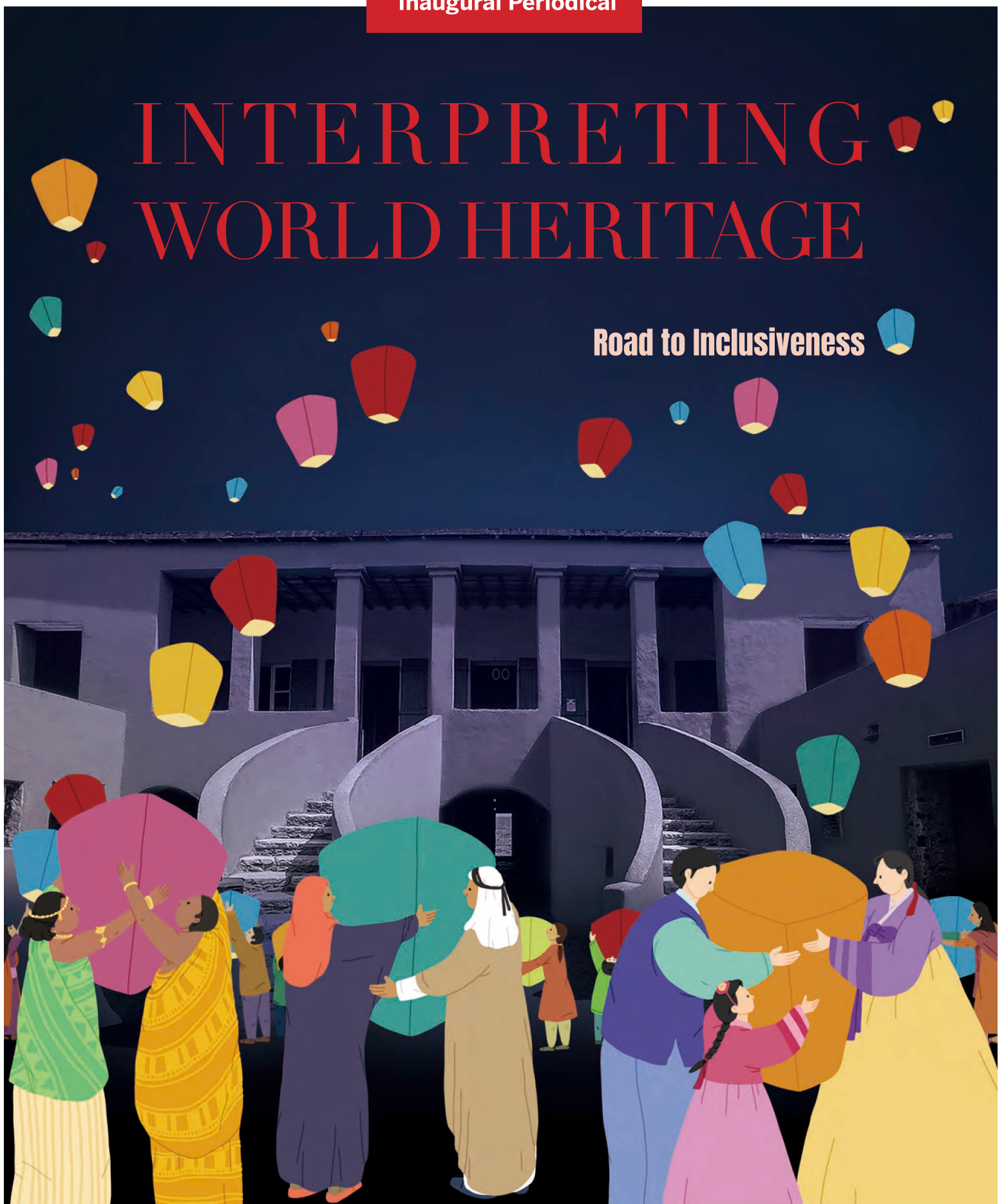


Inaugural Periodical

INTERPRETING WORLD HERITAGE

Road to Inclusiveness




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International Centre for
the Interpretation and Presentation of
World Heritage Sites under the auspices of UNESCO
위네스코 세계유산국제해석발명센터

Island of Gorée



©Ko Hon Chiu Vincent

The Island of Gorée lies off the coast of Senegal. It was inscribed in 1978 as one of the first 12 World Heritage sites under the World Heritage Convention. It was the largest slave trading centre on the African coast. Its architecture is characterised by the contrast between the grim slave quarters and the elegant houses of the slave traders. Today it continues to serve as a reminder of human exploitation and as a sanctuary for reconciliation.



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International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites under the auspices of UNESCO
유네스코 세계유산(인)해석·전시·발표센터

UNESCO WHIPIC
International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites under the auspices of UNESCO is one of UNESCO's Category 2 institutes. WHIPIC is established to promote the understanding and protection of heritage through the inclusive interpretation and presentation of heritage around the world.

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INTERPRETING WORLD HERITAGE

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Acropolis, Athens, Greece.
The Parthenon is also reflected in the
UNESCO's symbol.

Marking Publication of Interpreting World Heritage



Discovering the diverse values and meanings of World Heritage sites and contributing to sustainable development

It has been almost a year since the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage sites under the auspices of UNESCO (hereinafter "WHIPIC") was established in January 2022.

WHIPIC is a UNESCO Category-2 Centre established in accordance with the 1972 World Heritage Convention to rightly understand and protect World Heritage sites. WHIPIC was established following UNESCO's approval and the Cultural Heritage Administration's active support. We have been busy throughout the year establishing our systems and expanding our capacity as an organisation. And I believe we have made progress in various areas, by conducting research on inclusive interpretation and presentation of World Heritage, strengthening stakeholder capacity, building the framework for a system that collects and stores information on heritage sites, exchanging experts between World Heritage Centres around the globe, and reinforcing international cooperation with institutions at home and abroad.

Currently the ways in which people view interpretation and presentation of World Heritage are changing very rapidly. They have moved away from narrow-minded, ethnocentric ways of interpreting heritage and shifting toward universal interpretation and presentation. Furthermore, since the COVID-19 pandemic has been, and still is, marginalising people in terms of region, gender, age, and access to technology, embracing new values has become more important now than ever for the development, protection, and conservation of World Heritage. Our Centre will play a pivotal role to link the world, heritage, and people, facilitating communication among not only different international organisations, but also communities. Our goal is to spread the values of heritage sites that connect time and space.

This first issue makes a special contribution to the meaning of inclusive interpretation and presentation of World Heritage sites, why it is needed, and how it can be carried out. It contains a section on interpretation and presentation of World Heritage in the six regional groups defined by UNESCO, and a section on World Heritage sites and communities at the very end. In addition, multimedia tools make it approachable for not only World Heritage site interpretation and presentation experts, but also interested members of the general public.

We truly hope that our Centre's efforts to improve understanding of heritage, sharing, and spreading information on World Heritage sites, and international cooperation that leads to actions, will all contribute to upholding the values of UNESCO, which are reconciliation, co-prosperity, and peace for humankind.

Thank you.

December, 2022
Director-General **Su-hee Chae**



Ernesto Ottoni Ramirez, Assistant Director-General for Culture, UNESCO, and Choi Eung-chon, Minister, Cultural Heritage Agency in Republic of Korea joined at the signing ceremony for the establishment of WHIPIC

The Rising Importance of World Heritage Interpretation And the Establishment of the UNESCO WHIPIC

Haeree Shim

Head of Education and Cooperation Office

The International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites (hereinafter referred to as “WHIPIC”) was established in Sejong City in 2022, the year that marks the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention. WHIPIC, which is the first official institution launched under the auspices of UNESCO to focus on World Heritage interpretation and presentation, is a category-2 centre established through an agreement between UNESCO and the government of the Republic of Korea. The purpose of WHIPIC — with its three pillars of research, capacity building, and information sharing — is to identify the various meanings and values of World Heritage sites, and to protect heritage around the world through inclusive interpretation and presentation. The establishment of WHIPIC speaks volumes about the ever-increasing importance of interpretation and presentation of heritage around the world, which has been growing significantly throughout the 50 or so years of conservation following the adoption of the World Heritage Convention.

During the early days of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, following the Athens and Venice Charters, there was a stronger emphasis to preserve and restore World Heritage. It was only after the Burra Charter was adopted in Australia in 1979 that the interpretation of heritage expanded beyond from mere “monuments” to “places” with social and historic meaning. Then, as “cultural landscapes” were recognised as a category of World Heritage in 1992, the dichotomous way of viewing heritage as either cultural or natural was no longer the only way to understand heritage, and heritage came to be viewed as something that could be co-created by humankind and nature. Within the first 20 years of the Convention’s establishment, there had been criticisms that the World Heritage Programme was disproportionately focused on specific parts of the world, particularly Europe, and that major concepts and ideas related to heritage were Western-centric. This led to calls for the programme to better represent cultural and geographical diversity.

Against this backdrop, UNESCO launched its Global Strategy in 1994 to encourage the nomination and listing of regions poorly represented on the World Heritage List. The 1994 Nara Document on Authenticity achieved consensus that evaluation of the value of authenticity of cultural heritage should be based on each country's cultural context, instead of on a single, fixed standard. The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted in 2003 as part of the natural progression from changes born of the 1994 Nara Document, created momentum to revisit the intangible value of World Heritage and the communities built around it. The concept of interpretation and presentation of World Heritage sites began to gain prominence from the 2000s, as it became more important to not only protect World Heritage sites, but also to embrace and appreciate diverse heritage values. Against this background, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) announced the publication of the Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites in 2008. WHIPIC, along with international experts, is currently revisiting the basic definition and concept of heritage based on this Charter.

Because of its long history of global usage, the concept and definition of "heritage" have evolved over time and through new circumstances and problems. Today, as "interpreting the diverse values of World Heritage and reflecting the voices of the many became just as important as physical preservation itself" (Cameron, 2021), the role of interpretation and presentation of heritage properties is becoming increasingly significant. Due to this contemporary context, WHIPIC is introducing projects and business initiatives focused on building the framework for interpretation and presentation of World Heritage, including reestablishment of basic concepts. WHIPIC has led open discussions on the interpretation and presentation of World Heritage sites throughout the past two years through its Lecture series and Webinar for resolving conflicts over World Heritage. WHIPIC's three pillars are research, capacity building, and information sharing.

▲**Research** lays the theoretical foundation for interpretation and presentation and promotes research in four major areas, namely, theory, policies, subjects, and regions. The Centre conducts basic research for interpretation and presentation applicable to each World Heritage site. It researches the current status of World Heritage sites associated with conflicts; and, it also hosts academic conferences based on the main agenda of the year.

▲**Capacity Building** provides educational programmes on heritage interpretation and presentation for heritage site managers and experts, as well as programmes to raise awareness among the general public. It is also developing a training toolkit for strengthening capacity for interpretation and presentation of World Heritage sites, providing workshops for heritage site managers, and hosting international lectures and webinars. WHIPIC especially plans to promote programmes that encourage general public participation, so that interpretation and presentation of World Heritage does not become something reserved only for heritage experts and professionals.

▲**Information Sharing** has embarked on a long-term project to build a platform for more efficient information sharing and dissemination on World Heritage interpretation and presentation. The Centre is currently researching technology to build an international heritage interpretation platform to share information with stakeholders from around the world, and is carrying out research on digital presentation of World Heritage. Furthermore, the Centre regularly publishes *Interpreting World Heritage* and WHIPIC newsletters, periodic publications for sharing discourse on interpretation of World Heritage sites.

The Centre has more than 20 employees working with experts on heritage from various countries to uphold the philosophy of the World Heritage Convention, which is to protect heritage sites for sustainable development. WHIPIC will continue to work closely with heritage sites around the globe for inclusive interpretation and presentation of heritage. We hope for your continued interest and support for our new Centre, dedicated to promoting understanding and participation for World Heritage sites.

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Communicating Significance: World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation in a Time of Change

Neil Silberman

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The 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention is an auspicious moment to look back on the role that interpretation and presentation have played in the World Heritage process, how that role has dramatically changed over the decades, and how it is likely to evolve as we move through the 21st century. The daunting challenges now faced by the World Heritage Programme—and indeed cultural heritage as a whole—include global climate change, sometimes violent intercultural conflict, economic and social inequality, and unprecedented urbanisation, all of which require new strategies and techniques for the protection and promotion of humanity’s shared heritage. This brief article will highlight some of the formative events and theoretical developments in the years since the acceptance of the World Heritage Convention that have encouraged a new emphasis on active public engagement in the realm of interpretation and presentation—and which are likely to profoundly affect the character and effectiveness of cultural heritage communication at World Heritage sites in the coming decades.

In the decades since the acceptance, initial ratifications, and implementation of the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention, the roles of interpretation and presentation in the World Heritage process—and indeed in heritage activities of every kind—have dramatically widened. In that respect, the importance of the magazine has already twice defined WHIPIC, so it can be used from here on out. Sites as an international focal point for research, networking, and capacity sharing can hardly be overstated. Although the terms “interpretation” and “presentation” have often been used as synonyms by many heritage professionals and were long regarded as distinctly secondary activities to the technical work of scientific documentation and physical conservation of World Heritage sites, interpretation and presentation have now become central to every stage of the World Heritage process—from the selection of a site to be included on the UNESCO Tentative and World Heritage Lists of a state-party to the Convention to its nomination, potential for inscription, and, if inscribed, to its long-term conservation and socio-economic sustainability.



Fifty years after the birth of the World Heritage Convention, heritage interpretation and presentation must continue to develop a people-centered approach.

Ours is an era when public engagement and community outreach are increasingly seen as necessary components of World Heritage activities (Ripp and Rodwell 2018). This increased focus on public awareness and participation seeks to promote recognition of global sustainable development goals and serve the causes of peacemaking, human rights, inclusiveness, diversity, and intercultural understanding. The evocative and emotional resonance of cultural communication in all its forms and media—on-site, online, and in public fora and classrooms—is often the key to whether a World Heritage site is regarded as an alien intrusion or disruption to the life of a local community or whether it is properly maintained and respected by local residents and associated groups (Salazar 2016). Indeed, further serious research and detailed case studies are indispensable for fully understanding

the crucial role that interpretation and presentation can play in the equitable and inclusive implementation of the World Heritage Convention and in the enormous task of ensuring the conservation of the more than 1,100 sites on the World Heritage List.

What caused the increasing centrality of interpretation and presentation in World Heritage activities? Why and when did they become something more than the “popularisation” (French: “vulgarisation”) of academic discourse? The geo-political upheavals and shifting heritage policies of the 1990s were particularly important in this regard. With the growing political self-awareness of developing nations, worldwide human rights movements, the economic rise of dynamic Asian societies, and new respect for indigenous cultures, the primarily monumental, material orientation of heritage theory began to be challenged. The unquestioning acceptance of expert opinion now had to contend with a wide range of alternative perspectives. Heritage organisations at all levels had to rethink their mission in a new geo-political and social landscape. And during the closing decade of the 20th century and the opening decade of the 21st, some major heritage policy developments decisively shifted the focus of significance from an entirely material basis to an increasingly intangible one.

The first development was the discussion leading up to the drafting of the Nara Document, which suggested that authenticity did not stem only from surviving physical remnants but equally from the cultural continuity of design, materials, and functions—even at a heritage site that had been repeatedly—and recently—rebuilt (Larsen 1995). This continuity of cultural skills and expression, based as much on memory and tradition as on precise dates, formal architectural typology, or scientific investigation, required increasingly sophisticated interpretation that could convey the significance of intangible traditions and distinctive cultural expressions at heritage sites. At the same time, the geographical concentration of World Heritage sites in Europe and North America came under increasing critique by states-parties in Asia and the Global South for not fully representing the full diversity of World Heritage. This critique gave rise to the 1994 Global Strategy for a Repre-

sentative, Balanced and Credible World Heritage List (Rao 2010). And this growing attention to traditional cultures and largely overlooked community perspectives led to a new emphasis on diversity and multiple values in all the geographical locations and cultural contexts of World Heritage sites.

The essential character of heritage interpretation and presentation was changing (Staiff 2014). Although sound scholarship and empirical evidence remain integral elements of effective cultural communication, the focus has increasingly shifted from an exclusive reliance on top-down, expert-driven communication to an insistence on a greater measure of public engagement and interactivity. Part of this trend was undoubtedly due to the Digital Revolution,

where information about and interest in cultural heritage sites became increasingly detached from “place” (Freeman 2018). Likewise, the economic competition for visitor revenue created a need for engaging, entertaining visitor experiences that depended on the highly technical skills and expensive hardware of virtual and augmented reality. And at the same time, the growing value of heritage as a vehicle for community development and as a medium for the expression of community identity (Albert *et al.* 2012) made public participation in heritage interpretation and presentation indispensable. The responsibility of heritage interpreters and presentation designers was no longer seen primarily as a way to convey the facts and narratives of what Laurajane Smith has termed the Authorised Heritage Discourse (Smith 2006), but to widen the relevance and accessibility of heritage resources to local communities and long-marginalised groups all over the world.

As the historian and cultural policy scholar Dipesh Chakrabarty has noted, a similar transformation was occurring at the same time in the museum world (2002). There, the traditional, top-down pedagogical approach was also giving way to a greater measure of active public participation, which Chakrabarty characterised as a “performative” approach. From its primary responsibility of inculcating the public (and, in particular, young people) in majoritarian civic values, cultural heritage communication has become a vivid, if sometimes contentious, reflection on the past that serves to reinforce contemporary identities. How we can better understand the impact of heritage interpretation and presentation in promoting intercultural tolerance or intolerance — and how the vast social media networks influence public perceptions of the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage — are the pressing challenges that face every serious practitioner of heritage interpretation and presentation today. Fifty years after the birth of the World Heritage Convention, heritage interpretation and presentation must continue to develop a people-centered approach. The democratic participation of many voices and perspectives in reflecting on the shared heritage of humanity is the surest guarantee of the validity, and sustainability of the ideals of World Heritage itself. **whipic**



WHC site in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention

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Inclusive Interpretation and Presentation in a Changing Paradigm of Cultural Heritage Protection

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Indigenous dancers at a major annual celebration of aboriginal culture, Australia

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Deficiencies and paradigm change

Interpretation and presentation are critical elements in programmes aimed at protecting heritage places. It is the interpretation and the presentation of that interpretation that link the site as it exists with those who see and think about it, enabling them to make sense of the place. Regrettably, they are neglected elements at many sites around the world. Often, only brief technical descriptions of the main site structures are provided. Commonly, a single type of visitor is assumed, and nothing is done to accommodate visitors with

differing language skills, life experiences, education levels or interests.

When places associated with recent international or internal conflicts are remembered differently by opposing sides, nationalistic interpretation and presentation commonly reinforce divisions and maintain or even increase tensions. If we are serious about working towards a more peaceful world—the overriding constitutional purpose of the United Nations and UNESCO—the interpretation and presentation of a

site should do more than provide a top-down, government-approved view of the significance of the place, which can sometimes be narrow in focus, ideological, and even propagandistic.

This narrow political and technical approach has been increasingly challenged by scholars and practitioners both in the field and within UNESCO itself, and it is no longer regarded as best practice, particularly as it contravenes the declared aspirations and adopted policies of the United Nations and UNESCO. Once commonly seen by many heritage professionals as simply a technical matter—of applying the best or latest scientific solution to preserve or restore an artefact, monument or site—cultural heritage protection has shifted into a new paradigm (Logan 2008: 443).



In relation to heritage interpretation, the WH&SD Policy also requires that there be an equitable recognition of other perspectives and diverse opinions about values and narratives in the process of establishing tentative lists and final World Heritage List nomination dossiers.

This has been partly driven by the growing interest since the 1990s in intangible forms of heritage – ‘living heritage embodied in people.’

Including local communities and indigenous peoples

At the global level, UNESCO is the leading organisation engaged in shaping attitudes towards cultural heritage, articulating principles about the purpose and means of its safeguarding, and engaging with Member States in projects aimed at protecting cultural heritage and cultural diversity under UNESCO’s various conventions. Since at least its ‘Linking Universal and Local Values’ conference in Amsterdam in 2003, UNESCO has promoted the view that heritage protection does not depend solely on top-down interventions by governments or the expert actions of heritage professionals but must involve local communities.

UNESCO now argues that the values and practices of local communities, together with traditional management systems, must be fully understood, respected, encouraged and accommodated in management plans if heritage resources are to be sustained into the future

(UNESCO 2004). This gives local communities a sense of ‘ownership’ over their heritage and reaffirms their value as a community, as well as their ways of doing things, as ‘culture’ (Logan 2008). Having a say in determining one’s own life circumstances, including one’s cultural and physical environment, is now commonly seen as a fundamental human right.

This paradigm shift has been achieved only partially, however, since UNESCO is an international government organisation and the Member States working within the World Heritage system as States Parties to the World Heritage Convention commonly put their own national interests before the global interest. Certainly greater attention is now paid to local community interpretation of places and to the right of free, prior and informed consent before the heritage of indigenous and other minority groups is nominated to the World Heritage List or Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Nevertheless, it remains true that nominations reflect the interpretation endorsed by the official authorities responsible for them, and that, in turn, almost always conforms to the vision of society held by the political regime in power and its supporters.

Sustainable development

Important changes towards the democratisation of nomination and inscription processes were set in motion by the United Nations Secretary General’s decision in 2011 to prepare a post-2015 Development Agenda based on the notion of sustainable development and with an emphasis on working towards a ‘just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met’ (UN 2015). The set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that was established to clarify what the Agenda sought to achieve must be ‘implemented in accordance with international human rights law, eliminating gender inequalities and all forms of discrimination, reaching out to those that are furthest behind first, to ensure that no one is left behind’ (UNSDG 2015).

What is particularly significant about the UN approach is the comprehensive way in which sustainability was envisaged: no longer the familiar, narrow approach relating to the physical environment but as a concept dependent on three overarching principles—human rights, equality, and long-term sustainability—



Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, Australia

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and four main sets of factors—environmental sustainability, inclusive social development, inclusive economic development, and the fostering of peace and security.

This was taken up in the UNESCO policy for integrating a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the World Heritage Convention (referred to hereinafter as the WH&SD Policy). The policy's implications for the World Heritage system are substantial, including the requirement that inscription and management be equitable and human rights-based. It is important to note that UNESCO policies are mandatory, rather than merely advisory, for all Member States.

In relation to heritage interpretation, the WH&SD Policy also requires that there be an equitable recognition of other perspectives and diverse opinions about values and narratives in the process of establishing tentative lists and preparing final World Heritage List nomination dossiers. This means that the States Parties must seek out and listen to minorities and Indigenous Peoples and involve them in heritage interpretation, inscription and management. Other States Parties' should be heard when they differ from the nominating State Party's, especially when

a risk of potential tension or conflict has been identified through previous processes.

Implementation

The WH&SD Policy has been picked up in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (OG) at Paragraph 111, although in a less mandatory form than might be expected:

In recognising the diversity mentioned above, common elements of an effective management system could include:

- a. *a thorough shared understanding of the property, its universal, national and local values, and its socio-ecological context by all stakeholders, including local communities and indigenous peoples;*
- b. *a respect for diversity, equity, gender equality and human rights, and the use of inclusive and participatory planning and stakeholder consultation processes.*

An additional requirement not yet incorporated in the OG should be that such inclusiveness is conveyed explicitly but sensitively in the presentation of heritage interpretations at World Heritage sites, not only in terms of content but also with regard to the varying language skills and technical and historical knowledge. It is particularly regrettable that the OG remain very quiet on interpretation. Paragraph 7 simply reminds readers that the Convention aims at the 'identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of cultural and natural heritage of Outstanding Universal Value'. Elsewhere in the Guidelines the term 'interpretation' is used to mean techniques for presenting information to tourists and other visitors. Not only is the distinction between interpretation and presentation not adequately conveyed, but nothing at all is said about ensuring accurate and balanced interpretation.

Remedying these deficiencies is long overdue. It needs to be done urgently—ideally in the next OG revision—in order to better support those engaged in the interpretation, inscription and management of World Heritage places and, as elaborated in Logan (2022), to avoid the numerous conflicts that have erupted in the past when nominations were submitted to the World Heritage Committee that were based on narrow, nationalistic interpretations. **whipic**

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Interpretation for all

James Carter

Fellow of Association for Heritage Interpretation



1. Rechargers need time and space to absorb the atmosphere of a place without distraction (Yosemite).

If interpretation is to engage visitors, it must make their visit somehow more satisfying than it would otherwise have been. To achieve this, interpretation needs to satisfy their motivations for visiting. Only then can it contribute to “meaning making,” the process through which people absorb a place and make it part of their memories, thoughts, and views about the world.

John Falk, a researcher based at Oregon State University, describes a model that I think is particularly interesting in planning interpretation (Falk 2009). He suggests that visitor motivations are linked to how individuals build their identity – their sense of who they are, and of what is important to them – through their engagement with heritage. Based on empirical

research, he describes five profiles that explain what people are looking for during their visit.

The “Explorer” identity is driven by a desire to discover new things and expand their knowledge of the world. People building this sense of themselves want to understand and learn about the places they visit, but like many people learning in their leisure time, they may often be happy to gather just a few ideas or bits of information before moving on. They often share this level of interest with the “Facilitator,” whose main motivation is to share something they see as interesting or important with family or friends. Interpretation can help Facilitators engage their companions in the stories of the place by offering activities, images, and ideas that will stimulate conversations.

These two identities might be considered the core market for conventional interpretation: media such as exhibitions, guided tours, and self-guided trails. The well-established criteria for effective interpretation match the needs and learning styles of these two identities. These criteria are described in many sources, for example Ham (2013). Interpretation needs to:

- Invite its audience to engage with a few ideas or themes rather than to communicate lots of facts.
- Be accessible and easy to absorb, with short, well-written text and attractive visual elements that illustrate the themes.
- Present ideas so they are relevant to the audience and their lives.
- Give its audience a sense of satisfaction or enjoyment.

The “Experience seeker’s” motivation is rather different. People want to feel that they have visited places that are considered significant by society, perhaps even to “tick things off” a bucket list of places to experience. Social interaction is often important for Experience seekers, and they might see an attractive setting for time with friends and family as a major reason for the visit. They may make very little use of conventional interpretation, but they engage enthusiastically with the place by taking selfie photos and videos, sharing them on social media, and often by using catering and retail spaces.

World Heritage sites are, by definition, places rec-



2. In Bremerhaven, Germany, a museum dedicated to the stories of emigrants tells their stories in ways that encourage conversations among visitors.

3. At Monterey Bay Aquarium, California, posters make an attractive decoration in the café as well as the site's conservation messages.

4. Rechargers need time and space to absorb the atmosphere of a place without distractions (Muir Woods).

5. At Sovereign Hill, Australia, visitors for gold, a fun experience that reinforces the site's mining history.

6. A statue of Adam Smith is a popular backdrop for selfies in Edinburgh, Scotland. It places this key figure in the city's history.

ognised as important and valuable by humanity as a whole. It follows that this way of engaging with heritage – wanting simply to have been to a place, and to have proof of being there that you can share with friends – is particularly relevant for World Heritage.

It would be easy to consider this kind of contact with heritage as somehow less worthy or meaningful than the more intellectual goals of the Explorers and Facilitators. But that would be at best a mistake, and at worst elitist. The way Experience seekers weave heritage into their identities is no less valid than any other; it is just different from the academically influenced way in which heritage is often defined and managed.

Although Experience seekers may make little use of conventional interpretation, it is still possible for

the way a place is managed and presented to have a profound effect on their impressions. Viewpoints, iconic objects, and places to eat and drink will be popular focal points, and may well appear in thousands of social media posts. These places need to be clearly signposted, and the creative design of features such as seats and cafes can reflect the key stories of the site. This helps to make those stories an integral, if subconscious, part of the memories people take away.

As “Rechargers”, people look for an aesthetic, emotional, or spiritual connection with a place or its stories—something that may be deeply personal and private. Where Experience seekers might simply ignore interpretation, insensitively placed or timed attempts at communication might spoil a Recharger's impressions completely. They need opportunities and time to absorb the atmosphere on their own terms, making use of all their senses.

The final category is “Hobbyist:, or “Professional”. This identity is motivated by a specialist interest in the place or a topic. People with such an interest may want detailed, in-depth information and may value the chance to discuss the latest research with staff. Programmes of talks and special events can offer a satisfying experience for Hobbyists and Professionals, but exhibitions designed to meet their needs will be too detailed for Explorers and Facilitators.

It is important to recognise that these identities are not fixed personalities: an individual might move through several of them during a visit; or they might emphasise one in particular depending on their circumstances or the site being visited. This means that ideally a site should offer something to satisfy all the different motivations people bring to a heritage visit.

For this, we need to broaden our definition of what interpretation can be beyond conventional media. Features such as seats or the decoration and menu in a café can be inspired by the character of a place; merchandise in a shop can connect with its stories. We might not classify these things as interpretation, but they can all help visitors make meaning from their experiences. If an interpretive approach feeds into all aspects of how a site welcomes visitors, we can help them all value their heritage. [whipic](http://whipic.org)

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01. Africa

Reconnecting African Communities to Their Heritage

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Heritage interpretation in Africa has been consistently and heavily influenced by systems and strategies established during the continent's colonial period. People now widely consider that heritage should link culture and nature, people and aspirations, meaning there is no separation between people and their heritages (Taruvinga 2022a; Abungu 2016; Ndoro and Wijesuriya 2015). Heritage manifests as both tangible and intangible elements that create meaning and relevance to the diversity of local communities. Therefore, heritage is first and foremost local before universal (Taruvinga 2022a, 2022b). African communities were disconnected with their heritage and practices that give meaning to their identities and sense of belonging (Abungu 2016; Ndoro and Wijesuriya 2015). This was a great departure from how pre-colonial communities of Africa had an inclusive and holistic process of curating or interpreting their cultural material both for the conservation of their cultures and the sustenance of their socio-economic livelihoods.

Connecting these pre-colonial and colonial experiences of African communities, as well as their present-day aspirations and ideas regarding the interpretation of their heritage, constitute a priority for Africa. If heritage production, interpretation, and its relevance to society is thus a continuous and dynamic process, so should be knowledge production sources and systems, including the role of facilitators (heritage institutions and experts) thereof. If we cannot embrace this strategic thinking, heritage interpretation is at the risk of creating new exclusionary approaches in the presence of unlimited and inclusive opportunities relating to knowledge sources and systems, as well as interpretation strategies and mechanisms which can bring multivocality to the fore! Heritage interpretation should not default to what we are trying to run away from by using new and meaningless terminologies, concepts and paradigms, yet what we want is to promote use of different knowledge sources and systems to produce inclusive knowledge. Thus, decolonisation of heritage interpretation in Africa requires embracing other knowledge sources and systems in order to generate inclusive and enriched knowledge and interpretation narratives that help local communities reconnect with their heritage. This includes addressing their socio-economic needs alongside conservation.

How heritage is viewed and interpreted through time and space is important in Africa, because it is linked to notions of nation building, social cohesion, reconciliation, peace and security, identity creation, memorialisation, aspirations, and healing colonial trauma and a fractured past. This denotes the shifting community heritage landscapes of Africa associated with public museums, World Heritage sites, memorial sites, community centres among many others. These landscapes are public barometers that measure the effectiveness and impact of heritage interpretation in the now and future approaches of Africa! These shifting landscapes point to the fact that defining and interpreting African heritage is now a scientific, public, and social process in Africa. For communities in Africa, it is now “Them, Us, and Together” to co-create our heritage in the present and future. African heritage can no longer be defined in the absence of its creators, dialogues, and debates characterising these shifting landscapes.

To address the heritage interpretation inequities or inequalities, there is need to involve African communities in a transparent and open manner. This must happen at all levels of planning: from conceptualisation to implementation,

monitoring, and reviews. Innovative ways of engaging and involving them should be explored beyond traditional ways. Central to this process is decolonising heritage systems, operations, governance, and value propositions to the communities. This includes embracing new technologies on digitisation and digitalisation, while ensuring that communities are not further marginalised or victimised by commercialisation without receiving benefits. Reconnecting communities with their heritage cannot happen without embracing inclusivity across the board, otherwise alienation and conflicts shall continue unabated. The legal context of heritage should embrace the social framing of heritage interpretation in Africa. Bringing legal and social framing together is an opportunity to connect communities with their heritage.

Local communities remain marginalised in heritage management through a complex matrix of colonial and post-colonial legislations and policies operating in Africa (Taruvunga 2022a, 2022b; Ndoro and Wijesuriya 2015). Inclusivity and adopting local approaches have eluded heritage management in post-colonial Africa (Chirikure *et al.* 2015; Chirikure and Pwiti 2008). There is a need for decolonised research and connecting practices in the following areas: theory and practices in heritage spaces in Africa; indigenous knowledge systems and applications in the present; inclusive and holistic interpretation frameworks;

as well as mechanisms for sustainable engagement and community involvement. The underlying but important catalytic factors are decolonisation, inclusivity, multivocality, and embracing alternative knowledge sources.

Heritage interpretation in Africa is no longer about intellectual prowess on reimagining and reconceptualising African heritages. It is more about how this process is made relevant to the aspirations and needs of communities. To achieve this, heritage management creates connections between the creators (communities) and enablers (institutions and experts) of African heritage. This gives opportunity to co-create with other knowledge sources, production systems and multiple players, including communities. There is no future without having the knowledge creators, enablers, and public sharing a vision that deals with the toxicity in knowledge production and interpretation of heritage currently dominated by academics and experts.

Kuunaganisha tena Jumuiya za KiAfrika na urithi wao

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Kufasiri urithi wa Afrika umeathiriwa kabisa na mfululizo kwa mifumo na mikakati iliyoanzishwa wakati wa ukoloni. Urithi huu huwa kuunganisha utamaduni, uasilia, watu, na matarajio yao, kumaanisha kwamba hakuna utengano kati ya watu na urithi wao heritages (Taruvunga, 2022; Abungu, 2016; Ndoro *et al.*, 2014). Urithi huu unajidhihirisha kama vipengele vinavyoonekana na visivyo-shikika ambavyo vinaunda maana na umuhimu wake kwa jamii za wenyeji katika tofauti wao. Kwa hivyo, urithi ni wa kienyeji kabisa kabla ya kuwa wa ulimwengu wote. Jumuiya ya Afrika zimetenganishwa na urithi na desturi zinazomaanisha utambulisho na hisia ya kuwa pamoja. Huu umekuwa mbali kutoka kwa jinsi jumuiya ya Afrika kabla ya ukoloni zilivyokuwa na mchakato jumuishi na

kamili wa kutunza au kutafsiri nyenzo zao za kitamaduni kwa ajili ya kuhifadhi tamaduni zao na riziki maisha yao ya kijamii na kiuchumi.

Kuunganisha uzoefu wa kabla ya ukoloni na ukoloni wa jumuiya ya Afrika ni muhimu kuliko kuunganisha mata-rajio na mawazo yao ya sasa kuhusu tafsiri ya urithi wao katika kufasiri urithi wa Afrika. Ikiwa uzalishaji wa urithi, tafsiri na umuhimu wake kwa jamii ni mchakato enelevu na wenye nguvu, itakuwa vyanzo na mifumo ya uzalishaji wa maarifa, ikijumuisha jukumu la wawezeshaji(taasisi za urithi na wataalam) pia. Ikiwa hatuwezi kukumbatia mawazo ya kistratijiki, kufasiri wa urithi uko katika hatari ya kuunda mbinu mpya za kutengwa mbele ya fursa zisizo na kikomo na jumuiishi zanzohusiana na vyanzo vya maarifa na mifumo, Pamoja na mikakati ya tafsiri na utaratibu ambao unaweza kuleta wingi wa sauti mbele. Kufasiri urithi haupaswi kubadilika kulingana na kile tunachojaribu kukimbia kwa kutimbia istilahi mpya na zisizo na maana, dhana kwa sababu tunachotaka ni ukuza matumizi ya vyanzo na mifumo mbalimbali ya maarifa ili kuzalisha maarifa ya jumuiishi. Kwa hivyo uondoaji wa ukoloni wa kufasiri urithi wa Afrika lazima unapaswa kutazamwa kama kukumbatia vyanzo na mifumo mingine ya maarifa kuzalisha masimulizi jumuiishi na yenye kufasiriwa maarifa na tafsiri ambao unasaidia jumuiya za wenyeji kuungana tena na turathi zao. Hii ni Pamoja na kushughulikia mahitaji yao ya kijamii na kiuchumi Pamoja na uhifadhi.

Jinsi ya kufasiri urithi kupitia wakati na mahali ni muhimu katika Afrika kwa sababu inahusishwa na dhana ya ujenzi wa nchi, mshikamano wa kijamii, upatanisho, amani na usalama, uundaji wa utambulisho, dhamiri ya kumbusho, kuwezesha uponyi baada ya kishindo cha ukoloni na zamani vunjifi. Inasemekana ya kuwa mabadiliko ya hali ya urithi wa jamii katika Afrika kuhusishwa na makumbusho ya umma, maneno ya urithi wa dunia, maeneo ya kumbukumbu, vituo vya jamii, kadha wa kadha. Inakuwa vipimahewa vya umma ambavyo vinapima ufanisi na athari za tafsiri ya urithi kuhusu jinsi ya kufasiri Afrika kwa sasa na siku za mbele. Mabadiliko haya yanaelekeza kwamba kufafanua na kutafsiri urithi wa Afrika ni mchakato wa kisayansi, umma na kijamii katika Afrika. Kwa jumuiya ya Afrika, kuunda urithi wetu kwa sasa na siku za mbele kunasemekana “Nao, Sisi ni pamoja” Kufafanua urithi wa Afrika hakuwezi bila waundaji, midahalo na mashindano yanayobainisha mazingira haya yanaobadilika.

Ili kufasiri utamaduni kwa usawa na haki, kuna haja ya kushirikisha jamii ya Afrika kuhusu njia wazi na meupe. Kuna haja ya kushirikisha katika ngazi zote za mpango kutoka uundaji dhana hadi utekelezaji, ufuatiliaji na mapitio. Njia bunifu za kuwashirikisha zinapasa zaidi ya njia za desturi. Kiini cha mchakato ni kuondoa ukoloni mifumo ya urithi, uendeshaaji, utawala na mapendekezo ya thamani kwa jamii. Isitoshe hii ni pamoja na kukumbatia teknolojia mpya za uwekaji digitali, lakini kuna haja ya kuhakikisha kuwa jamii hazitungwi zaidi au kuwa wahanga wa biashara bila kunufaika. Kuunganisha tena jumuiya na urithi wao hakuwezi kutokea bila kukumbatia ujumuishi kote, waima kutengwa na mashindano yataendelea bila kukoma. Mazingira ya kisheria wa urithi unapasa kukumbatia muundo wa kijamii wa tafsiri ya urithi katika Afrika. Kuleta pamoja muundo wa kisheria na kijamii ni fursa ya kuunganisha jamii na urithi wao.

Jumuiya za mitaa katika Afrika limebakia kutengwa katika usimamizi wa urithi kwa sababu ya msingi changamano wa sheria na sera za ukoloni na baada ya ukoloni wa Afrika(Taruvina, 2022a; 2022b; Ndoro & Wijesuriya, 2015). Ujumuiishi na kufuata mbini za wenyeji kumeepuka usimamizi wa urithi katika Afrika ya baada ya ukoloni(Chirikure *et al.*, 2015; 2008). Kuna haja ya utafiti ulioondolewa ukoloni na mazoea ya kuunganisha katika mapande yafuatayo; nadharia-mazoezi katika nafasi za urithi katika Afrika, mifumo ya maarifa asilia na matumizi katika mifumo ya kisasa cha tafsiri, jumuiishi na kamili, ifu, taratibu za ushirikishawaji endelevu na jamii. Mambo ya msingi na muhimu hususa ni uondoaji wa ukoloni, ujumuishaji, maana mbalimbali, kukumbatia vyanzo mbadala vya maarifa.

Kufasiri urithi wa Afrika hauhusu uwezo wa kiakili katika kifikiria upya wa Afrika tu. Kusoma na kuunganisha uhusiano kati ya matarajio na mahitaji ya jamii hasa ni muhimu. Ili kufanikisha hili, usimamizi wa urithi huunda uhusiano kati ya waundaji(jumuiya) na wawezeshaji(taasisi na wataalamu) wa urithi wa Afrika. Hii inatoa fursa ya kuunda-pamoja kwa kutumia vyanzo vingine vya maarifa, mifumo ya uzalishaji na wachezaji wengi, ikijumuisha jamii. Hakuna wakati ujao bila kuwa na wabunifu wa maarifa, viwezeshaaji na kushiriki maono ya umma juu ya kukabiliana na sumu katika uzalishaji wa maarifa na tafsiri ya urithi ambayo kwa sasa inatawaliwa na wasomi na wataalam. **whipic**

Heritage site Interpretation in the Arab Region: Trends, Challenges, and Future Prospects

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In the field of heritage interpretation in the Arab region, conditions and capacities greatly vary among Arab States. New studies illuminate trends relevant to heritage presentation, education, and awareness in the Arab region. For example, the Report on the Results of the Third Cycle of the Periodic Reporting Exercise in the Arab States (World Heritage Committee 2021) states that: All States Parties in the Region are engaged in awareness raising activities, yet only 11 States Parties have specific strategies in place...” In effect, there are no adequate national strategies or frameworks to communicate messages about heritage sites in this region, and interpretation projects continue to be done *ad hoc*. The same report indicates that tourism industry decision makers, public officials, academics, and communities living around World Heritage sites have the most

“general awareness,” while the general public, private sector, youth, and indigenous peoples are rated as having lower awareness about the importance of these places.

While World Heritage sites form an important type of heritage property in the region, with increasing engagement in World Heritage work, a few governmental institutions have become concerned with the implementation of heritage interpretation projects.

Several museums and interpretation centres have been constructed in the past decade at World Heritage sites, such as Qal’at al-Bahrain — Ancient Harbour and Capital of Dilmun and the Pearling Testimony of an Island Economy (Fig. 1 and 2); the Archaeological Site of Volubilis, Morocco (Fig. 3); Byblos, Lebanon (Fig. 4); and Petra, Jordan, to name a few. Other examples of sites that are on the Tentative List include the prehistoric site of Mleiha, UAE (Fig. 5) and Jerash or Madaba, Jordan (JICA 2014). There is a great need, therefore, to make the public more aware of non-World Heritage sites especially as their interpretation and presentation make them more legible and understandable by non-specialists.

Archaeological sites and ruins merit special attention in the region where reconstruction constitutes a debated approach among professionals, especially with regards to earthen architecture (see also Stanley-Price 2009). Understanding the meaning of such sites is not a simple process

1. Qal’at Al Bahrain Site Museum
2. Pearling in Bahrain, marked with guiding lights which symbolise pearls
3. Volubilis Site Museum, Morocco
4. Site museum and map of the Old Fort of Byblos, Lebanon





since each of these archaeological sites may have different even conflicting meanings. Their understanding is often not only dependent on the methods used in their research, but on the differing professional backgrounds involved, not to mention the public and political perceptions and engagement influencing the decision-making processes. At the ruined fort in Al Dhaid Oasis in Sharjah (Fig. 6), socio-cultural dimensions have increasingly been areas of concern where professionals proposed a sensitive approach to evidence-based reconstruction *in situ* with distinguishable additions. Pressure from the local community pushed to have their fort reconstructed to its original glory prevailed with political support. At the World Heritage site of At-Turaif District in ad-Dir'iyah in Saudi Arabia (Fig. 7), research and investment in how to rebuild or interpret the heritage is being addressed by the newly created site authority.

Other approaches beyond *in situ* visitor interpretation centres and presentation with adequate signage, site models, and provision of headset guides have more recently included *ex situ* interactive displays with technologies such as augmented or virtual reality at visitor centres and museums. Some of these techniques emerged from academic work such as the American University of Sharjah to interpret the site of Jazirat Al-Hamra in Ras Al-Khaimah in the UAE (Fig. 8).

In conclusion, the field of heritage interpretation in the Arab world, especially at ruined sites, requires a holistic approach based on a deep understanding of various interdisciplinary professionals, ranging from archaeologists to conservation specialists, architects, and designers to educa-



5 Mleiha Archaeological Park
6 Al Dhaid Fort Reconstructed, Sharjah, before reconstruction and tested solution
7. Ad-Dir'iyah World Heritage site, Saudi Arabia

tors, who should be aware of authenticity dimensions to be adopted in every interpretation intervention. In addition, interpretation projects should form part of a national strategic framework concerned with heritage education and promotion for locals, policy makers, media specialists, and foreign visitors alike. Moreover, effectiveness of interpretation projects and media should continually be assessed and monitored through visitor evaluation surveys at visitor centres or museums serving these sites.

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مقدمة في تفسير المواقع التاريخية في المنطقة العربية :التوجهات القائمة والتحديات وآفاق المستقبل

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أن كل موقع أثري قد يكون له تفسيرات مختلفة من القيم، حيث أن فهمها غالباً لا يعتمد فقط على الأساليب المستخدمة في العمل الأثري الاستقصائي، ولكن على طرق ومدى فهم العديد من الخلفيات المهنية المشاركة، ناهيك عن التصورات العامة والسياسية والمشاركة المجتمعية التي تؤثر على عمليات صنع القرار. ففي موقع الحصن المدمر في واحة الذيد في الشارقة (الشكل ٨)، كانت الأبعاد الاجتماعية والثقافية موضع اهتمام متزايد حيث اقترح المهنيون نهجاً معمارياً حساساً لإعادة البناء مركّز على الأدلة في الموقع مع إضافات يمكن تمييزها، إلا أن الضغط من السكان المحليين دفع لإعادة بناء حصنهم إلى شكله الأصلي والذي تم دعمه سياسياً في النهاية. وفي موقع التراث العالمي في الدرعية بالمملكة العربية السعودية (الشكل ٩)، تتم المعالجات حسب البحث ويتم الاستثمار في دراسة النهج التي يتم بها إعادة بناء أو تفسير مكونات التراث المبني من قبل الهيئة المنشأة حديثاً لهذا الموقع.

وإن المقاربات الأخرى التي تتجاوز مراكز التفسير للزوار في الموقع والعرض التقديمي مع اللافتات المناسبة وغاذاً الموقع وتوفير أدلة سماعات الرأس مع توفير اللغة والترجمة للزوار أثناء الزيارات المنظمة على خط سير الزيارة تضمنت مؤخرًا عروض تفاعلية خارج الموقع مع الحلول التكنولوجية التي تضمنت وسائط الواقع الافتراضي المعززة والمتوفرة في مراكز الزوار و / أو متاحف الموقع. وقد ارتبطت بعض هذه الحلول بالعمل الأكاديمي المؤسسي مثل عمل الجامعة الأمريكية في الشارقة لتفسير موقع جزيرة الحمراء في رأس الخيمة (الشكل ١٠).

في الختام، يتطلب مجال تفسير التراث في العالم العربي (خاصة في المواقع المدمرة أو الأقل وضوحاً من قبل الجمهور) نهجاً شمولياً يعتمد على فهم الأدوار متعددة التخصصات للمهنيين العاملين في التراث بدءاً من علماء الآثار إلى أخصائي الحفظ والمهندسين المعماريين والمصممين إلى التربويين، الذين يجب أن يكونوا على دراية بأبعاد "الأصالة" للتفسير ومبادئ الحفظ التي يتعين اعتمادها في تفسير كل موقع. كما يجب أن تشكل مشاريع التقديم والعرض جزءاً من إطار عمل استراتيجي وطني معني بالتثقيف والتوعية والترويج للتراث للسكان المحليين وصانعي السياسات والمتخصصين في وسائل الإعلام والزائرين على حد سواء. علاوة على ذلك، يجب استخدام وسائل الإعلام وتقييم فعالية مشاريع التفسير والعرض ومراقبتها باستمرار من خلال تقييمات الزوار واستطلاعات الرأي في مراكز الزوار أو المتاحف التي تخدم هذه المواقع. **whipic**

8. Jazirat Alhamra, Ras Al Khaima, UAE



أن الظروف والخبرات والامكانيات المالية حول حالة أعمال تفسير التراث لتوصيل قيم الأماكن التاريخية تختلف اختلافاً كبيراً بين الدول العربية المختلفة. وتقدم الدراسات المستحدثة بعض المؤشرات حول التوجهات المتعلقة بعرض التراث والتعليم والتوعية في المنطقة العربية. فعلى سبيل المثال، ينص "تقرير نتائج الدورة الثالثة من إعداد التقارير الدورية في الدول العربية" على أن: "جميع الدول العربية الأطراف في المنطقة منخرطة في أعمال زيادة الوعي بأهمية التراث، ومع ذلك فإن ١١ دولة فقط لديها استراتيجيات محددة معمولى بها". في الواقع، لا توجد استراتيجيات وطنية كافية لرفع مستوى الوعي أو أي أطر عمل شاملة فعالة لتوصيل الرسائل التي تحملها مواقع التراث في هذه المنطقة، ويشير التقرير نفسه إلى أن صناعة السياحة، وصناع القرار، والمسؤولين الحكوميين، والأكاديميين، والمجتمعات التي تعيش حول مواقع التراث العالمي تعتبر الأكثر وعياً، في حين يتم تصنيف عامة الناس والقطاع الخاص والشباب والشعوب الأصلية على أنهم قليلي الوعي بأهمية هذه الأماكن والحفاظ عليها.

وبينما تشكل مواقع التراث العالمي أحد العناصر المهمة للممتلكات التراثية في المنطقة، وبينما أصبحت الدول العربية منخرطة بشكل متزايد في أعمال التراث العالمي، إلا أن انشغال المؤسسات الحكومية المتزايدة بتنفيذ مشاريع تفسير التراث يعتبر قليلاً ومحدوداً.

ظهر العديد من متاحف المواقع ومراكز التفسير في العقد الماضي في مواقع ذات قيمة عالمية استثنائية، مثل قلعة البحرين وطريق اللؤلؤ (الشكل ١ و ٢)؛ وموقع ويلي في المغرب (الشكل ٣)؛ وجبيل في لبنان (الشكل ٤)؛ والبتراء في الأردن (الشكل ٥)، على سبيل المثال لا الحصر. وهناك أمثلة أخرى لمواقع مدرجة في القائمة المؤقتة، مثل موقع مليحة الذي يعود إلى ما قبل التاريخ في الإمارات العربية المتحدة، وجرش أو مادبا في الأردن (الشكل ٦ و ٧). وهذا يعني أن هناك حاجة كبيرة لجعل عامة الناس ومختلف الزوار أكثر وعياً بالمواقع غير المدرجة في التراث العالمي، خاصة إذا كان تفسيرها وعرضها يجعلها أكثر قابلية للفهم من قبل غير المتخصصين.

وتستحق المواقع والأطلال الأثرية اهتماماً خاصاً في المنطقة حيث تشكل عملية إعادة البناء نهجاً قابلاً للنقاش بين المهنيين، لا سيما فيما يتعلق بالتراث المبني من الطين. ففهم معاني وقيم مثل هذه المواقع ليس عملية بسيطة في سياق تفسير الموقع حيث

Difficult Heritage over Modern Conflicts to Give Rise to a Shared Narrative

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Heritage allows us to better understand how the contemporary world has come into being, with the past leaving marks, traces, and possibly a roadmap for us to proceed as a broader community. Heritage, however, continues to be a contested terrain where diverse and sometimes conflicting understandings of the past compete and negotiate, especially over heritage associated with violent and traumatic memories, now understood as “difficult heritage” (MacDonald 2009). Over the past two decades, how to present and interpret difficult heritage in the Asia-Pacific, for instance, colonial architecture and infrastructure, battlegrounds, prison camps, sites or trails of forced labour and exploitation, etc. The empires were featured by magnificent architecture and infrastructure that made imperial capitals and port cities and yet the subaltern communities living upon the colonial, built legacy might find these footprints wrought with a mix of pride, nostalgia, pain, fear, and shame. On the east coast of Taiwan, for example, the railway that ran through the valley from Hualien to Taitung was under construction from 1909-1926. The railway, stations, and associated villages (resulting from the planned group migration from Japan to Taiwan) were heralded as achievements of Japanese colonial governance. The landscape that we can enjoy by riding the same railway today, nevertheless, is actually based on displacing indigenous communities who inhabited the territory before colonisers arrived. Worse still, the indigenous were forced to become cheap labour to pave the railway track for construction. For some of them, traveling along the railway still evokes painful memories.

Today, we are familiar with heritage decolonisation campaigns. The definition of colonialism, however, is usually much more contentious in the Asia-Pacific region.

Colonialism is not necessarily intrinsically Western but homegrown (Huang *et al.* 2022). Here, colonialism is definitely not confined to the past but intertwines with present cross-border initiatives. It then poses greater challenges to heritage interpretation as it is more difficult to draw a line and to clearly identify the boundary between past and present. Conceiving difficult heritage sites as “frontiers of memory,” Huang, Lee, and Vickers (2022) illuminate how heritage has played an instrumental role in expanding the temporal dimension of frontiers.

The increased number of case studies of difficult heritage in Asia allows us to observe the dynamism between memory and heritage, and how heritage interpretation matters in the continuous negotiation over heritage site values. Memory left unattended or uninhabited may be lost beyond a retreating frontier, while memory assiduously inhabited and cultivated can form a new centre for “communal consciousness or even to galvanise into aggressive actions in zonal time-space between states (Huang *et al.* 2022, page 3).” Heritage interpretation of difficult cases, if operated responsibly and sensibly, can foster transnational dialogues of peace and reconciliation rather than conservative, introverted parochial consciousness that only reinforces competition and, in a worse case, resentment. It is, however, quite challenging and we do not have enough successful cases, but look forward to having more. We need more cases that can promote cross-border dialogue and critical reflection on the transnational elements of the difficult past, and to learn about lessons and try not to repeat the wrong deed, which usually involves much more than one single perpetrator. Adequate interpretation of difficult heritage can allow us to learn more about the

Taiwan Hualien Train

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complexity of the past. What has been occurring between the indigenous peoples and the settler states in Australia, New Zealand, and Taiwan in the past decade is moving in that direction.

We need to recognise that multiple actors have a role in safeguarding heritage and advancing heritage interpretation. Not only that the heritage sector is leading the task, but that education, media, and international relations are all playing significant roles in cultivating a more “unified liberal discourse” that is arguably still lacking in the region, as Mitter (2020) notes. Difficult heritage over recent and modern conflicts could give rise to a shared, transcending narrative of resistance to imperialism or colonialism rather than a neocolonial sentiment that again fuels national victimhood and grievance.

多元行動者共同促進襲產詮釋 (亞太區域)

黃舒楣

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襲產容許我們去更好地理解當代如何形成，可參考過去留下的路標、蹤跡甚至是路線圖，讓我們能如同一個社群般地共同前進。然而襲產持續也是充滿爭議的領域，對於過去，充滿著差異甚至是矛盾的多元理解，相互競爭而時時需要協商，尤其是關聯著暴力和創傷記憶的襲產，也就是襲產研究中所謂的「困難襲產(difficult heritage”(MacDonald 2009))」。在過去二十年的亞太區域，如何展現、詮釋困難襲產充滿不少挑戰，例如殖民歷史留下的建築、基礎設施、像是戰場、戰俘營、強制勞動、剝削的工作場域或運輸路徑等等。帝國歷史總是為這些華美的建築和壯闊的基礎設施所標記，尤其在於帝國首都或是重要港口城市，然而，在城市中依附憑藉著殖民建成襲產而生存的

底層則在日常中體驗著帝國足跡相伴的複雜情結：尊榮、鄉愁、痛苦、恐懼、甚至是恥辱。舉例而言，貫穿台灣東海岸縱谷（花蓮至台東）之間的台東線鐵道乃興築於1909-1926之間，鐵道本身以及沿線的車站、聚落（包含日本政府推動內地往殖民地集團移住的官營移民村），在當時視為日本殖民政績。然而，這沿線風景-也正是今日我們搭乘鐵道可看見的-其實是建立在驅逐迫遷原先居住在當地的原住民族人而來。更糟糕的是，原住民族人而後被迫成為廉價勞動力，參與在這些基礎設施建築中。對他們以及他們的後人來說，今日在這些軌道上移動仍然會喚醒痛苦的記憶。

今日我們並不陌生於「去殖民襲產」這樣的主張口號。然而，在亞太區域，殖民主義之定義往往更困難且滿是爭議，因為殖民主義並不單純是外來，反而是萌生於區域內部(Huang, Vickers, and Lee 2022)。殖民主義並不限於過往，而是和當前的跨境計畫事務持續交纏。於是襲產詮釋上要如何界定過往和當下，也就更為困難充滿挑戰。我和Edward Vickers以及Hyun Kyung Lee (Huang, Vickers, and Lee, 2022)提出了「記憶前沿(frontiers of memory)」的概念，即為了分析襲產往往在時間向度上，扮演著彷彿是前沿的角色，支持著時間領域上的競爭與擴張。

在亞洲近年增加的困難襲產研究讓我們有更多機會來觀察記憶和襲產之間的動態構成，以及襲產詮釋在襲產場址鬥爭中扮演的關鍵角色。被輕忽的、未有敘事重構的記憶就好像是退縮中的前沿，甚至可能消失，相較於那些被高度關注、投資的記憶，成為集體記憶的中心節點，甚至可能促發了激進的國際侵略行動 - 即便是記憶領域層面上的，而非物理領域上的(Huang, Vickers and Lee 2022, page 3)。困難襲產之詮釋，如果能負責任地、敏感地進行開展，應該能促進跨國性的互動以增益擁抱和平、和解，以取代保守性地、內向地的本地意識，避免不必要的競爭甚至是惡性的仇恨政治。然而這並不容易，因為我們仍欠缺足夠成功案例能提供指引。我們還需要更多案例參考，推廣能促進把握困難襲產跨國成分的批判性的對話與思考，才能記取教訓、避免重蹈覆轍，充分理解困難歷史之發生往往有複雜多元的加害者組成。近年來在原住民族群逐漸積極爭取參與襲產詮釋的墾拓者國家社會，一如澳洲、紐西蘭、台灣等地，都努力往這個方向前進。

我們必須肯認多元行動者都有份捍衛襲產以及促進襲產詮釋。不只是襲產部門有責，教育、媒體以及國際關係等等都有重要的角色，能孕育支持這個區域所欠缺而有待發展的(如同Mitter 2020, 50所指陳)更為團結、自由開放的論述。關乎近代矛盾爭戰的困難襲產應有潛力促進區域間社群共享、超越的敘事，好讓我們共同抵抗帝國主義、殖民主義，而非繼續合理化那些徒然極化受害者國族主義、憤恨的新殖民主義情感政治。 [whipic](#)

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04. Latin America, Caribbean

Heritage Interpretation Emerging in Latin America

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As with many fields, Latin American heritage interpretation grew with the influx of written materials and experts from the north. For example, the first appearance of heritage interpretation in Latin America may have been in the 1960s when the US Peace Corps, a US government development agency, produced the first interpretive programs in the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador (also among the first World Heritage Sites named in 1978). Later books written principally by Americans arrived, which, although they fertilised the germination of interpretation in Latin America, were definitely of northern origin.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s interpretation publications began to pop up in different countries such as Mexico, Costa Rica, Argentina, and across the ocean in Spain, with the very first Latin American book on interpretation published in 1992 by Jorge Morales and the United Nations in Chile. That same year, Sam Ham published his highly influential book in Spanish, *Environmental Interpretation*. But most remained isolated and often unknown until the field began to consolidate somewhat in the 2000s, when they were rediscovered. As well, in 1991, the first university degree program in environmental interpretation started at the University of Costa Rica.

But in 2017, a rapid increase in native material began to occur in Latin America, starting with the publication of *Compartiendo el Tesoro: Metodología para Divulgar la Arqueología* (*Sharing the Treasure: A Methodology for Interpreting Archeology* by Dr. Antonieta Jiménez of Mexico) followed quickly in 2018 by *Interpretación del Patrimonio Cultural: Pasos hacia una divulgación significativa en México* (*Cultural Heritage Interpretation: Steps toward meaning interpretation in Mexico*), edited by Manuel Gándara and Antonieta Jiménez. Aside from



The meeting in Los Cabos, Mexico, gave birth to one of the most important collaboration in Latin American interpretation history. Dr. Sam Ham (left), one of the field's leaders and a long-time Latin American veteran, attended the meeting.

these books, a variety of new connections among Latin American interpreters took root, not the least of which was due to the international conference of the American-based National Association for Interpretation in Los Cabos, Mexico, in 2017 that united specialists in Mexico and Costa Rica. That encounter unleashed a new era of rapid growth in interpretation in Latin America.

The very first activity to emerge from the Los Cabos conference was the launch of a Spanish interpretation webinar series, during which Latin American specialists in interpretation and related fields offered paid interactive opportunities for people from throughout Latin America and Spain. Its scholarship program aimed to reach interpreters throughout Latin America, reassuring them that they were not alone.

Shortly thereafter, interpreters from universities, non-profits, government agencies, and private companies in Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, Peru, and Guatemala organised the I Latin American Congress for Heritage Interpretation in October 2018. The event took place on physical campuses in five countries, with over 50 presenters, and was transmitted via the Internet to 1,800 people from 20 countries. The Colegio de Michoacán, a postgraduate social science University and co-organiser in Mexico, will soon publish an edited book of referred congress papers in early 2023.

The Congress connected people for the first time across the region and endowed the nascent field with new energy. That energy was soon manifested as the Mexican Association for Heritage Interpreters in 2020 and then the creation of *Méropé: The Magazine of the Center for Tourism, Recreation, and Heritage Interpretation Studies*

in Argentina. That same year, with the help of OpEPA, a national outdoor education NGO, the Colombian National Parks Service spread the participatory interpretive framework methodology across its system. The following year, that energy pooled in Costa Rica as *Esencia de la Interpretación del Patrimonio: Visión holística para experimentar y conservar el patrimonio natural y cultural de América Latina* (*Essence of Heritage Interpretation: Holistic Vision to Experience and Conserve the Natural and Cultural Heritage of Latin America*), published by the University of Distance Learning Press, the very first college textbook about heritage interpretation produced by and for Latin Americans.

As an encore to the 2018 Congress, the organisers in 2021 planned the Latin American Heritage Interpretation Assessment, which started in 2022 in Costa Rica with funding from the University of Costa Rica. Its methodology will then be adapted in other Latin American countries.

In 2023, aside from the Congress book, the *Guía de campo para escritores de temas interpretativos* (*Interpretive Theme Writer's Field Guide*) will be published cooperatively by the Mexican Association, the PUP Global Heritage Consortium, and a northern interpretation association, written for Iberoamerican interpreters across the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking world.

La interpretación del patrimonio está emergiendo en América Latina

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Como en diversos campos, la interpretación del patrimonio latinoamericana creció con la llegada de materiales escritos y expertos provenientes del norte. Por ejemplo, la primera aparición de la interpretación del patrimonio en América Latina podría haber sido en la década de 1960, cuando el Cuerpo de Paz de Estados Unidos, una agencia de desarrollo del gobierno estadounidense, produjo los primeros programas interpretativos en las Islas Galápagos, Ecuador (que también se encuentra entre los primeros sitios del Patrimonio Mundial nombrado en 1978). Posteriormente llegaron libros escritos principalmente por norteamericanos, que, si bien abonaron la germinación de la interpretación en América Latina, sus orígenes definitivamente fueron del norte.

A lo largo de las décadas de los 80s y 90s, empezaron a surgir publicaciones de interpretación en diferentes países como México, Costa Rica, Argentina y del otro lado del océano en España, con el primer libro latinoamericano sobre interpretación publicado en 1992 por Jorge Morales y las Naciones Unidas en Chile, el mismo año que salió publicado el muy influyente libro *Interpretación Ambiental* por Sam Ham. Pero la mayoría de ellos permanecieron aislados y a menudo desconocidos hasta que el campo comenzó a consolidarse un poco más en la década de los 2.000, cuando fueron redescubiertos. Por otra parte, en 1991 se puso en marcha la primera carrera universitaria de interpretación ambiental en la Universidad de Costa Rica.

Pero en el 2017 se empezó a producir un rápido incremento del material originario de América Latina, a partir de la publicación de *Compartiendo el Tesoro: Metodología para Divulgar la Arqueología* por la Dra. Antonieta Jiménez seguido rápidamente en 2018 por *Interpretación del Patrimonio Cultural: Pasos hacia una*

The back and front covers of the first university textbook on heritage interpretation produced by and for Latin Americans in 2021.



interpretación significativa en México editado por Manuel Gándara y Antonieta Jiménez. Además de estos libros, se han establecido una serie de nuevas conexiones entre los intérpretes latinoamericanos, sobre todo gracias a la conferencia internacional de la Asociación Nacional de Interpretación, con sede en Estados Unidos, celebrada en Los Cabos, México en 2017, que reunió a especialistas de México y Costa Rica. Ese encuentro desencadenó una nueva era de rápido crecimiento de interpretación en América Latina.

La primera actividad que surgió de la conferencia de Los Cabos fue el lanzamiento de una serie de seminarios web sobre interpretación en español en los que especialistas latinoamericanos en interpretación y campos afines ofrecieron oportunidades pagadas para interactuar con personas de toda América Latina y España. Con el programa de becas, se tenía el objetivo de llegar a los intérpretes de cualquier rincón de América Latina, afirmando que, efectivamente, no estaban solos.

Poco después, intérpretes de universidades, organizaciones sin fines de lucro, organismos gubernamentales y empresas privadas de México, Costa Rica, Colombia, Perú y Guatemala organizaron el I Congreso Latinoamericano de Interpretación del Patrimonio en octubre de 2018. El evento se realizó en campus físicos de cinco países, con más de 50 ponentes, y se transmitió por Internet a 1800 personas de 20 países. El Colegio de Michoacán, universidad de posgrados en ciencias sociales y coordinador en México, publicará próximamente un libro editado con las ponencias arbitradas del Congreso a principios del 2023.

El Congreso conectó por primera vez a personas de toda la región y dotó al naciente campo de una nueva energía. Esa energía pronto se manifestó como la Asociación Mexicana de Interpretes del Patrimonio en 2020, y luego la creación de *Méropé: La Revista del Centro de Estudios de Turismo, Recreación e Interpretación del Patrimonio* en Argentina. Ese mismo año, con la ayuda de OpEPA, una ONG nacional de educación al aire libre, el Servicio de Parques Nacionales Naturales de Colombia impulsó a nivel nacional la metodología del marco interpretativo participativo. Al año siguiente esa energía se unió en Costa Rica como *Esencia de la Interpretación del Patrimonio: Visión holística para experimentar y conservar el patrimonio natural y cultural de América Latina* publicado por la Universidad Estatal a Distancia, el primer libro de texto



The logo for the PUP-NAI Spanish interpretation webinar series



The poster for the 2018 I Latin American Congress for Heritage Interpretation

universitario sobre interpretación del patrimonio producido por y para latinoamericanos.

Como un complemento del Congreso del 2018, los organizadores planificaron en 2021 el Diagnóstico Latinoamericano de la Interpretación del Patrimonio que comenzó en 2022 en Costa Rica con la financiación de la Universidad de Costa Rica. Su metodología se adaptará después en otros países latinoamericanos.

En el 2023, además del libro del Congreso, se publicará la *Guía de campo para escritores de temas interpretativos* en colaboración con la Asociación Mexicana, el Consorcio PUP para el Patrimonio Mundial y una asociación de interpretación del norte, escrita para los intérpretes iberoamericanos del mundo hispano y lusoparlante. **whipic**

05. Europe

Flowers and Soup

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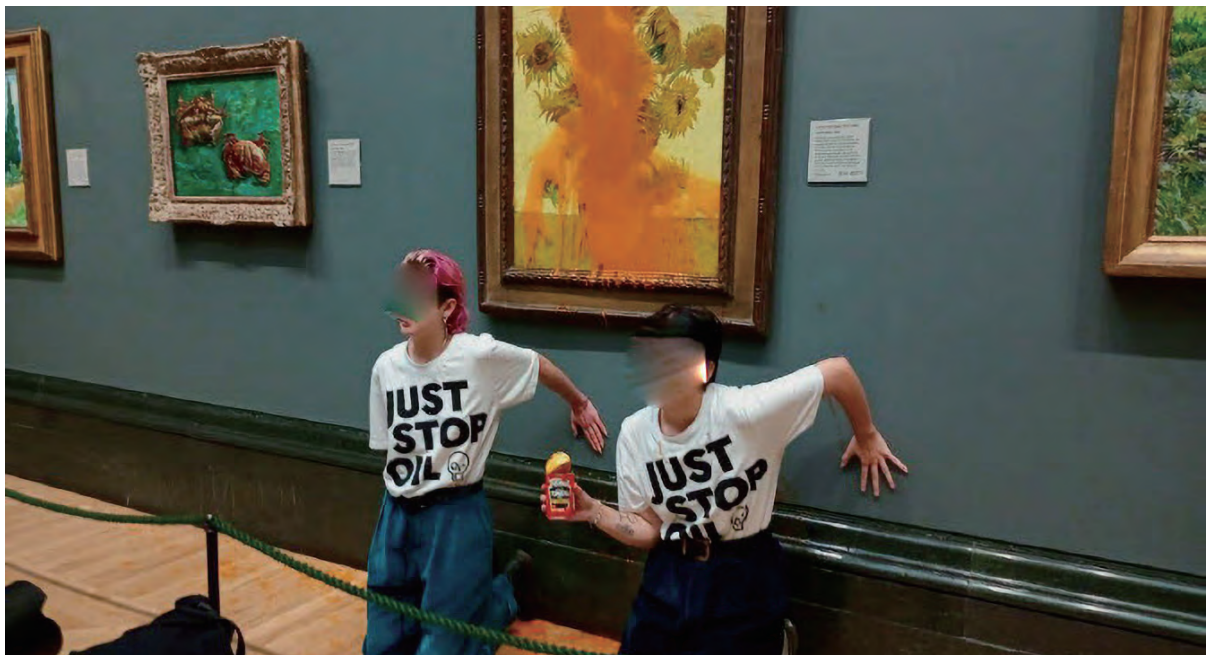
On 14 October 2022, two young women entered the National Gallery in London, stood in front of Vincent Van Gogh's *Golden Flowers*, a masterpiece painting, and threw tomato soup over it. They explained that their act was a protest against people's inaction and indifference towards the use of fossil fuels. Later, they claimed that they were aware of the protective glass covering the painting, and thus knew that their act would shock people without actually harming Van Gogh's original. Their protest was based on the argument that people today care more about art than they care about the climate crisis, which is irrational, since art (and even humans) will no longer exist on a depleted, hostile planet Earth. Nature, they say, should come first.

As a citizen who enjoys both art and the environment, this story drew my attention. And as an interpretive trainer and planner, I started comparing this protest and its intended result and heritage interpretation's principles. Obviously,

to present this as an either-or situation, is against what we try to achieve in interpretation. Why should art be seen as a rival of people's attention, instead of using it as a source of inspiration, and even provocation, for stewardship of all heritage?

In the days following this incident, many people took a stance. Some described the activists as ignorant youngsters whilst others claimed they couldn't understand how endangering a world-acclaimed work of art would help the environment. Finally, there were those who defended their act, as a way to shock the public into active citizenship and environmental awareness. And this is where I see common ground with heritage interpretation. Interpreters also have the chance to awaken people towards active citizenship and heritage stewardship. In their sites, they reveal how heritage phenomena are part of a bigger picture. Going back to Van Gogh's work, one could talk about beauty in nature, and humility and equality since values (such as beauty) can be found even in a phenomenon as simple and common as the sunflower. By interpreting the sunflower's details an audience can see all stages of its life, talk about our own lives and the transition of time between birth and death. Furthermore, by explaining the circumstances behind Van Gogh's work, one could more deeply appreciate friendship, and how important it is to care about others – given that Van Gogh had made this painting to decorate his guest room before the visit of his friend Paul Gauguin.

Activists from Just Stop Oil threw tomato soup over Vincent van Gogh's *Sunflowers* at the National Gallery, UK.



© Just Stop Oil SNS



Arles, France

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To connect this painting to human values, such as beauty, equality, wellbeing, creativity, friendship, or to universal concepts such as life, death, time, humility, and even nature, opens a door in our visitors' minds and hearts. It invites them down a path where they will most probably find their own meaning for these phenomena. And by making this personal connection, they will gradually feel responsible not just for painting, but also for the meanings ascribed to it. In other words, thanks to heritage interpretation, people would leave the National Gallery admiring Van Gogh's masterful skills, but also feeling co-responsible for what the painting stands for.

Furthermore, by using other interpretive tools, such as open-ended questions, interpreters can spark dialogue between participants. By comparing Van Gogh's times with those of the present, one could wonder what we see today in and around Arles, France that could inspire an artist to depict beauty. Is nature as intact as it used to be? Or we could consider what would be our own favourite natural element, from our own environment, and how to save it for future generations: would it still be flowers? And how could we act in our everyday lives to help its conservation?

Choosing dialogue over monologue, and encouraging meaning making, rather than transmitting one didactic message, lies at the heart of developing active citizens: People who can think for themselves how to act as stewards for natural and cultural heritage, instead of following a line of conduct enforced on them.

Then, there might come a day, where we will no longer need tomato soup in order to reflect deeper meanings, and to turn our environmental concerns into actions, while still admiring the skilful brush strokes of Van Gogh's Sunflowers.

Λουλούδια με σούπα

Valya Stergioti

Training Coordinator

European Association of Heritage Interpretation

Στις 14 Οκτωβρίου 2022, στην Εθνική Πινακοθήκη του Λονδίνου, δύο νεαρές γυναίκες στάθηκαν μπροστά στα αριστουργηματικά 'Χρυσάνθεμα' του Vincent Van Gogh και πέταξαν τοματόσουπα στον πίνακα.

Στόχος τους, είπαν, ήταν να διαμαρτυρηθούν ενάντια στην αδιαφορία και απραξία ως προς τη χρήση των ορυκτών καυσίμων. Αργότερα, ισχυρίστηκαν ότι γνώριζαν πως ένα προστατευτικό τζάμι κάλυπτε τον πίνακα, κι επομένως ότι η πράξη τους θα σόκαρε το κοινό, χωρίς ωστόσο να θέσει σε κίνδυνο το ίδιο το έργο.

Η διαμαρτυρία τους βασιζόταν στο επιχειρήμα ότι σήμερα οι άνθρωποι νοιάζονται περισσότερο για την τέχνη απ' ό,τι για την κλιματική κρίση – πράγμα παράλογο, αφού η τέχνη (και οι άνθρωποι) δεν θα υπάρχουν πλέον σε μία υπερεξαντλημένη, εχθρική Γη. Η

φύση πρέπει να έχει, είπαν, προτεραιότητα.

Επειδή αγαπώ την τέχνη αλλά και το περιβάλλον, αυτή η ιστορία μου κίνησε το ενδιαφέρον. Ως ειδική στην ερμηνεία φυσικής και πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς, με μιάς άρχισα να συγκρίνω αυτή την πράξη διαμαρτυρίας, με τις αρχές τής ερμηνείας.

Προφανώς, τέτοιοι ανταγωνισμοί έρχονται σε αντίθεση με τους στόχους τής ερμηνείας. Αντί να θεωρούμε ότι η τέχνη κλέβει την προσοχή του κοινού, προσπαθούμε μέσω αυτής να εμπνεύσουμε, ακόμη και να προ(σ)καλέσουμε το κοινό να αναλάβει την προστασία της φύσης και του πολιτισμού μας.

Τις επόμενες μέρες, πολλοί ήταν εκείνοι που εξέφρασαν άποψη για το συμβάν. Κάποιοι περιέγραψαν τις ακτιβίστριες ως ‘ανίδες νεαρές’, ενώ άλλοι απορούσαν πώς θα βοηθήσει το περιβάλλον το να θέσουμε σε κίνδυνο ένα παγκοσμίως αναγνωρισμένο έργο τέχνης. Τέλος, υπήρχαν κι εκείνοι που πήραν το μέρος τους, θεωρώντας ότι σοκάροντας τους ανθρώπους έχουμε περισσότερες πιθανότητες να τους μετατρέψουμε σε ενεργούς πολίτες που νοιάζονται για το περιβάλλον. Δηλαδή, αυτό που προσπαθούμε να πετύχουμε με την ερμηνεία.

Οι ειδικοί τής ερμηνείας έχουν την ευκαιρία να αφυπνήσουν τον κόσμο να αναλάβει μία ενεργή στάση προς την κοινωνία και την κληρονομιά του. Με τον τρόπο τους αποκαλύπτουν πως η κληρονομιά αυτή αποτελεί τμήμα μιας ευρύτερης εικόνας. Στην πραγματικότητα, τις περισσότερες φορές υπάρχουν άπειροι τρόποι να το πετύχει κανείς αυτό. Για παράδειγμα, στο έργο του

Van Gogh, θα μπορούσαν να μιλήσουν για την ομορφιά τής φύσης, την ταπεινοφροσύνη και την ισότητα αφού κάτι τόσο απλό και συνηθισμένο, όπως τα χρυσάνθεμα, μπορούν να αντικατοπτρίσουν αξίες όπως η ομορφιά.

Ή, επιδεικνύοντας τα στάδια της ζωής του λουλουδιού που απεικονίζονται στον πίνακα, να αναφερθούν στη δική μας ζωή και τη μετάβαση τού χρόνου μεταξύ της γέννας και του θανάτου. Επιπλέον, εξηγώντας ότι ο ζωγράφος έφτιαξε τον συγκεκριμένο πίνακα για να διακοσμήσει το δωμάτιο όπου θα φιλοξενούσε τον φίλο του Paul Gauguin, να μιλήσει για την φιλία και το πόσο σημαντικό είναι να νοιαζόμαστε για τους άλλους.

Συνδέοντας τον πίνακα με αξίες όπως η ομορφιά, η ισότητα, το ευ ζην, η δημιουργικότητα και η φιλία, ή με οικουμενικές έννοιες, όπως η ζωή, ο θάνατος, ο χρόνος, η ταπεινότητα κι η φύση, ανοίγει ένα παράθυρο στο νου και την καρδιά των επισκεπτών. Τους προσκαλεί να βρουν τί νόημα έχει για τους ίδιους αυτός ο πίνακας. Και συνάπτοντας μία προσωπική σύνδεση με αυτόν, σταδιακά θα νοιώσουν υπεύθυνοι, όχι μόνο για τον πίνακα αλλά και για τις αξίες και τις έννοιες που αυτός αντικατοπτρίζει.

Με άλλα λόγια, χάρη στην ερμηνεία, οι επισκέπτες φεύγοντας από την Εθνική Πινακοθήκη θα έχουν εκτιμήσει τη δεξιότητα του Van Gogh, αλλά θα έχουν ανακαλύψει και το νόημα τής τέχνης του.

Εξάλλου, άλλα εργαλεία της ερμηνείας, όπως οι ανοιχτές ερωτήσεις, μπορούν να πυροδοτήσουν διάλογο ανάμεσα στους επισκέπτες. Συγκρίνοντας την εποχή του Van Gogh με το παρόν, μπορεί κάποιος ν’ αναρωτηθεί τί θα επέλεγε σήμερα ο ζωγράφος από την Arles και τα περίχωρά της, για να απεικονίσει την ‘ομορφιά’. Υπάρχει άραγε ακόμη κάποιο κομμάτι άσπιλης φύσης; Εναλλακτικά, μπορούμε να αναρωτηθούμε ποιο θα ήταν το δικό μας αγαπημένο φυσικό στοιχείο, από το οικείο μας περιβάλλον, και πώς μπορούμε να το διαφυλάξουμε για τις επόμενες γενιές.

Όταν ενθαρρύνουμε το κοινό μας να συνδεθεί με τον δικό του τρόπο με την κληρονομιά μας, όταν κάνουμε διάλογο αντί για μονόλογο κι όταν δεν προσπαθούμε να περάσουμε διδακτικά μηνύματα, έχουμε φτάσει στην ουσία της δημιουργίας ενεργών πολιτών: εκείνων που αποφασίζουν μόνοι τους πώς να δράσουν για να προστατεύσουν τη φυσική και πολιτιστική κληρονομιά, χωρίς να χρειάζονται κανόνες συμπεριφοράς που τους έχουν επιβληθεί.

Μπορεί, τότε, να έρθει η στιγμή που θα θαυμάζουμε τα Χρυσάνθεμα του Van Gogh, θα αναλογιζόμαστε τις αξίες τής κοινωνίας μας, και θα μετατρέπουμε την περιβαλλοντική μας ανησυχία σε πράξη, χωρίς σούπα. **whipic**

Vincent van Gogh, Sunflowers



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06. North America

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Interpretation and Presentation in North America, Major Trends

John H. Jameson

ICOMOS ICIP

U.S. National Park Service, Retired

In recent years, public interpretation of archaeological and cultural heritage sites has come to be recognised as an essential component within management schemes surrounding the conservation and protection of cultural heritage sites and resources worldwide. In the United States, the development of resource protection legislation and cultural resource management (CRM) strategies in the 1960s and 1970s, and the resultant very rapid accumulation of archaeological and historical site information and collected artifacts, led to concerns for inclusiveness and sensitivity to the heritage values of multidimensional communities and constituent stakeholders.

By the late 1980s, many cultural heritage specialists in North America were addressing the contemporary context of their research as part of a growing practical and ethical awareness. Following trends in the United States, the 1988 passage of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (*Loi sur le Multiculturalisme Canadien*) aimed to preserve and enhance cultural diversity, i.e., multiculturalism, in Canada. The 1990s saw the emergence of greater energy and funding devoted to the public interface of archaeology as the professional community became aware that intellectual introversion was no longer acceptable and that more attention should be paid to the mechanisms, programs, and standards of public presentation. In the face of an

An archeologist in the field

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National Museum of Natural History, USA

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increasing public interest and demand for information, archaeologists and their cultural heritage colleagues began to collaborate more actively to devise effective strategies for public presentation and interpretation. Until the 1990s, publications on public presentation and interpretation strategies and standards were rare and largely obscured in isolated accounts and academic grey literature.

By 2005, traditional definitions for the terms “heritage,” “historic,” “archaeological,” and “scientific” were changing to incorporate intangibles such as aesthetic, artistic, spiritual, emotional, and other values stemming from introspection and reflection. An expansion and broadening of the content of “archaeological knowledge,” a term increasingly subsumed in professional practice parlance under the more general category of “cultural heritage,” to be more inclusive and less authoritative, has emerged, broadening the definition and meaning of “expert.” An important result has been the emergence of the interpretive narrative approach in archaeological and cultural heritage interpretation, where heritage specialists actively participate in structuring a compelling story instead of just presenting sets of derived information. The narrative is used as a vehicle for understanding and communicating, a sharing as well as an imparting of cultural heritage values within the interpretation process. This trend is having profound ramifications for definitions of significance in heritage management deliberations and what is ultimately classified, conserved, maintained, and interpreted. It has changed the roles we play and the values we present in historic preservation and education. It affects our strategies

for conducting research and the public’s interpretation of that research. The challenge for heritage managers, archaeologists, cultural historians, and other resource stewards is to educate ourselves on the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to deal with these developments.

Paramount for professional educators and interpreters is ensuring that their audiences connect with and understand cultural heritage values, those tangibles and intangibles that define what is important to people. They strive in these endeavours to develop more holistic interpretations in which the values of sustainable environment and heritage are inextricably linked. They also recognise that multi-disciplinary, inclusive, and community-engaged approaches are the most effective. Heritage sites are no longer limited to great iconic monuments and places but include millions of places of importance to sectors of society that were once invisible or intentionally ignored. These under-recorded sites can play an important role in fostering peaceful multicultural societies, maintaining communal or ethnic identities, and serving as the indispensable theatre in which the ancient traditions that make each culture a unique treasure are performed periodically, even daily. The values of these previously ignored and heretofore low-priority sites and features are often not readily obvious in the material fabric or surrounding geography, but today it is imperative that they be identified and require a narrative for the fullness of their meaning to be properly conveyed to local communities, site visitors, and the public at large. This is accomplished through processes of public interpretation, presentation, and education. **whipic**

UNESCO WHIPIC Roundtable Dialogue on Bridging the Gap between Conservation and Development



Gamini Wijesuriya
Special Advisor to the
Director-General of ICCROM



Jakhongir Khaydarov
Head of Office, UNDP Cyprus



Mario Santana Quintero
ICOMOS Secretary General,
Professor at Carleton University



Tim Badman
Head of Heritage,
Culture and Youth, IUCN

There have been ongoing discussions about finding the correct balance between conservation and development through sustainable development, community participation, and various forms of partnerships and multinational collaboration. It is a difficult, however meaningful, journey to embrace all stakeholders and contribute to the harmonious value of World Heritage sites.

Accordingly, the Centre invited four experts who have served in international organisations that work with World Heritage sites to hear about the role of heritage in these sites, what causes the gap between conservation and development, and finally how we can achieve cooperation through inclusive heritage interpretation and presentation. The expert dialogue was summarised and edited for clarity and style.



What is the role of heritage in your organisation?

Gamini Wijesuriya, ICCROM

I have been invited to represent ICCROM, or the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, based in Rome, which is one of the advisory bodies to the World Heritage Committee.



Shared Heritage of Cyprus, Famagusta City Walls

ICCROM, created by UNESCO in 1956 in the aftermath of World War II, has a mandate to promote the conservation of cultural property worldwide. It is an intergovernmental organisation with 137 member states that implements its mandates through training, information, research, advocacy and cooperation.

Jakhongir Khaydarov, UNDP

The cultural heritage of Cyprus has evolved from the diverse and rich cultures and civilisations that have populated the island throughout its history. The island of Cyprus has been de facto divided into two parts since 1974, where we have the Republic of Cyprus, the Greek Cypriot community, as a member of the European Union, and a Turkish Cypriot community, the authorities in the northern part of Cyprus, which are not recognised.

Cyprus joined the European Union in 2004. UNDP in Cyprus started implementing projects and initiatives with funding from the European Union to support peace and confidence-building process on the island.

For us, heritage has become a means and a tool to promote peace and confidence between the two major communities, the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Since 2010, the UNDP and the European Commission have been assisting the process through the so-called Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage. The focus is to preserve the island's cultural heritage. Regardless of political differences, the culture has become united, and heritage has become a uniting platform for Cypriots.

Mario Santana Quintero, ICOMOS

The International Council on Monuments and Sites is a non-governmental, non-profit international organisation and has been a partner to UNESCO and its Member States for numerous projects and initiatives. Over the past 50 years, ICOMOS has been a pillar in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. ICOMOS assists in developing and engaging reflections about today's global challenges to build a more robust and resilient cultural sector.

We promote inclusion, equity, and diversity. I think that the development of our cities and built environment is something that we cannot prevent, but we can facilitate because cultural heritage, historic buildings, and resources contribute to that built environment.

Tim Badman, IUCN

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is the world's oldest and largest global network focused on nature conservation. But we are also centrally engaged to achieve sustainable development. Our vision is a just world that values and conserves nature. So we see nature as part of what society as a whole needs to consider and include in its future. The priorities are twofold. One is that we have the core job as the advisory body, complementing ICOMOS and ICCROM, but with our focus on natural World Heritage sites to secure their identification, protection, and conservation. We also have come to see World Heritage and the Convention as beacons for advancing place-based approaches that link nature to culture and people, especially through the World Heritage Leadership programme. Heritage is central to every distinct and diverse place on the planet. It is a way to tell the complete story or the linked set of stories that bring together everything that's significant about a place, embracing geodiversity, deep time, biodiversity, nature, habitats, and species, but also cultural diversity.

What causes the gap between conservation and development? And how can we achieve comprehensive cooperation through heritage interpretation?

Gamini Wijesuriya, ICCROM

Two decades ago, development was considered a threat and, therefore, an enemy of heritage. The development sector was of the view that the heritage sector was a hindrance to development. This was the reason for creating a gap between conservation and development.

In 2008, when the advisory bodies collectively developed the third Periodic Reporting questionnaire, we collected from IC-

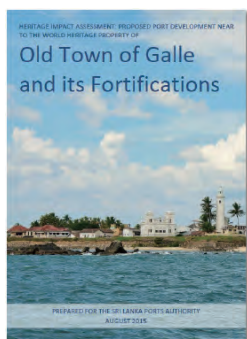


Old Town of Galle and its Fortifications, after Heritage Impact Assessment

CROM, IUCN, and ICOMOS a list of threats to heritage. After long discussions, we considered, “Well, these can pose threats, but they are also contributory.” Factors affecting heritage can have positive as well as negative impacts, so it is important that heritage processes pay attention to development activities. ICCROM endeavours to promote a people-centred approach to the conservation and management of heritage. This entails placing people at the heart of the heritage discourse, based on the conviction that heritage has a role to play in the lives of people.

We are now moving from development to a sustainable development paradigm. Sustainable development policies adopted by the World Heritage Committee can be a tool to assess the diverse benefits that can be derived from heritage management processes. Assessing and sharing them among stakeholders is another way to bridge the gap between conservation and development. Indeed, ICCROM is doing a lot of work in its training programs, and sustainable development was introduced in the late 90s and also into a number of training programs. The current Director General of ICCROM is of the view that cultural heritage management is the rock on which sustainable development can prosper.

Because interpretation is a site-specific venture, we could interpret the particular stories for that particular site. Yet, in fact, I think that interpretation can help by building trust among the de-



Heritage Impact Assessment Report on Old Town of Galle and its Fortifications
(Sri Lanka Ports Authority)

velopers and the people. I can give one example. We had a World Heritage site in which there was a big proposed port development by the government and UNESCO was questioning it (the Old Town of Galle and its Fortifications in Sri Lanka). The impact assessment suggested that “Yes, this development is necessary for the people of that area.” But there was a question about big cruise ships being brought to the site. The conclusion was that, yes, they can go ahead with a smaller development, and that development is necessary for the people. I think if we can interpret the particular site, it will build a lot of confidence among developers as well as people. People will realise this heritage needs to be looked after despite development. On the other hand, development will take care of the livelihoods of the people. Interpretation can help explain the benefits of development at that particular site. And more importantly, we need to engage developers from the beginning. We need to bring them in from the beginning, not at the end, and in the process of assessing impacts. If we can go forward in these directions, I think that interpretation can help build trust among the developer and the general public and help bridge the gap between conservation and development.

Jakhongir Khaydarov, UNDP

Cultural heritage in developing nations is a big part of economic development. Furthermore, the protection and preservation of cultural heritage on the island of Cyprus is a crucial element of the recovery process. I think what we see as a gap is that the context between Greek and Turkish Cypriots in their daily lives is becoming more limited. Culture is playing a significant role, as inter-cultural dialogue can help prevent conflicts and foster reconciliation within and between communities. It can also be a tool to deliver important social and economic development both within and outside the EU. UNDP in Cyprus, the comprehensive cooperation between conservation and development, is more of the main focus of our work. First, again, I'll bring it to the context of Cyprus as a post-conflict country. The importance of access to heritage and the link between conservation and development is becoming very, very critical. What makes the Cyprus model exemplary is that the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leadership created a bicomunal Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage. It has become a very good forum to discuss, interpret heritage, and then focus on the conservation and link it to development. The issue was that it was not a legal entity. UNDP in particular stepped in as a natural platform. We provided the implementation mechanism, employed contractors, handled legal matters, and fostered dialogue. With the broader mandate of UNDP, we were also able to break down the gender element and promote the engagement



Orounta mosque, where the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot met after several years

©UNDP Cyprus

of youth. The role of local communities was very important. Usually decision-makers live in centralised locations, such as the capitals or other regional headquarters, while beneficiaries and stakeholders live in the local area or near heritage sites. UNDP brought their voices to the table by engaging the local community. Heritage is becoming an increasingly important element of EU foreign policy, as the basis for an intercultural dialogue that can help prevent conflicts and foster reconciliation between communities. We are very thankful to the European Union and European Commission for providing funding and expertise.

I think this forum is very important because it is the first time that UNDP has participated here as a panel, and I already learned about so many cooperation channels we need to link to and learn from. I like the point about Heritage Impact Assessments. Unfortunately, our actions are reactive and focused on post-scenarios. Nowadays we have many innovative and technological tools to apply to heritage so that we do more preventive work, more prediction, and more analysis, and I believe it will come with research and cooperation, as we're doing now.

Mario Santana Quintero, ICOMOS

ICOMOS has recently published guidance for Heritage Impact Assessment with ICCROM and IUCN for UNESCO. In this document we have provided excellent ideas on how to conduct assessments that could bridge the gap between the need for development and good conservation practices. As the guidance indicates, World Heritage sites have been facing increasing pressure from various forms of development in recent years, including urbanisation, tourism, infrastructure (for example, dams, roads, power plants), and other major interventions. This is confirmed by monitoring reports conducted by UNESCO and the advisory body to the World Heritage Committee. The guidance also describes how impact assessments can actually help identify better projects that provide more benefits in the long term, satisfying both conservation and development needs.

Furthermore, in my opinion, the gap is also caused by ignorance about the existence of historic places due to the lack of comprehensive heritage inventories. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that these types of inventories be conducted by authorities at the municipality, city, regional, and country levels,

and that they be conducted urgently, in particular in emerging economies and low-income countries. Also, COVID-19, the bi-hazard that we have all suffered from with the pandemic and lockdowns worldwide, resulted in partial or total restricted access to many World Heritage sites. The livelihood of local communities that depended on these tourism visits has been substantially affected.

The development of strategies to present World Heritage properties should take into account that they inherit spatial phenomena and are characterised by location, distribution, and scale. Frank Matero from the University of Pennsylvania, mentioned that any consideration of the interpretation display of heritage sites demands reflection on three specific criteria questions. First, he asked, “How should we experience a place, especially one that is fragmented, accreted, and possibly illegible?” Second, he asked, “How does intervention affect what we see, what we feel, and what we know?” And finally, he asked, “How can the interpretation display promote effective and active dialogue about the past across space and time?” And I think that these three elements are really important when we try to work on an interpretation and presentation strategy that could help to narrow the gap.

Nowadays, with the evolution of digital technologies, we are more connected than ever before. A traditional visit to World Heritage sites with a trained tour guide is no longer required.

However, with progress comes new challenges. It is essential to understand that the quality of the information retrieved can be compromised. The digital information could negatively impact perceptions about the values of the site and the local community, whose livelihood depends on the qualities that attract tourists in the first place. So visitors’ experiences should be studied by interdisciplinary groups of heritage professionals who will respect the significance and integrity of that particular World Heritage site. While acknowledging the privacy of communities, it is essential to ensure transparency in how digital content is collected and presented online and how these virtualised representations will create a solid sense of community and pride. Using digital technology is an excellent way to enhance visitor experiences at World Heritage sites and reflect the integrated voices of local communities.

There are challenges we need to think over to provide a new platform for good practices. We will need to prepare new guidelines on what are the defining essential skills for the multidisciplinary experts, putting together interpretation and presentation strategies. Finally, we need to convince the industry to create

purpose-built technologies for the interpretation and presentation of heritage sites in general. The collaboration between heritage institutions can be instrumental in contributing to the effective adoption of interpretation approaches that will make the presentation of World Heritage sites more inclusive, equal, and embracing of diversity.

Tim Badman, IUCN

“Why is there a gap?” First, because development agendas frequently don’t consider conservation. We have developments that essentially can’t go forward without creating unacceptable damage. And so we frequently find ourselves in situations that are conflictual in our reactive monitoring. It’s often too late when we pick up issues. We need to put our emphasis on different proactive ways to address conservation issues. There are the Heritage Impact Assessments and Environmental Impact Assessments. We see that as one of the really important techniques to focus on: anticipating issues before they come along, looking at alternatives and finding solutions before a development is committed and very far down the tracks and too late to stop sometimes.

“Why do we not engage?” I’ll just put forward two points that I think are often the root causes of the issues. The first is the tendency to only consider some values. At World Heritage sites, we tend to guide towards outstanding universal values, but World Heritage sites have other values, beyond outstanding universal heritage values. It’s a way to leave communities out of the picture. A second very frequent issue we see is that heritage sites tend to be sort of frequently constrained by their boundaries. World Heritage site managers typically only feel like they’ve got agency influence and the ability to do things within the limited boundaries of their heritage site. Sometimes these can be very small, but many of the development challenges and opportunities are about the bigger landscape, the bigger place, the bigger sea-



Mountain Gorillas in Virunga National Park, Congo



Galápagos Islands, Ecuador

scape, and the bigger urban environment where a heritage site is located. It's often very difficult to achieve the connection that's needed between conservation and development outcomes.

I think it's important to say that heritage interpretation is not a magic cure for the gap we're talking about. But I think it can certainly help actively in several different ways. Good heritage interpretation really is about dialogue. It's about the meaning of a place to different audiences and different communities. So simply embarking on interpretation as an activity opens up the sort of discussion that heritage needs in a place. Why is this heritage important? What stories do we want to tell? It is about establishing a narrative or narratives for heritage. Interpretation is about connections. It ensures we're focused on communication and outreach to make the case for conservation. And in my view, what we do in conservation often fails because heritage managers and nature conservationists more generally have very weak skills in communicating what's important and engaging people in our mission. We tend to fall back, giving advice instead of really engaging ourselves more humbly in what places stand for and what communities want. Interpretation is a place-based approach, and we know it works. A lot of what we need for proper sustainable

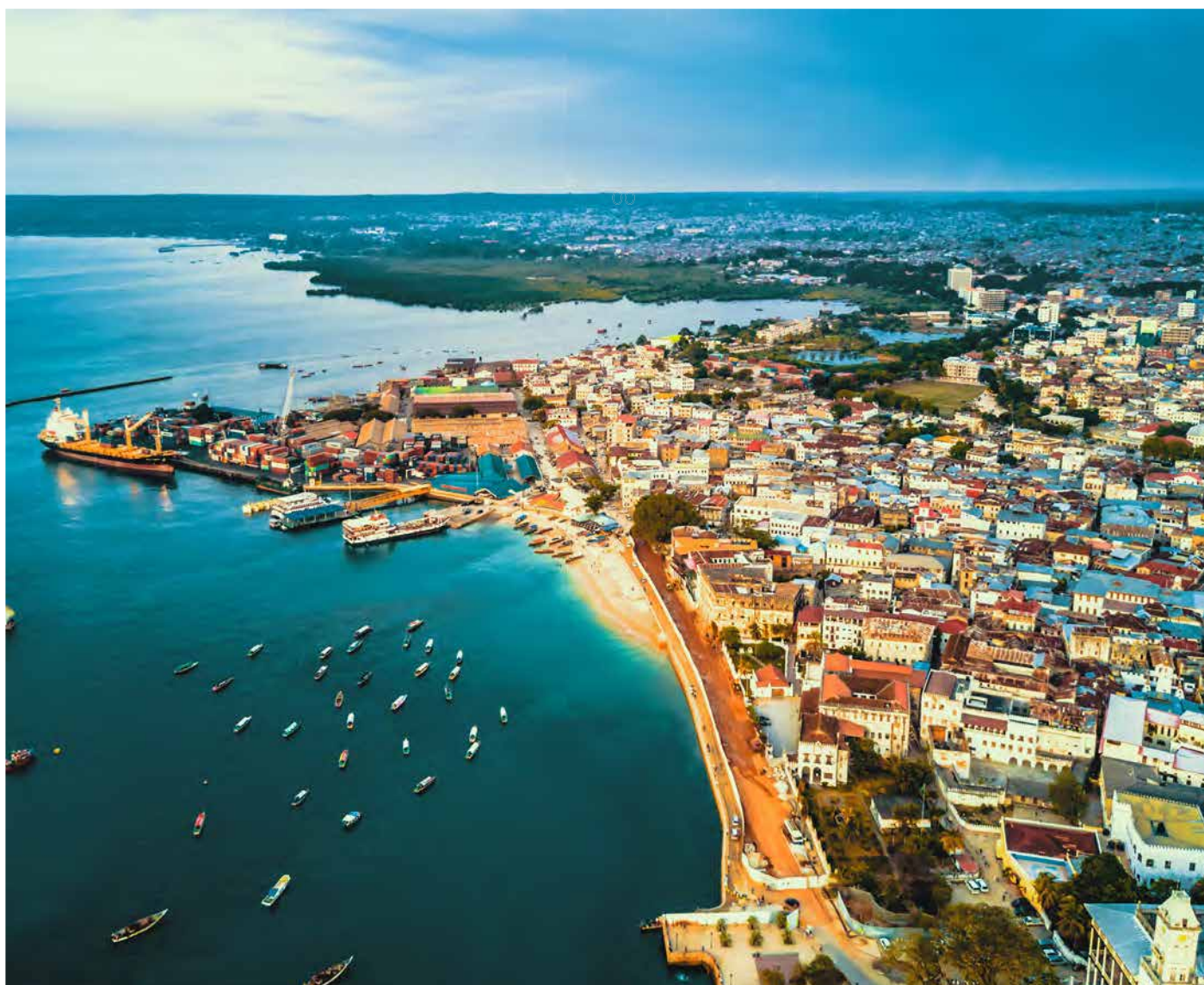
development is development that respects the place and respects the community. So connecting and reconnecting to past stories in the context of the present day is a crucial way in which we create the context for sustainable development and good development choices. Lastly, though the list could go on, I think it's important to say that interpretation can create real opportunities that have direct, social, and sometimes economic value. Interpretation and placemaking add value to the place itself. Sometimes it can even create a brand that can certainly contribute to tourism strategies, making a place more attractive, making it liveable, making it a place somebody wants to come to for a job or want to set up a business. And then, of course, some interpretation services themselves can be income-generating. But interpretation, as I say, isn't the magic solution to everything. It won't address infrastructure decisions, it won't address a lack of skills in education, it won't address demographic challenges, it won't address pollution, environmental quality, and it won't address questions of rights and inclusion on its own. But it can make an important contribution, and it's definitely been overlooked as a focus in the World Heritage System for a very long time. So in closing this event more broadly, the focus that WHIPIC is bringing to this issue is something that's long overdue and very welcome. **whipic**

Reconciliatory Heritage Interpretation

Inclusive planning bridges society
The case of the Stone Town of Zanzibar

Muhammad Juma

Chief of African Unit, World Heritage Centre



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Stone Town of Zanzibar

The Stone Town of Zanzibar, a World Heritage site since 2000, is an excellent case to demonstrate how the reconciliatory interpretation of heritage values (and its presentation) is crucial to develop and shape balanced spatial planning that bridges and enables society to talk about spatial and cultural development. It raises awareness of inclusive socioeconomic development and promotes environmental sustainability as part of sustainable development. With 1.9 million inhabitants (GoZ 2022) and an area of 2,654 km², the Islands of Zanzibar needed a new vision of urban development to fully harness the transformative power of urbanisation (UN-Habitat 2014). For that, a National Spatial Development Strategy (NSDS) that establishes culture as a driver and enabler of sustainable development (GoZ 2015a) was to be developed. For this purpose, the interpretation of heritage values was discussed as part of the application of the Historical Urban Landscape (HUL), (UNESCO 2012, 2015).

This article shows how this process was important to harmonise conflicting ideas through reconciliatory interpretation and unlocked spatial and cultural development in the Stone Town of Zanzibar.

Heritage Interpretation and Urban Conservation in Zanzibar

Zanzibar, a semi-autonomous province of Tanzania passed its first legislation concerning the protection of ancient monuments in 1927 (GoZ 1927). The urban conservation process, however, started in the 1980s, with influence from the World Heritage site in Lamu, Kenya (Ghaidan 1976; Heathcott 2013). As a result, the Stone Town Conservation and Development Authority was established in 1985 and a conservation plan was developed in 1996 (Siravo 1996).

Through the conservation plan, a biased interpretation of heritage values emerged that divided the Stone Town between the stone-constructed and the mud-constructed areas. In reality, what society considered simply a division between the rich and poor (Myers 1995) was converted by specialists to be heritage values. In addition, when the Stone Town of Zanzibar was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2000, this interpretation was endorsed as part of its Outstanding Universal Value (see map). With that idea, Stone Town stopped influencing spatial continuity toward its large urban (buffer zone) area. The main issue was how to involve society in safeguarding and managing this interpretation.



Biased Interpretation and Consequences on Spatial Planning

Although the Stone Town of Zanzibar shares similar trends of development with other towns along the coast of East Africa, its growth accelerated in the 19th century when the Sultan of Oman shifted his court from Muscat to Zanzibar (Freeman-Greenville 1988). With the support of British and Indian trading partners, Stone Town expanded its influence (Sheriff 1995). The

HI Good Practices

Zanzibar Revolution of 1964 questioned the domination of Stone Town and the centrality of Zanzibar Town started to shift toward the Ng'ambo area as a buffer zone (Sheriff 2010).

The third Master Plan of Zanzibar Town in 1968 endorsed this shift that was further integrated into the planning system to harmonise the spatial relationship between Stone Town and Ng'ambo in 1982, through the fourth Master Plan (GoZ 1982). Over time, Ng'ambo expanded from 208,571 inhabitants in 1985 to reach 611,000 inhabitants in 2015. Given such growth, the pressures of densification and built development were ever-mounting. It was therefore challenging to keep Ng'ambo as a periphery, with no heritage value as proposed by the conservation plan in 1996 and the inscription of the Stone Town on the World Heritage List in 2000. A reconciliatory interpretation of heritage values was needed to enable these equally historically and socially important parts of Zanzibar Town to accommodate changes.

New Interpretation within a Historic Urban Landscape Approach

The idea of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach was first introduced in Zanzibar in 2009. During the discussion, the experts largely discussed the current practices of urban conservation that threaten the continuity of historic towns, which is an essential element for their development and sustainability (Choay 1999). They called for change by supporting continuity.

Capitalizing on the debate on HUL and its recommendations, the GoZ prepared the fifth Master Plan, the Zanzibar Structural Plan (GoZ 2015b). In parallel with that, a new National Spatial Development Strategy that placed culture as a central element for urban development was to be developed. In this process, the heritage values of Ng'ambo (the buffer zone) were differently interpreted. It was considered as a planning tool to enhance the social benefit as well as the heritage itself. As such, Ng'ambo heritage values that could be different from the Stone Town were accepted.



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Stone Town of Zanzibar



Meetings were convened with inhabitants to explain the HUL approach and its interpretation.

Fig. 1

The new vision of Ng'ambo changed its role from a periphery of Stone Town with no heritage value to an area with heritage value. The process toward this reconciliatory interpretation was participatory with local communities and stakeholders. This involved a value-based approach associated with pluralistic meanings and human values about their living environment (Bandarin and Van Oers 2015). The process started with intensive research and the mapping of both tangible and intangible values of Ng'ambo. Thematic workshops were then organised with experts and local inhabitants along with two visioning workshops, in February 2013 and April 2015. On both occasions, the meetings were convened with inhabitants to explain the HUL approach and its interpretation (Fig. 1). For that, it was essential to articulate heritage values that bridge society to its future and promote inclusive spatial, economic and social development, by introducing the idea of continuity. This was possible by supporting good governance, creating a forum for local inhabitants and communities in interpreting heritage values and finally, developing partnerships between both local and international to harnessing of the best practices and lessons learnt.

Shifting toward a reconciliatory interpretation

This article shows how the interpretation of heritage values could marginalise and hinder spatial, social, and economic development. The HUL approach was instrumental in shifting toward a reconciliatory interpretation and allowed for a new understanding of the buffer zone to emerge. This interpretation has also offered possibilities for the local authorities to face the

challenge of addressing development by linking Stone Town with its larger territory. In fact, the classical approach of conservation that is based on typologies of buildings and limits the understanding of heritage and management hindered a unifying effort to address issues of a buffer zone and its development in Zanzibar Town. **whipic**

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Nubian Monuments from Abu Simbel to Philae, Egypt

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My World Heritage

Nubian Monuments from Abu Simbel to Philae

Heba Alders

Inspector of Antiquities,
Ministry of Tourism and
Antiquities, Egypt

The magnificent site called the Nubian Monuments from Abu Simbel to Philae in the south of the Aswan governorate was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1979. The listing actually contains 10 sites: “The temples of Ramesses II in Abu Simbel; Amada; Wadi Sebuah; Kalabsha; Philae; the ancient granite quarries and unfinished obelisk; the Islamic Cemetery; the ruins of the ancient city of Elephantine; the Monastery of St Simeon; and the Old and Middle Kingdom tombs (Qubbet el-Hawa)” (WHC 2022). Its sites contain significant evidence of the Egyptian civilisation through all its periods and stages. It became modern evidence of international solidarity after the UNESCO international campaign from 1960 to 1980 to save the monuments of Nubia from submersion by rising waters following the construction of the Aswan High Dam. This led to the documentation and relocation of a number of the endangered temples out of harm’s way. It was also proof that saving heritage is a shared responsibility and does not conflict with economic development. Moreover, the campaign inspired the eventual World Heritage Convention.

There are many stakeholders who are very connected with this property: the archaeologists who are still studying and excavating these sites to reveal more secrets about ancient Egypt and the Egyptians who see these sites as part of their history. Since half of these sites were originally located in ancient Nubia, which is now located in southern Egypt and northern Sudan, these monuments have a special significance for Nubians. The Nubian community is an integral part of Egyptian society and has contributed to the enrichment of its culture. They have their own customs, traditions, and languages inherited from their ancestors, and they have a high sense of pride in their origins and culture. The temples located in the area from Abu Simbel to Philae are part of their identity and evidence of the Egyptian civilisation’s influence in ancient Nubia. The significance of these temples is not only related to their ancient history, but they are also the only parts saved from the areas that hold the memories of their ancestral home. These places hold memories that older Nubians still tell their grandchildren about. Additionally, since many members of the local communities living around some of these sites work in the tourism sector, we can see that the UNESCO campaign not only saved their cultural heritage but also provided a new source of livelihood for the future.

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Voices were collected from around the Nubian Monuments from Abu Simbel to Philae. They include local guides, boatmen, a museum owner, archaeologists and students, who will tell us what heritage means to them.



Bassam Fikery

- 📍 West Aswan, Nag' Al-Qubba is less than a kilometre away from the nobles' tombs
- 🌐 Boatman and owner of a Nubian guesthouse

My whole childhood was spent around the old and middle kingdom tombs, as I always played there and sneaked into the site at sunset.

I was born in a house that hosted tourists, and I became a boatman when I was 17 years old, like my father and grandfather. I do not have a background or any idea about the meaning of a World Heritage site, but I know about the rescue campaign that was carried out by UNESCO to save the Nubian temples due to the construction of the High Dam so that these temples would not be submerged.

In Aswan, most of the sites are surrounded by the Nubians, Philae, Abu Simbel, and Elephantine. They tell of the history of Egypt and are evidence of its greatness. Personally, these monuments are important to me and to a lot of people who work in the tourism sector. Tourism in Aswan is concentrated on visiting these areas, and tourists come from all over the world to see the sites. They become fascinated by them and the greatness of the ancient Egyptian civilisation.

“To me, the site is my livelihood, my future, and my property.”



Holger Kockelmann

- 📍 Germany
- 🌐 Professor at Leipzig University; also director of the Philae Temple Text Project

Philae was an important hub in the transfer of religious ideas and concepts between Egypt and Nubia. It also stood in close intellectual exchange with other sanctuaries in Egypt. Apart from studying and publishing the hieroglyphic decoration of Philae, our project explores these interconnections.

I am fascinated by many places and regions in Egypt, but Philae has especially much to offer to me, as it serves several of my special interests at once: Egyptian religion; cults and rituals; the hieroglyphic writing system; graffiti in Demotic and Greek; and the history of the country from the Late Period to Roman times. It has always been known among travellers as the 'Pearl of Egypt.'

Thanks to the relocation in the 1970s, the Philae Temples are now generally in a fairly good state of conservation. There is no problem with groundwater penetrating the temple walls and damaging the structure. Hence, the Philae temples are embedded in a rather favourable environmental situation.

Sustainable management of the Philae monuments at present basically means protecting the monuments and their reliefs from pollution by birds and bats and cleaning them from time to time where necessary and possible. Of course, it does not ignore the fact that raising awareness among visitors is an important part of any sustainable site management.

“To me, the site is a puzzle of texts, images, architecture, and ideas that never loses its fascination.”



Mohamed Sobhi Abd el-shakour

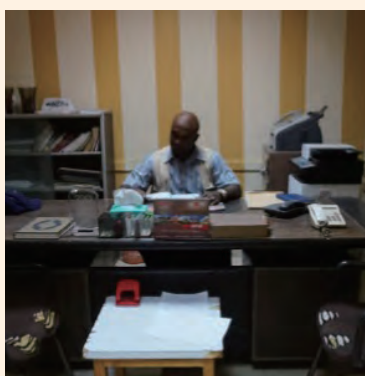
📍 Elephantine Island
🌐 Owner of Animalia Museum

In my childhood, I didn't care about the sites, but when I saw tourists come from all over the world to visit it, while I didn't feel anything about the importance of the place, I started to think about it and became very interested in it. Now these sites represent my love, my passion, and my heritage.

I'm the owner of the Animalia Museum. I started this museum in 2004 for Nubian heritage, culture, customs and traditions, superstitions, and everything about Nubia. I studied Egyptology to take the guide exam to get a license to work as a tour guide. I learned Spanish by myself from books and cassettes to become a Spanish guide. Two years later, I added the English language to become a multilingual guide.

The rescue campaign saved my own heritage, and it had other advantages too. Before the campaign, Nubia wasn't that famous. But during that time, all the world started to talk about it, and the press wrote about it here in Egypt and around the world. So I feel grateful to UNESCO and Tharwat Okasha, who made this call for saving the Nubian monuments.

"To me, the site is me."



Mohammed Hamdy Rabea Gomaa

📍 Garb Aswan Village (west of Aswan)
🌐 General Supervisor of the Antiquities of Nubia, Nubia Fund Office

My feeling of pride, fascination, and greatness when I worked for the first time in these temples is an unforgettable memory and feeling that continues until now.

As a specialist in Egyptology, I worked for 20 years in cultural World Heritage sites, in the rock-cut temples of ancient Nubia, as well as in other sites such as West Aswan. For me, the existence of 17 temples in this area is evidence of the ancient relationship, connection, and cooperation between Nubia and Egypt. For Egypt, the sites are historical evidence of the extension of the Egyptian civilisation beyond Nubia, and they are an essential part of the history of Egypt and the Egyptian civilisation.

These monuments are a legacy of humanity, and the participation of many countries in the international campaign of UNESCO to save the Nubian monuments is proof of that. As a result of this campaign, Former President Gamal Abdel Nasser gifted some of these temples to some countries around the world as an appreciation for the great efforts made by these countries in the rescue process. This campaign is a symbol of humanity and unity and evidence that heritage is the common property/heritage and legacy of the whole world.

To preserve these sites, awareness of their importance must be raised. People must understand the significance of these sites and the fact that they represent their history, and that they are the legacy of future generations.

The sites must be prepared perfectly in terms of the services provided and the staff trained to deal with visitors, and the guides must be well-trained to interpret and convey the information correctly because this will contribute to creating a good image of the site and providing an unforgettable experience. I also hope that visitors can experience the living Nubian heritage and get the chance to learn more about the intangible Nubian heritage when they visit these sites where ancient Nubia existed.

"To me, the site is an inheritance from my ancestors for my children, my grandchildren, and future generations."



Nourhan M. Eldemerdash

- 📍 Aswan, Nubia
- 🌐 Tour guide in Cairo, currently studying Korean Folk Arts abroad

Understanding your heritage is like having a superpower. Every visit to the sites could pause the whole world around me. I could spend hours only staring at the historical miracles that impress the world every single day.

I've fallen in love with the Aswan historical sites; specifically, I'm from Abu Simbel, and my relatives are the guardians of the Abu Simbel temple, which made me more attached to the rescue history.

From my point of view, the site is one of Aswan's important attractions. Aside from the beautiful location, unique weather, and beautiful landscape, these two valuable temples make it a very strong tourist attraction.

As a Nubian from the local community who is currently living abroad, every time I introduce myself, I mention my hometown and how it led me to my dream career. In every tour I guide to the site, I bloom the second I step inside and in every scene on the massive walls, I see my great ancestors. To me, it's home.

At university, I studied the ancient history of the sites, the hieroglyphic texts on their columns, the descriptions of the historical drawings on the walls and every single meaning behind it. I felt like I had superpowers, like the ability to see every single page of history right in front of my eyes. Since that time, every visit to the sites could pause the whole world around me. I could spend hours just staring at the historical miracles that impress the world every single day.

"To me, the site is my identity."



Ramadan Wahby

- 📍 Heisa Island, about 300m from Philae
- 🌐 Boatman

The new island was called 'ay gi jilika,' not Agilika as people pronounce it now. It is a Nubian word that means 'remember me.'

I lived all my life here, and my home is a few meters from the Philae temple. After the building of the Aswan Dam, the temple was submerged for almost the whole year. One of my favourite memories is that I witnessed the relocation of the Philae temple. I saw how they installed twin rows of steel sheets around the island, and by using a pressure system, they put a mix of sand and water between the two rows, which was transferred by pipes from the Shallal to the old island. They used water pumps to drain Philae, and after that, they removed the mud and silt from the temple. By the way, my two brothers and other relatives worked there to remove the silt from the temple.

Then they numbered the stones and transferred them to Elshalal, after which they paved and flattened the new location because the new island was higher and to make it exactly like the original island. They then reassembled the temple at its current location. The new island was called 'ay gi jilika,' not Agilika as people pronounce it now. It is a Nubian word that means 'remember me.'

In earlier times, when Philae was flooded, the visit was done by boat. My father used to take the people by boat to visit the temple. It was very beautiful and fascinating for me to visit the temple by boat, but the water wasn't good for the temple. Because of the building of the dam, it was submerged almost the whole year. Philae and other temples were relocated to be protected and not sunken. After the relocation, the water never covered the temple, lost in old memories forever.

"To me, the site is 'My Life.'"

UNESCO WHIPIC 2022 Projects

UNESCO WHIPIC, established in January 2022, has carried out the following projects. 2022 WHIPIC Online Lecture and Webinar Series and other events are open to public on WHIPIC social media: YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram.

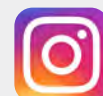
Jan	UNESCO WHIPIC was established	Aug	2022 WHIPIC Online Lecture and Webinar Series: Bridging the Gap: 50 Years of the World Heritage Convention
May	ROK-UNESCO Signing Ceremony on the Establishment of the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites under the auspices of UNESCO	Sep	WHIPIC attends Heritage Korea 2022
	Research on Theory and Principles of World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation		2022 WHIPIC Online Lecture and Webinar Series: Human-Nature Coexistence through Heritage Interpretation
	Research on Interpretation and Presentation Policy for Implementing the World Heritage Convention		2022 WHIPIC Online Lecture and Webinar Series: For Sustainable Heritage Interpretation: Public-Friendly Presentation
Jul	UNESCO WHIPIC Information Strategy Planning (ISP)	Oct	2022 WHIPIC Online Lecture and Webinar Series: Interlinking the Tangible and Intangible including Memories in Heritage Interpretation
	Research on Interpretation of UNESCO "Sites of Memory associated with Recent Conflicts": analysing its conflict structures and classification		Roundtable Dialogue: Bridging the Gap between Conservation and Development
	Research on the World Heritage Attributes of the Republic of Korea	Nov	2022 World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation Forum
	World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation Capacity Building for Heritage Practitioners (Pilot Project)		2022 WHIPIC Online Lecture and Webinar Series: The Directions of Heritage Interpretation in World Heritage Policy
Aug	Research on World Heritage Presentation Methodologies	Dec	Research on Capacity Building Strategy for World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation
	2022 WHIPIC Roundtable Solidarity in Heritage Interpretation and Presentation: Sharing experience, spreading lessons		Publication of 'World Heritage : 50 Years and Moving Forward' in commemoration of the World Heritage Convention



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Discovering the Diverse Values and Meanings of World Heritage Sites and Contributing to Sustainable Development

Ha Long Bay, Viet Nam, includes some 1,600 islands and islets, forming a spectacular seascape of limestone pillars. The site's outstanding scenic beauty is complemented by its great biological interest.

© Photo by Kwang-Jun Kim

UNESCO

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation) was established in 1945, following World War II, to contribute to world peace and human development.

UNESCO contributes to international cooperation and solidarity by education, science, culture, and information. UNESCO emphasises the importance of cultural understanding in building the defence of peace in the minds of people as well as intellectual and moral solidarity, achieved through education.



WORLD HERITAGE

To protect heritage sites with outstanding universal value to humanity, international cooperation in various fields, including technology, resources, and research are required.

By adopting the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in 1972, UNESCO is continuing its activities for the protection of World Heritage sites together with State Parties. The Convention, to protect World Heritage sites with Outstanding Universal Value, is recognised as the most active international convention thus far and sets the standard for heritage management and protection practices.



UNESCO WHIPIC

The international Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites under the auspices of UNESCO is one of UNESCO's Category 2 centres. WHIPIC was established to promote understanding and protection of heritage through the inclusive interpretation and presentation of heritage around the world.

WHIPIC aims to promote reconciliatory cultural dialogue and contribute to the sustainable development of humanity by identifying various values and meanings of World Heritage sites through research, capacity building, informationisation, and networking while sharing the results with the general public.





INTERPRETING WORLD HERITAGE

