO 23 May 2007). This proposal argued indeed that the lack of community involvement in heritage protection leads invariably to a failure in the implementation of the Convention’s other four objectives. In light of this, the fifth C aims to enhance the role of communities in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. References to local populations and their involvement in the nomination of sites and their conservation is further analyzed in chapters 4 and 5.

In April 2000, English Heritage and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (henceforth referred to as Government of the United Kingdom), in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre, organized an International Expert Meeting on the Revision of the Operational Guidelines in Canterbury. Following this meeting, the World Heritage Committee, at its twenty-fourth session in 2000, decided to simplify and restructure the Operational Guidelines in a more logical order and present them in a more user-friendly format. The Committee also decided to revise some of the criteria, improve the link between the cultural and natural heritage criteria, identify gaps, propose new sections and further define some of the concepts for clarification purposes. Indeed, over the years, the results of expert meetings and other revisions had been fed into the Operational Guidelines on an *ad hoc* basis. This had resulted in long sections on certain specific issues (twentieth-century cities, for example) while others were missing entirely (UNESCO 12 October 2000a, 4). The name and recommendations of the Global Strategy, in particular, were not mentioned in this document. As already discussed, the Operational Guidelines also did not define authenticity according to the Nara Document.

The 2005 revised version of the Operational Guidelines provides, for the first time, a unified list of the six cultural heritage criteria and the four natural heritage ones. This unification had been called for since at least the 1996 expert meeting on World Heritage natural criteria organized at the Parc
National de La Vanoise in France (UNESCO 26 September 1996). This unification reinforces the spirit of the World Heritage Convention and particularly Article 1, which explicitly links natural and cultural heritage sites.

In addition, the 2005 version of the Operational Guidelines provided a revised framework and timeframe in order to simplify and facilitate the work of all the actors of the Convention. According to this new framework, nomination dossiers have to be received by the World Heritage Centre by February 1. Complete dossiers are then sent to the advisory bodies for independent evaluation. These evaluations are then presented to the Committee that in turn makes the final decision on each site at its annual session in June/July the following year.

The heritage criteria were likewise revised. The scope of criterion (vi) was slightly expanded and now reads as follows: “be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria)” (UNESCO February 2005).

Additionally, cultural heritage criterion (v) was also revised to include reference to “sea-use” and “human interaction with the environment.” This criterion reads as follows: “is an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change” (ibid.). The alterations made to these two criteria are crucial as they widen their scopes and allow different types of cultural heritage sites to be included on the World Heritage List.

The 2005 revision of the Operational Guidelines also introduces the requirement for a “Statement of Outstanding Universal Value,” deemed to be “the key reference for the future effective protection and management of the property” (ibid.). Adopted by the Committee, it should include a summary of the description of the property, a detail of the criteria for inscription and assessments of the conditions of integrity or authenticity, as well as of protection and management measures in force.

Analyses of the Lists and Problems with the Global Strategy

In 2000, the World Heritage Committee asked the advisory bodies to analyze the World Heritage List, the Tentative Lists and the recommendations of all regional and thematic meetings on the harmonization of Tentative Lists held since 1983 as well as of regional meetings on the Global Strategy organized since 1994 (UNESCO 11 December 2000). According to the World Heritage Committee, this analysis would provide States Parties with a clear overview of the present situation of the World Heritage List and Tentative Lists as well
as of geographical and thematic gaps in the list. This would also help determine whether the different meetings organized as part of the Global Strategy had influenced States Parties’ selection of sites.

The results of the analyses conducted by ICOMOS show that the geographic imbalance had not changed since 1994. As of 2003, 55 percent of the cultural and mixed cultural and natural heritage sites on the World Heritage List were located in Europe and North America. As of 2002, a total of 866 sites were on Tentative Lists, and 399 of them (46 percent) were on a Tentative List from Europe or North America. Tentative Lists are important as they provide an indication of the sites that States Parties plan to nominate in the next five to ten years, and they therefore offer an indication of the evolution of the World Heritage List in the medium term. Geographical analyses of Tentative Lists therefore demonstrate that, in the near future, the Europe/North America region will continue to dominate the list (ICOMOS 2004, 40). ICOMOS analyses also demonstrate the preponderance, on both the World Heritage list and Tentative Lists, of traditional categories of heritage, particularly historic towns and historic properties. Most properties illustrating underrepresented themes on the list have been located in Europe. For example, only thirteen of the thirty-seven cultural landscapes on the World Heritage List were located in a non-European country as of 2003. ICOMOS analyses have also stressed that the regional expert meetings recommended by the text of the Global Strategy and organized in all the UNESCO regions between 1995 and 2003 have not had a major impact on the regional and thematic balances of the list (ibid., 38–41).

My article on the Global Strategy (2005) as well as the audit of the Global Strategy, conducted by UNESCO’s external auditor (requested by the General Assembly and presented at its eighteenth session), explain some of the issues in implementing the Global Strategy (UNESCO 27 May 2011, 3–10). Some of these difficulties are linked, as previously stressed, to the revised Operational Guidelines. First, the central notions of the Global Strategy have not been defined in these guidelines, leading to divergent interpretation by States Parties. Second, the 1996 restriction of the scope of cultural heritage criterion (vi) has made it difficult for nontraditional and non-monumental types of properties from countries outside Europe to be nominated for inclusion on the World Heritage List. The Operational Guidelines have also not been defined in some cases. The 1996 revised version of this document stresses that States Parties should “consider whether their cultural heritage is already well represented on the List and if so to slow down voluntarily their rate of submission of further nominations” (UNESCO February 1996, Paragraph 6[vii]). Nonetheless, ten sites from Italy were inscribed on the list in 1997. It is true that, following the Cairn-Suzhou decision, the Committee decided to examine up to two complete nominations per State Party, provided that at least one of the nominations concerned a natural property, and
to set at forty-five the annual limit on the number of nominations it would review. However, this does not mean that European States Parties have refrained from submitting nominations or that the properties nominated have reflected more diverse types of heritage.

Besides, some problems are rooted in national circumstances. These include the lack of financial and administrative capacity, or the lack of a national or regional inventory of heritage. The implementation of the World Heritage Convention is also limited because of internal political instability.

Lastly, the themes identified in the Global Strategy as being underrepresented on the list are, in some cases, problematic. In his in-depth analysis of World Heritage cultural landscapes from 1992 to 2002, Fowler notes that potential cultural landscapes have deliberately not been nominated as such by States Parties for inclusion on the list (2003, 22). This situation might be due to the fact that States Parties seem to believe that it is more difficult to submit a successful nomination dossier for a cultural landscape than for a cultural or natural site (ibid.). Cultural landscapes are also perceived as requiring more complex management systems. The 1994 text of the Global Strategy further refers to the heritage of the twentieth century. Some national legislations on archaeology and cultural heritage exclude this type of heritage, making its preservation difficult.

The 2011 audit of the Global Strategy presented a number of key recommendations (UNESCO 27 May 2011). These recommendations clearly demonstrate the failure of the different attempts to arrive at a credible and representative World Heritage List. These recommendations include the regional harmonization of Tentative Lists (already attempted many times), the diversification of the geographical origin of experts working with the advisory bodies or the deletion from the list of properties that have irremediably lost their outstanding universal value. To curb the increasing politicization of the Committee, this report recommends that States Parties should not be allowed to submit nomination dossiers during their mandate on the Committee. The General Assembly, at its eighteenth session in 2011, decided to create an open-ended working group to examine the report of the external auditor in order to produce an implementation plan for these recommendations for consideration by the World Heritage Committee (UNESCO 16 November 2011). It also adopted, as Goal 2 of the Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention 2012–2022, “the credible selection of the most outstanding world’s cultural and natural heritage,” reiterating the importance of this issue of credibility (UNESCO 1 August 2011).

Reflection on Outstanding Universal Value

At its twenty-eighth session in 2004, the World Heritage Committee requested that a special meeting of experts on the concept of outstanding uni-
versal value involving all regions be convened. This request denotes the increasing concern of the Committee about the diverging understanding and interpretation of this concept by the main stakeholders responsible for the implementation of the Convention. The aims of this meeting were to provide better understanding of the concept of outstanding universal value; to offer guidance toward better preparation of Tentative Lists and better identification of World Heritage properties of potential outstanding universal value; to help to improve nominations of properties of potential outstanding universal value to the World Heritage List; and to provide guidance toward better sustainable conservation of World Heritage properties of outstanding universal value.

This expert meeting on the concept of outstanding universal value took place in Kazan, Russian Federation, April 6–9, 2005. Christina Cameron, former chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, gave a keynote speech. She argued that, in the first years of the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, iconic sites considered to be the “best of the best” were inscribed on the list. Sites that were “representative of the best” would subsequently be included on the World Heritage List. She stressed in particular, “In the first five years, 20% and 30% of listed sites could be considered iconic” (UNESCO 15 June 2005, 2). However, one could ask, to whom were these sites iconic and representative of “the best”? It can be argued that most of the sites included met these standards if understood from a Western and occidental perspective. Referring back to the themes developed in the preceding chapter, some of these so-called iconic sites are considered as having “intrinsic” and universal value because they have been consistently cited over time and have therefore become an almost natural point of cultural reference. However, Cameron’s position can also be understood as invoking the relative values of heritage: her mention of “representative of the best” reflects the opening up of the World Heritage framework to new types of properties.

At the meeting in Kazan, the experts recognized that outstanding universal value, like all values, is attributed by people and through human appreciation. However, this recognition did not lead to the removal of the term “intrinsic” from the Operational Guidelines. The experts also agreed that the identification of the outstanding universal value of sites needs wide participation by stakeholders including local communities and indigenous people. They recognized that outstanding universal value was a concept that changed over time, as demonstrated by past committee decisions. Therefore, the criteria that give substance to outstanding universal value need to be regularly revised to accommodate changing perceptions of heritage. The experts also insisted that outstanding universal value is poorly understood in general and requires major communication efforts, both generally and at site level.
It is rather unfortunate that these main conclusions did not really clarify the major issues related to outstanding universal value and especially to those questions discussed in chapter 1 of this book. Besides, this meeting did not elucidate how States Parties themselves had understood outstanding universal value. As a follow-up to this expert meeting, at its thirtieth session in 2006, the World Heritage Committee requested the advisory bodies to undertake a careful review of past committee decisions. This review was to be the basis of two compendiums of relevant materials and decisions, from which precedents on how to interpret and apply discussions of outstanding universal value (in terms of nominations to both the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger) could be clearly shown. At its thirty-first session, in Christchurch, New Zealand, in 2007, the Committee requested the advisory bodies to “harmonize their reports to include detailed analyses of criteria, lists of sites inscribed under each criterion, landmark cases as well as reflections on authenticity, integrity and management practices” (UNESCO 22 May 2008, 2).

The 2008 ICOMOS report “The World Heritage List. What Is OUV?” is largely based on the document presented to the thirty-second session of the Committee held in Quebec in 2008. It contains chapters on the development of the concept of outstanding universal value, based on official reports, analyses of characteristics, changes in the wordings and uses of the different criteria over the past thirty-five years, examples of sites listed under each criterion as well as explanations for the non-inscription of specific cases. The conclusions reflect particularly on the notion of universalism. The report clarifies that this concept does not mean that the property should be known to all but that it should refer to an issue or a theme shared by all human cultures (ICOMOS 2008, 48). For this reason, ICOMOS insists that nominations “should not be undertaken only as a question of national interest,” but should be the result of regional cooperation. However, this publication does not provide any guidelines to move from a national understanding and implementation of the Convention (see chapter 3) to a more regionally based cooperation.

Another issue with this publication is its limited analyses of outstanding universal value. It only presents changes to the wordings of each criterion followed by examples of sites inscribed under such criterion. The section on the “use of criteria” touches upon the discrepancies in the evaluation of nomination dossiers between ICOMOS and the World Heritage Committee. However, it does not provide any in-depth analyses of the reasons for these divergences, which would have helped to clarify some understandings of outstanding universal value.

As already highlighted in the first pages of this book’s introduction, the different shortcomings of this ICOMOS publication certainly make space for further work on the issue of outstanding universal value (hence my contri-
tion). This is all the more important seeing as the Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention 2012–2022 reiterates the importance of outstanding universal value as the overarching structuring concept and goal of this international system (UNESCO 1 August 2011).

The Future of the Convention

Following the publication of *World Heritage: Challenges for the Millennium*, which I edited under the direction of Francesco Bandarin, then director of the World Heritage Centre (Bandarin and Labadi 2007), and in view of the approaching fortieth anniversary of the Convention, the World Heritage Committee decided to launch a reflection on the future of the Convention at its thirty-second session in 2008. During the reflection workshop organized at UNESCO headquarters (Paris, 25–27 February 2009), “World Heritage and Sustainable Development” was identified as a theme needing further reflection (UNESCO 22 June 2009). This is a particularly important theme and the subject of chapter 5. As further detailed in chapter 5, the introduction of the 2005 version of the Operational Guidelines notes, “The protection and conservation of the natural and cultural heritage are a significant contribution to sustainable development” (UNESCO February 2005, Paragraph 6). However, these references have not been translated into actual policies or procedures for the implementation of the Convention (UNESCO 2010a).

For this reason a meeting was organized on this topic by the World Heritage Centre in March 2010. During this meeting, the definition of sustainable development from the Brundtland Report as the “careful balance of environmental, social and economic dimensions, in order to meet the needs of current and future generations” was adopted (ibid., 2). This meeting recognized that uncontrolled development is one of the most significant threats affecting World Heritage sites and their outstanding universal value. A deeper focus on sustainable development issues was recognized as leading to a better conservation of World Heritage sites and their outstanding universal value. A number of methods were identified as ways to better consider the development potential or reality of properties, including cultural mapping indicators and the ARDI (actors, resources, dynamics and interactions) methodology. An “Action Plan for 2012” was also adopted, which proposed that further studies on the social and economic impact of World Heritage List inscription be undertaken, along with the preparation of guidance on the integration of sustainable development issues within conservation and management strategies or the revision of the Operational Guidelines to incorporate issues related to sustainable development (ibid., 7). The Committee welcomed the proposed Action Plan for 2012 and asked the center to identify extra-budgetary resources to implement it (UNESCO 7 July 2011). This action plan has yet to be fully implemented. As an addition, the revised 2011
version of the Operational Guidelines requests that sustainable development principles be integrated into the management system. This reflects Goal 3 of the Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention 2012–2022, adopted at the eighteenth session of the General Assembly in 2011, which aims to increase “consideration of sustainable development through connecting conservation to communities” (UNESCO 1 August 2011). These issues, including matters related to sustainable tourism at World Heritage sites, are considered in greater depth in chapter 5 and in this volume’s conclusion.

SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has highlighted that, over the past thirty-nine years, none of the theoretical considerations addressed in chapter 1 on the notion of intrinsic and extrinsic values have been thoroughly addressed by the Committee. This is particularly surprising considering the many meetings organized on the meaning of outstanding universal value. For this reason, the official discourses on outstanding universal value still reveal ambiguous positioning, with some texts (the Operational Guidelines for instance) referring to the intrinsic value of sites while other documents choose to focus on their extrinsic dimension.

Moreover, this chapter has demonstrated that the Committee and the advisory bodies have unequally considered the notion of outstanding universal value in its broader social context. ICOMOS may have arguably made a very bold request to move beyond a nationalistic implementation of the Convention in its 2008 report on outstanding universal value. However, it did not indicate how such a move was to be achieved. The debates concerning the inscription of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) to the list in 1996 could also have provided an opportunity for further discussion and even the adoption of practical steps for using the Convention as a tool for postnational construction and peace building. However, this was not the case. The following chapter will consider whether and how States Parties have understood the Convention according to a postnationalist approach.

The widening of criterion (vi), the adoption of the concept of cultural landscape and the call for a more anthropological consideration of properties in the text of the Global Strategy might also have been an opportunity for the better recognition of the culturally diverse people living within inscribed sites. Chapter 4 will help to clarify whether this was really the case, despite the lack of any official guideline on how to better account for cultural diversity such as women as well as the position and role of subaltern or subjected groups.
As for the concept of sustainable development (the focus of chapter 5), recent reflections on the future of the Convention have revealed that this concept had been included in the Operational Guidelines since 1992 but without any procedures for its implementation. Furthermore, these reflections did not touch upon States Parties’ understanding of sustainable development and the integration of this concept in their nomination dossiers. Chapter 5 will investigate such understanding and integration.

Of all the concepts considered in this research, authenticity (the subject of chapter 6) might have undergone the most drastic changes, as testified by the Nara Conference, its proceedings and the Nara Document. However, this conference and text were only directly mentioned in the 2005 revised version of the Operational Guidelines. Besides, no guidelines have ever been published on how to implement the principles and requirements of the Nara Conference and the Nara Document. Chapter 6 will consider how these changing definitions have influenced the meaning and presentation of authenticity.
Chapter Three

National Constructions of the Past

From this point onward, the discussion herein turns to focus on the key question of this volume: How have States Parties understood the notion of outstanding universal value? This chapter examines how these conceptions have shaped the construction of the nation, especially when the collective identity of its population is considered to be materially represented in certain heritage properties. This topic is of crucial importance, as indeed many heritage sites have been associated primarily with the creation or strengthening of the nation-state, its cultural identity and collective memory (see, for example, Lowenthal 1998; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1984; Trigger 1995, 263–79; and D. Fowler 1987, 229–48).

In order to do so, this chapter tackles a number of tensions: those between nation-building as presented in nomination dossiers and the perception that World Heritage sites serve as symbols of the common human interest; those between claims of supremacy and uniqueness emphasized through the concept of outstanding universal value and the UN message of peace among all cultures; and those between the compulsory requirement of comparative analyses and the seemingly absolute nature of outstanding universal value.

This chapter begins with an analysis of the architectural, aesthetic, historical and monumental values of nominated properties. It continues with an examination of how notions of tradition, continuity and the linear presentation of history play a central role in nomination dossiers. These sections are completed by an analysis of the construction of collective identities, an essential component of nation-building. The final component focuses on comparative analyses, also as understood through the lens of nation-building.

59
Chapter 3

THE CENTRALITY OF ARCHITECTURAL, AESTHETIC AND HISTORICAL VALUES

The majority of the nomination dossiers analyzed herein concentrate on describing the outstanding architectural, aesthetic and historical values of the nominated property. This stands in opposition to some of the shifts in the historical evolution of the Convention, as presented in the previous chapter. The 1994 text of the Global Strategy, in particular, stresses that States Parties should move away from an architectural and monumental conception of cultural heritage to one that is more anthropologically inclined in order to consider heritage in a more holistic and pluri-disciplinary manner. One of the outcomes of this meeting and the accompanying text was the 1994 revision of cultural heritage criterion (i). The reference to “a unique artistic achievement” was removed as it was felt that this phrase favored aesthetically and architecturally pleasing buildings. From that time onward, cultural heritage criterion (i) has referred to sites that “represent a masterpiece of the human creative genius.” Nonetheless, before and after 1994, criterion (i) was associated in nomination dossiers with the description of the architectural and aesthetic beauty of the proposed sites. This denotes a monumental and biased understanding of the concept of World Heritage based on the physical attributes of properties. Such a focus is reinforced by references to the architectural and aesthetic values of nominated properties in the “Justification for inclusion in the World Heritage List” section of most of the dossiers analyzed. This key section aims to clarify and justify the criterion(a) for which the site is proposed for inclusion on the World Heritage List.

This reveals States Parties’ lasting association of the notion of World Heritage with monuments and sites that are aesthetically and architecturally pleasing. This tension between the decisions of the Committee, the text of the Global Strategy and States Parties’ implementation of the Convention can be explained by the lack of information and tools provided to States Parties regarding how they might implement the Global Strategy recommendations. Furthermore, States Parties have never been encouraged to respect or take into account the conclusions of this meeting.

MONUMENTS AS ICONS OF NATIONAL HEROISM

All the dossiers analyzed refer primarily to the monumentality, beauty and opulence of sites. Such a focus can be explained from a political point of view: through these monuments, the nation, which is an abstract concept, is being materialized (Kertzer 1988, 17). These monuments act as emotional symbols of collective self-expression and self-identification, and in doing so “mobilise political emotions, draw people together in common acts of self-
identification, generate and affirm the consciousness of a collective ‘we,’ and play a vital part in building up a strong sense of mutual commitment and belonging” (Parekh 1998, 11). The monumentality of sites tends to be used to present them as “icons of national heroism” (Silberman 1995, 257). By association, the nation’s population as a whole is additionally identified as heroic, grand, strong and powerful. Above all, the impressive architecture of these monuments is understood as enabling this population to see themselves as a coherent group that has “accomplished great things together” (Renan 1994 [1882], 17).

The non-European States Parties use the same techniques and arguments to describe their religious heritage as the European ones. This is interesting considering that the World Heritage system has often been criticized for being Eurocentric—that is, for privileging specific aesthetic and art-historical points of view (see, for instance, Cleere 1993, 11). If one analyzes, as detailed in chapter 1, the dossiers according to the lens of reiterative universalism and the contact zone, two main strategies of imitation can be identified to have been adopted by the non-European States Parties in order to have their sites recognized as worthy of global status.

The first strategy concerns the dossiers of the monuments built by the colonial forces—for instance, the Jesuit missions of the Guaranis (Brazil) or the Jesuit missions of the Chiquitos (Bolivia). These documents pay homage to the European civilization, whose influence on and domination over the former colonies is thus acknowledged and legitimized. This can be understood as recognition of the ostensibly superior position of Europe, the supposed locus of civilization. The second strategy is deployed in non-European nomination dossiers concerning pre-Hispanic monumental sites located in South America, such as Teotihuacan or Chichen Itza in Mexico (figure 3.1). They mimic the presentation of the religious sites from Europe but stand concomitantly as a place of resistance to and contestation of the legitimacy of European power and the hegemony of its culture and heritage. Indeed, by employing the same strategies as their European counterparts, non-European States Parties destabilize the central, hegemonic and seemingly inaccessible position of Europe. Moreover, by adopting the vocabulary used by the Europeans, these non-European States Parties reposition themselves from the periphery to an egalitarian position and the very heart of European discourse.
From the outset, one would perhaps assume that industrial heritage sites would be presented differently than religious ones. Industrial sites do not tend to be valued for their monumentality (e.g., underground mines) or their architectural or aesthetic values. However, surprisingly, the descriptions of the architectural and aesthetic values of industrial sites mirror those of the European religious properties. Indeed, the nomination dossiers of the selected industrial heritage sites similarly focus on their monumentality and beauty. Insisting on the beauty of properties helps to project an attractive, idealized and positive image of the nation; while ugliness is usually consciously or unconsciously understood as connoting “evil, disorder, dissonance, irregularity, excess, deformity” (Athanassoglou-Kallmyer 2003, 281). Some industrial heritage sites are even associated with religious properties. Through such mimetic associations, industrial heritage sites can be considered to shed their otherwise ugly and dangerous connotations and instead be accepted on the world stage. This is the case, for example, in the German nomination dossier of the “Völklingen Ironworks,” which is compared to a “cathedral” of the industrial age, in its section on its justification for inclusion on the World Heritage List (Government of Germany 1993, 7).

This section has clarified, from the lens of reiterative universalism and the contact zone, the different strategies used by States Parties to describe the architectural and aesthetic values of nominated properties. It has stressed that nomination dossiers from the non-European countries and from industrial heritage sites have mimicked the nominations of religious sites from European countries through similarly focusing on monumentality, beauty and perfection. These descriptions can be understood in a political sense as repre-
senting the nation as perfect, grand and powerful. These parallels in the presentations can be due to the fact that successful models, often originating from Europe, were copied by non-European States Parties to ensure that their sites would also be inscribed on the list. Copying is nonetheless a very powerful act since it enables non-European countries to become equal to European countries on the world stage.

TRADITIONS AND CONTINUITY AS A POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION OF THE NATION

The majority of the nomination dossiers analyzed convey a sense of the continuous importance of the site, and, in particular, of the traditions continuously upheld there over the centuries. Such descriptions help nominated sites be cast as foundational pillars of the nation in which they are located (A. Smith 2001) and to define and materialize the collective identity of the nation’s people. Conveying these notions of continuity and tradition are essential for the construction and justification of the nation. This is part of a nationalistic project that aims to justify the present state of the nation, its autonomy, uniqueness and unity (Meskell 1998; Kohl and Fawcett 1995; Díaz-Andreu and Champion 1996; A. Smith 2001, 9). Traditions indeed help to associate the idea of the nation with that of symbolic stability. Although heads of states, governments and frontiers change, some traditions stay the same and are repeated over time. These traditions present the nation as a stable and continuous entity over time. This, in turn, helps to convey a “shared ideology of legitimacy” (Kertzer 1988, 39). The relationship between symbolic stability and legitimacy is twofold. First, symbolic stability helps to legitimate the current geographical boundaries and civil organization of the nation. Second, symbolic stability helps to legitimate the political structures, the rulers in place and their authority by presenting them as direct inheritors of past regimes. Importantly, the three groups of cultural heritage considered correspond to this political presentation and use. This stands in opposition to some statements that industrial heritage sites do not help to justify the existence of the nation and have little to do with justifying of the continuity of national institutions and governments (Samuel 1994, 158).

In addition, some of the descriptions in the nomination dossiers considered help to provide an image of the property, and by extension of the nation, that goes beyond continuity and into “semi-fiction” and eternity (Hobsbawm 1984, 7). Ideas of eternity reinforce, first, the prestige and legitimacy of political leaders: “throughout much of recorded human history royal families and ethnic groups have sought to bolster their prestige by invoking mythical links to the gods or to some glorious human past” (Trigger 1995, 266). Second, links to a mythical and eternal past help to justify the existence of
the nation, which is understood as having been created by the will of gods. Establishing links to a mythical and eternal past is also, in this instance, crucial to justifying the future existence of the nation. Indeed, these emphases both on continuity and eternity provide an image of the nation as a petrified block. Since the nation is presented as having been in existence forever in the past, one could easily jump to the assumption that it would exist, in its current form, forever into the future. Therefore these emphases on the continuity and eternity of the site play a key political role in justifying the existence of the nation and do not allow any space for contesting and challenging it.

Through specific analyses of nomination dossiers, four main types of continuous traditions and continuity can be identified. First of all, some of the religious and industrial heritage sites from Europe detail architectural and political traditions held at the site, some of them obviously invented. Hobsbawm defines these invented traditions as “responses to novel situations which take the form of references to old situations” (1984, 2). They include a specific architectural style that “automatically implies continuity with the past” (ibid., 1). Hobsbawm provides the example of the “deliberate choice of a Gothic style for the nineteenth-century rebuilding of the British Parliament” (ibid., 1–2), part of the nominated property of “Westminster Palace, Westminster Abbey and Saint Margaret’s Church.”

Second, some of these invented traditions refer to the mythical origin of the nation and help support claims that its creation was the will of God. An example is the nomination dossier of the “Cathedral of Notre-Dame, Former Abbey of Saint-Remi and Palace of Tau, Reims,” and its explanation of the symbolic and mythical dimension of the coronation of the French kings. This dossier explains that, at the baptism of Clovis, considered to be the first official Christian king of France, an ampulla containing a holy chrism was brought by a dove from heaven. This baptism of Clovis, considered as the foundation of France (Le Goff 1998, 198), helps to give mythical foundations to the nation, based on an act of God. This vial and its contents were subsequently used for centuries for the coronation of the great majority of the kings of France at Reims.

Third, emphases on the religious features of sites help to project beliefs in national tradition and continuity. Such ideas are conveyed in many of the nomination dossiers analyzed through explanations that the property has been an active religious center or a place of pilgrimage for at least four or five centuries. Such an emphasis on the tradition of pilgrimage conveys an image of a continuous and unified nation. Indeed, these mass pilgrimages bring people together and sanctify their unity against the divisive tendencies of daily life (Kertzer 1988, 63). Examples include the French and Spanish “Routes of Santiago de Compostela” and the Italian site of “Assisi, the Basilica of San Francesco and other Franciscan Sites,” which have both func-
tioned as pilgrimage sites since the Middle Ages. The continuity of the religious faiths at these sites has also been recognized in some ICOMOS evaluations and by the World Heritage Committee as expressions of their outstanding universal value. This is the case, for instance, for the ICOMOS evaluation of the dossier of the Spanish “Route of Santiago de Compostela” (October 1993) and the subsequent committee decision concerning the inscription of this site on the list. This evaluation and decision recommended inscription of this site on the World Heritage List under cultural heritage criterion (vi) since “thousands of pilgrims” have walked along these paths “for centuries.”

The final case corresponds to the postcolonial countries of Mexico and Bolivia, which have attempted to create a hybrid, inclusive national identity through invented traditions and a sense of continuity with their pre-Hispanic past. This is particularly true in the nomination dossiers of the pre-Hispanic properties of Tiwanaku in Bolivia and Teotihuacan and Chichen-Itza in Mexico. While these sites were abandoned before or during the colonial period, a symbolic continuity is established between the pre-Hispanic and the present Mexican populations in these nomination dossiers. The nomination dossier of Teotihuacan is particularly clear when it indicates that this site has always been in the mind of the indigenous population and has remained, for them, a key referential point over the centuries. These nomination dossiers from Bolivia and Mexico are thus clearly located within a nationalistic and indigenismo discourse (D. Fowler 1987, 234), which attempts to base the origin of the nation on these monumental pre-Hispanic sites and to thus forge continuous links between the past and present Mexican population. However, one should be wary. On the one hand, these discourses can be understood as portraying complex and hybrid nations, shaped simultaneously by their colonial legacy but also by their capacity to remain outside of the colonized/colonizer territory. On the other hand, for some, “indigenismo is the theory developed by members of the Latin American oligarchy to stop and repress the indigenous peoples’ liberation movement” (Ovando Sanz 1979, 7; see also Breglia 2009, 205–27). These examples of Tiwanaku, Teotihuacan and Chichen-Itza could thus be understood as representing an inclusive model of the nation that in reality is actually used to exclude. Hence, discourses concerning the greater inclusiveness of nomination dossiers should be used with care. In particular, the right for minorities to stay outside of the World Heritage system should certainly be respected, and in some cases encouraged, so as to avoid the problems of the all-pervasive, controlling nature of some central governments.

An analysis of the results of this section through the lens of reiterative universalism and the contact zone highlights that States Parties have all focused on traditions continuously upheld over the centuries at the site in question. Such a focus is due to the need to legitimate, within nomination
dossiers, the current geographical boundaries of the nation as well as its political structures and authorities. Why such similar presentations can be found is a difficult question to answer. It might reflect the copying, on the part of non-European countries, of models of nation-building through heritage, as developed in Europe.

LINEAR HISTORY AS NATION-BUILDING

A sense of continuity is further conveyed through descriptions of the history and development of the nominated properties. For all the dossiers analyzed, these descriptions follow linear and sequential narrations with chronological explanations of the construction of the property or significant buildings within it. Outstanding universal value seems therefore to be interpreted as a long and sequential succession of events. In some cases, it is even interpreted as being the longest succession of events possible—stretching, as exemplified in some of the Chinese dossiers, as far back as the geological formation of the site—in order to justify that the heritage property in question has always been of outstanding universal value.

This linear, continuous and unilateral presentation of history is problematic as it omits different perspectives and other histories that might have been linked to the site. These unilateral histories do not “acknowledge the parallel existence of incongruent narratives that interpret the same event very differently” (Archibald 1999, 96). It is true that any representation of history is necessarily selective, since all the historical details cannot be narrated (Blok 1992, 121; Carr 1987, 11). However, the nomination dossiers considered in this publication present a very restricted vision of history that focuses almost exclusively on the construction of the site. This has led to the omission of a number of important aspects, such as the historical context in which the nominated property was built or the controversies surrounding its construction. Some members of the clergy were opposed, for instance, to the construction of the early French Gothic cathedrals because they were understood as too opulent. Indeed, such styles of architecture had a negative status “in a strict system of Christian morality. To build for any purpose implied an inappropriate faith in the permanence of material things in this world and was easily seen as an expression of personal vainglory” (Onians 1988, 112).

These findings trigger a key question: how can narratives that acknowledge different and often contested perspectives be constructed? Is it possible to accommodate these different narratives within nomination dossiers? For Lowenthal, the essence of heritage is to omit specific aspects of the history of the site (1998, 121). Mention of different and even contradictory viewpoints might lead to an incoherent presentation of the site and the nation, making States Parties reluctant to provide such a presentation. In addition, the con-
cept of outstanding universal value encourages States Parties to focus on the pos-
tive and “safe” historical accounts associated with the nominated site rather than on the polemics and tensions connected to it.

If analyzed through the lens of reiterative universalism and the contact zone, these results demonstrate the copying by non-European countries of the linear way in which history is constructed in the West. Indeed, such linearity is not necessarily the fashion in which history is conceived of and presented by non-European countries (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2010, 331–32). In addition, States Parties nominating industrial heritage sites mimic the way in which elitist heritage is being presented. For Gillis (1994, 6) and Nora (1998, 623), the representation of history differs according to the category of cultural heritage under consideration. Historical accounts relating to elitist heritage such as religious sites tend to be presented in a linear and chronological order. On the other hand, historical accounts regarding more recent and popular forms of cultural heritage, such as industrial heritage, tend to follow alternate, less linear narratives and sequences. However, this differentiation was not noticeable in the nomination dossiers of industrial heritage analyzed in the research for this volume. These linear presentations might be understood as providing an “aura of socially neutral inevitability to the industrialisation process, and a pervading theme of progress [that] legitimate[s] what had occurred and marginalise[s] many of the negative social impacts” (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996, 77).

This section has also highlighted the difficulties in accommodating different histories and narratives within nomination dossiers. This is particularly problematic considering that best practices guidance on drafting statements of significance, and by extension the nomination dossiers, calls for the identification of all important values associated with the site. This can lead to the featuring of contradicting values and narratives. However, outstanding universal value seems currently to be primarily associated with positive values. As the debates that surrounded the 1996 inscription of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) on the World Heritage List testify, there exist many difficulties in nominating negative heritage sites or those with negative connotations, despite the observation that if the list’s goal is to promote “peace in the mind of men,” as stressed in the Constitution of UNESCO, such negative sites can contribute to this goal by offering understandings of the roots of conflicts and opportunities for the development of peace.

INCLUSIVE/EXCLUSIVE COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES

The previous section presented and contrasted the different ways in which the architectural and aesthetic descriptions as well as the historical presentation of sites were used to construct the nation. As an addition, this section
analyzes how heritage has been used in nomination dossiers to construct collective national identity. This is a key element of nationalism, which gives people the sentiment or consciousness of belonging to an “imagined community” (Anderson 1991). I define collective identity following Anderson as the development of a collective, cohesive and unified consciousness whose limits cannot be possibly felt on the basis of individual experience (Anderson 1991; L. Williams 1999, 8).

The process of defining this collective national identity involves the delimitation of both a set of shared characteristics that a community considers part of itself as well as a group of excluded qualities to which it defines itself in opposition. This exclusionary collective identity is a crucial element in legitimating the occupation of a specific territory and the existence of different nations and peoples. It is, for instance, because they define themselves differently that Germans and Czechs form two separate nations and occupy different territories. The problem with exclusionary collective identities is that they can lead to the rejection of the actual diversity that exists within the national space as a consequence of regional or international migrations.

From the outset, universalism is often proclaimed to encourage respect for diversity. In reality, it has often been criticized as excluding “any requirement that would inspire curiosity for what makes others different. On the contrary, the particularity of others is sacrificed to an assumed universal equality that denies its own origins and interests. Universality thereby becomes two-faced: respect and hegemony, rationality and terror” (Beck 2006, 49). However, as indicated in chapter 1, all meanings are up for reinterpretation and subversion. The term “universalism” could thus certainly have been interpreted differently in nomination dossiers, and not solely as a signifier of domination and exclusion. It could have referred, for instance, to multiculturalism, defined as the recognition, respect and provision of equitable status or treatment for clearly demarcated homogeneous groups in the national space (ibid., 66–67; Meskell 2009, 4), or cosmopolitanism, the recognition of the other as both “different and the same” (Beck 2006, 58–59). Cosmopolitanism can indeed be a powerful means to recognize, concomitantly, the heterogeneity of a nation’s population, due, for instance, to its waves of immigrations as well as its unity. It can thus help to destabilize and move beyond fixed binaries constructed through the universalist-cum-Eurocentric framework.

Analyses of the selected nomination dossiers reveal a marked difference, with one exception noted below, between the European religious and industrial heritage sites, on the one hand, and some of the religious heritage sites located outside Europe, on the other. Most nomination dossiers of the European religious and industrial heritage sites focus on the role of the Christian faith in the construction of national collective identity, and consciously or unconsciously exclude other faiths that have been prominent in Europe over the centuries, Islam in particular. This confirms some theorists’ views that
National Constructions of the Past

The national identity of European nation-states has been fashioned in opposition to and exclusion of Islam, considered as the Other, the opposite one (Hodder 1998, 125; Hallam and Street 2000, 8). Two French nomination dossiers are particularly striking: “Vézelay, Church and Hill” and the “Routes of Santiago de Compostela in France,” which refer to the Crusades, a strong political and religious symbol that situates France in opposition to the Muslim world. This testifies to the two-faced reality of universalism: a superficial respect for others that equates, in reality, to exclusion. The nomination dossier of “Vézelay, Church and Hill” in particular insists in three different places on the links between this property and the Second and Third Crusades (figure 3.2). This site was nominated under criterion (vi) because St. Bernard advocated the Second Crusade in 1146 on the hill of Vézelay and Philippe Auguste and Richard Lion Heart set out from Vézelay for the Third Crusade (Government of France 1979c, 5). It was included on the World Heritage List under criterion (vi) for this very reason, following ICOMOS support for such inscription (ICOMOS March 1979). These notions of oppositions and exclusions can be considered as contrary to the messages of intercultural understanding, dialogue and tolerance advocated by UNESCO since they can lead to a rejection of Islamic culture and a failure to appreciate its long and critical historical influence.

On the other hand, eight nomination dossiers of religious heritage sites from non-European countries as well as the “Old Town of Segovia and Its Aqueduct” in Spain stand as opposite cases. This Spanish dossier, located within the European religious group, the referential center, can act as a powerful counter-discourse, challenging the dominant and exclusionary discourse on collective national identity. It was nominated because it represents a type of social structure where different religious faiths peacefully coexisted, including Christians, Muslims and Jews. Because of the rich social texture created by the coexistence of these different faiths, this site was nominated under criteria (iv) and (vi). The ICOMOS evaluation recommended its inscription under criterion (iv) because the layout of this city reflects its ethnic composition, a recommendation that was followed by the World Heritage Committee (ICOMOS November 1985; UNESCO December 1985).

This case of the “Old Town of Segovia and Its Aqueduct” demonstrates the possibility of recognizing the integration of different waves of immigrants into the current identity of the nation-state. This example testifies to the fact that universalism as hegemony and denial of difference as well as exclusionary collective identity can be transgressed in nomination dossiers. This stands as a counterpoint to the example presented above of Mexico, where the inclusion of indigenous people has been understood as a political act to exclude and repress. This example is all the more symbolic because it is located in Europe, within the control group that has often submitted nomination dossiers based on a model of exclusionary collective identities.
COMPARATIVE ANALYSES

The comparison of the nominated property with similar sites is a key section of dossiers. Analyses of this section can help to clarify further how outstanding universal value has been understood in relation to the construction of the nation.

This section of nomination dossiers on “comparative analysis” should be drawn to record, concomitantly, the influence exerted by similar properties on the site as well as the influence that the nominated property itself exerted on subsequent ones. Analyses of the selected nomination dossiers reveal, however, the difficulty of States Parties in drafting these comparative analyses. A number of the nomination dossiers analyzed submitted before 1997 omitted this comparison. Existing comparative analyses in the nomination dossiers from this period were rather short and often did not exceed a few sentences. The 1997 revised version of the Operational Guidelines, which requested States Parties to provide a more comprehensive comparative analysis of the property in nomination dossiers than in the past, led to more detailed analyses.

Furthermore, as already detailed in chapter 2, changes in the wording of cultural heritage criterion (ii) in 1994 with the added reference to “inter-
changes of human values” were supposed to encourage States Parties to acknowledge and recognize in their comparative analyses the influences exerted by foreign cultures on the nominated property. Up to then, nomination dossiers tended to focus solely on the influence exerted by the nominated property on other sites. However, this change in the wording of criterion (ii) did not lead to a better recognition of these foreign influences exerted on nominated properties. Such a continuous focus on the influence wielded by the property on other sites is understandable: States Parties are eager to demonstrate the universal value of the property through insisting on this impact on others. States Parties might not have understood the benefits of and rationale for highlighting the responding influences of these other sites in nomination dossiers in their justification of the outstanding universal value of the property in question. Above all, States Parties seem to have been able to discard this 1994 change in the wording of criteria without prejudice to their nominated property being recommended for and inscribed on the World Heritage List (see also ICOMOS 2008, 25). So why should they take this change into account?

A common strategy found in most nomination dossiers is the use of superlatives to describe the site, and by extension the nation. Through such a strategy, States Parties can avoid having to compare the nominated property with other similar sites. This presentation certainly results from the need to demonstrate the outstanding universal value of the nominated property, a phrase that encourages superlatives rather than more subtle comparative analyses. These superlatives justify claims of superiority as well as of primacy, such as that the site is the oldest structure or building of that kind in the world, or that the industrial process used is the oldest and longest one in use in the world. Such claims are used since “precedence evokes pride and proves title. To be first in a place warrants possession; to antedate others’ origins or exploits shows superiority” (Lowenthal 1998, 174). These claims of superiority and primacy seem to be sometimes so overblown that they border on being outright fallacious, as illustrated by the examples of Aachen Cathedral and Speyer Cathedral dossiers, nominated by Germany in 1978 and 1980 respectively. Both claim to be the first major vaulted building, with Aachen Cathedral described as “the first major vaulted building of the early Middle Ages” (Government of Germany 1978, 7) while Speyer Cathedral is also described as “the first . . . vaulted church building in Europe” (Government of Germany 1980, 11). Neither ICOMOS nor the World Heritage Committee commented on these repeated claims of supremacy and precedence.

Such representations of the past and the nation are nonetheless dangerous: “Claims of ownership, uniqueness, and priority engender strife over every facet of collective legacies” (Lowenthal 1998, 234). These claims are used to stress the differences between different cultures and nations rather than to promote ideas of a common past and legacies shared between them (ibid.).
These claims can lead to tensions since other countries might also make the same assertion. This can be understood as a fundamental slippage between the message of peace and solidarity promoted by the UN and the implementation of the World Heritage Convention that leads to claims of supremacy that underline the differences between nations and cultures.

A few of the dossiers of the European and non-European industrial heritage sites insist on the essential influence exerted by the nominated property on other sites. They emphatically stress that the industrial heritage property was essential for the development of other countries worldwide and that without it the history of the world would have been different. In these dossiers, Europe is taken as the reference, the center that influences the rest of the world. These Eurocentric references reinforce the dominant place occupied by Europe in world history. A telling example is the nomination dossier of the industrial heritage site of “Ironbridge Gorge” in England, which stresses that it is “the direct ancestor of every large metal-framed structure, of the Brooklyn Bridge, the Sydney Harbour Bridge and of the bridge which crosses the Bosphorus, as well as of every skyscraper” (Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 1985a, 22).

Other dossiers from non-European countries mimic, but at the same time subvert, this traditional representation and location of Europe at the center of world history. This is the case, in particular, for the nomination dossier of Potosi in Bolivia, which was one of the biggest silver mines of the Spanish empire from the sixteenth century until the independence of Bolivia in 1809. The nomination dossier of Potosi justifies its proposal for inscription on the World Heritage List because “the silver from Potosi, exported to Europe, was able, to a certain extent, to change the course of European economic history. Without the discovery of this important silver deposit, the fate of the Spanish colonies and metropolitan Spain would certainly have been different” (Government of Bolivia 1986; author’s translation). This justification was accepted by both ICOMOS and the World Heritage Committee and the site was inscribed on the list under criterion (vi) because it is “directly and tangibly associated with an event of outstanding universal significance: the economic change brought about in the sixteenth century by the flood of Spanish currency resulting from the massive import of precious metals in Seville” (ICOMOS December 1986). This nomination destabilizes Europe’s position as the sole referent for world history and argues for the taking into account of the periphery and those countries that had been subjugated for centuries. Indeed, it reveals that it was through the exploitation of those countries that Europe was able to locate itself at the center of the world. In this dossier, strategies of ambivalence can be seen to be at play, disrupting the authority, power and position of historic colonial domination by destabilizing the dichotomy between colonizers and colonized.
The preceding paragraphs demonstrate the difficulty of unbiased comparative analyses between the nominated property and similar ones. Indeed, a minority of nomination dossiers point out the difficulty in undertaking comparative analysis. Such difficulty is explained as being due, first of all, to interpretations of outstanding universal value as superlatives or claims of supremacy. Second, this difficulty is due to the extrinsic nature of valuation, explained in chapter 1. Because valuation is not a scientific action, comparison of a specific site with other similar properties will be challenging because all sites can be valued for completely different reasons. The difficulty, or even impossibility of comparative analysis is explained in the English nomination dossier of “Blaenavon Industrial Landscape,” an ironworks landscape of coal and ore mines, quarries, a primitive railway system, furnaces, workers homes and social infrastructures. This dossier tries to present a comparative analysis of similar sites concerned with ironworking already on the World Heritage List. It concludes, however, that this comparative analysis is difficult to achieve as these similar sites “represent different chronological periods, different forms of technology, and distinctive cultural traditions” (Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 1999, 13). These problems in drafting comparative analyses have nonetheless never been debated or contested by ICOMOS or the World Heritage Committee. This lack of investigation of this subject at the international level might reflect these institutions’ fear of seeing the veneer of objectivity that surrounds the work of ICOMOS and the World Heritage Committee tarnished.

An analysis of the results of this section from the lens of reiterative universalism and the contact zone demonstrates that States Parties have, in their majority, misappropriated the need to undertake a comparison of the nominated property with similar ones. They have used this request to claim that their property is unique and superior to any other similar one. This section is used to reinforce the differences between sites rather than to promote the idea of a shared and common past, underlined in the concept of “universal.” Thus outstanding universal value is understood and interpreted, through the section on comparative analyses, as contrary to what it is supposed to stand for. This section might reveal that outstanding universal value and the World Heritage List are still too often understood as a nationalistic project rather than one that is supposed to promote our shared and common cultures. The recent clashes at the border between Cambodia and Thailand following the inscription of the Preah Vihear temple as a Cambodian site on the list is one example. This stands in opposition to the overall vision of UNESCO that aims to bring “peace in the mind of men.” The proposal to create a new program on heritage and dialogue at UNESCO would certainly help to tackle this issue.
Chapter 3
SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS

This research analyzes the different ways in which the World Heritage Convention has been understood and interpreted at national levels, according to different regions and types of heritage. The Convention has most often been presented as a nationalistic and Eurocentric instrument of Western domination and of the subjugation of minorities (see Cleere 1996; Askew 2010; Beazley 2010). The notions of reiterative universalism and the contact zone offer the possibility of moving beyond such approaches in order to detail and contrast those dominant discourses with instances of ambivalence, disruption, transgression and hybridization in the nomination dossiers from non-European countries and from non-traditional types of heritage underrepresented on the World Heritage List.

More specifically, this chapter reveals differing understandings and representations of outstanding universal value and how these relate to the construction of the nation, as materialized in these nominated properties. It details that outstanding universal value has been widely associated, first, with architecturally and aesthetically pleasing structures. Emphases have also been put on the monumental and grand dimension of properties (even as far as industrial underground structures are concerned). In doing so, the nation is being identified as grand and powerful. This strategy characterizes the three groups of heritage taken into account in this research. Non-European countries have thus mimicked the presentations from Europeans. This is very powerful since these non-European countries thus become equal to their European counterparts, and all the more so because some of the nominated sites date from the pre-colonial period before the arrival of Europeans in the first place.

Second, outstanding universal value has been widely associated in the dossiers analyzed with traditions as well as the continuous importance of the site. Traditions are important to associate the idea of the nation with that of symbolic stability. Different strategies have been used to identify the nominated property with such ideas of traditions and continuity. Mexico and Bolivia, in particular, seemed to have created hybrid and inclusive nations through creating a symbolic continuity with their pre-Hispanic past. This indigenismo discourse is, however, not without its problems and has been criticized for forcibly assimilating indigenous people within one nationalist model. This demonstrates the danger of an inclusive approach to heritage identification and preservation at all costs.

Third, outstanding universal value has been associated with different models of collective national identity. Collective identity refers to the development of a unified consciousness shared by the inhabitants of the same territory through the delimitation of a set of bounded characteristics a community considers as being part of itself, as well as those characteristics it
excludes. Most nomination dossiers from the European religious and industrial heritage sites focus on the structuring dimension of the Christian faith for the construction of national collective identity, and consciously or unconsciously exclude other faiths that have been prominent in Europe over time, such as Islam. However, a number of the religious heritage sites located in non-European countries as well as the “Old Town of Segovia and Its Aqueduct” in Spain recognize the diversity of religious faiths that have coexisted peacefully in the nominating site for centuries. These examples can act as a powerful counter-discourse that challenges the dominant and exclusionary discourse on collective national identity and subverts the sanctioned, prevalent and exclusionary conception of universalism as hegemony and denial of difference.

Finally, outstanding universal value tends to be associated with absolutes and superlatives, as reflected in the section of nomination dossiers “Comparison with Other Sites.” These superlatives are used to justify claims of superiority as well as of primacy. This can be understood as standing in opposition to the overall mission of UNESCO, which is to promote our commonalities and our shared cultures. A few of the dossiers of the non-European religious and industrial heritage sites stress that the properties were essential for the development of other countries worldwide, and particularly for the domination of Europe. These can be understood as strategies of ambivalence that disrupt the authority, power and position of Europe by destabilizing the dichotomy between colonizers and colonized, rich and poor, or important and marginal.
Chapter 4

Cultural Diversity and Inclusion

Chapter 3 analyzed how understandings of outstanding universal value have shaped the construction of the nation and collective identity. This chapter moves on to analyze how understandings of outstanding universal value have shaped representations of cultural diversity, especially vis-à-vis its role in the process of nation-building. This chapter thus considers cultural diversity to be a key aspect of the implementation of the Convention, as recognized by the Global Strategy and UNESCO (UNESCO 2009).

Cultural diversity has been understood, first, from a gender perspective. Indeed, the mainstreaming of women has been at the heart of the agenda of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, particularly UNESCO, for the past thirty years. Studies on the marginalization and re-centering of women in history and heritage have also been widely published, at least in the occidental world. In this light, it could have been expected that such measures would have changed the ways in which history and heritage have been constructed, taking greater account of women and the special values they ascribe to heritage sites (and arguably contributing to them being afforded greater recognition in the present).

Second, cultural diversity has been understood in terms of the representation and participation of local communities. Indeed, as stressed by Kōichirō Matsuura, former director-general of UNESCO:

> Without the understanding and support of the public at large, without the respect and daily care of the local communities, which are the true custodians of World Heritage, no amount of funds or army of experts will suffice in protecting the sites. (UNESCO 23 October 1999, 4)

Since one of the aims of this book is to detect differing interpretations of outstanding universal value, the data contained herein has been further ana-
Chapter 4

lyzed according to the concept of class. Class has often been criticized for being too generic and unnuanced a concept. I nonetheless use it as a categorizing notion in this research due to the fact that the lower classes are often identified as having been overtly silenced, subjected and marginalized in representations of the past and heritage (L. Smith 2006). Such analysis would detect whether mention of the lower classes helps to provide alternative discourses that differ from dominant ones.

The concept of cultural diversity also helps to address a number of other key related issues, including whether outstanding universal value has been used to marginalize minorities; whether it has been understood as reinforcing the “expert” status of a minority of individuals; and whether tensions or oppositions can be noted between a local population’s ways of caring for the past and an ostensibly objective concept of outstanding universal value.

MARGINALIZATION OF WOMEN

Analyses of the nomination dossiers selected reveal a clear marginalization of the references to women and a strong bias toward androcentric representations of the past. References to women amount to only a few sentences of nomination dossiers, with some notable exceptions, detailed below. This strongly positions women at the margin of the text, history and heritage, and makes them invisible, secondary and forgettable. This stands in stark contrast to the long descriptions of the men related to the nominated property. This would suggest that evidently outstanding universal value is an exclusionary and male-dominated concept. These results reveal some inherent tensions within UNESCO and the UN system. Indeed, the international rhetoric of the UN and its specialized agencies, such as UNESCO, have identified women as a common priority target as illustrated by the Decade for Women (1976–1985) or the Fourth World Conference on Women (United Nations 1996). This call for the re-centering of women has its origins in the results of research and publications, some sponsored by the UN and its specialized agencies, which highlighted the marginalization of women in public spheres and the insufficient recognition of their manifold contributions over the centuries (see, for instance, Cliche, Mitchell and Joh 1998, 2; and UNESCO, Unit for the Promotion of the Status of Women and Gender Equality 2000, 10). These publications call for the recognition of the historical importance of women who, if they are not denied their history any longer, can be empowered to have a more significant place in contemporary societies.

While the World Heritage Centre has recognized the need to ensure gender mainstreaming in its training programs through ensuring the participation of women, no attention has ever been paid to the impacts of this participation on the representation of women in nomination dossiers or on the World
Heritage List. One way of ensuring a better representation could have been the identification of sites relating to women as a theme underrepresented on the list according to the Global Strategy framework. Such lack of recognition, however, might reflect understandings of World Heritage as being equated with objectivity and the indistinct treatment of particularities. This has been denounced by Conkey and Spector, who argued that “the archaeological ‘invisibility’ of females is more the result of a false notion of objectivity and of the gender paradigms archaeologists employ than of an inherent invisibility of such data” (1998, 15). However, this objective universal equality, which does not accommodate and regulate the treatment of difference, does lead to discriminations (Beck 2006, 49). Such a universalist framework as governs the implementation of UNESCO conventions, particularly in the field of cultural heritage, has recently been reassessed and the need to take better account of the cultural diversity dimension of these legal frameworks has been called for (UNESCO 2009), but with no real impact as of yet.

Despite the marginalization of women and the overtly male biases, social messages related to gender representation and identities can be unraveled through fine-grained analyses of nomination dossiers. These analyses demonstrate the need to move beyond distinctions of class, which is too unsubtle a concept to use as an analytical lens. Stereotypical representations of women, framed as the Other, the weaker gender (see, for instance, de Beauvoir 1974, 16), are found across the three groups of heritage considered, in 44 percent of the nomination dossiers from the European religious group, 23 percent from the non-European religious group and 10 percent from the industrial heritage group. These women are presented as belonging to the private sphere as wives, brides, or mothers or sisters of a male character. Here women are defined according to their private status in relation to a male character, as if their identity were created by and dependent upon him. In one dossier, that of the Semmering Railway from Austria, a wife is presented as epitomizing the stereotypical personal characteristics of women as sentimental, hysterical, prone to making decisions based on emotion and incapable of rational action. This site is the first mountain railway in Europe, bordered by many fine buildings designed for leisure activities and built at the end of the nineteenth century. Its dossier describes Olga Waissnix, the wife of the proprietor of the Thalhof hotel, as “consumed with unrequited love for her regular guest, Arthur Schnitzler, and the epitome of a woman enervated by the tension between the amorous adventure of a summer flirtation and the brutal stress of the tourism industry” (Government of Austria 1995). All these descriptions reinforce the description of men as being in control, as further explained below, and of women as secondary and inferior members of society (Díaz-Andreu 2005, 18).

In all, 30 percent of European religious dossiers, 27 percent of the non-European religious dossiers and 37 percent of the industrial heritage dossiers
present women in a more egalitarian manner as public figures: heads of state, active members of royal families (queens, empresses or princesses) or artists and architects. According to some scholars, women who are part of the “official history” tend to be better documented and therefore mentioned more often and more thoroughly than other women (Waaldijk 1995, 16). However, these well-known historical figures are still described, in the dossiers considered, in a short, superficial and undocumented manner. Paradoxically, these more egalitarian representations further reinforce the biased androcentric representations of history and heritage. It is indeed difficult to understand who these figures were and what they accomplished, despite the availability of information on them. Such marginalization makes these public figures subjugated in comparison to their male counterparts, who occupy central positions in nomination dossiers. This becomes all the more significant when considering that there is only one dossier of the whole data set—that of “Assisi, the Basilica of San Francesco and other Franciscan Sites” (Government of Italy 1999)—which mentions a female sculptor, Amalia Dupré, active at the end of the nineteenth century. While the other nomination dossiers contain many lengthy references to male architects and sculptors, references to Amalia Dupré are scant. Despite recent studies, at least in Europe and North America, that have revealed the hidden history of female sculptors, architects or assistants (see Suominen-Kokkonen 1992 or Torre 1977, for example), male architects and sculptors are still dominant in the historical and heritage narratives. Such marginalization makes the work of female artists seem less relevant and worthy of recognition than that of their male counterparts.

Similar comments can be made concerning the three nomination dossiers from the industrial heritage group, which suggest that women are equal to men and capable of the same jobs. The nomination dossier of “Blaenavon Industrial Landscape,” for instance, quotes A. J. Munby, the commentator of Working Women, who wrote of the “robust and fearless girls who work at those mountain mines” (Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 1999, 31; see figure 4.1). Again, these descriptions can contradict the definition of women as “Others,” inferior to men. This is a positive and empowering description considering that female factory and mine workers have tended to be described negatively as “dirty and dangerous” in historical narratives (Skeggs 1997, 74; or Bradley 1992, 204). However, these descriptions are very short (only one sentence), while in some cases women constituted the bulk of the blue-collar workers, as is the case, for instance, in British textile manufacture, which was the second-largest employer of women by the mid-nineteenth century. Furthermore, all these nomination dossiers omit to describe the living and working conditions of these women and to explain that they provided cheaper labor than men (de Beauvoir 1974, 147). Moreover, women were, in general, “considered more
docile” (Bradley 1992, 203) and were reputed to provide better quality work than the men (de Beauvoir 1974, 144).

One nomination dossier, the “Flemish Béguinages,” nominated in 1997 by Belgium, stands out in its relocation of women from the periphery to the center of the text, history and heritage, and its transcendence of fixed representations of women (figure 4.2). As described on the website of the World Heritage Centre, the Béguines are Christian religious communities devoted to prayer and good works. In the thirteenth century they founded the Béguinages to meet their spiritual and material needs as architectural ensembles composed of houses, churches, ancillary buildings and green spaces, with a layout of either urban or rural origin and built in styles specific to the Flemish cultural region. These women are located at the center of this nomination dossier and in the section on the justification for inclusion on the World Heritage List. Cultural heritage criterion (vi) was also used to relate further the outstanding universal value of the site to the presence, from as early as the Middle Ages, of these women in Béguinages. ICOMOS recommended inscription on the list under criterion (iii) because of this illustration, a recommendation followed by the World Heritage Committee (ICOMOS June 1997; UNESCO 29 January 1999).

Figure 4.1. Blaenavon industrial landscape (Wales), where blue-collar women are recognized in the dossier. (Photo Wikimedia Commons)
This nomination dossier thus stands out due to its association of outstanding universal value with women, their roles and lives in Belgium society. This dossier is also exceptional since it acts as a space for the discussion and negotiation of the representation of these women. As such, it highlights that the representations of women, their status and the values they embody are socially constructed and “in constant negotiation and interaction by individuals and groups” (Babić 2005, 75). Indeed, on the one hand, this dossier qualifies the Béguines as “independent women” because they wanted to live a freer life than the one of “women who were often married against their will” (Government of Belgium 1997a; author’s translation). On the other hand, it also refers to the dissonant voices of feminist theorists such as Julia Kristeva, who question the Béguines ascetic conception of happiness as independent but religious women (ibid.). This dossier also openly quotes the opinions of the French revolutionaries who, at the end of the eighteenth century, had wanted to close the Béguinages as an attempt “to give back their freedom to these poor girls who were only waiting for the right time to get away from this life of slavery” (ibid.).

Figure 4.2. The nomination of the Flemish Béguinages relocates women from the periphery to the center of the text and the Convention. (Photo Wikimedia Commons)
Analyzing these results from the lens of reiterative universalism and the contact zone reveals the possibility for States Parties to use the framework of the World Heritage Convention to nominate sites representing the history and heritage of women. This is illustrated by the example of the Flemish Béguinages. This is a recognition of the Convention’s potential to promote and enhance cultural diversity. At the same time, this dossier is unique. It does not fulfill any of the guidelines that could have been given by the World Heritage Committee, which, despite UN and UNESCO discourses on gender mainstreaming, has never requested a better representation of the history and heritage of women in nomination dossiers. As highlighted in this section, the vast majority of the dossiers considered mirrored the Committee’s silence on women and do not pay particular attention to their representation.

Does it matter if women are represented or not in nomination dossiers? Indeed, it does so very much at site level and in the subsequent construction of the nation. First of all, it matters at site level since contemporary women might not feel attached to the site and might not necessarily want to care for it if they are not represented in its official narratives. Besides, best practice encourages the identification of all the values that make the site significant to ensure they guide the long-term management of the property. If the histories of women are occluded, then some important social, historical or cultural events related to them might not be recorded, and a holistic management of the site will never be implemented. Second of all, it matters at the national level. To be empowered, women need to have a history and heritage that is recognized, valued and promoted. Without a national history and heritage, contemporary women will continue to be marginalized and stereotyped in the official construction and representation of the nation and to be considered as inferior to its past male heroes.

ANDROCENTRIC REPRESENTATIONS

Famous men such as historical architects, monks, engineers or official figures occupy a central place in the nomination dossiers considered, all the more so for those within the European religious category. Examples include Leonardo da Vinci, Erik Gunnar Asplund (considered Sweden’s leading modern architect) and Cristoforo Benigno Crespi, the entrepreneur behind Crespi d’Adda. This confirms previous theoretical perspectives on the representation of the past. As stressed by Kavanagh, for instance, “the nation’s history had . . . to be heroic, illustrated by stories of great men and great events” (1993, 14). This centrality of male historical figures is reinforced by their recurrent references in the key section of nomination dossiers: “Justification for inclusion in the World Heritage List.” More precisely, 56 percent of the nomination dossiers from the European religious group, 30 percent
from the non-European religious group and 55 percent from the industrial heritage group mention a male historical figure in this section. Such references reinforce the authority and influence of male historical figures over the justification of the property’s outstanding universal value. Some of these nomination dossiers justify the use of cultural heritage criterion (vi) because of the site’s association with an outstanding male character who has undertaken deeds of universal value therein. This is the case of the nomination dossier of “Aachen Cathedral” in Germany, which highlights the importance of the site because it is the place where Charlemagne’s relics are kept.

This focus on the great men of history has increased in the recent nomination dossiers from the industrial heritage group, which often present detailed biographies of male entrepreneurs. A number of these industrial heritage sites are utopian industrial villages, including Crespi d’Adda in Italy or Saltaire and New Lanark in the United Kingdom. These biographies describe the founders of these sites in glowing terms; they are portrayed as both great entrepreneurs and philanthropists, generous with their employees and genuinely caring for their employees’ well-being. No such biographies have yet been drafted for women or for any worker associated with the history of a nominated industrial heritage site, contributing to their marginalization. Despite their central role in the construction and functioning of industrial heritage sites, the workers are thus marginalized in official national discourses on the historical importance of industrial heritage sites.

This focus on the great men of history presents a very specific, stereotypical image of masculinity. This image corresponds to the definition given by Badinter of the “real male” who “must be superior to others. Masculinity is measured by success, power, and the admiration he wins” (1995, 130). These findings echo theories in cultural studies on the traditional representation of men (see Bourdieu 1990, 21). While women are, with a few exceptions, described in a neutral way, these famous men tend to be depicted in a more positive and praiseworthy manner. This is the case, for instance, of Ghegha, the engineer of the Semmering Railway, presented earlier, who is described as “a man who was able to fully grasp the technical possibilities of the time and may be regarded as one of the pioneers of nineteenth century railway construction” (Government of Austria 1995). As implied by this quote, these men undertook outstanding deeds that had a universal impact. These famous men are described as “inspirational” and “geniuses” who are in control (Seidler 1997, 49). This representation also enables the “myth of masculinity” or the “illusio of manhood” (Badinter 1995, 2) to survive. This “myth” helps man to be defined as “a privileged human being, endowed with something more, unknown to women” (ibid., 4).

Moreover, contemporary male researchers, archaeologists and conservators occupy a central position in nomination dossiers, mirroring that of historical male figures. They are mentioned in 37 percent of European religious
Cultural Diversity and Inclusion

nomination dossiers, 43 percent from the non-European religious dossiers and 45 percent of the industrial heritage dossiers. This is much higher than their contemporary female counterparts, who are only mentioned in 15 percent of European religious dossiers, 10 percent of the non-European religious dossiers and 13 percent of the industrial ones. Not only are these men mentioned more frequently than their female counterparts, but they are also more often quoted. Being quoted provides these men with a high degree of authority and legitimization in their capacity to interpret the past. This might reflect the common view that the opinions of men have more credence than those of their female counterparts (Conkey and Spector 1998, 13–14). This discrepancy might also be due to the predominance of male authors in the literature used for drafting the nomination dossiers, which would contribute to explain the historical marginalization of women. The poor representation of women in some academic departments might further explain this marginalization.

This focus on the “great men of history” characterizes primarily nomination dossiers from the European states. One exception is the dossier of the Brazilian “Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Congonhas,” which centers on its architect, Antônio Francisco Lisboa, the Aleijadinho (the “Little Cripple,” 1738–1814). A mestizo, the son of the Portuguese architect Manoel Francisco Lisboa and an African woman, he was born with a degenerative disease that led to the deformation of his limbs. He nonetheless became one of the most important Brazilian architects. Although unique, this example is a powerful copying of the representation of the great white men of history as presented in the nomination dossiers from Europe. This destabilizes the pervasive and fixed stereotyping of the non-Western, non-white male as being inferior to his Western and white counterpart and as having not yet entered history. This example reveals, rather ironically, the limitation of this stereotyping discourse. Aleijadinho is indeed not only an architect with the same talent as his European counterparts but also an extraordinary character: his degenerative disease eventually led him to lose the use of his hands, but he nevertheless continued working with tools strapped to his arms throughout the rest of his career. This presentation of Aleijadinho destabilizes the hegemonic domination of the great white man of history and helps to move beyond fixed binaries such as center/periphery, civilized/savage and advanced/retarded by demonstrating their fluid nature.

If analyzed from the lens of reiterative universalism and the contact zone, the results of this section demonstrate the possibility for non-European States Parties to use nomination dossiers as a platform to pay homage to their great architects and public figures. This is a way of destabilizing the Eurocentric, stereotypical and inferior presentation of these countries. In this context, nomination dossiers and the implementation of the Convention can be understood, maybe naively, as being a possibility for non-European countries to consider themselves equal to European ones. Besides, the example of the
nomination dossier of the “Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Congonhas” and its focus on the crippled architect Aleijadinho demonstrates that architects from non-European countries, despite their marginal space in world history, embody the notion of outstanding value due to the hardships they faced and overcame. Despite its uniqueness in the sample, this example also gives space to disabled people who tend to be silenced in heritage representation and interpretation.

MARGINALIZED REFERENCES TO THE LOCAL POPULATION

The rest of this chapter focuses on the representations of local population in nomination dossiers. This focus reflects the recent orthodoxy requesting that the local population be involved, represented and empowered in the conservation and management of heritage (see, for instance, de Merode, Smeets and Westrik 2004). As detailed in chapter 2, it also reflects the discussions at the level of the World Heritage Committee and the 2007 inclusion, at the thirty-first session of the World Heritage Committee in New Zealand, of a fifth strategic objective that focuses on enhancing the role of communities in the implementation of the Convention. As stressed in the document arguing for such inclusion, “heritage protection without community involvement and commitment is an invitation to failure” (UNESCO 27 May 2007).

“Local population” has been understood as those groups that inhabited or still inhabit the site, or work regularly (at least six months a year) or permanently within it. References to the local population might include explanations of the reasons why it values the place and its emotional attachment to it, how it uses the property or some of its buildings as well as the special meanings and values it might attach to them (Johnston 1992, 21). This also includes the roles the local population has played in the nomination for World Heritage status and has and will play in the site’s conservation, management and development. This category does not record individual and gendered references and therefore does not necessarily overlap with the previous sections of this chapter.

References to this category are marginalized in nomination dossiers and have not demonstrated any increase, despite the direct reference since 1995 to the need to involve the local population in Paragraph 14 of the Operational Guidelines. The wider conservation literature that has increasingly stressed the importance of involving local populations in the conservation and management of sites thus does not seem to have yet had a great impact upon nomination dossiers.
This section focuses on the representation of those segments of local populations who belong to the lower classes, and who are thus typically disempowered, marginalized or even silenced in historical accounts. These lower classes supposedly present dissenting heritage discourses to the more official one (L. Smith 2006, 29–42). It was therefore hoped that such fine-grained analyses would bring about different and more democratic versions of the past (Samuel 1994, 158). In all, 22 percent of nomination dossiers from the European religious group, 30 percent from the non-European religious group and 47 percent from the industrial heritage group mention these lower classes. Nonetheless, these dossiers describe them in a vague and depersonalized manner, usually by quantifying the number of workers involved with the industrial heritage property without providing much detail concerning their daily working or social conditions. This is a way of presenting a “safe” and “sanitized” version of the past (Kavanagh 1993, 19). Industrial heritage sites have been strongly criticized for presenting such a portrait of the past and of the social relations of production (see, for example, West 1988, 52–53).

Five of the more recent nomination dossiers from the industrial heritage group nonetheless refer to the suffering and exploitation of the lower classes. This helps to present a more realistic and less “sanitized” version of the past. The nomination dossier of the “Hallstatt-Dachstein Salzkammergut Cultural Landscape” (nominated in 1996) is the first document to mention the suffering and exploitation of the working classes (Government of Austria 1996). This dossier also notes that social revolts were brutally handled by soldiers. In addition, the nomination dossiers of “Saltaire” (nominated in 2000; Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 2000c) and the “Zollverein Coal Mine Industrial Complex in Essen” (nominated in 1999; Government of Germany 1999b) are the only documents mentioning that accidents were part of the daily life of those working in the industrial heritage site.

An additional four recent nomination dossiers—“Blaenavon Industrial Landscape,” “Derwent Valley Mills” and “New Lanark” (Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 1999; 2000a; 2000b) as well as the “Mining Area of the Great Copper Mountain in Falun” (Government of Sweden 2000)—mention the working practices associated with child labor. This presents a key evolution in the themes mentioned in nomination dossiers as child labor was current practice in most industrial sites but had been consistently omitted from these documents. These four nomination dossiers explain that children were employed because they constituted a much cheaper workforce.
These more negative descriptions of the local population, despite their marginalization in the data set of nomination dossiers analyzed, constitute an important evolution. Specifically, they help to break away from the dominant hegemonic and positive presentations of the great men of history, as detailed in the previous section. Gramsci (1971, 12) defines hegemonic position as the capacity of dominant groups to generate consent among the masses due to their prestige or authority. The focus on the great men of history as philanthropists who care for the well-being of their employees can implicitly lead to the belief that power struggles between classes had disappeared at site and that workers were satisfied with their situation. However, mention of the power struggles that took place in these industrial sites demonstrates a real contestation of the dominant male figures.

The structuring notion of reiterative universalism and the contact zone highlights that nomination dossiers can be a place for the presentation of more negative aspects of heritage and the criticism of the positive and glorifying model of the nation, as based on notions of the great men of history. Analyses of the representations in dossiers of those working in industrial sites demonstrate their suffering, exploitation, and their antagonism with capitalists who might not have been, after all, such great philanthropists. These representations, which reflect the possible association of outstanding universal value with negative connotations, are all found in recent European nomination dossiers. This geographical containment might reflect debates on the importance of mentioning the negative dimensions of heritage, which may not have yet have emerged in other parts of the world.

LOCAL POPULATION: DANGEROUS OR INDISPENSABLE TO THE SITE?

Discourses on communities and heritage have often been rather ambivalent. On the one hand, the objectives of the implementation of the Convention (commonly referred to as the “5 Cs”—see chapter 2) were recently revised to include references to community participation. On the other hand, communities are sometimes considered a threat to sites. Taruvinga and Ndoro, for instance, commenting on the situation of cultural resource management in Africa, state that “local communities are often regarded as a nuisance and are normally blamed for vandalizing places of heritage due to their perceived limited appreciation of the resource” (2003, 3; see also Timothy and Boyd 2003, 244). This ambivalence can be noted in the official format of the nomination dossier that States Parties need to fill out when proposing sites for inclusion on the list. From 1997 onward, one of the direct references to the local population is made under “Section 5(e) Factors Affecting the site; Numbers of inhabitants within property, buffer zone.”
In all, 6 percent of European religious nomination dossiers, 23 percent from the non-European religious group and 16 percent from the industrial heritage group offer a negative interpretation of the category “factors affecting the site.” In these, the local population is presented as constituting a threat to the site. More specifically, the threats mentioned include the growth of the local population in the region where the site is located, the danger and/or reality of encroachment of private properties onto the site, the need to expropriate these private properties from the owners, vehicle circulation and pollution as well as vandalism and graffiti. Only a minority of the dossiers interpreted the presence of the population on the site and its renewal as one of the site’s fundamental and indispensable features. Migrations of the local population from these places to more economically prosperous regions are indeed presented as a major threat since they have led to the abandonment and slow degradation of houses of great architectural value. These dossiers thus insist on the vital importance of the local population who lives within the boundary of the nominated property and thus ensures its conservation.

Some of the nominated properties are in regeneration areas where economic and social degradations are being tackled, including most of the industrial heritage sites nominated by the United Kingdom such as Ironbridge Gorge, Saltaire, Blaenavon and the Derwent Valley Mills. According to some theorists (see, for example, Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996, 77–78) the process of regeneration leads to gentrification, which is “the process by which an (urban) area is rendered middle-class” (Oxford English Dictionary Online). Gentrification therefore can lead to a change in the local population with an influx of people with a greater disposable income. This can have positive impacts on the site such as a better maintenance of the houses located within the nominated property. Some dossiers, that of Saltaire for instance, highlight the positive dimensions of gentrification. However, most dossiers omit to detail its negative aspects, particularly higher housing and living prices, which can lead to the departure of members of the local population who might have special knowledge of the property, including the working classes and the elderly. These dossiers do not explain how members of the community will be encouraged to remain within the nominated property or will benefit from the site regeneration and its inscription on the World Heritage List.

Analyses of the results of this section from the lens of reiterative universalism and the contact zone demonstrate that some States Parties understand communities as a threat to the property. This reflects a commonly held view that communities are not supposed to be concerned with or consulted about the identification, nomination and management of the property. It also reflects the dichotomy between access to and preservation of the property. This stands in opposition to the discourses of the World Heritage Committee, which has increasingly stressed the importance of involving and empowering
local communities. The continuous reference to the local population in the section “factors affecting the site” of the official format of nomination dossiers might denote conflicting views within the Committee, its secretariat and the advisory bodies on the roles of communities. These conflicting views might explain why some local communities are still expropriated and displaced from within the boundaries of a site once it is inscribed on the list. Conversely, these conflicting views might also explain why the latest World Heritage Resource Manual Preparing World Heritage Nominations contains a small paragraph, “Participation of local people and other stakeholders,” on the need to involve local communities in the selection and nomination of sites for inclusion on the list and in their subsequent management (UNESCO 2011, 54). Despite this manual and its guidelines, no attempt has yet been made to change the format of nomination dossiers.

**PARTICIPATION OF THE LOCAL POPULATIONS**

The participation of local populations tend increasingly to be a focus of heritage management literature (see, for instance, Sullivan 1997, 18; Hall and McArthur 1998, 55–84; Fairclough 1999, 131; De la Torre 2001). This approach reflects the recognition of the shortcomings of top-down management processes that exclude and alienate the local population. This stance is based on an assumption that better access to people’s knowledge of the site and their involvement will lead to increased care for the site. Participation mechanisms are nonetheless not all beneficial. In particular, the provision of information on the conservation of the site without any active involvement of local communities leads to a low degree of trust from the latter (Hall and McArthur 1998, 74). On the other hand, full participation by the local communities in decision-making through, for instance, the organization of advisory groups and small workshops leads to a high degree of involvement and trust. This distinction implicitly recognizes that participation has become a buzzword, loaded with contradictory meanings, and in some cases “has turned to be manipulative, or . . . in fact harmed those who were supposed to be empowered” (Cooke and Kothari 2001, 1). This distinction might also reflect some distrust toward participatory policies that have failed because they naively dismiss diffused power relations at local, national and international levels (Meskell 2004; Weiss 2007, 416). Through examples, the following paragraphs discuss how States Parties have explained and justified these participatory strategies for the nomination and conservation of sites.

To continue, 20 percent of European religious nomination dossiers, 13 percent of the non-European religious ones and 17 percent of the industrial heritage ones explicitly mention the participation of the local population in decision-making and the sharing of information between different stakehold-
Cultural Diversity and Inclusion

ers. However, details of such participation are rather scant. Interestingly too, some nomination dossiers indicate that major decisions concerning the conservation and/or restoration of the site are taken primarily by local community groups and not by a heritage site manager. One instance is the nomination dossier of the San Millán Yuso and Suso Monasteries in Spain, which indicates that “the warnings of the Guardian of Yuso and/or the friars of Yuso, and the technicians’ continual attention to the buildings, are the base for deciding where and how to restore” (Government of Spain 1996b). However, this dossier does not detail whether and how potential conflicts regarding the conservation of these monasteries were resolved between the religious community, conservation professionals and political groups, including the Government of La Rioja, the Municipal Council of San Millán and the Foundation for the Protection of the Suso and Yuso Monasteries of San Millán de la Cogolla. These short descriptions concerning the participation of this religious community are rather objective and do not help the reader understand whether and how it has acquired a “bargaining power to overcome the structural dominance enjoyed by more powerful groups” (Hildyard et al. 2001, 69).

Participation by the local population in the interpretation of the site is also crucial as this enables the latter to have a function in the life of the community, and hence fulfils article 5(a) of the Convention. This can also lead to the sharing of the special intangible knowledge that communities have of the property with visitors and tourists. A total of 15 percent of the nomination dossiers from the European religious group, 17 percent from the non-European religious group and 13 percent from the industrial heritage group specifically indicate that members of the local community have been participating in the interpretation of the site or have been using it for traditional celebrations. This includes guided tours of industrial heritage sites by factory or mine workers or their descendants, as indicated, for instance, in the nomination dossier of the “Blaenavon Industrial Landscape” (Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 1999). These guided tour activities provide former miners with the possibility, as members of the lower classes who have been powerless and excluded from the dominant and hegemonic discourses, to be able to speak in the first person and to reclaim their history and heritage. This is particularly important considering the general difficulties, for members of the lower classes, in expressing their views in the public sphere (see, for instance, Spivak 1988). However, it is true that the role of these miners is limited to the interpretation of the industrial site. That former miners are empowered to give guided tours does not mean that they are taking part in the wider management and conservation of the property. Neither Blaenavon nor any other nomination dossier analyzed details such wider participation or considers the negotiation of powers involved. This
might be explained by the absence of such a process at sites or the difficulty of detailing it in nomination dossiers.

Analyses of the results of this section according to reiterative universalism and the contact zone highlight the lack of references to the participation of local communities in the conservation, management and interpretation of sites. While the involvement of communities is increasingly mentioned at the level of the Committee, this does not follow through in the format of the nomination dossiers, as already explained in the previous section. Furthermore, the level of involvement of local communities is not a qualifying criterion for inclusion on the World Heritage List. Therefore, the lack of mention of the local communities might reveal that they are not involved at site level. This might be because local values are not considered part of the outstanding universal value, despite guidelines from the Committee. Until the participation of communities becomes a qualifying criterion for inclusion on the World Heritage List, it will be difficult for States Parties to engage them.

SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has revealed, through the lenses of reiterative universalism and the contact zone, the heavy marginalization of women in the nomination dossiers analyzed, despite one dossier demonstrating the possibility of using the Convention as a tool to present and promote the history and heritage of women. This strongly positions women at the margin of the text, history and heritage, and makes them invisible, secondary and forgettable. This stands in stark contrast to the long descriptions of the men related to the nominated properties. These results reveal some inherent tensions within UNESCO and the UN system. On the one hand, UNESCO and the UN have argued for and worked toward the mainstreaming and empowering of women. On the other hand, neither the World Heritage Committee nor its secretariat have ever emphasized the need to pay particular attention to gender equality and the empowerment of women in the identification of sites to be nominated to the list or in the nomination dossiers themselves. This is particularly problematic considering that the first step toward the empowerment of women would be the recognition of their public and key role in the history and construction of the nation.

The chapter further demonstrates the possibility for non-European States Parties to use nomination dossiers as a platform to pay homage to their great male architects and public figures. This destabilizes the prevailing and fixed stereotyping of the non-Western, non-white male as being inferior to his Western and white counterpart, as being close to savagery and as having not yet entered history. In this context, nomination dossiers and the implementa-
Cultural Diversity and Inclusion

Finally, light has been shed upon the representation of local populations in order to reflect on the current orthodoxy encouraging the involvement, representation, and empowerment of the local population in the conservation and management of heritage. In doing so, this chapter intended to analyze whether tensions existed within nomination dossiers between the outstanding universal value of a given site, which should be preserved for a hypothetical and abstract world community, and its traditionally associated local community, whose values might not coincide with those for which the site was nominated. Despite theoretical consensus about the participation of local populations, they are still considered, in the format of nomination dossier and by States Parties, as threats to the property.

Some nomination dossiers did mention the participation of the local population in decision-making and the sharing of information between different stakeholders on conservation and management issues. However, these descriptions are rather short: they do not explain how these local communities intervene and whether and how they have acquired a “bargaining power to overcome the structural dominance enjoyed by more powerful groups” (Hildyard et al. 2001, 69).
Chapter Five

Sustainable Tourism and Development

Realistic Outcome or Wishful Thinking?

[Sustainable] tourism at World Heritage sites has implications for all aspects of protection of World Heritage properties. The aim of the Convention is to identify, protect, conserve, present and transmit the cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal values of World Heritage sites to future generations. Tourism, and the way in which the World Heritage community responds to the opportunities and threats it poses, can be a major factor in the success or otherwise of implementing the aims of the Convention at individual World Heritage sites. (UNESCO 9 July 2010, 2)

As this quotation clearly outlines, the complex relationship between sustainable tourism, development and the protection of outstanding universal value is of great concern to UNESCO, and therefore it is necessary to dedicate an entire chapter in this volume to a discussion of these key issues. The previous two chapters analyzed how States Parties understand outstanding universal value and how such understandings have shaped the construction of the nation and cultural diversity. Moving forward, this present chapter and the one that follows examine how outstanding universal value relates to, and is affected by, two central aspects of the Convention’s implementation: tourism and authenticity.

This chapter analyzes, first, the representations of tourism and tourists in nomination dossiers as a means to justify the outstanding universal value of properties. The second part clarifies the relationships between sustainable tourism, development and World Heritage through examining States Parties’ understanding of the notion of “carrying capacity,” which they must discuss in their nomination dossiers. Sustainability is analyzed too as a buzzword proclaimed to be at the heart of the Convention, particularly through the lens
Chapter 5

of intergenerational equity. The third section considers the provisions for visitor facilities and activities as described in nomination dossiers. It also investigates whether and how States Parties have maintained the outstanding universal value of sites and avoided their deterioration due to lack of visitor facilities or, on the other hand, an excess of them. The final part analyzes community involvement in tourism and the benefits communities receive from engagement in this industry as a whole and in specific site-related programs. This section is important since definitions of sustainable tourism and development generally include references to the social and economic benefits gained by local communities.

OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE, TOURISM, AND CONTINUITY

Under Article 4 of the Convention, States Parties have the duty to take effective measures for the presentation and transmission of the heritage situated on their territory. This duty might be understood as implying the need to provide access to the site for the general public. From the 1980 revised version of the Operational Guidelines onward, nomination dossiers reflected this duty, requesting details of the state and level of a property’s accessibility to the general public. The difficult balance between conservation and access will be considered below. The present section analyzes the representation of tourism and tourists at nominated properties.

Sites are described as having been touristic venues well before the twentieth century in 37 percent of the nomination dossiers from the European religious group, 40 percent from the non-European religious group and 34 percent from the industrial heritage group. These recurring descriptions echo the association of the nominated property with ideas of continuity and stability of the past, as already identified in previous chapters. These properties are presented as having been of great renown and the object of national and international/universal interest for centuries. These descriptions strengthen the presentation of nominated properties as central pillar of nations. These dossiers thus aim to justify the outstanding and universal value of sites through casting them as continuous nodes of tourism for centuries. To convey such an idea, imposing figures of visitor numbers are provided in most dossiers considered. A minority of nomination dossiers even claim that the site was the first touristic place in the country, thus employing yet again claims of primacy to justify a site’s outstanding universal value. An example is the “Mining Area of the Great Copper Mountain in Falun,” an industrial heritage landscape in Sweden illustrating copper mining and production, which began as early as the ninth century and came to an end in the closing years of the twentieth century. It is described as “Sweden’s first and biggest
tourist attraction,” and the place where the word “tourist” was first used in Swedish (Government of Sweden 2000). This example reinforces the findings of chapter 3 that outstanding universal value is often associated with claims of primacy and antecedence, despite the rivalry this might cause between states.

The continuous popularity of religious sites over the centuries, whether they are located in European or in non-European countries, can easily be understood, seeing as they are often magnets for pilgrims and, in more recent decades, tourists. Those nomination dossiers from non-European countries can be considered as redefining and reframing the notion of the “tourist,” who has tended to be primarily considered a Westerner (Winter 2010, 117). These documents explain that tourism is as much a Western categorization as a non-Western one. As explained previously, such presentations help to challenge and disturb the traditional dichotomies between West/the rest, civilized/barbarian, modern/traditional and secular/religious through relocating Western concepts within a non-Western discourse.

A minority of nomination dossiers focus on presenting the gaze of the tourist. Urry argued that when we travel “we look at the environment . . . we gaze at what we encounter . . . and the gaze is socially constructed” (Urry 1990, 1). For Urry, there is no single gaze; rather, the gaze varies across social groups, temporally and geographically. Nomination dossiers from Europe described this gaze in the most precise manner, to such an extent that a shift can be noted in its characterization over time. On the one hand, the nomination dossier of the Pont du Gard (France) refers to the learned gaze of the poets and artists who undertook the Grand Tour and went to marvel at the classical wonders of Europe. This learned gaze is found again, but at the same time transformed, in the nomination dossier of the Semmering Railway (Austria), a mountain railway already described in chapter 4, which focuses on the nineteenth-century “scenic tourism gaze” (see also Urry 1990, 4) and on exalting the untouched beauty of nature in relation to an increasingly more industrial and agitated urban life. This can be considered as the predecessor of the current mass tourists who travel and gaze to “create or recreate structures which modernity is felt to have demolished” (Selwyn 1996, 2). One nomination dossier, that for the Flemish Béguinages in Belgium (also presented at length in chapter 4), stands out as providing a critical stance on the tourism gaze by ironically mentioning the Béguinages as a space of memory and nostalgia that attracts tourists in search of picturesque clichés. This document thus refers to what much of contemporary tourism is based upon: “the Quest for the Other” (Van den Berghe 1994). Interestingly, while this quest and thirst for encountering the Other is usually presented as being quenched by going to non-European destinations, just such a spectacle of otherness and pre-modernity is presented, in the dossier of the Béguinages, as being at the heart of Europe. This critical stance toward the Béguines and
the tourists interested in seeing them is, again, a way of deconstructing the dichotomy between the non-European, pre-modern Other and the modern, or even postmodern and overcivilized, European world. This is certainly a way of objectifying these religious women, the Béguines, rendering them the object of information, but not the subject of communication (Foucault 1977, 200; Wickstead 2009, 252).

From a reiterative universalist viewpoint, dossiers from Europe presented subjective descriptions of the experiences of tourists, gazing at nominated sites. This subjectivity helps to demonstrate further that outstanding universal value is constructed through the eyes of tourists who build up this value by visiting the site. It likewise confirms that value is an extrinsic process, as detailed in chapter 1, rather than an intrinsic one. This contradicts the stance adopted in a number of nomination dossiers that properties have been visited for centuries because of their intrinsic outstanding value.

The examples presented above also help to destabilize some of the Eurocentric standpoints that structure the discourses and field of tourism studies. This includes the recognition of long-term tourism patterns as a non-Western phenomenon, which undermines the unreflective view that such patterns were primarily European. Interestingly, the description in the nomination dossier of the Flemish Béguinages of the Béguines as a pre-modern Other made into a main tourist attraction can also be read as a subtle critique of an apparently postmodern Europe as evolutionary superior to the rest of the world.

**SUSTAINABILITY, SUSTAINABLE TOURISM, DEVELOPMENT**

The rest of this chapter examines the complex linkages between sustainable development, tourism and outstanding universal value. First, however, sustainable development and tourism need to be defined. According to the report *Our Common Future* (also known as the “Brundtland Report”), development is sustainable when it “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987, 8). At the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, sustainable development was conceived in terms of the three pillars of economic viability, social responsiveness and respect for the environment (UN 1997; Spenceley 2008a, 1). This represented a shift away from the sole consideration of the economic dimension of growth to one based on the balanced interactions between ecology, economics and social justice (Nurse 2006). This holistic approach also structures the definition of sustainable tourism. As summarized by Lansing and De Vries (2007), sustainable tourism is “proposed to simultaneously fulfill the needs of different parties involved: delivering revenues and profits to the tourism industry,
responsible travel experiences to the increasingly wealthy tourist, and economic growth combined with environmental and socio-cultural protection to host countries and communities” (77).

Such definitions of sustainable development and tourism have often been criticized as paradoxical aggregations that attempt to bring together fields with contradictory objectives and methods (Flipo 2005, 1; Boccardi 2007, 10). These concepts have also been criticized as being unpractical and as not applicable to actual, concrete cases. Meskell also criticizes intergenerational equity, the core principle of sustainable development (2011a, 27). In our unjust and unequal world, how can those who are already deprived of resources bequeath them to future generations? How can this principle of intergenerational equity work in a global context where instant profit is so valued to the detriment of long-term benefits?

Within official discourses concerning World Heritage, sustainability has often been located at the heart of this Convention, particularly via the notion of intergenerational equity. In accordance with this principle, States Parties are encouraged to protect World Heritage sites located in their territory and are discouraged from compromising the ability of future generations to enjoy them. Nonetheless, the first appearance of the term “sustainability” in the Operational Guidelines was not in relation to intergenerational equity but to cultural landscapes in 1992. Sustainability was then rather narrowly defined as follows: “Protection of cultural landscapes can contribute to modern techniques of sustainable land-use and can maintain or enhance natural values in the landscape” (UNESCO February 1994). Only recently—particularly in the 2002 Budapest Declaration and then in the 2005 revised version of the Operational Guidelines—did the World Heritage Committee refer to sustainable development in broader terms.

The 2005 revised version of the Operational Guidelines and its subsequent version indeed indicate that “the protection and conservation of the natural and cultural heritage are a significant contribution to sustainable development” (UNESCO February 2005, Paragraph 6). Paragraph 119 further details that World Heritage properties “may support a variety of ongoing and proposed uses that are ecologically and culturally sustainable. The State Party and partners must ensure that such sustainable use does not adversely impact the outstanding universal value, integrity and/or authenticity of the property. Furthermore, any uses should be ecologically and culturally sustainable. For some properties, human use would not be appropriate” (ibid.). This paragraph hence reveals potential tensions between the use(s) of the site and its outstanding universal value. This can explain the decision to create the UNESCO World Heritage Tourism Program at the twenty-fifth session of the World Heritage Committee in Helsinki in 2001. This program was set up following the identification of tourism as one of the main dangers affecting World Heritage sites. Its specific objectives were to address “growing threats
on World Heritage sites from tourism which, if sustainably managed could offer socio-economic development opportunities” (Martin, Jenkins & Associates 2010). In light of these statements, it becomes interesting to investigate how States Parties have understood these notions of sustainability, and sustainable tourism and development, and whether these governments present such concepts as being in tension with the obligation to safeguard the outstanding universal value of nominated sites.

**CARRYING CAPACITY AS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM?**

Official discourses on World Heritage and tourism can seem contradictory: sites must be managed in such a way that they are preserved for future generations while at the same time they have to be made accessible to the current public for education and enjoyment. This contradiction has been rather bluntly expressed by ICOMOS: “It is not easy to create such a balance [between access and conservation], especially because conservation and tourism are in many respects opposite kinds of endeavors. Generally speaking, conservators preserve and tourists consume” (ICOMOS 1994, 2). How has this seeming contradiction been tackled in nomination dossiers and what solutions have been identified to help reconcile these tensions? Pursuing such questions can clarify the notion of sustainable tourism, which requires that heritage sites are not overcrowded, do not fall prey to wear and tear and do not suffer irreversible harm from visitors.

Before analyzing issues relating to carrying capacity, the question of site access and visitor levels needs to be addressed to contextualize the discussion on this concept. A majority of nomination dossiers—57 percent from the European religious group, 87 percent from the non-European religious group and 71 percent from the industrial heritage group—clearly mention that the site is open to visitors. These documents present a diversity of visitors with different, sometimes opposite motivations. This is the case, in particular, for religious sites with, on the one hand, a community of faithful and, on the other hand, tourists. Tensions can become real between these different communities with varying views on and uses of the site. Tourists, for instance, may want to visit a religious site at the exact time when it is only accessible to the community of faithful. Cologne Cathedral in Germany, for example, is closed during mass, which some visitors do not accept. However, in the majority, the nomination dossiers considered in this research do not detail the multiple stakeholders and various public uses of properties. They only provide objective and cold facts about the opening times of the nominated properties without mentioning these different uses and the tensions or conflicts that these may have fostered. Such objective descriptions might be due to the
lack of discussion and guidelines on access to and multiple uses of World Heritage sites.

While information on site visits was rather scant in the early nomination dossiers, more details are provided in the latest ones. These dossiers clearly explain a recent increase in the number of visitors or tourists and the expectation that this trend will continue in the future, based on the prestige of the World Heritage label. However, as stressed previously, a fragile balance should be established between access and conservation. Basic elements upon which to foster such a balance include understanding the characteristics of visitors, their numbers, their profile, their place of origin and their expectations (Pedersen 2002, 49–50). In all, 20 percent of the European religious nomination dossiers, 33 percent of the non-European religious dossiers and 37 percent of the industrial heritage ones provide basic information on visitors, mainly visitor numbers. A minority of these documents details that these figures correspond to tickets sold, as mentioned, for instance, in the nomination dossier of the “Darjeeling Himalayan Railway” in India. One nomination dossier, “Saltaire” in the United Kingdom, stresses the difficulty of recording exact visitor figures because it is a village with open and free access. The “Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya” in India is one of those rare dossiers that provides information on the origins of visitors (figure 5.1). Of the four hundred thousand annual tourists who visit this site every year, 30 percent are foreigners and the remaining 70 percent are domestic, based on data collected at the gates. This is vital information for knowing the types of visitor activities to be provided on site and how to offer them, as well as the language to be used. However, it is very difficult to understand the visitor figures mentioned in nomination dossiers as they are not contextualized. Are these levels of visitors too high and thus damaging to the site? Was a balance struck between access and conservation, and if so, how?

Tools such as the “carrying capacity” or the “limit of acceptable change” of a site are important to contextualize and set an acceptable cap on visitor levels in different parts of the heritage property. Since 1996, States Parties have been required to detail the carrying capacity of a site in their nomination dossiers. The explanatory notes on how to draft this part of the dossier explain that this section should provide “an indication of whether the property can absorb the current or likely number of visitors without adverse effects, i.e., its carrying capacity.” Pedersen clarifies the concept of carrying capacity in the official tourism manual released by the World Heritage Centre in 2002. It is concerned with setting numeric visitor limits and defining “how much and what kind of change is ‘acceptable’” (Pedersen 2002, 57). This is done by establishing “indicator limits or standards for any changes that would degrade the conditions agreed upon” (ibid., 57). Wager distinguished between three types of carrying capacity:
1. Physical capacity is the measure of the number of visitors that can be accommodated at any one site at the same time.
2. Environmental capacity is the level of use that the archaeological structures, the forest and the landscape features can withstand without damage either to the fabric of the brick and stonework or to the ecology.
3. Perceptual capacity is the measure of how many visitors can be accommodated without a reduction or loss in the quality of experience of visiting the site. (1995, 518)

The carrying capacity of sites is not mentioned in the nomination dossiers analyzed until 1994. From that time onward, this concept is increasingly cited and is indeed mentioned in all the dossiers analyzed after 1997. However, no nomination dossier details how the site’s carrying capacity has been calculated, how it has been defined or what it encompasses. While the carrying capacity of sites can evolve over time, no nomination dossier indicates when its figure was calculated or whether it was based on any longitudinal studies. Some of the nomination dossiers even indicate that the carrying
capacity of the site is unlimited. The dossier of “Kalwaria Zebrzydowska” in Poland is one such example. It is a natural setting in which a series of symbolic places of worship relating to the Passion of Jesus Christ and the life of the Virgin Mary were laid out at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The dossier indicates that “the size of the area and the wide avenues (but also the phenomenon of the multiplication of the lines of avenues—double, triple, and even quadruple avenues)” create a park of “almost unlimited capacity” (Government of Poland 1998). This dossier explains that because of the “wide avenues and the complex form of the landscape adjacent to the avenues, the phenomenon of trampling of and damage to vegetation is rarely observed at Kalwaria.” This example is, however, problematic. Indeed, parts of this complex are closed environments—this is the case, for instance, for the different churches such as the Church of Our Lady of the Angels—and they therefore do not have “an almost unlimited capacity.” This dossier does not indicate whether and how a limit to the number of visitors and pilgrims to these walled environments has been set up and whether the spiritual importance of the place is protected through such thresholds. This example illustrates the difficulty of establishing a single carrying capacity threshold that can be applied to an entire property.

Other nomination dossiers provide precise figures to detail the carrying capacity of sites. However these figures are difficult to understand since they are not contextualized or explained. This is the case, for instance, for the nomination dossier of “Longmen Grottoes” in China. It indicates that “through repeated repair and expansion and construction of protective railings, the sightseeing paths in the grotto area at Longmen have now gained the capacity of receiving 50,000 tourists a day” (Government of China 1999b, 47). The ICOMOS evaluation of this property only indicates that “there are interpretational and infrastructural facilities on-site for the large number of visitors (in the neighborhood of one million per year)” (September 2000b). ICOMOS does not comment on the carrying capacity figures detailed in this nomination dossier or question how it was calculated. Because of this lack of explanation, it is very difficult to understand the limits established on visitor levels and the physical and environmental impact of visitors on the property and its environment.

These two examples of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska and Longmen Grottoes reveal, through the lens of reiterative universalism and the contact zone, some tensions between States Parties’ understandings of outstanding universal value and requirements for site protection. These cases indeed illustrate the use of the notion of carrying capacity as the maximum number of visitors that can be accommodated at one site at the same time. In doing so, some of the key dimensions of the definition of carrying capacity, as detailed earlier, have been silenced. This is the case, in particular, for the idea of a modulated threshold for the carrying capacity of sites that takes account of the fragility
104

Chapter 5

of specific cultural or natural elements. Such a use of the concept of carrying capacity might reflect the expectation of States Parties of getting an increased number of tourists thanks to the World Heritage label (see Shackley 2006, 88). It might also reflect the idea that heritage is robust and does not need any careful management of visitors or tourists. This relates to States Parties’ understanding of outstanding universal value as presented earlier in this chapter, which posits that the site is of great value because it has been visited by hundreds of tourists for centuries. Thus, to remain of outstanding universal value, the nominated site needs to continue to receive a fair amount of visitors and tourists.

In addition, ICOMOS contributed to such problematic presentations of carrying capacity through uncritical acceptance of its representations in nomination dossiers. One reason for this silence by ICOMOS might be that carrying capacity is considered to be unpractical. The World Tourism Organization, for instance, stresses that carrying capacity is a limited tool since the “identification of a single threshold value will be inadequate in nearly all cases” (2004, 20). Above all, these two examples of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska and Longmen Grottoes demonstrate that the very notion of a single threshold value does not seem to make sense. Indeed, the figures from nomination dossiers are provided in a vacuum, without being linked to any threat affecting the site, the site’s visitor profiles, its uses or the fragile nature of its various parts. The fundamental dimension of carrying capacity—that is, the notion of a threshold value—seems to have been missed in nomination dossiers. Despite the fact that this idea of carrying capacity seems to be rather problematic, there has been no attempt at the level of ICOMOS or UNESCO to change the requirements of nomination dossiers to encourage a real reflection on how and why visitor numbers should be limited at sites.

These problems are echoed by the lack of discussion concerning the negative effects of tourism, which are mentioned only in a minority of nomination dossiers: 24 percent of the dossiers from the European religious group, 13 percent from the non-European religious group and 16 percent from the industrial heritage group. The nomination dossier of Tiwanaku in Bolivia, for instance, mentions the irreversible damage caused by the hands and feet of tourists. Only a minority of these dossiers provide clear indications that preventive measures have been taken against the harmful behavior of tourists. These omissions might mirror the lack of references to the negative impact of tourism in the official publications on risk preparedness for cultural sites published by or in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre (see UNESCO 2010a or Stovel 1998). Such omissions might also signal a misunderstanding of the damage caused by tourists on heritage properties.

Judging from its superficial presentation in the sample of nomination dossiers analyzed in this research, tourism does not seem to be considered a major threat to sites. This contradicts official data in state of conservation
reports from 1986 to 2004, which stresses that tourism is the most frequently recurring threat (see Bandarin and Labadi 2007). This would indicate that the dangers of tourism are overlooked when a site is nominated and then inscribed on the World Heritage List, but that they are noticed later on when the dangers worsen. Indeed, the inscription of a site on the World Heritage List often leads to its integration in the circuit of tour operators and other mass tourism companies, which offer cultural excursions as add-ons to their holiday packages, contributing to further increases in the number of visitors to a site and its degradation (see Cochrane and Tapper 2006, 99–102). This increase in visitor levels might endanger the site if no proper tourism management policy is put in place and tools such as a limit on acceptable change are not implemented.

VISITOR FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES AS SAFEGUARDING OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE?

The provisions of visitor facilities and activities are key components of sustainable tourism management. Such provisions are essential to manage the flow of tourists as well as to enhance visitors’ understanding of the site and their appreciation of the different cultures and ways of life they encounter there. At the same time, a balance should be struck between preservation and the provision of visitors facilities to avoid the commoditization of heritage sites (see Macleod 2006, 71). This section analyzes the presentation of the provision of visitor facilities and activities in nomination dossiers. It also investigates whether and how States Parties have maintained the outstanding universal value of a site and avoided its deterioration due to a lack of visitor facilities or, on the contrary, an excess.

In all, 59 percent of nomination dossiers from the European religious group, 60 percent from the non-European religious group and 76 percent from the industrial heritage group provide brief information on the visitor facilities and activities available at the nominated property. Information on visitor facilities was not requested in nomination dossiers until 1997. This might explain the lack of such information. From that time onward, official requests for information on visitor facilities and activities in nomination dossiers might have resulted in the few noted references to this information in the three groups of cultural heritage considered.

The provision of visitor facilities is a complex issue, and each site will have different needs. However, according to the literature on the subject, two services are “crucial to visitor comfort” and must be provided on a cultural site: vehicle parking and rest rooms (ICOMOS 1994, 13). A quarter of the dossiers from the three groups considered mention the provision of vehicle parks for cars and coaches. The nomination dossier of the “Mahabodhi Tem-
ple Complex at Bodh Gaya” is one of the best examples as it stresses that “in order to keep the entrance of the Temple free from traffic congestion and pollution, the car parking area has been removed to a distance away from the temple” (Government of India 2002, 25). Not only is the provision of car parking important but so is its location. The provision of a car park away from the heritage site will prevent the potential negative impact of these vehicles, such as pollution and vibration. The strategic location of car parks can also prevent congestion at site entrances and the degradation of the visitor experience. Despite its importance, the question of the location of car parks as well as their availability has not been discussed in ICOMOS evaluations or by the World Heritage Committee. For instance, the location of a car park beneath Cologne Cathedral was not mentioned in its nomination dossier or discussed in ICOMOS evaluation or by the Committee. The lack of discussion on such crucial issues prevents any understanding of the thresholds of acceptability for basic facilities and their location.

Accommodation and catering facilities for visitors—hotels, restaurants, cafes and bars—are also commonly found on sites. They are referenced, in a rather short and vague manner, in 41 percent of the European religious group dossiers, 37 percent of the non-European religious group dossiers and 45 percent of the industrial heritage group dossiers. Such scant references are partly due to the fact that, until 1997, the Operational Guidelines did not request States Parties to detail their tourism infrastructures in nomination dossiers. The nomination dossier of “Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya” in India is one of those few instances, explaining how the visitors’ facilities were integrated within the property: “The construction and location of all the elements of the visitor services must combine convenience to the visitors with minimal impact to the visual image and the historic character and fabric of the site” (Government of India 2002, 21). According to this document, there are around twenty-two hotels in the town of Bodh Gaya and fourteen monasteries accommodating around 2,500 people every day. It also stresses that, in the near future, there will be more pressure on the site due to increased visitor levels that will require more hotels and residential facilities. This will have a negative impact upon the “peaceful atmosphere of this revered site” (Government of India 2002). This document then makes clear that the regional development authority will control this pressure using existing legal instruments.

However, foreign countries have acquired land around the temple to build other religious structures, monasteries and residential accommodation for their visiting pilgrims. The nomination dossier of the Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya does not explain how these constructions are controlled. In addition, this nomination indicates that plans are under consideration for the construction of an airport near the site (Government of India 2002). This major regional development might lead to negative impacts on
the site, including more pollution and vibration as well as notable increases in visitors. This nomination dossier does not indicate how close this planned airport will be to the nominated property, nor does it present the possible negative effects of such a construction. In its evaluation of this dossier, ICOMOS mentions this airport and other development, emphasizing the need to monitor continuously the impact of such developments on the religious and spiritual significance of the site (ICOMOS March 2002). Besides, at the time of inscription of this site on the World Heritage List in 2002, the World Heritage Committee noted that a management plan was missing and that no tourism monitoring policy was in place. For this reason, this site has been the subject of a state of conservation report since its inscription on the list. Its 2010 state of conservation indicates that a management plan, also tackling tourism issues, has been adopted and integrated into a larger development plan for the period 2005–2031. It nonetheless laments the lack of information on the management of the increased flow of visitors (UNESCO 1 June 2010, 140). Such an increase is certainly due in part to the Gaya international airport, which “has been a major catalyst for increasing the number of pilgrims coming from Bangkok, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Burma, and Bhutan” (Geary 2008, 13). This increase will certainly continue in the short to medium-term, fuelled by a boom in regional tourism, hence the importance of a managed flow of visitors, as requested by the committee (Winter 2010, 117–129).

This example demonstrates that discourses on sustainability at the international level are not, in many cases, actually followed at national and local levels. This is particularly due to the paucity of evidence connecting the activities, facilities and patterns of visits with their physical, environmental and cultural impact. Such a lack of information makes it difficult to draw a line on what constitutes the sustainability of a property or what can be considered as sustainable tourism and development. Indeed, this example demonstrates the difficulties in the sustainable management of development and tourism activities at sites due to the multiplicity of actors, either local, national or international, along with their related spheres of influence and power.

In addition, the examples developed in this section highlight the lack of detailed standards and principles regarding sustainable tourism activities and facilities at World Heritage sites (see also Martin, Jenkins & Associates 2010). In other words, there are no minimum or maximum visitor facility thresholds, and States Parties are left to decide what constitutes “sustainable” tourism facilities. Besides, it seems that some of the early signals of problems related to levels of tourism activities and facilities at sites, flagged by ICOMOS or the World Heritage Committee, were not acted upon by the nominating country, which has in turn led to the rapid worsening of these issues. Specific guidelines on tourism management by the World Heritage Committee and its secretariat would certainly guide governments on this issue. Furthermore, a tougher policy by the World Heritage Committee to put
more sites on the danger list might enable its decisions to be better respected and acted upon by governments.

MAXIMIZING COMMUNITY BENEFITS?

A key and fundamental dimension of sustainable tourism is community involvement, as already highlighted in chapter 4 (see also Millar 2006, 39). This is clearly outlined in the tourism manual released by the World Heritage Centre: “Any sustainable tourism program must work in concert with stakeholders, or interested parties, including government agencies, conservation and other non-governmental organizations, developers and local communities” (Pederson 2002, 38). The importance of tourism for economically benefiting local communities has also been a leitmotiv of UNESCO and the World Heritage Centre since the 1990s with the recognition of the key role played by the Convention in the implementation of Agenda 21 (the outcome and action plan on sustainable development of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) and UNESCO’s claims that heritage can fulfill the first Millennium Development Goal, “To Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger,” through fostering economic benefits for local communities. More specifically, as itemized by UNESCO, World Heritage listing and conservation can contribute to maximizing communities’ benefits through the following:

- the generation of employment for site management;
- employment and revenue from tourism and tourism related activities;
- development and sale of arts and crafts; and
- (being) a source of identity and pride. (UNESCO 2010a, 2)

The official tourism manual released by the World Heritage Centre warns that the generation of economic benefits to support local populations through their participation is notoriously difficult, and “even in highly successful areas, few direct benefits went to local communities. For example, while tourists generate about $5 million annually at Khao Yai National Park in Thailand, little of the revenue benefits the surrounding communities” (Pederson 2002, 34). This publication further insists that the link between tourism benefits and conservation is unclear (ibid.). This has been echoed in reports on the impact of pro-poor tourism projects that aim to contribute to poverty reduction in local communities (Spenceley 2008a, 10). These projects have tended to result, for local communities, in limited market access, poor revenue generation and low motivation (Spenceley 2008b, 370). What do nomination dossiers tell us about sustainable tourism as poverty reduction? Have they succeeded in surmounting these problems just outlined?
Only one nomination dossier from the European religious group, the “Catalan Romanesque Churches of the Vall de Boí” in Spain and eight industrial heritage dossiers insist on the benefits brought by heritage tourism to the local population. The dossier of the Vall de Boí is particularly interesting as it presents such tourism as the only option for bringing the local population out of poverty. This dossier indicates that the local population used to live in poor conditions, relying primarily on agricultural activities. The average revenues for the Boí region used to be inferior to the average revenues for the whole of Catalonia. The lack of economic prospects, infrastructure and equipment led many people from this region to emigrate to Barcelona and its surroundings. However the recent evolution of tourism in the Boí region seems to have changed the outlook and condition of the local population. This dossier insists that these communities now have greater economic and social opportunities with jobs in the tertiary sector, giving guided tours or offering lodging for tourists. Therefore they are increasingly becoming active in the interpretation and use of their heritage. The local population also has the opportunity to explain to visitors the different values they associate with the site. This dossier thus stresses that the development of tourism in the valley will primarily benefit the local population. However, this document also highlights the seasonality of tourism in the region (concentrated in the winter and summer months). It does not explain how those involved in tourism activities can face seasonal unemployment and whether they are really living in better conditions than when they were working in the agricultural sector.

Plans to economically and socially reinvigorate an area through its heritage for the benefit of its local inhabitants are not without problems. The Ironbridge Gorge in the United Kingdom was renovated, bringing “a renewal of commercial activity, and [it] is now an attractive residential area” (Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 1985a, 14). This property succeeded in generating employment and revenue for the local population. However, it was criticized for doing this in a very unsustainable manner (see Walsh 1992, 95; Hewison 1987, 93; Boniface 1995, 44; West 1988, 36–60) with “craft shops, antique shops, and the endless knick-knack emporiums that all sell the very same glitzy junk” (West 1988, 55). According to Boniface, through this commercialization, the Ironbridge Gorge has lost its “integrity, its ‘soul’” (1995, 44). None of the other nomination dossiers that mention the actual or planned regeneration or rehabilitation of the site explain how this will be undertaken or how the pitfalls of Ironbridge Gorge’s commercialization will be avoided. None of these dossiers explains how the local population will benefit from these regeneration projects and how the process of gentrification (see chapter 4), which is often an offspring of regeneration processes, will be avoided.
This section has highlighted that most dossiers remain silent on the benefits gained by the local communities from the World Heritage label and tourism. This silence may be because some States Parties believe that the World Heritage Convention is concerned with preserving the past for present and future generations—as stressed, for instance, during meetings on the relationship between World Heritage and sustainable development, held in Paraty, Brazil, in 2010—and not with income generation for local communities.

The examples presented in this section also demonstrate the difficulty and danger of taking into account the needs of local communities when these are not well thought through, since they can lead to the commodification of heritage with a multiplication of shops around or within the properties selling the same souvenirs, as well as unhistoric reenactments. As Meskell (2011a) highlights with the example of South Africa, these commercial ventures often do not belong to members of the local community but to external investors. They thus do not benefit those people most closely associated with the site itself. In some cases, these external commercial ventures even contribute to the pauperization of their staff through low salaries. How can local communities benefit from tourism when they do not necessarily have the capital needed to open a shop or a hotel or earn a decent salary? It is true that a number of international organizations provide training in entrepreneurship or lend capital via micro-credit. However, information is scant on how successful these initiatives have been at heritage sites.

SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has revealed UNESCO’s ambiguous relationship with sustainable development and tourism. On the one hand, UNESCO has stressed on a number of occasions that sustainable development and tourism should be promoted through controlled access to sites. On the other, it has attempted for many years to demonstrate the positive socioeconomic impacts of inscription on the World Heritage List, such as job creation or revenue from tourism, without systematically referring to the potential negative impacts that these developments can have when they are not undertaken in a sustainable manner.

This ambiguity has been echoed in nomination dossiers. Analyzing the issue of sustainability and the use of the notion of carrying capacity, this chapter highlighted the overall misuse of carrying capacity in nomination dossiers. Instead of being employed to establish a threshold at which the impact of tourists becomes harmful to the site, this notion has been understood as the maximum site capacity, without consideration of the physical or environmental impact of mass tourism. This finding is particularly striking
considering that carrying capacity is the only notion mentioned in the format of nomination dossiers to guide States Parties’ detail of tourism pressure.

This chapter has also revealed the difficulty in understanding, from nomination dossiers, how tourism is managed and controlled. This is due, in part, to the lack of information on tourism management at sites. However, such a lack of information does not seem to prevent sites from being listed on the World Heritage List. This lack of information on tourism and its management gives the impression that this phenomenon is not fully understood and controlled at nominated sites. For this reason, it is not very surprising that the most frequent reason for World Heritage sites to be the subject of state of conservation reports is the pressure from tourism.

Finally, this chapter has demonstrated that the nomination dossiers did not necessarily explain how the inscription of a site on the World Heritage List would assist with the generation of economic benefits to support local populations. Besides, these documents do not explain how the commoditization of the past and heritage will be avoided through the development of projects and activities to ensure that local populations gain economically from the listing of the site on the list.

This chapter has thus demonstrated that the concepts of sustainability, sustainable tourism and development have not been meaningfully translated from theory to practice. This might be because the concept of sustainability cannot be applied practically. There is thus a need to reframe these notions so that they become practical tools that will contribute to maintaining the outstanding universal value of sites.
Chapter Six

Authenticity and Post-Authenticity

Keeping It Real?

This will be the final chapter to analyze States Parties’ understandings of the notion of outstanding universal value. In particular, it focuses on how these understandings relate to and affect the concept of authenticity, one central to the implementation of the Convention. Authenticity is arguably one of the most ambiguous and controversial notions in conservation (see Holtorf and Schadla-Hall 1999; Byrne 2004; Lafrenz Samuels 2008). At the same time, authenticity is a key criterion for the identification of the outstanding universal value of nominated properties. More than any other foundational concepts of the Convention, authenticity has undergone the most drastic changes in its definition, particularly with the 1994 adoption of the Nara Document on Authenticity (see chapter 2).

How have States Parties understood authenticity and what have been the impacts of these understandings on their representation of outstanding universal value? What have been the consequences of this shifting definition of authenticity, as invoked by States Parties in their understanding of terms such as “conservation,” “restoration” and “reconstruction”? Have States Parties used the Nara definition of authenticity in an uncritical fashion? Can differences in interpretations of authenticity between European and non-European States Parties be identified?

To answer these questions, this chapter examines, first, interpretations of the test of authenticity, and second, understandings of authenticity according to the Nara Document and their impact on representations of outstanding universal value. Later sections move to analyze how representations of “restoration,” “reconstruction” and “adaptation” impact the perception of the authenticity, and hence outstanding universal values, of sites. The final part
introduces the notion of post-authenticity to reflect on some of the major findings of this chapter.

AUTHENTICITY AS ORIGINAL

The majority of States Parties considered made scant references to the notion of authenticity in their nomination dossiers. This might denote a lack of understanding of this issue (see von Droste and Bertilsson 1995, 4–5; Holtorf and Schadla-Hall 1999, 234; Cleere 1995b, 60). Even after 1994 and the Nara Document on Authenticity, most dossiers analyzed refer to authenticity as an objective and scientific notion inextricably linked to the original state and form of the property. This can be explained by the lack of reference to this document until the 2005 revised version of the Operational Guidelines. As detailed in chapter 2, up until then, these guidelines referred solely to four degrees of authenticity (in design, material, workmanship and setting). Interestingly, the principles from the Nara Document are not systematically mentioned in nomination dossiers submitted after 2005, despite their clear references in the Operational Guidelines.

One example is the nomination dossier of Mount Wutai, submitted in 2008 by China. It explains that some of the Buddhist temples remain tangibly identical to the time when they were built, and that such monuments are therefore authentic in terms of architectural form, design and materials. Such continuous use of authenticity in terms of its strict etymological meaning—that is, “original as opposed to counterfeit” or genuine (Jokilehto1999a, 296; Bendix 1992, 104)—reveals the mimicry of a European understanding of authenticity. Indeed, such understanding is rooted in European conservation theories and does not necessarily apply to the reality of conservation in non-European countries where authenticity often lies in less materialistic modes of conservation (Byrne 1995; De Cesari 2010, 307). These results are all the more surprising considering that the Nara Document was adopted to reflect the realities of heritage conservation in non-European countries. This overwhelming use of authenticity in the sense of a monument being original and frozen in time might be due to States Parties’ lack of understanding of the Nara Document, or to difficulties in applying it, as further detailed below. It might also be due to comprehension of the values of sites as being intrinsic (as detailed in chapter 1), and thus as residing in the physical fabric of sites (Byrne, Brayshaw and Ireland 2001, 57). As further detailed below, this serves to shift the values associated with heritage from individuals to objects.

Such an understanding of authenticity might also serve to strengthen States Parties’ claim to outstanding universal value in nomination dossiers. As detailed in previous chapters, the majority of States Parties associate outstanding universal value with the notions of continuity, uniformity and
stability. This association, I have argued in this book, is used to construct stable, solid and homogeneous nations and collective identities, thus consolidating an “imagined community” (Anderson 1991, 5; Labadi 2010, 74–75). These ideas of stability and homogeneity help to convey a “shared ideology of legitimacy” (Kertzer 1988, 39). This use of authenticity for nation-building is further developed later in this chapter.

The property’s state of conservation, which nomination dossiers are required to describe, tends to mirror these understandings of authenticity and strengthen the image of the nation’s continuity and stability. The majority of these documents claim that the site is in a good state of conservation (even using superlatives to justify such assertions), and in doing so, they bolster the nation’s representation of itself as both homogenous and enduring. The nomination dossier of the industrial heritage site “Engelsberg Ironworks” in Sweden, for instance, stresses that it is “one of the most complete and best preserved early industrial sites in Europe based on iron making” (Government of Sweden 1989a, 1). These ideas of continuity and the stability of nominated properties are reinforced by the invocation of very specific terms such as “preservation,” often understood as “protection from all harmful or damaging factors and one thinks of things sealed up or isolated, and certainly not in daily use” (Pye 2001, 27). “Maintenance” is another term frequently used in nomination dossiers, defined as the most basic and important means of conservation that seeks to identify and eliminate potential threats (Agnew and Demas 2002, 7). Such choices of vocabulary strengthen the presentation of the nominated properties in their having been protected from all harmful and damaging factors since their construction and as having been conserved in their original form, frozen in time.

This presentation of the site as frozen in time is reinforced by the description of the legal and administrative measures taken for the protection of the property, detailed in the section of nomination dossiers on conservation. Most dossiers describe the varying legal restrictions in place to ensure that the property will not suffer from encroachment or illegal construction or destruction. This is well explained, for instance, in the nomination dossier of “Potala Palace” in Lhasa, which stresses that “no other construction project shall be launched within the protection zone. If there is a special need to launch a construction project in the zone, approval should be won from the regional people’s government and State cultural and administrative departments” (Government of China 1993a, 2). However, traditional buildings in Lhasa have been destroyed because of development pressure and new construction. For this reason, in 2001, the World Heritage Committee noted that “because of development pressures in the city of Lhasa, particular attention (should) be given to the mitigation of the changes in the areas surrounding the World Heritage properties” (UNESCO 8 February 2002). This example highlights the discrepancies between the existence of legal provisions and
their enforcement. It destabilizes the text of nomination dossiers and the representation of a property as a solid element, frozen in time and as having been preserved in a sealed container over the centuries. The recent intervention by the committee on the World Heritage sites in Lhasa demonstrates that they have not remained in such a vacuum, but rather have changed over time and been affected by development and other pressures. Fine-grained analyses of the notions of restoration and reconstruction, presented later on, will further destabilize the association of authenticity with the original form, workmanship and setting of the site.

**AUTHENTICITY AND THE NARA DOCUMENT**

The previous section analyzed understandings of the four degrees of authenticity (in design, material, workmanship and setting) and their associations with the state of conservation and legal measures for the protection of the property. It highlighted understanding of the authenticity of the site as static and frozen in time. This section moves on to analyze more dynamic understandings and representations of authenticity—particularly according to the provisions of the Nara Document on Authenticity. Such understandings are marginalized in nomination dossiers, “Durham Castle and Cathedral” in England being the first case in point. Submitted in 1985 and well before the 1994 Nara Document, the nomination dossier explained that Durham Castle,

founded soon after the Norman Conquest . . . has been rebuilt, extended and adapted to changing circumstances and uses over a period of 900 years: from being a key fortress in the defence of the border with Scotland, it was gradually transformed in more peaceful times into an imposing and comfortable palace for the Bishops of Durham; and since 1837, soon after the foundation of the University of Durham, it has served as a residential college for many generations of students and dons. As they stand today, the buildings reflect these changing functions and display a wide variety of architectural styles of different periods. (Government of the United Kingdom 1985b)

This dossier stands out because it recognizes the changes undergone by this monument as a consequence of new functions, standards and fashion in both military and domestic architecture. In doing so, it represents a departure from the four official degrees of authenticity. While this interpretation of authenticity is rather forward looking, ICOMOS did not comment on it in its evaluation (ICOMOS December 1985).

The other nomination dossiers that interpret authenticity as a dynamic process were all submitted after 1994 and might thus be a direct consequence of the Nara Document. The nomination dossier for “Notre-Dame Cathedral in Tournai” in Belgium is one such example. It does not insist on the perfect
protection of the monument’s original form, as an object frozen in time. On the contrary, it stresses that this cathedral followed a similar history to most medieval churches of the region: it was subject to gradual adaptations and additions due to new functions and fashions, ultimately cumulating in a restoration campaign during the nineteenth century. This dossier concludes that the authenticity of the monument should be evaluated relatively, in the light of its different stages of restoration and layers of reconstruction. Analyses of references to restoration and reconstruction in nomination dossiers are presented further down.

Another example is “New Lanark,” a nineteenth-century utopian industrial village set in the Scottish landscape, close to the Falls of Clyde (figure 6.1). It contains cotton mill buildings and workers’ housing, as well as an educational institute and school. Its nomination dossier stresses that Mill 2 was subject to structural change over the centuries: “The Venice Charter and Nara Document on Authenticity remind us that the widening of the mill is an essential part of the story of New Lanark” (Government of the United Kingdom 2000b, 56). These examples illustrate Melucco Vaccaro’s viewpoint that buildings are hardly ever frozen in time and that they “rarely come to light in the state in which they left the hands of their creators; they have usually been tampered with, altered, restored, re-used, and adapted” (1996, 202) because of changes of use, fashion or owners. She goes on to stress that these changes have also ensured buildings’ survival for future generations (ibid., 203). Defining authenticity as a dynamic concept resulting from the varying historical changes in buildings might therefore be closer to the actual history of most structures than to declare them as static, original and frozen in time.

As explained previously, most States Parties might have adhered to this latter, stricter definition of authenticity because this was the only one officially sanctioned in the Operational Guidelines until 2005. However, it might also reflect a difficulty in applying the principles of the Nara Document on Authenticity and in moving away from a definition of authenticity conceived as the original and frozen state of the property. This is well illustrated by the example of “Vizcaya Bridge,” nominated by Spain in 2004. Built in 1893, this is the world’s oldest transporter bridge. It represents a solution to the problem of connecting the towns of Portugalete and Las Arenas in the Northern Province of Biscay without disrupting the maritime traffic. Its nomination dossier makes a direct reference to the Nara Document and its provisions when it details the regular replacement of worn parts as well as the modernization of the bridge in accordance with new technologies and current legal security regulations. On the other hand, this document also indicates that “more than 80% of its structure is still identical to when erected between 1890 and 1893” (Government of Spain 2005, 17) in an effort to firmly tie the
monument’s claims to authenticity to the overall persistence of its original state.

These two sections reveal, through the lens of reiterative universalism, the overwhelming use of the four degrees of authenticity in nomination dossiers as an attempt to demonstrate that sites remain in a state identical to when they were built, as if they had been frozen in time. This was even the case after the adoption of the 1994 Nara Document and its 2005 inclusion in the Operational Guidelines. References to the four degrees of authenticity crop up, particularly with regard to sites from non-European countries, despite the fact that the latter do not necessarily define authenticity as such at national and local levels. This discrepancy might reflect the copying and reproduction of European concepts in these non-European nominations, as well as the perceived importance of demonstrating that the site is genuine and unique. Only a minority of dossiers refer to authenticity as an evolving process, reflecting the provisions of the Nara Document. Ironically, this seems to reflect more accurately the history of sites, which in their majority have been continually altered through the centuries.
AUTHENTICITY AND POST-AUTHENTICITY

RESTORATION, RECONSTRUCTION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR AUTHENTICITY

Analyses of the terms “restoration” and “reconstruction” as used in nomination dossiers reveal some tensions between the overarching representation of the authenticity and the conservation of the property as original and frozen in time. In most of the nomination dossiers analyzed, restoration is associated with the repair of a building undertaken in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries. Most often, this work is presented as being essential for the safety of the building and for extending its life and original function. Restoration is thus an important step in prolonging the life of a building and in implementing the principle of intergenerational equity that stands at the heart of the Convention, as detailed in chapters 2 and 5.

A telling case is the nomination dossier of the “Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram,” located in a monsoon zone. Its dossier explains the problems related to the Shore Temple, located right on the seashore and vulnerable to waves and high velocity winds during monsoons. Due to these environmental conditions, the stones and the carvings have weathered to such an extent than they have been lost over the centuries (Government of India 1983, 4). This document goes on to detail the comprehensive program of structural repairs undergone by this temple. This site was nominated and subsequently inscribed on the World Heritage List under criteria (i) and (ii) for its aesthetic and architectural values, demonstrating the key importance of restoration and reconstruction as a way of maintaining outstanding universal value. This example demonstrates that maintaining the “original” state of a building often requires its restoration or reconstruction.

As for European sites, the association of the history of their restoration with their repair reflects the fact that “many major monuments throughout Europe were in a state of disrepair at the beginning of the century . . . so there was scope for widespread reconstruction and restoration” (Pye 2001, 42–43). This is exemplified in the nomination dossier of “Vézelay, Church and Hill” (Government of France 1979c). This document quotes Prosper Mérimée, French general inspector of historical monuments, who in 1835 described this building as having cracked walls and being made rotten by humidity (ibid). Pye goes on to stress that, in the nineteenth century, “buildings were repaired to maintain their function but often considerably altered or rebuilt to suit the restoring architect’s concept of the style of the original, rather than by following the design and detail of the remaining structure” (2001, 43). Hence, these repairs of European buildings were more reconstruction than restoration. This example confirms that buildings have rarely remained in their original state, frozen in time. This reflects problems with the four degrees of authenticity, which hardly correspond to the reality and history of sites, no matter where they are located. This lack of connection between the
history of a building and this prevailing definition of authenticity has led to
issues in the Committee’s evaluation of sites, some of which have been
heavily restored/reconstructed before being inscribed on the list (see, for
instance, the case of Rhodes in Greece or Chichen Itza in Mexico), while
others have been rejected for the very same reasons (see, for instance, the
first submission of the dossier of Carcassonne in France as described by
Pressouyre 1996, 11–12). This is further developed below in the section on
post-authenticity.

According to Jokilehto, the principles of restoration and reconstruction as
detailed in the Venice Charter have been recognized as basic policy guide-
lines for the assessment of cultural heritage sites on UNESCO’s World Heri-
tage List (1998, 230). The Venice Charter emphasizes that “the valid contri-
butions of all periods to the building of a monument must be respected, since
unity of style is not the aim of restoration. When a building includes the
superimposed work of different periods, the revealing of the underlying state
can only be justified in exceptional circumstances and when what is removed
is of little interest” (Second International Congress of Architects and Special-
ists of Historic Buildings 1964, Article 11). Such respect for the different
periods of construction was also stressed by the 1931 Athens Charter for the
Restoration of Historic Monuments (see, in particular, chap. 1, “Doctrines:
General Principles”), which preceded the Venice Charter. In all, 24 percent
of European religious nomination dossiers and 16 percent of the industrial
heritage ones indicate that twentieth-century restoration focused on removing
later accretions to return the building to its original appearance. This is the
case, for instance, in the nomination dossier of the “San Millán Yuso and
Suso Monasteries,” which stresses that work had taken place to restore Suso
to its twelfth-century appearance (Government of Spain 1996b). However,
this dossier does not explain whether these later additions to the buildings
had been removed because of their lesser historical, architectural or social
importance. The ICOMOS evaluation, however, contextualizes this restora-
tion by stressing that “a study of photographs from the pre-restoration period
shows the later additions to have been of low cultural quality and disfiguring;
their impact on the core structure was also superficial” (ICOMOS September
1997). This example demonstrates that in some cases, removal of later addi-
tions can be justified since it is in conformity with the recommendations
from the Venice Charter.

The example of New Lanark above also illustrates the issues involved in
removing later additions and pursuing period restoration. The dossier indi-
cates that most of the village was restored to its appearance in Robert Owen’s
time (Government of the United Kingdom 2000b). Owen was the master-
mind behind the creation of this utopian and paternalist industrial village at
the beginning of the nineteenth century. However, this property had to adapt
to the requirements of textile industries at the end of that century and the
beginning of the twentieth. New Lanark thus underwent a “period restora-

tion” that relied on choosing “an earlier period as a guideline for the choice

of what to keep, what to remove, and what to reconstruct. At the end of the

restoration, the historic building tends to have lost its authenticity and to have

become a modern interpretation” (Jokilehto 1999b, 8). The ICOMOS evalua-
tion of New Lanark nonetheless stresses that its authenticity is “relatively
high” because the restoration and rehabilitation of its buildings were based
on careful research, involving both graphic and written archives (ICOMOS
September 2001b). Yet, as detailed in the previous section, this nomination
dossier also stresses that Mill 2 has been subject to changes and widening
over the centuries, alterations that have been kept while most of the rest of
the village has been restored to its nineteenth-century appearance. Hence
contemporary New Lanark is not a faithful image of its nineteenth-century
appearance but seems more to be a modern interpretation with a combination
of old and new buildings. Its nomination dossier does not explain why the
later additions to some buildings have been kept while others have been
removed. Therefore, Jokilehto’s comment that period restoration destroys the
authenticity of the site by being a modern interpretation could indeed be
applied to the case of New Lanark. This confirms some authors’ comparison
of New Lanark to a theme park (McIntosh and Prentice 1999, 608) that mixes
different epochs but that “never really exists in the form in which it is pre-


cented” (Bryman 1995, 128; Sorensen 1989, 65).

This example of New Lanark is, however, of fundamental importance
since it helps to move beyond the dichotomy between authenticity as the
original state of the building and the Nara Document. It illustrates that au-
thenticity can be understood as a cultural construct, reflecting, embodying
and materializing the specific outstanding universal value of a site. This
means that “authenticity is not inherent in objects, buildings, places, or in-
deed cultural practices. Rather, it is a quality that is culturally constructed
and varies according to who is observing an object and in what context”
(Jones 2009, 135). Such an understanding of authenticity moves beyond
emphasis on the building itself and its specific attributes, be they its form,
design, materials, workmanship, use or function. Conversely, such an ap-
proach recognizes that authenticity is an extrinsic process and concerns the
values that individuals attach to a specific property. When authenticity is
understood as such, the comments quoted above by Bryman and Sorensen on
New Lanark lose their relevance. The authenticity of this property is not
inherent to its tangible dimensions and attributes but to wider historic, social
and cultural contexts. This represents a shift from understanding the four
degrees of authenticity as the intrinsic value of the site to its extrinsic one,
drawing upon the meanings given to it by individuals (Byrne, Brayshaw and
Authenticity understood in relation to the extrinsic values associated with the site can explain why such properties as the “Old Bridge Area of the Old City of Mostar” in Bosnia and Herzegovina were included on the World Heritage List. What matters is not that the bridge was reconstructed but that it embodies the values for which it was nominated and inscribed—that is, that it stands as a symbol of hope and reconciliation and “of coexistence of communities from diverse cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds” (Cameron 2010, 23). These examples stand as recognition that the concept of authenticity is a cultural construct (see also Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2009, 152). Here again the importance of the living connection with the property is stressed as central, as already highlighted in chapter 4 but also in parts of chapter 5.

COMPATIBLE OR INCOMPATIBLE ADAPTATION AND REUSE?

Feilden and Jokilehto explain, in relation to the four degrees of authenticity, that if a site’s function cannot be maintained, it should be adapted in full respect of its outstanding universal value (1998, 60). A property can thus be altered and reused and still be considered authentic as long as its outstanding universal value is maintained. In all, 9 percent of nomination dossiers from the European religious group, and 34 percent from the industrial heritage group describe the compatible reuse of the nominated site or buildings within it. Some of these reuses relate to the outstanding universal value of the site and its educational role. This includes buildings whose functions have evolved into a museum or a depository of local archives. This new function can help to communicate the different values of the site to visitors. The nomination dossier of the industrial heritage site of “Kutná Hora: Historic Town Centre with the Church of St. Barbara and the Cathedral of Our Lady at Sedlec” in the Czech Republic, for instance, stresses that one of the buildings within this property, “Little Castle,” has been adapted to house the new municipal museum. Another example is the dossier of the “Engelsberg Ironworks” in Sweden, which explains that a barn has been converted to house local archives on ironworks. Some of these explanations detail that changes to the function of the building were carefully undertaken and that all the main adaptations are reversible.

An additional 13 percent of the nomination dossiers from the European religious group and 21 percent of nomination dossiers from the industrial heritage group describe the reuse of the nominated site or a building within it without mentioning how this was undertaken or how its significance and history have been preserved and/or have been communicated to visitors. This is the case, for instance, with the nomination dossier of “San Millán Yuso and Suso Monasteries” (Government of Spain 1996b), which states that parts
of the monastery (in the case of San Millán Yuso) have been transformed into a hotel. Kerr explains that some buildings or sites have varying degrees of significance, with some parts being of “such significance that adaptation is unacceptable. On the other hand, some later accretions are of much more modest significance; modifications to these accretions would not ‘substantially detract’ from the significance of the place and would help make the whole complex viable” (1996, 29). The ICOMOS evaluation of San Millán Yuso Monastery did explain that adaptations undertaken to transform part of the monastery into a hotel “have been discreetly and sympathetically handled” (September 1997). No additional information is provided to justify these comments and it is thus difficult to understand what constitutes a discreetly and sympathetically handled adaptation. None of the other nomination dossiers that mention the reuse of the site explain the lesser significance of some parts of the buildings or sites as the justification for the manner in which they have been reused.

The previous section analyzed understandings of authenticity according to a site’s values. Analyzing such understandings in relation to adaptation and reuse raises many problems. Indeed, which values should be considered to determine the authenticity of a site and its adaptation and reuse? In the case of New Lanark, the values selected were those associated with Robert Owen. This association with Robert Owen guided the rehabilitation of the site and acted as a guide to decide what to reuse and how. However, the values will be different according to those who have the power to identify what is important and what should be conserved. The local communities and the former blue-collar workers of the industrial structure, for instance, might be more attached to the site as it was when it was still a working factory in the 1980s. Hence, if the local population is excluded, as has been detailed all through this publication, then its values cannot be recognized as part of the overall outstanding universal value of the property. The authenticity of the building will not reflect values to which the local population can relate. For this reason, Jones calls for the maintenance of the relationship between the site and local communities, lest there be “an undermining of the very qualities and relationships that inform the authenticity of heritage objects as experienced . . . by source communities” (2009, 142). How should one navigate between conflicting judgments and values held by differing stakeholders and the related authenticity of sites? Alberts and Hazen report on the example of Rothenburg in Germany, a place considered to be an authentic medieval site by the local population, but seen as unauthentic by conservators and heritage managers due to it having been largely rebuilt (2010, 61). This instance illustrates that authenticity is always relative and not fixed and that it is always negotiated between the different stakeholders who can ascribe values to a property (see also Andrews and Buggey 2008, 68). It also means that the authenticity of a property can be lost, as is its outstanding universal
value. This is exemplified by the cases of the Dresden Elbe Valley in Germany and Oman’s Arabian Oryx Sanctuary, delisted from the World Heritage List in 2007 and 2009, respectively, because the World Heritage Committee considered that the sites had lost their authenticity and their outstanding universal value. The delisting of the Arabian Oryx Sanctuary was in accordance with the wishes of the government, which reduced the sanctuary by 90 percent after oil had been found at the site. The delisting of the Dresden Elbe Valley was the result of the beginning of the construction of a four-lane bridge across the river Elbe just over a mile from the city’s historic center. An independent visual impact study conducted by the Technical University of Aachen in 2006 concluded that the bridge would cause “irreversib[le] damage to the values and integrity of the property” (Boccardi and Kilian 2008, 3). Discussions with all stakeholders to find alternative solutions and to ensure that the values of the site could be preserved were not conclusive. This led to the decision to go ahead with the construction of the bridge and the subsequent delisting of the site from the list.

WORLD HERITAGE AND POST-AUTHENTICITY

In a recent article, I introduced the notion of “post-authenticity” to reflect the changing framework and reality associated with authenticity (Labadi 2010, 66–84). Here I use the term “post-” to refer, first of all, to the move away from the four degrees of authenticity in design, material, workmanship and setting, which were initially intended to be applied universally and indiscriminately. Such a term helps to criticize this rational and universalist framework. “Post-authenticity” thus represents a move away from the modernist and Enlightenment legacy, which originally served as the theoretical foundation of the World Heritage Convention. This term “post-” also refers to the postmodern evolution of the definition of authenticity, well illustrated by the adoption of the Nara Document. As explained throughout this chapter and in chapter 2, this document recognizes that the authenticity of a site is relative and rooted in specific sociocultural contexts. The last section of this chapter demonstrated that authenticity is considered an extrinsic process, expressing the values for which sites have been nominated. For these reasons, authenticity is not a fixed, rational concept that corresponds to specific criteria. On the contrary, it needs to be negotiated between the different stakeholders who ascribe value to the property. The term “post-” is also an explicit recognition of this extrinsic and subjective process, necessary for the identification of the authenticity of a property.

Moreover, the term “post-authenticity” is useful to describe States Parties’ overwhelming use of the definition of authenticity according to its four degrees, even after the adoption of the Nara Document or its integration in
the text of the Operational Guidelines in 2005. Indeed, as demonstrated in the preceding sections—in particular, through analyses of the terms “restoration” and “reconstruction”—most sites are never frozen in time and do not remain in their original form and state. Conversely, the four degrees of authenticity reflect an ideal but unrealistic state of sites as frozen in time. In this sense, this definition of authenticity according to four degrees can refer to what Baudrillard calls a “simulacrum” (1994). This is defined as a concept that “is never that what hides the truth—it is the truth that hides the fact that there is none. The simulacrum is true” (ibid., 1). Despite the fact that the four degrees of authenticity did not reflect the actual state of conservation of sites, they were thought to represent the truth and the reality since they referred back to the official meta-narratives of the World Heritage Committee’s system, which was the reality and truth of that time. These representations mask the absence of a basic reality of the four degrees of authenticity, which do not relate in any case to the actual state of authenticity of sites. These contradictory and unrealistic presentations of authenticity in nomination dossiers conceal the fact that the Operational Guidelines, up until their 2005 version, bear no relation to the reality of this concept. These representations are thus simulacra: they do not conceal the truth, but rather are the truth themselves because they follow and reproduce a definition from the Operational Guidelines, which is ostensibly the truth but in fact conceals “that there is none.”

SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has revealed the central position occupied by the rational and universalized definition of the four degrees of authenticity in nomination dossiers. This definition was used even after 1994 and the adoption of the Nara Document as well as after the inclusion of the provisions of this document into the Operational Guidelines in 2005. This definition is used by States Parties to strengthen the association of the outstanding universal value of a site with ideas of the stability, continuity and homogeneity of the nation. Descriptions of the state of conservation are also overwhelmingly used in nomination dossiers to strengthen such an image of the continuity and stability of the nation.

This chapter then moved on to analyze representations of authenticity in nomination dossiers as a dynamic process, reflecting the provisions of the Nara Document. Although marginalized, these analyses demonstrate that buildings are hardly frozen in time and that they often have been tampered with, altered, restored or reconstructed to fit various changes of use, fashion or owners.

Using the example of New Lanark, this chapter moved beyond this dichotomy between the original state of the building and the Nara Document.
Authenticity can indeed be understood as embodying the outstanding universal value of sites. In other words, authenticity is not inherent in objects but is an extrinsic process and concerns the negotiations of values between individuals and a specific property. The issues of such understanding were also discussed in this chapter, particularly the problem, highlighted previously, of the lack of a holistic identification of all the values by all concerned stakeholders or the problem of conflicting judgments and values held by different stakeholders or individuals. The last section introduced the notion of post-authenticity as a way to recognize these changing definitions and realities associated with authenticity.
Chapter Seven

The Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention

Complementing World Heritage?

The previous chapters have presented and contrasted the dominant, marginalized and transgressing discourses concerning outstanding universal value and analyzed how these have been employed in the representation of the past and the nation, cultural diversity, sustainable tourism and development and authenticity. This final chapter moves to new grounds to study the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (henceforth the 2003 Convention). It entered into force in 2006, three months after the date of deposit of the thirtieth instrument of ratification. It is often claimed that this document, as a legal instrument, constitutes a shift of focus in the very concept and management of World Heritage. Indeed, the 2003 Convention can be considered to provide, from the outset, a reply to some of the salient criticisms associated with the World Heritage system—in particular, its elitist and monumentalist bias, its tendency to exclude communities and their associated living heritage, and the unsustainability of various tourism management models it promotes. As further detailed and analyzed in the following pages, the 2003 Convention claims to be representative and inclusive of communities and to have established a model that helps to safeguard intangible heritage in a sustainable manner, without freezing it in a timeless mold.

As detailed in the previous chapters, on diverse occasions, the World Heritage Committee has encouraged States Parties to take better account of less tangible dimensions of heritage, of anthropological components of heritage (as called for in the 1994 text of the Global Strategy) and to consider the
concept of authenticity according to more relativist definitions as outlined in
the 1994 Nara Document. However, as highlighted throughout this book,
these attempts to widen the scope of the World Heritage Convention and to
encourage a more anthropological and relativist understanding of its key
concepts did not actually have a major impact on the official discourses
represented by World Heritage List nomination dossiers. The previous chap-
ter, for instance, revealed that States Parties have overwhelmingly adhered to
the original definition of authenticity and have not, for the most part, taken
into account the Nara Document, even after its 2005 inclusion in the Opera-
tional Guidelines.

This chapter aims to critically analyze the provisions of the 2003 Conven-
tion through an in-depth study of official texts, its implementation at national
and local levels and one of the projects I worked on in its secretariat, related
to capacity-building. In doing so, it compares and contrasts the processes of
the 2003 Convention with those of the World Heritage Convention and the
key messages discussed in the preceding chapters. The first sections analyze
the definition of intangible cultural heritage as provided in the text of the
2003 Convention. This chapter then assesses the listing process as a method
for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and associated claims of sustain-
ability. Finally, this chapter details the capacity-building strategy in which I
was involved. To ensure some continuity with the previous chapters, some
sections will be based on analyses of nomination dossiers of elements for
inclusion on the Intangible Heritage Lists. However, the requirements of
nomination dossiers for the 2003 Convention are different from those of the
World Heritage Convention, with shorter obligatory replies to the mandatory
questions. For this reason, it was deemed unnecessary to undertake similar
in-depth and value-based analyses of these dossiers as was pursued in the
case of the selected nomination dossiers for inclusion on the World Heritage
List.

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE, LIVING AND
CONSTANTLY CHANGING

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was
adopted in 2003. This is a different system from the World Heritage Conven-
tion and completely separate from it in its implementation, with a distinct
committee, general assembly and secretariat. Making this distinction at the
beginning of this chapter is important since, too often, the 2003 Convention
is considered part of the World Heritage Convention, perhaps because they
both deal with heritage and were adopted by UNESCO (Murphy 2001; Er-
llanger 2012). Additional background on the 2003 Convention is provided
later in this chapter.
According to the text of the 2003 Convention, intangible cultural heritage means

the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills—as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith—that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly re-created by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. (UNESCO 2003b, Article 2.1)

This rich definition raises a number of issues for critical analysis, the first of which concerns the conceptual limits of intangible cultural heritage. It presents a shift from the World Heritage Convention by locating people at the center of this definition. This understanding of heritage is indeed based on what communities, groups and in some cases individuals recognize as part of their intangible cultural heritage.

Some consider this definition to be an excellent opportunity to recognize new, marginalized or unprepossessing forms of heritage and their fluid nature not restricted to particular national boundaries. It also represents a promising means by which living cultural traditions can be afforded greater public recognition and legitimacy, which have often been withheld in past considerations of this type of heritage. Nonetheless, this definition of intangible cultural heritage has been criticized for encompassing too much. Critics of this notion have argued that intangible cultural heritage can include virtually anything pertaining to the human mind, ranging from “the white lie” and “the passive voice” to “irony” (Murphy 2001; Hafstein 2009, 96). These viewpoints echo some of the scornful approaches to the rise and expansion of heritage in the 1980s and 1990s that Lowenthal termed our “obsession with the past” (1998, ix; but see also Hewison 1987; Walsh 1992). However, these critics fail to recognize the potential for the definition of intangible cultural heritage to change both the characterization and management of heritage through the relocation of the human at the center of the system.

Second, this definition clearly stresses the continuity between tangible and intangible cultural heritage, with the reference to “cultural spaces.” It recognizes that some forms of intangible cultural heritage are intimately linked to a geographical space, be it a mountain, a river or a town. This recognized continuity certainly opens avenues for greater synergies between the World Heritage Convention and the 2003 Convention. It represents the possibility to reread World Heritage sites according to those more anthropological values referred to in the text of the 1994 Global Strategy, which have often been omitted from nomination dossiers (as detailed in chapter 4). This is the case, for instance, for the Hudhud Chants of the Ifugao that are prac-
Chapter 7

noticed during the sowing and harvesting of rice, funeral wakes and other rituals at harvest time on the rice terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras (figure 7.1). While the chants have been recognized as intangible heritage by UNESCO and included on the Representative List in 2008, the rice terraces themselves were included on the World Heritage List in 1995. Some theorists and heritage professionals have argued nonetheless that the establishment of two categories is “artificial” and that they correspond to the same reality (see comments from ICOMOS during the meeting “Authenticity and Integrity in an African Context” [UNESCO 9 October 2000, 4]). It is true that heritage, be it tangible or intangible, concerns the negotiation and formation of identities, as well as a sense of place. However, in terms of the specificities entailed in safeguarding this heritage and its transmission, these two types, tangible and intangible, belong to two different spheres. Safeguarding a dance or drafting a statement of significance for an intangible cultural heritage element requires different knowledge and expertise than, say, working on the conservation of an archaeological site. For this reason, intangible and tangible cultural heritage could be considered as complementary or continuous domains rather than identical, overlapping or superficial ones.

Yet, as highlighted and argued throughout this book, dominant heritage discourses related to World Heritage, as well as sanctioned and authorized heritage representations in general, revolve around architectural beauty, monumentality, origins and stability. They tend to marginalize the intangible and more anthropological dimensions of properties that are nonetheless of great importance. The 2003 Convention might therefore arguably help to re-center the marginalized values identified in this research to more central spaces. Recognizing the power that intangible cultural heritage has to reconsider and reread the World Heritage Convention from a more anthropological angle is also a way of considering these two instruments as equal and refuting any possible hierarchy between them.

Refusing to acknowledge any hierarchy between the two conventions also helps to fight against the possibility of associating intangible heritage with non-Western countries and tangible heritage with Western ones. It is sometimes believed that intangible cultural heritage is “old, pre-industrial, unchanging or relatively stable over time, related to an ethnic identity (especially a marginalized or non-Western one) and regionally specific” (Deacon et al. 2004, 29). The 2003 Convention is thus too often associated with non-Western countries while, on the other hand, the World Heritage system is considered a select club of the West. A brief analysis of the elements submitted or inscribed on the different lists of the 2003 Convention (the listing process is explained below) reveals the fallacy of such dichotomous claims between the West and the rest. No element from Africa was inscribed on any of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Lists in 2010; as for 2009, only three elements inscribed on the Representative List (out of seventy-six) and two...
out of twelve) on the Urgent Safeguarding List originated from Africa. These figures certainly show that European States Parties have integrated the narrative of intangible heritage while non-European countries might not have yet the financial and human capacities to nominate elements to the lists and register under the 2003 Convention, although major efforts have been deployed by UNESCO.

A third important point raised by this definition relates to the “constantly re-created” dimension of intangible cultural heritage in response to the communities’ environment, their interaction with nature and their history. This recognizes the porous, creolized and moving nature of intangible heritage that is transformed by the migration of cultural bearers, their contacts with other cultures and external influences. This definition also recognizes that intangible heritage does not sit comfortably within fixed geographical spaces and the boundaries of contemporary nation-states. Communities with particular intangible cultural heritage may live in one contiguous area spread over two or more countries, or in noncontiguous areas in one or more States Parties (due, for instance, to migration in the past and present). This certainly represents a move away from the traditional understanding of heritage that,
as detailed in great length in chapter 3, is used to define a nation and justify its current boundaries. Hence the importance of the notion of multinational heritage that goes beyond nationalistic understandings of heritage, as further detailed below.

Such recognition of the constantly re-created dimension of heritage also means that authenticity cannot apply to intangible cultural heritage. This was one of the decisions adopted during the tenth anniversary of the Nara Document on Authenticity held in Nara, Japan, in October 2004. This move away from the concept of authenticity represents a shift from the World Heritage Convention, which, as extensively discussed in the previous chapter, has kept “authenticity” as one of the key criteria for the selection of sites to be inscribed on the list. This move away can be understood as an attempt to prevent the use of the 2003 Convention as a way to fossilize the living heritage of communities. This is also the reason why the term “folklore” has also been carefully omitted from the text of the 2003 Convention and its Operational Directives. This absence of the notion of folklore reflects the heavy criticism addressed to folklore studies, dubbed “fakelore” (Dorson 1976; Bendix 1997, 190), which too often have portrayed a romanticized, original, pre-modern and unaffected state of the intangible cultural heritage. Such portrayals have in turn led to the essentializing and stereotyping of the bearers of the intangible manifestations or elements. Another effect of this “folklorization” was the transformation of intangible heritage into entertainment, based on simplification of the elements performed, their adaptation to the audience (primarily tourists) and the dilution of the special meanings they have for the local populations. Since authenticity was not considered in the 2003 Convention, the text of the 2003 Convention indicates that the threshold used to decide whether an element is still relevant, meaningful and can be nominated for inclusion on one of the lists rests with its associated communities. This is not without problems, as discussed in the next section.

COMMUNITIES: THE HEART OF THE 2003 CONVENTION

Communities are located at the heart of the definition of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), as presented in Article 2 and in the rest of the text of the 2003 Convention. Such self-referentiality to communities places them at the center of the system, not only as bearers of intangible cultural heritage but also as arbitrators of what should be considered as such (Soós 2010, 32). The central role played by communities is “a response to the very specific character of ICH that exists only in its enactment by practitioners and, therefore, whose continued practice depends wholly on the ability and willingness of the cultural group and/or community concerned” (Blake 2009, 45–46). Instead of focusing on materiality and tangibility, as the World Heritage system does,
The Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention

the 2003 Convention introduces a shift and focuses on individuals and on sustaining their knowledge, practices, skills and cosmologies (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004, 53). This participatory approach is clearly summarized in Article 15: “Within the framework of its safeguarding activities of the intangible cultural heritage, each State Party shall endeavor to ensure the widest possible participation of communities, groups and, where appropriate, individuals that create, maintain and transmit such heritage, and to involve them actively in its management” (UNESCO 2003b). Some discrepancies can, however, be noted between Article 2, quoted above, which defines intangible cultural heritage and Article 15. While Article 2 refers to communities as being at the heart of the system, Article 15 recenters the state as the party that is ultimately in charge. This tension will be further considered later on.

Before analyzing the mechanisms that have been defined to ensure the participation of communities, let us analyze what a “community” is in the first place. Perhaps surprisingly, the 2003 Convention does not provide any definition of this concept. During a 2002 expert meeting on the preparation of the draft of the 2003 Convention, a glossary of relevant terms was produced. It defined a “community” as “people who share a self-ascribed sense of connectedness. This may be manifested, for example, in a feeling of identity or common behavior, as well as in activities and territory. Individuals can belong to more than one community” (see van Zanten 2002, 4; Blake 2009, 51). This definition recognizes that communities are fluid and changing and that they may be understood in different ways by different people, according to administrative, geographical, ethno-linguistic or other criteria. Individuals can also concomitantly belong to a diversity of communities. As implied by the 2003 Convention, communities should themselves define who they are, according to the relation they have with a specific intangible cultural heritage element. This can include being a practitioner or a member of an audience.

The identification of communities can nevertheless be complicated due to competing claims of association with the element and different usages of, and meanings associated with, the element. “One of the key disputes over meaning may arise from the difficulty of defining what the core of the intangible heritage is and therefore what change is fundamental (and possibly damaging) and what change is incidental (and possibly interesting and useful)” (Deacon et al 2004, 45). The text of the 2003 Convention and its Operational Directives do not explain how multiple interpretations of, and claims of association with, the element by specific social groupings, like women or youth movements, can be dealt with and negotiated in the identification and preparation of nomination dossiers. These texts do not provide any further information on how complex power/knowledge relationships, already addressed in earlier chapters in relation to World Heritage, can be mediated (ibid., 48). In addition, the text of the 2003 Convention points to the common assumption that identifiable communities exist, while the reality
might be more complex with overlapping, shifting and subjective communities that may be difficult to delineate (Cleaver 2001, 44).

The key question though is how to translate this text and theory of communities into practice. One potential problem is the intergovernmental system of the 2003 Convention. This system can lead to a situation in which the process of selecting and nominating elements is undertaken solely by governments, which may or may not want to engage and involve particular communities. This may lead to elements being nominated without local communities knowing the precise implications of this process, and ultimately of inscription. The consequences can be very serious with, for instance, violation of the sacred or secret dimension of an element or its commodification (De Jong 2007, 162). To ensure the engagement and participation of communities, different evidence is requested from States Parties in their nominations of elements for inclusion on the different lists. The process of listing under the 2003 Convention is explained in greater detail below. Similar to the World Heritage Convention, elements need to correspond to and fulfill different criteria in order to be inscribed on one of the lists (see figure 7.2 for the list of criteria). Criterion 4, identical for both the Representative List and the Urgent Safeguarding List, requires a description that “the element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent” (UNESCO June 2010).

In addition, the nomination form requests States Parties to identify clearly one or several communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned with the element. Sufficient information should also be provided to determine that the intangible cultural heritage corresponds to the definition provided above and that it therefore has been recognized as such by the related community, which it provides with a sense of identity and continuity. In their nomination dossiers, States Parties are also encouraged to explain how communities have actively participated in the preparation of the nomination at all stages. The nomination form also provides a space for States Parties to indicate clearly whether the nominated element is restricted by customary practices enacted and conducted by the communities, in order, for instance, to maintain the secrecy of certain knowledge. Respect for customary practices also needs to be demonstrated in these dossiers.

This continuum and the logical references to communities, not only in the text of the 2003 Convention or the Operational Directives, but also, and most importantly, in the requirements of nomination dossiers, represent a fundamental move forward. As stressed by Boccardi with regard to the World Heritage Convention, “evidence of this consultation (of communities) was . . . not requested (and still isn’t) within the established format for the nomination of a property” (2007, 19). This is one of the reasons why communities have been excluded from being mentioned in nomination dossiers and
management plans, as highlighted in chapters 4 and 5, despite official literature produced on the importance of their inclusion. Evidence of the participation of communities has thus been built into the process of element nomination and evaluation under the 2003 Convention, which is not yet the case for World Heritage. The inclusion of such a request for evidence in nomination
dossiers for World Heritage was proposed during the meeting “World Heritage, Conservation and Sustainable Development” held in Paraty (Brazil), 29–31 March 2010.

How have States Parties understood and explained community involvement in their nomination dossiers? Such analyses reveal, first of all, differing understandings of community. Some nomination dossiers identify local populations as well as those practitioners organized into nongovernmental organizations as being the primary community. This is the case, for instance, in the nomination dossiers of the Aalst Carnival in Belgium and the Scissors Dance from Peru, both inscribed on the Representative List in 2010. Other States Parties have diffused understanding of communities. For example, this is the case for the nomination dossier of Chinese Calligraphy, inscribed on the Representative List in 2009, which recognizes as its communities—in addition to the China Calligraphers Association, the Chinese Calligraphy Institute of the Chinese National Academy of Arts and other related calligraphy research institutions—calligraphers and calligraphy lovers, which can include a wide range of people from across the world and whose delimitation is rather blurred. As for the Radif of Iranian Music, the standard melodic patterns of Iranian classical music inscribed on the Representative List in 2009, it is linked to, according to its nomination dossier, “people of the State Party concerned.” This demonstrates the vague understanding of this concept of community held by States Parties and the fact that they do not associate identification of the community with safeguarding of the element. Calligraphy lovers or “people of the State Party concerned” cannot be directly associated with the preparation of the safeguarding plan and the active safeguarding of the element. In some cases, identification of communities seem thus to be a rhetorical exercise, unrelated to the direct safeguarding of the element. This appears to be confirmed by the information contained in the consent form that must be provided with the nomination dossier and which should demonstrate the free, prior and informed consent of communities. The form for the dossier of Chinese Calligraphy was signed by the China National Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding Center and does not provide the consent of the communities referred to in the dossier itself.

Identifying the communities is just one step of the process. How are communities described as having participated in the nomination dossier and how are they illustrated as taking part in the day-to-day safeguarding of the element? Participation is about creating positive results and benefits for all the participants that could not have been achieved without joint effort (see, for instance, Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2008, 12–14). In this situation, “collaboration is viewed as profitable to participants and the larger communities and there is a commitment to a long-term relationship between the [government] and the community” (Nicholas, Welch and Yellowhorn 2008, 293). As already stressed in chapter 4, participation has become a
buzzword, loaded with contradictory meanings, and in some cases it “has turned out to be manipulative” (Cooke and Kothari 2001, 1). Besides, communities might not see the benefits of participating in the process of nominating or safeguarding intangible elements, despite the widespread assumption that communities are always willing to participate in heritage projects.

Analyses of the nomination dossiers demonstrate a wide range of understandings of community participation. In a number of cases, nomination dossiers only explain that the communities concerned have given their full support for the inclusion of the intangible cultural element on one of the lists. These dossiers do not explain how the day-to-day safeguarding of the element is being undertaken in collaboration with the communities or how the element will continue to be enacted by its community of origin and will not fall prey to commercialization. On the other hand, one nomination dossier stands out: that of “Traditions and Practices Associated to the Kayas in the Sacred Forests of the Mijikenda” from Kenya, inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2009. The sacred Mijikenda Kaya Forests were also inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2008. The dossier of this intangible heritage element details the series of consultation meetings that were held with different local community groups as part of the dossier’s preparation. During these meetings, the needs and concerns of the communities, including those of women and youth, were identified and included. It was thus clarified that “the members had a strong wish to continue with the traditions and practices and thus the need to safeguard them together with the forests that are indispensable for their enactment” (Government of Kenya 2008, 8). This nomination explains that problems related to a lack of income generation in the sacred forests lead the Mijikenda, particularly the younger generations, to leave the forests to look for employment. This nomination dossier explains thus the key importance of income generation to ensure the long-term safeguarding of the Kaya Forests. It explains that the participants plan to start income generating activities such as beekeeping, ecotourism and craft for each community. This would help to retain young people within the communities and ensure the protection of the forests. This dossier nonetheless does not explain how this development will be undertaken and how issues related to the over-commercialization of sites, as detailed in chapter 5, will be avoided.

These analyses have thus highlighted that the notion of community relates to a variety of realities linked to the bearers of the element but also to the whole population of the nominated state or those aficionados of the element. These analyses have also revealed that the need to involve communities has been understood differently by varying States Parties. In some cases, this participation solely means that communities have agreed upon the nomination of their element for inscription on one of the lists. In others, participation means the full engagement and empowerment of communities and the taking
into account of their concerns and needs related to ensuring the long-term viability of the element. These wide varieties of understanding can be explained by the lack of official guidelines provided by UNESCO and flexibility in the assessment of dossiers.

Now that the different concepts of the definition of intangible cultural heritage as provided in the text of the 2003 Convention have been explained, this chapter moves on to analyze the 2003 Convention’s key mechanism: the listing process. This process is supposed to ensure the safeguarding and viability of intangible heritage.

THE LISTING PROCESS: THE BEST WAY FOR SAFEGUARDING INTANGIBLE HERITAGE?

Borrowing from the World Heritage Convention, the 2003 Convention is based on a listing system. While the 1972 Convention focuses on one main list from which sites can then be inscribed in the List of World Heritage in Danger (see chapter 2), three distinct listing processes characterize the 2003 Convention. First, a List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding has been established “with a view to taking appropriate safeguarding measures” (Article 17.1, UNESCO 2003b). Second, a Register of Good Practices (also referred to as Article 18) aims to disseminate and ensure the visibility of programs, projects and activities considered to best reflect the principles and objectives of the 2003 Convention and aims to be a platform for the exchange of experiences in implementing the 2003 Convention. Third, there is a Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity that is similar to the World Heritage List and aims to ensure the visibility of elements inscribed on it (Article 16). Its elements should not be facing any significant threat to their viability.

To have their elements inscribed on these lists and the register, States Parties submit nomination dossiers, which aim to demonstrate that criteria are met (see lists of criteria in figure 7.2). As discussed throughout this book, the threshold for sites to be inscribed on the World Heritage List is their outstanding universal value, which has led critics to refer to it as an elitist system. Conversely, one of the key principles of the listing systems under the 2003 Convention is that no hierarchy can be assigned to distinguish one community’s intangible heritage as better, more valuable, more important or more interesting than the heritage of any other community. To every community or group, each element of its intangible heritage has value that cannot be compared to other elements of other communities’ heritage: each is equally valuable, in itself.

The aim of the 2003 Convention is to safeguard intangible cultural heritage. In the 2003 Convention’s terms, safeguarding is synonymous with
viability, which is the principle that ensures that intangible cultural heritage continues to be transmitted from generation to generation. This philosophy behind the listing process certainly helps to ensure the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage. This listing process insists upon the important role played by bearers and practitioners in keeping their intangible heritage alive through transmitting it. Considering that intangible cultural heritage is often seen in negative and pejorative terms as backward and pre-modern, the two UNESCO lists and register are surely some of the best measures to ensure accrued visibility, respect and awareness for intangible heritage. It is also a way to ensure that the younger generation becomes more interested in these manifestations and that they keep them viable through learning these traditions and passing them on to their own children. This is the reason why Kirshenblatt-Gimblett indicated that the listing system might be the most practical way to raise awareness and visibility while encouraging the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage (2004, 57).

However, despite these advantages, numerous experts have raised concerns over the listing system. Kurin, for instance, questions for whom the main list is representative: “As can happen in such programs . . . those receiving the prestige are nations and their governmental representatives, not the practitioners of the actual traditions. If the folks do not get and experience attention, honor, prestige and respect, it is difficult to make the argument that they benefit from it, as much of its efficacy lies in the realm of self-esteem and resultant action” (Kurin 2007, 17). For Early and Seitel, the problem associated with having made the lists and the register the central emphasis of the 2003 Convention is that governments will first and foremost concentrate on these rather than focusing on the culture bearers themselves (cited in Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004, 56; Early and Seitel 2002, 13). Besides, how can we ensure that the listing of elements on the lists do not result in their fossilization? These concerns echo those expressed during the debates on the drafting of the 2003 Convention. Some participating governments were reluctant to have a system that would bear such a close resemblance to the World Heritage one and that would not pay justice to the richness and variety of intangible cultural heritage elements. They were also rather worried that the listing system would deter States Parties from focusing on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and compel them to focus only on nominating elements and proposing programs, projects and activities. During the discussions on a draft convention, proposals were made about having a system of national lists only instead of an international system in the same mold as the World Heritage system. However, these proposals were not adopted.

In addition, this system of listing means that some States Parties still associate their intangible heritage with claims of territory, origin and antecedence, despite the recognition in the 2003 Convention of the moving and changing nature of heritage that often defies national boundaries. This is
exemplified, for instance, by the tension between Turkey and Greece over the inscription of Karagöz. This type of shadow theater was nominated by Turkey and inscribed as such on the Representative List in 2009. However, Greece claims this heritage as its own tradition. In an effort to move beyond these territorial claims, UNESCO organized a regional meeting on “shared heritage,” held in Bangkok in July 2010. More than thirty government representatives from across the Asia-Pacific region participated in this meeting. Its aims were to strengthen international cooperation for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and preventing conflicts that might otherwise arise over the ownership or misinterpretation of intangible heritage. During this meeting, the importance of the shared dimension of intangible cultural heritage was highlighted: “When communities move or disperse, they take their ICH [intangible cultural heritage] with them more easily than other forms of heritage. When their territory is split by an imposed State border, the community continues to exist, and so does its ICH, becoming heritage shared across national borders. In fact, a considerable part of the ICH of humanity is spread over more than one country, and because of widespread migration, not necessarily between adjacent countries” (UNESCO July 2010, 2). This meeting clearly stressed the importance of multinational nomination dossiers concerning the same element and proposed by more than one country as a way of recognizing the fluid nature of intangible cultural heritage and moving beyond claims of origin and precedence.

Although this meeting on intangible heritage as shared heritage was definitely a step forward, additional efforts will be required to alter the way in which States Parties think about and work on safeguarding this heritage. As highlighted in this book, the way in which States Parties understand heritage cannot be changed solely by meetings and modification in the wordings of official texts.

The issues considered in this section can be related to the next, which analyzes the relationships between the 2003 Convention and sustainable development. It will also compare and contrast these relationships with those discrepancies (highlighted in chapter 5) between discourses on sustainability, tourism and development and the use of these discourses to justify unsustainable practices.

**THE 2003 CONVENTION: A SUSTAINABLE SYSTEM?**

The 2003 Convention is often qualified as sustainable because its conception of viability echoes the definition of sustainability from the Brundtland Report (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). As I have stressed, the concept of viability rests on the commitment, capacity and willingness of bearers of intangible cultural heritage to practice their heritage and
The Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention

141
to transmit it to future generations through a variety of measures (Labadi 2011a, 115–16). This concept of “viability” as transmission can be associated with that of “sustainability.” As stressed by Proschan, “If sustainable development, as defined in 1987 by the Brundtland Commission, is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,” sustaining intangible heritage means ensuring that it continues to be practiced today without compromising the ability of coming generations to enjoy it and practice it in the future” (2008, 19–20). In addition, the central principle of intangible cultural heritage as being transmitted from generation to generation reflects the concept of intergenerational equity, also central to sustainable development. However, the fact that the text of the 2003 Convention has been inspired by and reflects ideas of sustainable development does not mean that intangible heritage elements listed under it are being developed in a sustainable manner. Chapter 5 detailed major issues with the way in which World Heritage sites have been developed and the lack, in a number of cases, of sustainable or responsible development at sites. UNESCO has warned against such unsustainable development of intangible cultural heritage (Duvelle 2010), and the 2010 revised version of the Operational Directives was carefully crafted to avoid such pitfalls.

As highlighted in chapter 5, a major issue concerns the unsustainable development of heritage property due to its listing, which increases its visibility and leads it to become a target for tour operators or other tourist stakeholders. The problem with the commercialization of intangible cultural heritage is that it can lead to its “folklorization.” This can include freezing the elements and enacting them according to the state in which they were when inscribed on the lists, which corresponds to their most visible and documented form. This can also include turning the elements solely into tools for economic profit (Soós 2010, 37), adapting/simplifying their performance for tourists or emptying them of their content and as a result alienating the communities related to them. This is a real threat that is already happening, as is the case, for instance, for the Mevlevi Sema Ceremony from Turkey, inscribed on the Representative List in 2008 (originally proclaimed as a masterpiece of intangible cultural heritage in 2005).

The ascetic Sufi order Mevlevi, founded in 1273 in Konya, is perhaps best known for its Whirling Dervishes, referring to their famous practice of whirling as part of entering into communication with God. Since the inscription of the Mevlevi Sema Ceremony on the Representative List, posters have been displayed across Istanbul advertising tourist shows of “Whirling Dervishes” with the UNESCO symbol and the legend “800 Years of Tradition” (figure 7.3). These shows, performed by actors, have lost all their symbolic content. In this case, the inscription on the Intangible Heritage List is clearly used as a marketing and commercial tool to attract more tourists to the shows.
of the Whirling Dervishes. This does not prevent the practices of the Whirling Dervishes from remaining meaningful for their practitioners and being continued away from tourists. However, these practices are kept confidential and do not seem to be in need of the visibility offered by the Representative List. The problem, as was already highlighted in chapter 5, is the fact that UNESCO insists on culture as a tool for development and, in particular, for the reduction of poverty. In the absence of any specific guidelines on or monitoring of heritage and development, this can be understood as an encouragement for States Parties to use intangible heritage for unsustainable tourism policies. The issues raised here and in the previous sections highlight the need to set communities at the heart of the safeguarding process to ensure
that it corresponds to their needs and aspirations and that they have the power to limit the development and commercialization of their heritage. The following section presents some of the efforts undertaken by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section of UNESCO to strike a balance between top-down and bottom-up approaches.

STRIKING A BALANCE

One way of avoiding some of the pitfalls presented previously is to strike a balance between top-down and bottom-up approaches to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. This means ensuring that communities can take the lead in identifying what benefits they want from the nomination and can control how the safeguarding is undertaken. In this process, the national authorities play the role of coordinators and facilitators. In order to encourage such an approach, since 2009 UNESCO has been coordinating a comprehensive global training strategy on intangible heritage. This training strategy covers a number of topics, ranging from the preparation of inventories and nomination dossiers to the implementation of the 2003 Convention. The premises of this project lie in the belief that providing communities with the necessary knowledge of the 2003 Convention will help them acquire real power to implement it.

The first topic tackled was the preparation of inventories. UNESCO organized a number of pilot projects on inventory-making in Southern Africa. It coordinated, with the concerned States Parties, the selection of a geographical area where inventory would be undertaken by cultural officers in full cooperation with different members of the communities. Members of the community were accessed through key individuals, including—in the instance of the inventory-making in Botha-Bothe, Lesotho, in February 2010—teachers, traditional doctors and chiefs of the local community council. Workshops were organized with community members to identify relevant themes and elements to be listed in the inventory. Key information was gathered during these workshops, including description and origins of the intangible heritage, associated tangible elements, modes of transmission, details of community participation, values or beliefs attached to the practice, transmission of the element and threats to it. These meetings helped to sensitize and involve the local communities as the primary custodians responsible for deciding the elements to be selected for inclusion on inventories.

The second element of the training strategy concerned the preparation of nomination dossiers. Who should take part in the training on drafting nomination dossiers was one of the key questions addressed. Indeed, those who acquire the knowledge of how to draft a nomination dossier have the power to represent the element in a specific way and can include or exclude some of
its dimensions. One of the discussions concerned the level of accessibility of the workshops on preparing nomination dossiers and whether illiterate members of local communities might be able to participate in a training session on preparing a written document. No single, firm answer was provided, but a number of possibilities were suggested so that even illiterate members of communities could participate in the training session. This included explaining the questions of the nomination form and the types of answers expected orally.

One key element of this training module concerned community participation and its presentation in nomination dossiers. Providing best-example case studies can be an effective way of explaining community participation. Examples such as the one presented above, “Traditions and Practices Associated to the Kayas in the Sacred Forests of the Mijikenda,” help participants understand the different steps in community participation and the different reasons for undertaking it, including the need to ensure that the bearers can earn a living from their practice without endangering the element or over-commercializing it. Indeed, if community members do not get some benefit out of the nomination process, they might not take part in it. Of course, the training is all theoretical, and the actual preparation of nomination dossiers might not be conducted at all in cooperation with the local communities. Until some guidelines on the threshold of holistic community participation are released as a means to guide the preparation and assessment of nomination dossiers, a non-participatory framework could well emerge and ultimately become the norm. Such guidance, in the form of books or other materials, should be produced and released in parallel with the training sessions. Such publications have already been requested by some States Parties.

SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter analyzed critically the processes of the 2003 Convention and compared and contrasted it with the World Heritage Convention. From the outset, the 2003 Convention seems to provide a model that replies to the salient issues associated with the World Heritage Convention such as the exclusion of communities, its monumentalist and elitist bias and its unsustainable implementation. As detailed in this chapter, the 2003 Convention evolves from the World Heritage Convention as it locates communities at the heart of its system, insists upon the importance of not establishing a hierarchy between intangible heritage elements selected and emphasizes the need to ensure the sustainable safeguarding of intangible heritage elements without freezing them in an unrealistic and constraining fashion.

Nonetheless, this chapter detailed the difficulties of implementing the framework of the 2003 Convention. This includes, first of all, the concept of
community participation. How to ensure meaningful community participation in such a system where the main stakeholder is the State Party remains to be seen; the 2003 Convention does not yet provide a meaningful framework to promote such participation. What a community *is* certainly remains a thorny question that requires further debate, and it necessarily raises further questions of how to ensure consensus-building on the selection and nomination of certain elements, as well as the question of what are the acceptable thresholds of change for these elements. Ways of guaranteeing that the lists are not used solely as tools for furthering nationalistic claims or making economic profits also need to be further analyzed. Hence this chapter reveals the similarities in the issues facing both the implementation of the 2003 Convention and the World Heritage Convention.

Importantly, this chapter has clearly demonstrated that the inclusion of official requests to be followed by States Parties—for instance, regarding the involvement of communities in the selection of heritage and in the preparation of nomination dossiers—is not sufficient. States Parties understand in widely diverse manners these requests and do not even necessarily comply with them. The conclusion of this book proposes ways to move forward with the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and pays particular attention to avoiding such pitfalls.
Conclusion

The World Heritage Convention at Forty

In 2012, the World Heritage Convention celebrates its fortieth anniversary. This event has been preceded by a number of reflections on the continuing role of this foundational document, including “Future of the World Heritage Convention” (as requested by the World Heritage Committee in 2008). These discussions—initially triggered by the general publication ProfessorBandarin and I coordinated, World Heritage: Challenges for the Millennium (Bandarin and Labadi 2007)—reveal a shared need at this point to take stock of the Convention’s history and implementation through in-depth research and analyses that highlight salient issues, identify potential solutions and illuminate new avenues for future exploration. Such has been the intent of this present volume.

Considering in turn the three core themes of this book, I want to reflect over the following pages on the prior forty years of the World Heritage Convention’s implementation, and on what conclusions might be drawn from this past. I begin with reflections on the analyses of the historical genealogy of outstanding universal value as understood by the World Heritage Committee. I will then move on to my second point, a discussion of States Parties’ understandings and interpretations of these official texts in nomination dossiers of sites for inclusion on the World Heritage List and how these have shaped representations of the nation, cultural diversity, sustainable development and tourism and authenticity. From these fine-grained analyses emerges the third theme of the book, a focus on identifying postcolonial transgressions of the dominant European concepts associated with heritage. In doing so, this research attempts to move away from the traditional understanding of outstanding universal value as following one—and only one—Eurocentric
Conclusion

interpretation. On the contrary, it aims to chart the variety of ways in which a universalist framework can be apprehended and represented.

A UNIVERSALIST FRAMEWORK

Despite the many formal reflections on outstanding universal value that have been undertaken by the World Heritage community of experts, a number of key issues have remained unanswered, impeding States Parties' full understanding and implementation of this notion, as underlined all through this book. One important, yet unresolved, issue concerns the concept of values, still considered in many official documents as intrinsic to heritage properties (see, for instance, the latest version of the Operational Guidelines, 2011). Such an understanding of significance means that properties are typically seen as having inherent values that reside in the physical fabric of their structures or landscape, features that ostensibly do not change in time and that can thus be appreciated by all mankind equally, regardless of individuals' backgrounds or their geographical location. Considering values as intrinsic in this manner also means that they are detached from their own changing history, the wider social and cultural environment that shapes them as well as the shifting and conflicting significance that can be given to them by different individuals. This excludes, de facto, the possibility of drawing a comprehensive statement of significance that would take into account wider sociocultural values and considerations—in particular, values attributed by the local communities associated with the property. I argue that this conception of values as intrinsic prevents the most important aspect of the process of protecting heritage from being undertaken: the identification of a comprehensive statement of significance to guide the conservation and management of properties. This understanding of values as intrinsic, and this narrow focus on the supposedly unchanging fabric and history of properties, can also explain why the Convention is not yet used to its full potential as a postnationalist tool for social cohesion, cultural diversity and sustainable development.

This tradition of understanding of values as intrinsic could be interpreted as an indication of the Committee’s fear of losing the veneer of objectivity that the World Heritage Convention claims to have. Indeed, if it is recognized that values are extrinsic, then this opens a figurative floodgate, as an extreme diversity of values could be readily identified and proposed for a single site. This institutional anxiety might also explain the difficulty of integrating greater societal issues into the definitions of outstanding universal value, as exhibited in official documents related to the Convention and in their actual implementation. A noteworthy example is the provision of the Nara Document on Authenticity. Adopted in 1994, it represents a shift from considerations of authenticity rooted in the fabric of a building to a more
Conclusion

Extrinsic understanding of this complex and ambiguous concept. It took, however, eleven years for these provisions to be included in the Operational Guidelines.

Interestingly, recent World Heritage Committee meetings—in particular, the 2010 session held in Brazilia and the 2011 session held in Paris—have demonstrated that this veneer of objectivity is slowly being chipped away. In a number of cases during these two sessions, ICOMOS recommended, in its evaluations, the referral or deferral of nomination dossiers because outstanding universal value was not reflected in the fabric of the nominated property. On the other hand, the Committee also decided to overrule ICOMOS recommendations and to inscribe nominated properties on the list on the grounds of more intangible values (see, for instance, the debate and justification for inscription of “Historic Bridgetown and its Garrison from Barbados,” inscribed on the list in 2011). Nonetheless, this evolution is not necessarily a smooth one, and a number of experts who attended these World Heritage Committee sessions have warned that such a tendency to overturn the decisions of the advisory bodies and to list sites on less “objective” qualities will increasingly undermine the credibility of the list. In the “worst case scenario” posed by these critics, the World Heritage criteria would then be understood in a highly individual manner, one that could lead to virtually any property being inscribed on the list, whether it has been recognized as having outstanding universal value or not. This idea is further discussed below.

STATES PARTIES’ UNDERSTANDINGS OF OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

This research has also considered the processes of negotiations between global institutions represented by UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee on the one hand and national/local institutions characterized by States Parties on the other. In doing so, it has charted how discourses and decisions of the Committee have been understood, interpreted and implemented by States Parties nationally. Furthermore, it has revealed that the Convention is not used by States Parties as a way of considering and furthering contemporary societal issues, such as postnationalism and peace, cultural diversity or sustainable development and tourism. On the contrary, the Convention has been, and is still being, used as a nationalist instrument: nominated sites contribute to the materialization of the nation and the construction of a collective identity and memory for its population. In pursuing this nationalistic endeavor, most of the nomination dossiers herein analyzed presented the properties in an objective manner, detached from wider contemporary societal concerns. This lack of reference to world heritage as an important component of postnationalism, cultural diversity and sustainable development in nomination
Conclusion

dossiers indeed mirrors the wider silence of the World Heritage Committee on these issues.

According to World Heritage experts, the fact that these concepts are not heralded in nomination dossiers does not mean that the Convention does not contribute to strengthening postnationalism and peace, cultural diversity or sustainable development. On the contrary, according to them, the mere implementation of the Convention leads to the furthering of these principles. In this line of argument, the World Heritage List with its multifarious sites, for instance, contributes to promoting the diversity of cultures on the planet, and by extension to strengthening social cohesion. In addition, the Convention, as a virtuous instrument, contributes to tourism through the list, which itself bolsters sustainable development.

However, as the preceding chapters have demonstrated, the content of nomination dossiers is not neutral and does not project a benign image of heritage. It contains the seeds to fuel controversies, conflicts and the marginalization of whole sectors of populations. It is also based on superlatives and is used to justify claims of superiority as well as of primacy and to give concrete meaning to the outstanding and universal value of the site. These claims are in turn implemented to stress the differences between different cultures rather than to promote ideas of a shared and common past and the legacies between nations. This state of affairs can unsurprisingly lead to tensions since another country (or other countries) can also often make the same assertions about similar sites. In addition, the high levels of tourism that these nationalist projections of heritage often seek to encourage are obviously a detrimental factor to sites if they are not managed properly, or if thresholds of acceptable changes and controlled access are not put in place.

This belief that the mere implementation of the Convention leads naturally to postnationalism and peace, social cohesion and sustainable development might explain the lack of guidelines on some of the key concepts that should have guided its implementation. As explained throughout this book, concepts such as sustainability, sustainable tourism and development, and carrying capacity have been defined, but without any precise guidelines in place to direct heritage managers in how to implement them. States Parties have thus been left in a kind of vacuum to implement these concepts as they see fit, a situation that oftentimes results in countries invoking and materializing these ideas in a manner contrary to the intentions of UNESCO and of the World Heritage Convention itself. This lack of guidelines thus contributes to these pivotal concepts—which are supposed to help with the sustainable and value-led identification, conservation and management of World Heritage sites—being emptied of their value and meaning.

This scenario can certainly explain in part the high number of World Heritage sites that currently suffer from major threats, including overdevelopment or a lack of proper management systems. In recent years, ICOMOS
Conclusion

has been more careful in raising such issues in its evaluations. However, the recent trend, as explained above, in which ICOMOS evaluations are overturned by the World Heritage Committee and sites are inscribed even with major management and conservation problems (or indeed with no management plan or mechanism in place at all) is undoubtedly going to raise this already large number of reported problem cases. Considering that, at the 2011 session of the World Heritage Committee, a total of 135 sites were reviewed in light of threats affecting their state of conservation, it can certainly be asked what impact such an increase in properties with conservation and management dilemmas has upon the Convention’s ability to function as an efficient system.

Also partially contributing to this exclusion of less objective values and the high recurrence of conservation issues is the marginalization of local populations from the drafting of nomination dossiers and the day-to-day management of heritage sites. This marginalization reflects the difficulty of moving from the theorization, recognition and identification of a best practice system to its implementation. Indeed, the central role of local populations in the identification, conservation and management of heritage was recognized in the fifth strategic objective (“the fifth C”) guiding the implementation of the Convention. The adoption of this objective was justified on the grounds that a lack of community involvement in heritage protection leads invariably to failure in the implementation of the objectives of the Convention. However, in actuality the adoption of this objective did not lead to the increased participation of local populations at site level. Again, this can be explained by a lack of exact guidelines concerning how to involve local populations in the Convention’s implementation. This rather disappointing situation is further compounded by the tendency of nomination dossiers to cast indigenous populations as threats to the property in question (see chapter 4).

The UNESCO 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention was considered and analyzed in this book in the hope that it could have provided a model to take better account of local populations within the international, intergovernmental system. Indeed, such communities are claimed to be at the heart of this Convention and to dictate its application. Nonetheless, the intergovernmental nature of UNESCO, and hence of the implementation of its conventions on cultural heritage, makes it a real challenge to involve local populations and concerned communities. In this framework, the process of selecting and nominating elements can be withheld from these groups by governments that may not want to engage or to acknowledge communities. Besides, the concepts of “communities,” “participation” and “free, prior and informed consent” are free-floating notions, and their use in the implementation of the 2003 Convention is not without problems, as previously explained. This Convention cannot thus yet be used in its present form as a
reliable guide for the better taking into account of local populations and communities.

CONTACT ZONES AND THE LENS OF REITERATIVE UNIVERSALISM

This book has also drawn from postcolonial theory to analyze whether nomination dossiers represented ambivalent and hybrid spaces, maintaining but also transgressing dominant European concepts and representations of heritage. Such a focus was justified on the grounds that the Convention has predominately been criticized as a Eurocentric instrument, one that is based on and actively promotes European values along with Western methods of conservation and management.

Notions of reiterative universalism and the contact zone have been used throughout this volume to identify and highlight strategies used by non-European countries in their nomination dossiers, reflecting the multifarious ways in which the Convention can be understood and implemented. These different strategies aim, for non-European countries, to occupy a central space in the international sphere of heritage management. This is considered here a very powerful act since it enables non-European countries to become equal to European countries on the world stage. Some of the instances of copying should in no way be considered a submission of non-European countries to Europe, but on the contrary, they should be considered a subversion of the traditional representation and location of Europe as the sole referent and geographical space of world history. I have argued throughout this book that these strategies of copying are strategies of ambivalence that disrupt the authority, power and position of European states as perpetrators of prior colonial domination by destabilizing the dichotomy between colonizing and colonized, civilized and savage, good and bad, and historically rich and historically poor.

These strategies of mimicry have not been imposed upon non-European countries but have instead been deliberately chosen by them. Indeed, as demonstrated in chapter 6, non-European countries have not used the management concepts expressly adapted by the World Heritage Committee to their own specificities. This is the case, for instance, with the notion of authenticity, a notion revised in 1994 with the purpose of better reflecting non-Western frames of reference. However, in their own nomination dossiers, non-European States Parties have not often invoked the Nara Document interpretation of authenticity, opting instead for more traditional definitions based on ideas of original form and structure. This rejection reflects, for such countries, their incredulity toward specific rules supposedly adopted for their benefit at the international level, and it demonstrates the desire of these non-
European countries to position themselves as equal to European states on their own terms.

The 2011 World Heritage Committee confirmed the positioning of non-European countries as equal to European ones through their appropriation of the universalist system of the Convention. During this meeting, as already stressed above, the Committee, composed primarily of non-European countries, overruled the advisory bodies’ decisions to refer or defer nominations, a large number of which came from non-European countries, and instead decided to inscribe them on the World Heritage List. This session of the Committee certainly demonstrates the power that can be exercised by non-European countries in such a system, as well as the central role they can have in key decisions that direct its future path.

THE WAY FORWARD

The preceding paragraphs highlighted a number of shortcomings in the implementation of the Convention. On a more hopeful note, this last section proposes some suggestions for change.

As recognized by Rao, the upstream process presents the best way to strengthen the implementation of the Convention (2010, 161–72). This process can be defined as activities undertaken to prepare Tentative Lists and nomination dossiers, along with their subsequent evaluation by the Committee. It thus refers both to the efforts by the international community to help and encourage those States Parties that need assistance for getting sites of outstanding universal value inscribed on the World Heritage List, as well as to measures aimed at ensuring their sustained conservation (ibid.).

Rao suggests that Tentative Lists should be drawn by the States Parties concerned in collaboration with experts, the advisory bodies and the local communities (2010, 168). He then stresses that the Committee “should be called upon to play a more proactive . . . role, upstream of the nomination process, by identifying priorities for nominations from . . . tentative lists” (ibid., 169). These priorities would be guided by the Global Strategy themes. The better taking into account of the overall themes identified in the 1994 Global Strategy text could ensure that priority be given to nomination dossiers that further postnationalism, peace, cultural diversity or social cohesion. This is particularly the case for the theme “movement of peoples (migration)” identified by the Global Strategy document as one of the priority themes currently underrepresented on the list. Ideally, the Committee could provide additional information on this theme to clarify its meaning and to guide States Parties in the selection of relevant sites for nomination. It could be indicated that sites nominated under this theme would enhance multicultural diversity and help to reduce conflict through reflecting the positive inputs
Conclusion

of migrant communities within host countries as well as highlighting the peaceful coexistence of these diverse communities. At a time of increasingly violent ethnic conflicts—often causing irremediable damage to the material, immaterial and intangible heritage of humanity—this priority system would enable the World Heritage Convention to play a key role in conflict prevention, in peacekeeping and in building postnationalist countries through the development and strengthening of mutual understanding between different communities.

In a similar vein, this upstream process could also help to ensure the effective participation of local populations and communities in the heritage identification and management process. This would guarantee that a holistic statement of significance is drafted and that the conservation and management of sites is anchored in their contemporary social and economic environment. To do so, the format of nomination dossiers presented in the Operational Guidelines should be revised to ensure that local populations are not merely referred to as a “factor affecting the site.” As clearly established by the 2010 Paraty meeting “World Heritage, Conservation and Sustainable Development,” the format of nomination dossiers should be changed to include “questions to assess whether stakeholders’ views, needs and human rights considerations have been integrated in proposed nominations” (UNESCO 18 June 2010, 7). It is my belief that the Operational Guidelines should be revised to refer clearly to this proposal.

Moreover, the upstream process should provide for the integration of sustainable tourism principles and mechanisms in nomination dossiers and their subsequent implementation at specific sites. These mechanisms could include meetings and workshops with concerned stakeholders involved in preparing nomination dossiers, management and tourist plans to be organized either by UNESCO, the advisory bodies or other international partner organizations. These meetings and workshops would help to assess the specific situation on the ground and assist in developing plans and steps for the sustainable management of tourism at site level. Nomination dossiers would thus evolve from being ends in themselves to being the means to set in place mechanisms ensuring the efficient management of sites with the full participation of local populations.

In this process of drafting nomination dossiers, key quantitative and qualitative data, along with other indicators, would need to be identified, as this documentation is necessary to track the sustainability of sites. Indeed, how can sites be deemed sustainable if no data can support such claims? As revealed in chapter 5, the sample of nomination dossiers herein considered revealed a lack of longitudinal analyses and data-tracking indicators of sustainability. This lack of indicators was also noted during the reflection “Future of the World Heritage Convention,” and it was proposed that such indicators be collected in the 2012–2022 Action Plan. These identified indicators
should then be collected at regular intervals to ensure that longitudinal sequences are built and that indicators can be tracked and trends detected. Such indicators are currently rather scarce (see Labadi 2011b), and cooperation with other teams that have developed similar systems at existing World Heritage sites might be useful in getting these projects off the ground. Such a system would certainly help to further the text and vision of the Convention and its principle of international cooperation.

Such a new system would ensure a move away from the current reactive framework, from a situation where unsustainable approaches are usually identified after the inscription of sites on the World Heritage List to a proactive scenario where sites are carefully selected to represent postnationalism, where local populations representing cultural diversity are meaningfully involved in the preparation of dossiers and where the sustainable management of tourism and development are taken seriously while being integrated within the process of site nomination, conservation and management.

The start of a new decade in the implementation of the Convention presents the ideal timing and framework for beginning to implement such vital changes.
Appendix

Nomination Dossiers Selected

* Please note that these dates are those when the nomination dossiers were written.
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Austria                | N/A                                                                              |                                                                                | 1995—Semmering Railway
                                                                                |                                                                                                                  | 1996—Hallstatt-Dachstein
                                                                                |                                                                                                                  | 1997—Salzkammergut Cultural Landscape |
| Belgium                | N/A                                                                              | 1997—Flemish Béguinages
                                                                                | 1997—The Four Lifts on the Canal du Centre and their Environs, La Louvière
                                                                                | 1997—Neolithc Flint Mines at Spiennes (Mons)                                                                 |
| Bolivia                | N/A                                                                              | 1989—Jesuit Missions of the Chiquitos
                                                                                | 1986—City of Potosí                                                                 |
| Brazil                 | N/A                                                                              | 1982—Ruins of São Miguel das Misões
                                                                                | 1979—Historic Town of Ouro Preto                                                                 |
| China                  | N/A                                                                              | 1986—Mogao Caves
                                                                                | 1999—Mount Qincheng and the Dujiangyan Irrigation System                                                                 |
|                        | 1989—Ancient Building Complex in the Wudang Mountains
                                                                                | 1998—Dazu Rock Carvings                                                                 |
|                        | 1993—Temple and Cemetery of Confucius, and the Kong Family Mansion in Qufu
                                                                                | 1999—Longmen Grottoes                                                                 |
                                                                                | 2000—Yungang Grottoes                                                                 |
|                        | 1997—Temple of Heaven: an Imperial Sacrificial Altar in Beijing
<pre><code>                                                                            | 2008—Mount Wutai                                                                 |
</code></pre>
<p>|                        | 1998—Dazu Rock Carvings                                                                 |                                                                                      |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Czech Republic          | 1993—Pilgrimage Church of St. John of Nepomuk at Zelená Hora 2001—Jewish Quarter and St. Procopius' Basilica in Třebíč | N/A                                                                                           | 1994—Kutná Hora: Historic Town Centre with the Church of St. Barbara and the Cathedral of Our Lady at Sedlec |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>1990—Petäjävö Old Church</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>1995—Verla Groundwood and Board Mill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>India</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1982—Ajanta Caves</td>
<td>1998—Darjeeling Himalayan Railway</td>
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<td>1982—Sun Temple, Konarak</td>
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<td>1982—Churches and Convents of Goa</td>
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<td>1987—Brihadisvara Temple, Thanjavur</td>
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<td>1989—Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi</td>
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<td>1992—Qutb Minar and its Monuments, Delhi</td>
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<td>2002—Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya</td>
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<td><strong>Italy</strong></td>
<td>1979—The Church and Dominican Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie with the “Last Supper” by Leonardo da Vinci</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1994—Crespi d’Adda</td>
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<td>1986—Piazza del Duomo, Pisa</td>
<td></td>
<td>1996—Eighteenth-Century Royal Palace at Caserta with the Park, the Aqueduct of Vanvitelli, and the San Leucio Complex</td>
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<td>1995—Early Christian Monuments of Ravenna</td>
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<td>1996—Cathedral, Torre Civica and Piazza Grande, Modena</td>
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<td>1999—Assisi, the Basilica of San Francesco and other Franciscan Sites</td>
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<td>2000—Sacri Monti of Piedmont and Lombardy</td>
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<td><strong>Mexico</strong></td>
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<td>1986—Pre-Hispanic City of Teothuacan</td>
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<td>1987—Pre-Hispanic City of Chichen-Itza</td>
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<td>1993—Earliest Sixteenth-Century Monasteries on the Slopes of Popocatepetl</td>
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<td>2001—Franciscan Missions in the Sierra Gorda of Querétaro</td>
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<td>Norway</td>
<td>1977—Urnes Stave Church</td>
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<td>1978—Røros</td>
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<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>1991—Spišský Hrad and its Associated Cultural Monuments</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1991—Banska Stiavnica</td>
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<tr>
<td>States Parties selected</td>
<td>Religious heritage in Europe.</td>
<td>Religious heritage in non-European countries.</td>
<td>Industrial Heritage</td>
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<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
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<td>Control Group.</td>
<td>Typical category of sites on the World Heritage List</td>
<td>Under represented category on the World Heritage List</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1989—Skogskyrkogårdén</td>
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<td>1995—Church Village of Gammelstad, Luleå</td>
<td>2000—Mining Area of the Great Copper Mountain in Falun</td>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1985—Durham Castle and Cathedral</td>
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<td>1986—Studley Royal Park including the Ruins of Fountains Abbey</td>
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<td>1987—Westminster Palace, Westminster Abbey and Saint Margaret’s Church</td>
<td>2000—New Lanark</td>
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<td>2008—Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal</td>
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</table>
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Bibliography


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178 Bibliography


Bibliography

179


180

Bibliography

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Bibliography


Bibliography


Index

1994 Nara Conference on Authenticity.  
See Nara Conference on Authenticity; 
Nara Document on Authenticity

2003 Convention.  See Convention for the 
Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural 
Heritage

the “5 Cs”, 88.  See also capacity-building; 
communication; community; 
conservation; credibility; the “four Cs”

Aachen Cathedral, 71, 84
Aalst Carnival, Belgium, 136
adaptation, 113, 122–124
Anderson, Benedict, 68
androcentric representations, 83–86
Arabian Oryx Sanctuary, Oman, 124
architectural and aesthetic value, 7
Asplund, Erik, 83
Assisi, Italy, 64, 80
authenticity, 3, 8, 14, 32–33, 36, 43, 47–48, 
113–115, 116–122, 124; different 
definitions of, 8.  See also post- 
authenticity; Nara Document on 
Authenticity

Babri-Masjid mosque, Ayodhya, India, 
17–18
Bamiyan Buddhas, 18
beauty, 12
Bender, Barbara, 16
Benhabib, Seyla, 18

Blaenavon Industrial Landscape, Wales, 
73, 80, 91, 89
Bokova, Irina, 1–2
Bourdieu, Pierre, 12
Bridgetown, Barbados, 149
Brundtland report, 98, 140
Budapest Declaration, 49, 99

Cameron, Christina, 13
capacity-building, 50, 128.  See also the “5 
Cs”; the “four Cs”
carrying capacity, 95, 98–108, 110–111, 
150
Cathedral of Notre-Dame, 64
Chichen Itza, Mexico, 61, 65, 120
Cologne Cathedral, Germany, 100
communication, 50.  See also the “5 Cs”; 
the “four Cs”
community.  See local community; local 
population
Conference on Environment and 
Development, 108
conservation, 3, 4, 5, 6, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 
26, 29, 30, 36–37, 47–48, 50, 54, 
56–57, 86, 89, 90–93, 96, 99, 100–101, 
104–105, 106–107, 108, 109, 111, 113, 
114–115, 116, 119, 125, 130, 148, 
150–151, 152, 153, 154, 155;
European/Western conservation theory, 
14, 21, 114.  See also the “5 Cs”; the 
“four Cs”
contact zone, 21, 152–153
continuity, 63–66; maintenance and, 115; preservation and, 115
Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. See World Heritage Convention
Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, 4, 8–9, 127–145. See also intangible cultural heritage
credibility, 49, 50, 53, 149. See also the “5 Cs”; the “four Cs”
Crespi, Cristoforo, 83
Crespi d’Adda, Italy, 83, 84
criterion(a), 6–7, 8, 15, 25, 28, 29, 32–37, 42–44, 47–49, 55, 56, 57, 60, 65, 69, 70–71, 72, 81, 84, 113, 134, 149
cultural diversity, 8, 77–78, 150
cultural heritage. See heritage; World Heritage
cultural landscape, 29, 39–44, 52, 53, 87, 99
cultural spaces, 129
Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, India, 101
da Vinci, Leonardo, 83
Derwent Valley Mills, England, 89
development: sustainability and, 98–99. See also sustainable development
Dresden Elbe Valley, Germany, 124
Duprée, Amalia, 80
Durham Castle and Cathedral, England, 116
Earth Summit, Rio de Janeiro, 98
Eiffel Tower, 15
Engelsberg Ironworks, Sweden, 115, 122
Enlightenment philosophy, 12, 28
Eurocentrism, 11, 15, 152
European conservation theories, 114
European industrial heritage sites, 72
European religious sites/group, 6, 22, 62, 68–69, 75, 79–80, 83–85, 87, 90–91, 100, 104, 105, 106, 109, 120, 122. See also religious heritage
Falun, Sweden, 96–97
Feilden, Bernard, 48, 122
Flemish Béguinages, Belgium, 81, 83, 97, 98
folklore, 132
Foucault, Michel, 16, 17
the “four Cs”, 49–50. See also the “5 Cs”; capacity-building; communication; community; conservation; credibility
General Assembly of States Parties, 25, 30
Ghegha, 84
Global Study, 38–39, 45, 46
graffiti, 89. See also threats to sites
Hallstatt-Dachstein Salzkammergut, Austria, 87
heritage management, 14, 90, 152. See also World Heritage sites, management of Hiroshima Peace Memorial, 49, 67
Hobsbawm, Eric, 64
human rights, 154
Ifugao Hudhud chants, 129–130
imagined community, 68, 115. See also Anderson, Benedict
industrial heritage, 5–6, 35, 49, 62, 63, 64, 67, 68, 72, 79–80, 83, 84–85, 87, 89, 91, 96–97, 104, 105, 106, 109, 115, 120, 122. See also industrial heritage group; industrial heritage sites
industrial heritage sites, 6, 62
informational value, 7
intangible cultural heritage, 128–140; authenticity and, 132. See also Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage
intergenerational equity, 96, 99
International Center for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), 4, 31
International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), 4, 20, 30, 31, 36, 38,
Index

52, 55, 57, 65, 69, 71, 72, 73, 81, 100, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 120, 121, 123, 130, 149, 150–151
International Council of Museums (ICOM), 18; code of ethics, 18
International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), 27, 31
Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the Cultural and Natural Heritage of Outstanding Universal Value. See World Heritage Committee Ironbridge Gorge, England, 72, 89, 109
Jokilehto, Jukka, 120, 121
Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, Poland, 102–103, 104
Kant, Immanuel, 12
Karagöz shadow theater, 140
Khao Yai National Park, Thailand, 108
Kutná Hora, Czech Republic, 122
List of World Heritage in Danger, 30, 55, 138
local community, 13, 86–92, 108–110, 132–138. See also the “5 Cs”; the “four Cs” local population. See local community Longmen Grottoes, China, 103, 104
Mahabalipuram monuments, India, 119
Mahabodhi Temple, India, 101, 105–107
men, nomination dossiers and, 83–85; great men of history, 83–84, 85, 88
Mérimée, Prosper, 119
Mevlevi Sema ceremony, 141. See also Whirling Dervishes migration, 45, 68, 89, 131, 140, 153–154. See also nomadism Mijikenda sacred forests, Kenya, 137 modern heritage, 6 monuments, 60; colonial, 61. See also monumentality monumentality, 60–61
Mostar bridge, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 18, 122
Mount Wutai, China, 114
movable cultural heritage, 28
movement of people, 153. See also migration; nomadism multicultural, 68, 154
multinational heritage, 26, 132, 139–140
multiple interpretations, 2, 107, 132, 133
multiple stakeholders, 13, 15–16, 54, 89–91, 93, 100, 107, 108, 123–124, 132, 133, 154
multi-vocality, 45, 100, 107. See also multiple interpretations; multiple stakeholders museum, 12
Nara Conference on Authenticity, 14, 36, 47–48, 58
nation, 115. See also nation building; nation-state
national identities/narratives, 13
nationalism, 68
nation building, 3
nation-state, 59, 60–61
natural heritage, 28, 99
negative impacts on sites. See threats to sites
New Lanark, Scotland, 84, 117, 120–121, 123
Nixon, President Richard, 27
nomadism, 45. See also migration
non-European countries, 72, 97, 98
non-European industrial heritage sites, 72
non-European nomination dossiers, 21, 100, 101, 104, 105, 106, 152–153
non-European States Parties, 61, 63, 85
non-Western concepts of heritage, 15
Notre-Dame Cathedral, Belgium, 116–117
Old Town of Segovia, Spain, 69
Operational Directives, 134
Operational Guidelines, 12, 31–33, 36–37, 40, 50–51, 52, 96, 99, 114, 118, 125; revision of, 33–37
Index

Owen, Robert, 123
Parent, Michel, 35, 36
Philon of Byzantium, 12
political value. See value
pollution, 89, 106. See also threats to sites
Pont du Gard, France, 97
population. See local population
post-authenticity, 124–125
postcolonial theories, 2, 4
postnationalism, 1, 149, 150, 153, 155
Potala Palace, Lhasa, 115
Potosi, Bolivia, 72
Preah Vihear temple, 73
Pressouyre, Léon, 33, 36, 47, 120
Pyramids at Giza, Egypt, 12
Rao, Kishore, 153
reconstruction, 113, 117, 119–122
Register of Good Practices, 138
reiterative universalism, 4, 7, 18–19, 62, 65, 67, 68, 88, 98, 118
relativism, 11
religious heritage, 5–6, 22, 41, 61–62, 64–65, 68–69, 75, 79, 81, 83–85, 87, 90–91, 97, 104, 105, 109, 120. See also
European religious sites/group
religious value, 5–6, 14, 18, 41, 64–65, 68, 106–107, 122. See also religious heritage
Representative List of the Intangible
Cultural Heritage of Humanity, 138
restoration, 113, 119–122; Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments, 120
reuse, 122–124
Rhodes, Greece, 120
risk, preparedness for sites, 104
Saltaire, England, 84, 87, 89, 101
San Millán Yuso Monastery, Spain, 90, 120, 122–123
Santiago de Compostela, 64–65, 69
Scissors Dance, Peru, 136
Semmering Railway, Austria, 79, 97
Seven Wonders of the World, 12

Smith, B. H., 12
social classes, 6, 78, 79, 87–88, 89, 92
Speyer Cathedral, 71
stakeholders. See multiple stakeholders
States Parties, 2, 3, 4–5, 6, 8, 14, 20, 21, 29–30, 37, 38, 59, 60, 70–71, 73, 89, 96, 99, 100, 101, 113, 114, 117, 124, 134, 136, 137, 138
Stockholm Conference, 27
Stonehenge, 16
Suso Monastery, Spain, 90, 120, 122
sustainability, 2, 3, 14, 95, 99, 140–143.
See also sustainable development;
sustainable tourism
sustainable development, 1, 2, 3, 5, 21, 56, 57, 58, 98–100, 108, 110, 147, 148, 149, 150, 154
sustainable tourism, 3, 8, 95–96, 98–110
Tentative List, 37–38, 51, 153
Teotihuacan, 61, 65
threats to sites: graffiti, vandalism, 89;
pollution, 89, 106; vibration, 106
Titchen, Sarah, 26
Tiwanaku, Bolivia, 65, 104
Tongariro National Park, 43–44
tourism, 8, 95–110; management of,
acceptable and, 113–114; States
upstream process, 153–154
UNESCO, 1, 4, 8, 27, 149; constitution of,
26, 28; General Conference, 27. See also 2003 Convention; World Heritage Convention
UNESCO Declaration concerning the
Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage, 18
UNESCO World Heritage Tourism Program, 99
United Nations, 77; Conference on
Environment and Development, 108;
Conference on the Human Environment, 27; Fourth World Conference on Women, 78
universal value, 11, 28, 98, 114, 148;
authenticity and, 113–114; States
Index

Parties and, 113, 114, 149–152. See also outstanding universal value
Urgent Safeguarding List, 131, 134, 137

Vall de Boi Catalan Romanesque churches, Spain, 109
value: contingent, 15; extrinsic, 15, 98, 148–149; intrinsic, 11–13, 18–22, 148; multi-vocality, 15–16, 45; objective, 12; political, 18, 20, 28, 49, 60–61, 63–65, 69; relativism and, 15; relativist, 11, 18–22. See also outstanding universal value
vandalism, 89. See also threats to sites
Venice Charter, 14, 33, 36, 120
Vézelay, France, 69, 119, 120
Viollet-le-Duc, 36, 47
visitor facilities, 105–107
Vizcaya Bridge, Spain, 117
Völklingen Ironworks, 62

Waissnix, Olga, 79
Western concepts of heritage, 14, 15. See also Eurocentrism; non-Western concepts of heritage
Western conservation theory, 14
Whirling Dervishes, 141–143
women, 57, 77, 84, 85, 92, 98, 137; marginalization of, 78–83; nomination dossiers and, 79–83; official history and, 80; social movements and, 133
World Heritage Centre, 30, 46, 50, 51, 56, 78, 81, 101, 104, 108
World Heritage Convention, 1, 4, 7, 9, 11–13, 14, 15, 18–21, 22, 25–58, 72, 84, 110, 124, 128, 129, 130, 132, 134, 138, 144, 145, 147, 148, 150, 154
World Heritage List, 5–6, 8, 12, 13, 20, 21, 28, 31–32, 37–39, 45–46, 51, 73, 130, 138, 150; concept of. See also List of World Heritage in Danger; Tentative List
World Heritage properties, 50, 54, 99, 116
World Tourism Organization, 104
Zimbabwe, 16–17
Zollverein Coal Mine Industrial Complex, Germany, 87
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