

**Globalising Heritage – On UNESCO
and the Transnational Construction of a World Heritage**

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Globalising Heritage – On UNESCO and the Transnational Construction of a World Heritage¹

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Introduction

At its meeting in early December 1998 in Kyoto, Japan, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee decided to accept 30 new cultural and natural sites as World Heritage properties. Among these was also the naval port of Karlskrona. This was Sweden's ninth site inscribed on the World Heritage List, a list containing cultural and natural heritage sites considered by UNESCO and its affiliated expert bodies to be of outstanding universal value, and part of the common and invaluable heritage of humankind. The list is part of

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the implementation of the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 1972. According to the convention, the preservation of these sites is a concern not only for individual nations but also for the international community as a whole. The World Heritage sites mainly consist of historic buildings, monuments, cities and cultural landscapes, as well as natural areas.

The convention and the list are in constant growth. UNESCO has been successful in winning the hearts and minds of the world's nation-states. At present (October 2000) 161 states have become States Parties, i.e. ratified the convention, and the list comprises 630 cultural and natural heritage sites in 118 countries. New entries are made each year. The formal nominations submitted by the States Parties to the convention are processed by UNESCO and assessed by the expert bodies before the World Heritage Committee reaches a final decision. In the case of Karlskrona it was the well-preserved 17th and 18th century harbour area that determined the decision. Karlskrona fitted two of the six criteria that the experts' evaluations and the Committee's considerations for cultural heritage are based upon:

"Criterion ii: Karlskrona is an exceptionally well preserved example of a European planned naval town, which incorporate elements derived from earlier establishments in other countries and which was in its turn to serve as the model for subsequent towns with similar functions.

Criterion iv: Naval bases played an important role in the centuries during which naval power was a determining factor in European Realpolitik, and Karlskrona is the best preserved and most complete of those that survive." (UNESCO World Heritage Committee Report, 1998, WHC-98/CONF.203/18)

The decision in Kyoto to include the old naval town and the other sites made them affiliates of an exclusive group of globally dispersed cultural and natural heritage sites from different times in history, comprising such well-known monuments and places as the Pyramids of Egypt, Taj Mahal, and Grand Canyon.

Although the convention prescribes that the World Heritage is part of the heritage of humankind and that its basic idea is identification, preservation and conservation, the inclusion of a new heritage site on the list is often a source for local and regional pride. When the Committee's positive decision on Karlskrona was announced, the event was celebrated with festivities in the city centre. The County Antiquarian declared that an important task now was to make use of the city's new status as a World Heritage site in the marketing of the city and the region. Moreover, World Heritage has become increasingly popular among many states in the world. For these states World Heritage has become part of the national cultural repertoire. As status symbols World Heritage sites are, for various reasons, highly desired symbolic capital locally, nationally and internationally.

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Bringing order to the past has throughout history served as a powerful instrument for different purposes in various settings. A central feature of this sense-making of the past has been the ascription of meaning to historic monuments, sites and natural areas. Research on ethnicity and nationalism has argued for the importance of heritage for community and identity making. Anderson (1991), among others, has shown how heritage played a pivotal role in the forming of the nation as an imagined political community. In the nation-building process, monuments, sites and objects became important symbols and national jewels, and heritage was made a national concern, leading to an intensive

founding of a variety of institutions (Bennett, 1995; Bohman, 1997; Löfgren, forthcoming). Löfgren (forthcoming) has discussed how the construction of national heritage followed transnationally diffused inventories and matrices. National museums of folk culture were built, following the pioneer model in Berlin, and areas of native beauty were selected for transformation into national parks after an American idea and the example of the Yellow Stone National Park. Sweden exported the idea of "Skansen", an open-air museum from 1892, where the nation as an imagined community was materialised in very concrete ways. However, although the inventories and matrices for heritage were borrowed across national borders the construction of heritage mainly took place locally and nationally. Cultural and natural heritage sites were made sacred places within the territory of the nation, linking times and places to people into a recognisable and naturalised whole. Museums, folklife archives and the like became central institutions to the formation of the state, and, following Bennett (1995), places for instruction and reformation of citizens.

World Heritage strikes a contrast to this in a number of aspects. Firstly, the content of the list is a blend and mixture of a variety of natural and cultural heritage types, originating from different times in history and located in different places all over the world. The list ranges from Australian fossil mammal sites, Brazilian rain forests, rock carvings in Norway, the Chinese Wall, the French part of the pilgrim routes to Santiago de Compostela, the Wieliczka Salt Mine in Poland, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial in Japan, to Skogskyrkogården, a 20th century cemetery in Stockholm, Sweden. According to the convention these sites form part of our common heritage, reflecting and representing the history of Man and Nature. Thus, what World Heritage suggests is not (only) nations or ethnic groups as imagined communities, but rather humankind as a moral and imagined community. Putting globally dispersed phenomena from different times and places on the World Heritage List is a way of making symbols and sacred places in its global geography. Apparently, World Heritage is tied to a partly different political agenda, allowing "old" heritage sites to take on new meaning in a global context. Secondly, World Heritage is elaborately transnational in character as it both transgresses the idea of the nation and is shaped in more direct processes and procedures of collaboration across borders. Thirdly, World Heritage points at the emergence of some new and powerful actors within the heritage industry. Today, there are several important actors within the field of heritage operating on a global scale. These actors are not only guardians of the past but also influential and powerful producers of culture. UNESCO and its affiliated expert bodies are such actors with power to define and diffuse beliefs and practices for cultural and natural heritage. Fourthly, World Heritage is a phenomenon that is constructed in a transnational field of various interests, perspectives and locales.

In this paper I will try to come to grips with the cultural praxis of World Heritage. By exploring the techniques and procedures used, and the actors and locales involved in the process, I will discuss how globally dispersed phenomena are being organised into a World Heritage of global relevance. The paper shows how World Heritage is constructed in an institutional system of formalised routines, beliefs and practices, and in a centre/periphery relationship. It is argued that World Heritage is created through highly standardised, transnational processes and procedures based on expertise. As righteous interpreters of the past, and of the cultural and natural environment, experts within the heritage industry develop standardised notions and categories of culture and nature, methods and procedures for World Heritage. The view put forward is that UNESCO and the expert bodies provide a global "grammar" with which the dispersed local phenomena can be made sense of, co-ordinated into, and managed as a global heritage. However, in focus are not only the institutional system of World Heritage, which is central to the cultural praxis, but also its origin, its history, and its part in a larger socialising and civilising project aiming at defining, spreading, and internalising naturalised worldviews,

perspectives, preferences, and at obtaining a desired social order and conduct. A further point made is that World Heritage is part of the construction of humankind as an imagined and moral community, and the becoming of the world as one single place. Before exploring the cultural praxis of World Heritage, I will delineate a tentative theoretical framework for contextualising and understanding World Heritage, and report on the data and methods used for this study.²

² The study is part of my Ph. D. thesis project in Ethnology at Stockholm University and SCORE, Stockholm Center for Organizational Research. The project is part of a larger research programme, Transnational Regulation and the Transformation of States, and is financed by the Swedish Council for Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSFR).

Contextualising World Heritage - Theoretical Framework

Nation-states throughout the world have become more interconnected culturally, politically and economically during the post-World War II era. This increased interconnectedness has meant that interstate relations, national programmes and policies, and the circumstances of persons throughout the world have increasingly come under the scrutiny of a transnational web of regimes, international governmental and nongovernmental organisations and experts (Boli and Thomas, 1999; Finnemore, 1996; Meyer et al., 1997). Thus, this global institutional order, or world polity, is made up of strong and culturally empowered and legitimated actors who act through its network of influence, and operates as a constitutive and directive environment for states, business enterprises, groups, and individuals. Increasingly important within this polity are international governmental organisations, of which UNESCO is a prime example, and international non-governmental organisations (Boli and Thomas, 1999). UNESCO and World Heritage clearly illustrates the importance of such organisations as sites for the rise of world discourse and organisation, and the cultural authority that such actors exercise. World-polity scholars argue that this system has a set of cultural principles that are centrally involved and that the organisations embody, enact and promote. These are *universalism, individualism, rationality* (often based on the grounds of science), and *world citizenship* (Boli and Thomas, 1999).

The world polity perspective is useful for characterising the actors, relations, processes and principles involved in World Heritage. However, I also find the *culture as process and communication* approach attractive and applicable. It relates to Hannerz's notion of culture as meaning-making and flows (1992, 1996). As pointed out above, UNESCO is indeed a powerful producer of culture, and a highly influential actor, capable of defining and framing conditions, problems, and solutions, and thus framing the interests and desired actions of others, especially those of the world's nation-states (cf. Finnemore, 1996). Culture is not only a question of meaning-making in a communicative sense, but also of exercising power. However, as with any form of power, cultural power cannot be mobilised and deployed in the absence of organisations that create, transmit, reproduce and receive cultural messages or practices (Held et al., 1999: 328). World Heritage points to the fact that UNESCO within the UN system has the capacity to transform the context in which and the means through which natural and cultural heritage is produced, and to establish an infrastructure for cultural production, transmission and reception. In this infrastructure UNESCO can be regarded as a centre of power. As pointed out by Hannerz (1992, 1996), cultural processes in the global ecumene often take the shape of centre/periphery relationships. This is also the case in World Heritage.

Speaking of UNESCO as a global cultural centre of power influencing states is not to say that states no longer matter. On the contrary, World Heritage and the international institutional system are entirely dependent on them. Arguing in line with the *transformationalist* vein of thought (Held et al., 1999), World Heritage is an example of how the power, functions and authority of national government is reconstituted or re-engineered. This is a point of view that runs counter to that of scholars who unconditionally define globalisation as the demise of the nation-state (e.g. Beck, 2000; see Lechner and Boli, 1999:195-198 for a short sum up). However, this re-engineering process is by no means coherent. Rather, it is diverse, contradictory and often lodging conflicts. Being part of and "exposed" to the international community is not a matter of passive receiving and enacting. UNESCO is after all an IGO and an arena where states do engage and participate actively. As in all communication and participation there is a certain moment and amount of uncertainty that can be used counter productively. Sharing a cultural norm, for example, does not necessarily mean that the norm is automatically

interpreted and enacted according to the expected logic. There is always room for misinterpretation (also on purpose, which is a technique that the States Parties sometimes use), reinterpretation, negotiation and invention. This should not be neglected, since it is equally culturally constructive.

It is stated above that World Heritage is a transnational phenomenon. This is true in so far as it is constructed in processes and procedures across borders, and, thus, entails flows of people, objects, texts, signs and the like. This is also the standard usage of the concept. However, I think there is more to the concept than that. What I have in mind is the changing status of the nation as a political community, and the altering connection between the nation and the state. It is indeed paradoxical that parts of what used to be uniquely national jewels of the world's nation-states, and crucial to their formation, now are being tied to the international community, and reinterpreted from the point of view of humankind as a whole. This must also entail that World Heritage becomes part of the construction of humankind as a moral and imagined political community in Anderson's term (1991). Transnational phenomena and processes in the world polity do not only alter state responsibilities, but may also entail the formation of new forms of cultural/political alliance and solidarity. World Heritage sites can be regarded as symbolic anchors that epitomize humankind as one overarching and all-encompassing community, its historic and present relationships, and content. I regard World Heritage as a cosmopolitan political project, and part of what Falk calls "the overall project of citizenship", which is a response "to the overriding challenge to create a political community that doesn't yet exist, premised upon global or species solidarity, co-evolution and co-responsibility, a matter of perceiving a common destiny, yet simultaneously a celebration of diverse and plural entry-points expressive of specific history, tradition, values, dreams" (Falk, 1994:139). However, as a project it is idealistic and globally reformatory in aim, but, nevertheless, highly pragmatic, contradictory, and sometimes hypocritical in practice.

World Heritage is not only global in scale, but also inherently globalising in Robertson's sense, referring to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole (1992:8). For Robertson, the global and the human is a context which increasingly determines social relations and simultaneously a frame of reference within which social agents increasingly figure their existence, identities and actions. Processes of globalisation challenge and alter the relationships between individuals, national states, societies and humankind. Globalisation is the increased interaction between different orders of life, and the world as a single place implies the transformation of these orders as they are increasingly positioned against, and forced to take account of each other. As a cosmopolitan project, aiming at international organisation and consciousness raising at all levels of society, World Heritage is an example of this, and what is important is the problem of "globality": how to make living together in one system meaningful or even possible. But rather than seeing World Heritage as a manifestation of an all-encompassing world cultural order, or world society, as world-polity scholars probably would, I regard it merely as part of attempts to organise the world.

As a globalising project, World Heritage involves global standardising and regulating processes and measures. One of the things that struck me when I first came across World Heritage was the paradoxical relation between the globally dispersed and diverse phenomena and the idea that they, in spite of all disparities, had something in common, and were constitutive parts of a distinct, universal and categorical entity, i.e. the World Heritage of humankind. This kind of contradiction, between diversity, unity and uniqueness, is the point of departure in Richard Wilk's (1995) discussion on what he regards as a predominant feature of globalisation: that of providing structures, or systems, for organising and expressing difference (cf. Hannerz, 1990, 1992; Appadurai, 1996). Wilk uses the concept of *global systems of common difference* for describing and analysing how the

globalising hegemony celebrates particular kinds of difference while submerging, deflating or suppressing others (1995:118). He takes the phenomenon of international beauty contests as an instructive example. Beauty contests:

"take the full universe of possible contrasts /.../, and they systemically narrow our gaze to *particular* kinds of difference. /.../ They standardise a vocabulary for describing difference, and provide a syntax for its expression, to produce a common frame of organised distinction, in the process making wildly disparate groups of people intelligible to each other. They essentialise some kinds of differences as ethnic, physical and immutable, and portray them as measurable and scalable characteristics, washing them with the legitimacy of objectivity. And they use these distinctions to draw systemic connections between disparate parts of the world system." (Wilk 1995:130, emphasis in original)

Wilk argues that the accomplishments of these tasks serve political and polemic purposes for many different and contending interests. A further argument made is that people competing for global economical and cultural dominance build their hegemony not through direct imposition, but by presenting universal categories and standards by which all cultural differences can be defined (Wilk, 1995:130). However, this technology is not valid only for the definition of cultures or groups. They include economic categories of unemployment, GNP, standards of living etc., which define and shape policy in a wide variety of political arenas.

Although World Heritage perhaps is not comparable to a contest, the same phenomenon of standardisation and regulation seems to be at hand, involving the same kind of processes. Wilk's systems of common difference can be regarded as institutional mechanisms for the processes of universalisation of the particular, and of the particularisation of the universal that, according to Robertson (1992:chapter 6), is central to globalisation. This seems to be an accurate depiction of how World Heritage is constructed. World Heritage is about standardising by categorising and assessing the whole universe of natural and cultural heritage in order to distil the unique, outstanding, invaluable and indispensable "wonders of the world". And, just like beauty contests, World Heritage has judges and jury groups. Of particular importance in World Heritage are the experts involved. They are regarded as righteous providers of scientific knowledge to the system, of assessments according to criteria, and, thus of objectivity, ontology and truth.

Methods and Data

World Heritage truly is a global phenomenon. As mentioned in the introduction, the World Heritage List contains 630 sites in 118 countries, and 160 states around the world have ratified the convention. The UNESCO headquarters are located in Paris. There are three expert bodies. One is based in Paris, France, one in Gland, Switzerland, and one in Rome, Italy. In addition, many other organisations are involved in World Heritage, and the network is constantly expanding. When a state ratifies the convention, state institutions, organisations, and individuals locally, regionally and nationally are drawn in. Moreover, meetings and conferences regarding World Heritage take place in different places in all parts of the world. Both people and ideas travel across national and organisational borders. All these conditions make a qualitative study of World Heritage a complicated and challenging endeavour. How is one to approach and study a phenomenon like World Heritage?

Methodological issues regarding the study of transnational phenomena have been discussed in social anthropology (e.g. Hannerz, forthcoming; Marcus, 1995). For the

purpose of this study and paper, and for future research in my thesis project, I draw upon the method and concept of multi-sited fieldwork, e.g. research in several settings of relevance to the phenomenon studied:

"Multi-sited research is designed around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer establishes some form of literal, physical presence with an explicit, posited logic of association or connection among sites that in fact defines the argument of the ethnography" (Marcus, 1995:105).

Multi-sited fieldwork is a fruitful approach for studying parts of the construction of World Heritage. Basically, this means to identify, select, attend and penetrate events and locales of relevance to World Heritage, e.g. meetings and conferences in various parts of the world. These are occasions when experts and politicians from around the world gather to discuss previous work, make decisions and plan for the future. Attending these gatherings makes not only participant observation possible, but also interviews with the actors involved. To some extent this relates also to the "follow the actor" approach as discussed by Marcus (1995). Thus, of benefit to the study has also been the possibility to partake in the mobile, multi-local and cosmopolitan everyday life of the people involved.

However, relying on observations and interviews is not enough. As pointed out by Hannerz (forthcoming), it is also important to develop a sense of structure, and to stay informed of what is going on in the field of study. This entails an eclectic approach, i.e. to collect data from a variety of sources, via different media and to keep in touch with informants (cf. Gusterson, 1997). In my case, documents, such as reports from meetings and other types of written material, have been extremely important in this aspect. Moreover, they have been particularly important in the initial stage of the study, since they point out relevant events, actors, procedures, relationships, networks, concepts etc. Other sources and channels that have been used are the Internet and newsletters from the UNESCO headquarters.

Hannerz points to the fact that in transnational research one may have to accept some tradeoff between depth and breadth. The aim has been to choose and focus on certain actors, aspects, events and locales of relevance to the general phenomenon and praxis of World Heritage, while trying to stay informed also of the larger context of World Heritage. In pursuing such a task it is of little help spending six months in Karlskrona, since most of what eventually happens happens to happen elsewhere. However, the thorny issue of depth and breadth must, however, be taken seriously. A few previous studies and ongoing research projects on World Heritage already exist, but most of them are more or less traditionally "local" and "national" in character, focussing mostly on specific cases and sites on the list, e.g. how Lima became a World Heritage site (Seppänen, 1999).³ My argument is that general knowledge of the phenomenon, the processes and the actors involved really is needed. Without such knowledge it could be put into question whether deep knowledge on the matter at all is possible.

In the remainder of this paper we will take a closer look at the World Heritage praxis, starting with a short outline of the history of the convention. The discussion, then, is structured around four themes, or principles, that I perceive as central to the construction of World Heritage: *nomination, preservation and monitoring, development, diffusion and representation.*

³ The most prominent exception is Sarah Titchen's (1995) thesis *On the construction of outstanding universal value. UNESCO's World Heritage Convention (Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972) and the identification and assessment of cultural places for inclusion in the World Heritage List.*

The Convention - Events, Perspectives and Structures

Although the origins of the convention is not an issue for close scrutiny in this paper, a brief overview and characterisation of its context and history is useful for understanding World Heritage.⁴ When, how and where did heritage become a concern for the international community? As pointed out by, for instance, Finnemore (1996) and Boli and Thomas (1999) international organisations often have a fundamental role in defining and framing problems as global, and that they endow actors with agency to mobilise and organise. This was certainly the case in the global problematisation of World Heritage and the set up of the international institutional system. The history of origins also illustrates the importance of scientific experts and expertise in such processes, and of having access to the international UN system (cf. Meyer et al., 1997), in this case UNESCO.

World Heritage grew out of the experiences of devastation from the two World Wars, and from large international projects such as the rescue of the Temples of Abu Simbel during the construction of the Aswan High Dam in Egypt, a project that called for international assistance and co-operation (*UNESCO Courier*, August 1980). This successful project led to other safeguarding campaigns, such as Venice in Italy, Moenjodaro in Pakistan and Borobodur in Indonesia to name but a few. Consequently, UNESCO initiated, with help from ICOMOS, the International Council of Monuments and Sites, the preparation of a convention on the protection of cultural heritage. Similar proposals were made concerning natural heritage. In the 1960's, the foundations were laid for two international conventions, one for World Cultural Heritage and the other for World Natural Heritage. During the planning process, the visionary decision was taken to view these as a single entity. The idea of combining conservation of cultural sites with those of nature came from the United States. A White House Conference in Washington, D.C., in 1965 called for a "World Heritage Trust" that would stimulate international co-operation to protect "the world's superb natural and scenic areas and historic sites for the present and the future of the entire world citizenry" (UNESCO, 2000-11-09). In 1968 the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN, also called the World Conservation Union) developed similar proposals for its members. These proposals were presented to the 1972 United Nations conference on Human Environment in Stockholm. Later that year the *Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (the World Heritage Convention) was adopted.

The objective of the convention is, as mentioned above, world-wide identification and preservation of cultural and natural heritage sites. It is based on the idea:

".../ that the cultural and the natural heritage are increasingly threatened with destruction not only by traditional causes of decay, but also by changing social and economic conditions which aggravate the situation with even more formidable phenomena of damage or destruction, /.../" and ".../ that parts of the cultural or natural heritage are of outstanding interest and therefore need to be preserved as part of the world heritage of humankind as a whole, /.../."

The convention further states that:

".../ in view of the magnitude and gravity of the new dangers and threats, it is incumbent on the international community as a whole to participate in the protection of the cultural and natural heritage, by granting of collective assistance /.../, and by establishing an effective

⁴ For a thorough discussion on the history of the convention, see Titchen (1995).

system of collective protection, organised on a permanent basis and in accordance with modern scientific methods." (UNESCO, 1972, World Heritage Convention)

The perspective is one of moral responsibility and collaboration due to the globalisation of threats. Without support of countries throughout the world, some World Heritage sites would deteriorate or even disappear through lack of technical expertise or funding to preserve them. The convention is thus an agreement to mobilise financial and intellectual resources to protect cultural and natural sites recognised for their "outstanding universal value", as well as to establish an institutionalised system whereby the international community should participate actively.

The World Heritage Convention is an instance of cosmopolitan law, rather than ordinary international law. Cosmopolitan law refers to those elements of law which create powers and constraints, and rights and duties, which transcend the claims of nation-states, and seek to define and protect basic humanitarian values (Held et al., 1999:70-74). Other examples of such laws are the law of war, the law governing war crimes and crimes against humanity, and environmental law. The World Heritage Convention relates clearly to the two latter ones. Pivotal to its formation and content was the new concept of "the common heritage of mankind" that was propounded within UN as a potential vehicle for rethinking the legal basis of the appropriation and exploitation of resources. Interestingly, it was introduced as a way of thinking of the new possibilities of exploitation of natural resources on the seabed or on the moon and other planets that was opening up in the wake of rapid technological development. Its proponents argued that the vast domain of untapped resources should be developed for the benefit of all (Held et al., 1999:68, 73). The introduction of the concept was a turning point in international legal thinking, and was found relevant and applicable also to other domains, and, thus, of use in the forming of the World Heritage Convention.

The convention also prescribes the measures to be taken for its implementation, i.e. how and by whom heritage as a problem should be handled. First of all an intergovernmental committee, the World Heritage Committee, was established within UNESCO, consisting of 21 elected members from the States Parties to the convention. The World Heritage Committee is responsible for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. It is the Committee who has the final say on whether a site is accepted for inscription on the World Heritage List. Equally, it examines reports on the state of conservation of listed sites, and asks States Parties to take action when sites are not being properly managed. The Committee is also responsible for establishing the World Heritage Fund, and for allocating amounts from it for sites in need of repair or restoration, for emergency action if sites are in immediate danger, for technical assistance and training, and for promotional and educational activities. Seven members of the committee make up the World Heritage Bureau, a smaller executive body that prepares the work of the Committee. Three expert organisations within cultural and natural heritage protection were designated and affiliated as advisory expert bodies: ICOMOS⁵ for cultural heritage, IUCN⁶ for natural heritage, and ICCROM⁷ for advice on restoration techniques and for

⁵ ICOMOS, the International Council on Monuments and Sites, was founded in 1965. Organised in 90 national committees and one international executive committee, the organisation's members are experts on cultural heritage. ICOMOS provides the World Heritage Committee with evaluations of cultural properties proposed for inscription on the World Heritage List, as well as with comparative studies, technical assistance and reports on the state of conservation of inscribed properties. Head-office is located in Paris, France.

⁶ IUCN, the World Conservation Union, is an international organisation which advises the World Heritage Committee on the selection of natural heritage sites and, through its world-wide network of specialists, reports back on the state of conservation of listed sites. IUCN was set up in 1948, and is located in Gland, Switzerland.

training. A secretariat for the day-to-day operations of the convention was also set up. In 1975 twenty states had become States Parties to the convention, allowing it to come into force. Additional duties, procedures, criteria etc. not set out in the convention were identified and codified in the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, which completed and made the international institutional system functional.

The making of heritage a global concern shows resemblance to the development of the environmental protection field. As discussed by Frank et al. (1999), the environmental protection field evolved from Western sentimentality and moral virtues, and the Enlightenment separation of nature from human society, to the view of a systemic relationship between humans and nature. This required a very sophisticated process of cultural imagination. As a safeguarding project, World Heritage is part of this story, at least regarding the natural heritage side of the convention. However, the very idea of a common cultural heritage and global threats to it, suggests a similar process of cultural imagination, but with a systemic perspective on the whole physical and human environment. Just as nature has been rationalised and systemised globally, the cultural heritage domain is undergoing the same process, leading to world discourse and organisation.

One part of the history of World Heritage is the origins of the convention, another part is what has happened after it came into being. Barnett and Finnemore (1999) points to the fact that international organisations often develop in other and unexpected directions than their creators intended them to do. If World Heritage originally was designed as a safeguarding project, it has now turned into something partly different. The making of World Heritage today has become deeply embedded in and influenced by the discourse of global equal rights. Increasingly, World Heritage is regarded not only as a duty but also as a right: all states and "cultures" have a right to equal opportunities of being part of the World Heritage. Part of the story is that World Heritage increasingly is seen as a resource, not for humankind, but for states, regions, local settings and business enterprises. This increased interest in World Heritage shown has made the making of sites highly politicised. Another salient feature is an increased stress on the use of World Heritage for educational and civilising efforts. This is an aspect that has become more and more pronounced over the years. The objective is to foster a culture of peace and intercultural understanding. These changes and unanticipated trajectories are relevant for understanding the activities, controversies, the hypocrisy and decoupling prevalent in World Heritage today.

Nomination - A Global Grammar for Local Contexts

The first sites on the World Heritage List were inscribed in 1978. The list has been growing ever since, and today 480 cultural properties, 128 natural properties and 22 mixed (cultural and natural) properties are listed. New nominations are constantly coming in from the States Parties. The everincreasing blend and mixture might seem paradoxical at first sight, and it strikes a contrast to the very precise and standardised processes and procedures through which World Heritage sites are identified. However, one might bear in mind that the crystallisation of national heritage in the nation-state building process equally was one that needed standardised notions of culture and nature, categories, typologies, and

⁷ ICCROM, the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, is an intergovernmental body which provides expert advice on how to conserve the listed sites, as well as training in restoration techniques. ICCROM was set up in 1956 and is located in Rome.

procedures for making heritage conceivable as an entity to manage (cf. Bennett, 1995; Löfgren, forthcoming). The crystallisation of World Heritage is a process of standardisation, but one that is more clearly transnational in character, and one that demands precise rules of procedure, defined and generalised notions and categories, as well as clearly identified actors with specific responsibilities and roles to play. We will now take a closer look at the universalising and standardising processes in the World Heritage "system of common difference".

Part of the World Heritage apparatus is the nomination procedure. That is the process in which World Heritage is identified, i.e. the process in which the heritage of humankind is crystallised and materialised. The standard procedure is that the States Parties to the convention select properties within their territories and make tentative lists of sites intended for nomination. The standard format for this is set out in the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, which is the most important guiding tool for the functioning of the convention, and there are ready-made forms to use both for the tentative lists and for the formal nominations. The tentative lists submitted to UNESCO should provide information on the names of the selected properties, their geographical locations, brief descriptions of them and justifications of their value in accordance with the criteria and conditions set out in the convention and in the guidelines. The tentative lists can be regarded as preliminary inventories of potential World Heritage properties. Each nomination from the tentative lists should be presented in the form of a well-argued case, demonstrating that the property is truly of "outstanding universal value". Of particular importance here are the global comparative studies that the States Parties have to make. This means that the types, or categories, of heritage nominated (such as historic railways, pyramids, heritage canals, cultural landscapes, colonial historic towns, hominid sites, sub-tropical rainforests etc.) should be compared to other properties of the same kind in other places in the world. Each nomination should also contain documentation on legal protection and management plans, and be supported by other material such as photos, slides, maps and literature to justify the values and facilitate the assessment. The amount of documentation has increased over the years. The first nomination files in 1978 and 1979 were very brief, and consisted merely of the nomination form, some black and white photos and maps. Today most of the files consist of hundreds of pages of documentation in several volumes, including detailed management plans, maps, and other material such as videotapes and slides.

When completed the nomination file is sent to the Secretariat at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris for processing. The Secretariat checks that the nomination file is complete, and sends it to the expert bodies for examination and evaluation: ICOMOS for cultural properties, IUCN for natural properties, or ICOMOS and IUCN for mixed properties. ICOMOS and/or IUCN send experts to the nominated sites in order to evaluate their protection and management, and to check the nominations according to convention criteria. All missions are performed by specialists. The experts' task is to assess whether the nominated sites are of "outstanding universal value", and worth to be included in the list. The expert advisory bodies may also contact other experts or institutions, such as universities, for additional advice and consultation. After the missions technical reports are prepared. On the basis of these the expert bodies make their final evaluation reports, including their recommendations, and submit them to the World Heritage Bureau. The Bureau's task is to examine the reports and make recommendations to the World Heritage Committee, who has the final say whether a site should be inscribed. The Committee has several alternatives when deciding. It may refer the nomination back to the State Party for further information, or defer the nomination (which normally means that the nomination has to be either withdrawn or revised), or reject inscription, or inscribe the site in the World Heritage List. When a nomination has been

submitted to UNESCO, the whole evaluation procedure takes one year and a half in time, unless it is prolonged due to referral or deferral. During this period the nominated site is situated in a liminal phase before eventually being recognised as part of World Heritage. Not all nominations pass the *rite de passage* of World Heritage.

The clearly organised procedures and defined actors and roles are aiming not only at facilitating, but also at legitimising the process of identification. In the nomination process, as in World Heritage in general, the experts are consultants, or "others" in Meyer's term (1994). The use of experts is a basic organisational principle, granting that correct and impartial decisions of universal validity and truth can be reached.

The definitions and typologies of culture and nature set out in the convention are equally important. The convention defines cultural heritage as:

"monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;

groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;

sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view." (World Heritage Convention, article 1.)

Natural heritage is defined as:

"natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view;

geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation;

natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty." (World Heritage Convention, article 2.)

The definitions are carefully formulated, but nevertheless extremely general, leaving much room for interpretation and contestation. This makes the experts powerful and expertise crucial to World Heritage. The limits of the content of World Heritage is to a large extent dependent on beliefs and ideas prevailing within the scientific community of natural and cultural heritage experts.

The Operational Guidelines also set out additional definitions and typologies, e.g. "historic towns", "historic centres", and "cultural landscapes" for cultural heritage, together with defined but still generalised sub-categories. The nominations are also compared to a set of criteria, six for cultural heritage and four for natural heritage.⁸ These criteria also

⁸ For cultural heritage: (i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius; or (ii) exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or with a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design; or (iii) bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilisation which is living or which has disappeared; or (iv) be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural or technological

serve as means of categorising and justifying the values for which the sites are inscribed. They also appear on the officially published list together with site's name, state location, date of inscription and number. The criteria are also important when representing World Heritage in forms other than the list.

The nomination procedure illuminates the necessity and power of procedures, notions, categories and criteria. They all form part of what I call a global "grammar" for local contexts (cf. Garsten and Grey, 1998). Composed of a set of standard routines, definitions, categories, and criteria, it is this grammar, transnationally diffused and used, that makes World Heritage possible. It is through the application of this global grammar locally that the dispersed sites can be reinterpreted and reorganised as a heritage of humankind. Clearly this is an act of disembedding and re-embedding (Giddens, 1990), allowing the sites to become local sites in a global framework and perspective, and to take on new meaning through that framework and perspective.

Preservation and Monitoring - Centres of Power, Nodes and Networks

Another dimension of the construction of World Heritage is objectification through acts of preservation and conservation (cf. Foster, 1991). The purpose of such acts, in this case legislated in the convention, is to secure for all times the patrimony of humankind, those objects that epitomize the community and thus constitute the property of that community. When heritage was made a national concern in the nation-building process it led to an intensive founding of state institutions responsible for its identification, preservation and conservation. In many European countries the issue of national heritage protection has a long history and tradition. In Sweden for example, the origins of Riksantikvarieämbetet, the National Heritage Board, is to be found in the beginning of the 17th century. Today, state authorities of this kind can be found in most other countries: The State Bureau of Cultural Relics in China, Conseil National de la Culture in Angola, and The National Board of Antiquities in Finland to name but a few. In the case of World Heritage it is the Committee, the Bureau and the Secretariat that fulfil this function. Together they form what one might call an "International Board of Global Antiquities and Natural Heritage".

When a site has been inscribed on the list it has to be managed as a World Heritage property. The overall purpose of all the management activities undertaken is to ensure that the sites maintain the values for which they were inscribed. The sites' state of conservation and protection is the most extensive item on the World Heritage agenda. The activities are global in scale and comprise many different actors such as state, regional and local authorities, heritage experts, owners and proprietors. The Secretariat and the expert organisations have a major role in monitoring the sites' protection and state of conservation. "Reactive monitoring" is the reporting by the World Heritage Centre, other sectors of UNESCO and the advisory bodies to the Bureau and the Committee on the state of conservation of specific World Heritage properties that are under threat. To this end, the States Parties shall submit to the Committee through the World Heritage Centre, specific reports and impact studies each time exceptional circumstances occur or work is undertaken which may have an effect on the state of conservation of the property.

ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history; or (v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change; or (vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance (the Committee considers that criterion (vi) should justify inclusion in the List only in exceptional circumstances and in conjunction with other criteria, cultural or natural) (Operational Guidelines, § 24). Natural criteria follow the same format but differ in content.

ICCROM provides expert advice on how to conserve the listed sites, as well as training in restoration techniques. ICCROM has also elaborated and published management guides on "best practice" for World Heritage sites. ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN participate in expert missions together with the Secretariat to threatened sites world-wide, and report back to the Bureau and the Committee. Of importance are also the "periodic reports". These are reports on the sites' state of conservation and protection that the States Parties have to submit to the Bureau and the Committee every sixth year. These reports are discussed extensively during the meetings, resulting in comments and recommendations to be re-submitted to States Parties concerned. The reactive monitoring, periodic report and expert mission systems are illustrative examples of techniques used for inspection and control over distance. Together with the nomination procedure they illustrate the role of UNESCO as a powerful and influential actor, and, following Latour (1987) as a centre of calculation (cf. Rose and Miller, 1992).

The Committee's most powerful tool, however, is an additional list: the List of World Heritage in Danger. Inclusion of a property in that list is intended to focus the world's attention and emergency conservation actions on the property when its characteristics and values are threatened.⁹ This kind of measure is well known from other international organisations. Amnesty International, for example, rallies "world public opinion" against states that violate universalistic human rights (Boli & Thomas, 1999). Displacing sites in a liminal zone, betwixt and between World Heritage and non-World Heritage, is a threatening step towards the utmost consequence for States Parties falling into disfavour: deletion of the site from the World Heritage List. However, so far in the history of World Heritage this has never happened. Thus, the World Heritage institutional system has a strong regulative potentiality. The regulative processes in World Heritage involves not only the capacity to establish rules, inspect or review others' conformity to them, but also sanctions and punishments.¹⁰

When exploring the nomination and the preservation procedures and techniques, and most clearly the List of World Heritage in Danger, the very sophisticated mechanisms of power in World Heritage are revealed. Inherent in World Heritage is the construction and the preservation of values. World Heritage is about constructing and preserving monuments, buildings, landscapes and other areas to be thought of as exclusive, unique, desirable, indisputable and sacred. This is done through restructuring the heritage domain globally in terms of a hierarchy, where World Heritage is placed at the top. Furthermore, the listing activities are power modes of display. Also revealed are the influential roles of UNESCO and its affiliated expert bodies. World Heritage can only come about on terms decided by them. The global grammar is developed by UNESCO and the expert bodies. It is the experts who make the evaluations and the assessments, since they are regarded as righteous interpreters of the past and the global landscape. They are responsible for providing and upholding truth and ontology in large. Although one must not forget that UNESCO is an organisation for international collaboration, the national executives are to a large extent bound to follow and adapt to expertise. The use of experts and reliance on scientific expertise conceal to some extent the dimension of influence and power.

The nomination and preservation processes also illustrate the nature of power relations. Both nomination and preservation take place in a set of transnational relations in a centre/periphery relationship. As noted by Hannerz (1992, 1996), Garsten (1994) and others, transnational cultural processes in the global ecumene often take on this shape. In this respect UNESCO can be regarded as a centre of power, interestingly somewhat

⁹ There are currently 23 properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger (7 cultural and 16 natural properties).

¹⁰ It should be noted that "danger listing" is by UNESCO not regarded as a reprimand. However, that is how it is perceived by many States Parties.

detransformed and with the entire world as its periphery. What makes World Heritage special in this respect is that the centre/periphery relationships are so clearly organised and formalised as they are legislated in the convention. Although no state can be forced to sign the convention, most of them seem more than willing to do so. And they do so in spite of the delimitation of state sovereignty and autonomy that international and cosmopolitan laws entail (Held et al., 1999).

However, World Heritage also leads to the emergence of new relationships and networks that often are transnational in character. Networks among site managers have been formed nationally, regionally and globally for co-operation, exchange of knowledge and experiences. OWHC, the *Organization of World Heritage Cities*, is an example of this. It was established in 1993 to develop a sense of solidarity and a co-operative relationship between World Heritage cities, particularly in view of the implementation of the convention. The organisation, which has its headquarters located in Canada, is intended to facilitate an exchange of knowledge, management techniques and financial resources for the purpose of protecting monuments and sites. It is based on the idea that sites within populated cities endure pressures of a different nature and therefore may require a more dynamic style of management.¹¹

The founding of this organisation exemplifies the constructive side of World Heritage and its global grammar. Making World Heritage by scanning and structuring the world through categories and criteria, and by imposing restrictions and obligations is not only a matter of preserving, but also of shaping and constructing the world. World Heritage is undoubtedly creative in so far as it constructs a "new" heritage of parts of the "old" ones. But as illustrated, it also creates new entities, identities, actors, perspectives and needs, as well as new relations, networks and centres (cf. Meyer and Jepperson, 2000). The connotations of the word "preserve" strike a contrast to the verb's constructive ethos.

Development - Mapping the Globe

Another key aspect of World Heritage is development, an aspect that illustrates the rational nature of World Heritage, referring to the realm of design, redesign, invention and transformation. It is in this aspect that the global aspirations, the globalising character of World Heritage, and the regulatory efforts involved become most salient.

Over the years the World Heritage institutional system has been subject to numerous reorganisations, and the conceptual, methodological and processual apparatus has often been revised. There are various reasons for this. One is that the concept of heritage itself has become broader over the years, leading to revisions of the guidelines. Partly, this was due to a troublesome bias caused by the convention's predominantly Western origins. Another is that World Heritage has changed, from initially being a safeguarding project to a global democratic and regulatory one. Part of that is the success and changing status of World Heritage, which further enhances the problems to be described below. The solution is, of course, more scientific activities and new organisational efforts on rational grounds.

One of many problems that the World Heritage Committee has to deal with is an imbalance concerning types of heritage and geographical location. Since the adoption of the convention in 1972, innumerable discussions have been conducted as to means of ensuring the "representative nature" of the World Heritage List. Since 1979 and progressively afterwards, perceived disparities and imbalances have been underlined, notably the large number of inscriptions of cultural properties compared to the proportionally smaller number of natural properties, and a predominance of Western

¹¹ There are over one hundred World Heritage cities to date.

monumental architecture in comparison to non-monumental architectural heritage of other regions. Today, more than 50% of the World Heritage sites are located in Europe and North America, while there are very few sites in Africa, in the Arab states and in the Pacific.

According to UNESCO this imbalance is a serious problem as it threatens the credibility of the list. From 1979 onwards the Committee has evoked the need to improve the representative nature of the list, and has taken a number of "corrective measures". In co-operation with the expert advisory bodies, the Committee has tried out a variety of approaches. Comparative studies have been carried out in order to strengthen the evaluation criteria for assessing the outstanding value. IUCN has established a tentative inventory for natural properties of World Heritage value based on specific themes and regions. ICOMOS in co-operation with the States Parties, contributed to the development of a Global Study which was based upon different comparative factors such as culture, theme, type, style, epoch, etc. However, the Committee considered it necessary to find other means to guarantee that the list reflect the cultural, intellectual, religious and sociological diversity of humankind at a time when the notion of heritage was itself undergoing a much wider interpretation. This has meant a general move away from strict functional typologies towards wider interpretations, and a thematic and regional approach.

In 1994 a project called Global Strategy was adopted. The Global Strategy is a framework and methodology that relies on regional and thematic definitions of categories of heritage such as "human co-existence with the land" (focusing on movements of people (nomadism, migrations), settlements, modes of subsistence, technological evolution), and "human beings in society" (referring to human interaction, cultural co-existence, spirituality and creative expression). Within the project a number of expert meetings have been organised around the world, aiming at discussing and revising the criteria, and scanning the world through thematic and comparative studies. One has also tried to further enhance the efforts to remedy the disparities and imbalances through action plans on a regional basis (for Africa, Asia, the Pacific, Europe and North America, Latin America and the Caribbean). Global Strategy encourages all countries to become States Parties to the convention, to prepare tentative lists and to "harmonise" them, and to prepare nominations of properties from categories and regions currently regarded as under-represented on the World Heritage List. States Parties already well represented should harmonise their future nominations, or consider voluntarily suspension of new nominations.

The perspective and the principles are clearly illustrated in the following extract from the World Heritage Committee's report from the meeting in Kyoto 1998:

"The Secretariat pointed out the /.../ continuing imbalances of new categories defined in the Operational Guidelines and still under-represented on the List, such as Cultural landscapes, Routes and Itineraries. It deplored the absence of natural sites in the Amazon Basin, the low representation of heritage of Arctic and Sub-arctic regions, as well as the lack of implementation of the natural part of the World Heritage Convention in the Arab States. On the other hand, it noted the continuing increase in the number of categories of sites already represented. It underlined that little consideration had been given to paragraph 6 (vii) of the Operational Guidelines which 'invites States Parties to consider whether their cultural heritage is already well represented on the List, and if so to slow down voluntarily their rate of future nominations!'" (UNESCO, WHC-98/CONF.203/18, § 10.4)

The overall objective of "a representative World Heritage" means that the list has to be balanced in several aspects. It has to be balanced both in number of sites and their geographical distribution, as well as in number of cultural heritage sites in relation to

natural heritage sites. World Heritage has thus become an activity of global mapping, where gaps and blanks should be filled in. What also becomes clear is that World Heritage is based on the idea of humankind's heritage as one consisting of nations, cultures, times and natures in regions, and that these should be equally represented by sites that are nicely spread over the surface of almost the entire globe.

Interestingly, in spite of the World Heritage sites' geographical dispersion the idea of representativity, representativeness and territoriality shows striking similarities to the idea of the open air museum developed earlier in the history of the museum (Bennett 1995; Löfgren, forthcoming). As mentioned in the introduction the first such museum was opened by Arthur Hazelius at Skansen, Stockholm, in 1882. Consisting of reassembled farm buildings from different parts of the country, a manor house, craft industries, a log church and the like, as well as domestic and wild animals, the museum formed a miniaturisation of the nation where all the ingredients of "typically Sweden" should be found (Löfgren, forthcoming). In many respects World Heritage can be regarded as its global counterpart. However, due to its physical nature World Heritage cannot easily be moved and recomposed. The normal procedure of putting objects on display in museums is for obvious reasons not possible. The territory of World Heritage is the entire globe, and the content of it is the outstanding and universal. The listing is an act of disembedding and re-embedding that distances heritage sites from former times and spaces in nations, ties them to the evolutionary history of Man and Nature, and thereby extending their territory to the entire surface of the globe.

Diffusion and Representation - Global Skansen on Display

The last aspect of World Heritage to be dealt with here is diffusion and representation. This refers to the presentation of and attempts to "diffuse" World Heritage as an idea and entity. UNESCO puts a lot of effort in making World Heritage known throughout the world. One side of this is the Committee's strive for bringing more states to sign the convention. As noted in the introduction UNESCO has been very successful in winning the hearts and souls of the world nation-states. It can be argued that states have been "taught" to have World Heritage (cf. Finnemore, 1996). Finnemore claims that states are socialised to accept new norms, values, and perceptions of interest by international organisations. Today, the convention is one of the most widely accepted of the international agreements, and in September, 2000, Comoros became the 161st state to ratify it.

However, UNESCO's socialising efforts are not only directed towards the world's nation-states. To be discussed here is also an ambition for public awareness and education. UNESCO's argument is that increased general knowledge of World Heritage contributes not only to the preservation of the sites, but also to the fostering of a culture of peace and intercultural tolerance. This is an aspect that has come to be more pronounced over the years. World Heritage is also a civilising project that is global and all-human encompassing in scale. World Heritage sites are made symbols in the global ecumene, and form part of the construction of a desired social order and conduct. This argument builds on Tony Bennett's (1995) discussion on the role of museum display in the nation-state building process. Bennett argues that museums were important institutions for the instruction and reformation of citizens. As places, and by the use of technologies of vision and exhibition of knowledge, museums were prime sites for the production and consumption of national imageries. Anderson (1991) expresses a similar thought when

discussing print media, the census, the map and the museum as technologies for imagining the nation.

The project of diffusion and display of World Heritage is not the nation, but rather the imagery of a "nation of nations" under the overall arching identity of Man. As mentioned, I regard World Heritage as a cosmopolitan project. It is cosmopolitan in at least two senses. Firstly because it is a project that was initiated and is driven by cosmopolitans, as Hannerz defines them (1990, 1992). As opposed to "locals", they are mobile world-citizens with a taste for the Other, and capable of multi-sited and multi-cultural manoeuvring. Secondly, it is a project for ethical cosmopolitan education and reformation, in Tomlinson's (1999) sense. World Heritage tries to activate a sense of belonging to the wider world. It tries to enable the experience of a "distanced identity", an identity that is not delimited to the immediate locality, but embraces a sense of what unites human beings, of common risks and possibilities (cf. Tomlinson, 1999: chapter 6). What is strived for is a kind of extended solidarity, a "cultural project of extending the field of relevance of mutuality to embrace a sense of distant others as symbolically 'significant others'" (p. 207).

A number of media are used for these instructive and reformatory purposes: The Internet, exhibitions, education kits for schools, information leaflets, maps, journals, newsletters, CD-rom discs, encyclopaedias, coffee table books, radio and television programmes. These media and products are important for several reasons. The media used are important channels for the diffusion of World Heritage, allowing it to travel through the world. However, they are equally important as "places", or, following Bennett (1995), as "spaces of representation" where the globally dispersed World Heritage sites through techniques of framing and display can be co-ordinated into an entity and perceived as such. As pointed out by Bennett (1995), the cultural technology of heritage is one of vision and display. Heritage is created through a process of exhibition: As knowledge, as performance, as museum display (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998). Listing sites is one way of "lifting out" and putting light on cultural artefacts and natural areas. However, the list itself is a rather poor instrument for instructive and reformatory purposes. In the case of World Heritage the objects for display are dispersed globally and might therefore be difficult to perceive as parts of an entity. Furthermore, the standard procedure of moving artefacts to a museum is, as noted above, for obvious reasons not possible. Being practically immovable cultural artefacts and natural sites, they cannot easily be moved and reassembled physically as a global Skansen.

This is why the use of media is crucial as means of representing World Heritage. It is through use of media, through technologies of visualisation and textualisation that World Heritage is brought to life. The products are media for making World Heritage visible and intelligible. Furthermore, media makes the necessary spatiotemporal mergers possible. Media render, with all the immediacy of visual images and informative texts, the peculiar co-ordination of space, time, and people (territory, history, and society) that makes humankind an identifiable kind of imagined and moral community (cf. Foster, 1991). In this respect the products can be regarded as virtual museums, as virtual versions of global Skansen.

Concluding Remarks

Through the exploration of the problematisation of heritage on the international level, the set up of an international institutional system for World Heritage, and the construction of heritage through acts of nomination, preservation, monitoring, development, and representation, some interesting points and perspectives are revealed. When compared to the construction of nations, ethnicity, etc. the cultural praxis of World Heritage turns out

to be generally the same. Making heritage is about selecting, framing and representing (Löfgren, forthcoming). However, as noted in the introduction and explored in the paper, World Heritage comes about in organised transnational processes, on international arenas, and under influence and supervision of new and powerful actors. By putting globally dispersed phenomena from different times and places on the World Heritage List, these sites are made symbols in a patchwork of times, places, nations, ethnic groups, events and practices that is to reflect and represent the history of Man and Nature. World Heritage is both constructed from the point of view of and entails the construction of humankind as a moral and imagined community, and the world as one single place (Robertson, 1992).

However, as mentioned, the World Heritage praxis is also highly contradictory. A few concluding remarks should also be said on this matter. Keywords for describing and analysing praxis are also hypocrisy and decoupling. Behind the attractive official image of World Heritage lies a complicated complex of actors, perspectives and interests. Seemingly evident, depoliticised and innocent, it steers attention away from its complexity, from its problematics and implications.

One must not forget that UNESCO is an international organisation, composed of member states striving and struggling on the international arena both in competition with each other, and for internal national purposes. The denationalisation of time and the reterritorialisation of heritage to the surface of the globe are also processes of competition, contestation and conflict. For example many states in Africa have been reluctant to nominate heritage sites dating from the colonial era. When South Africa nominated Robben Island, where political prisoners like Nelson Mandela were imprisoned, it was done as a reminder of the abolition of the apartheid system. World Heritage is not so timeless as it might seem at first glance. World Heritage and the international arena can be used for highlighting atrocities in the past, and form part of the construction of new nations as imagined communities. Globalisation is transforming the both context and the means through which national cultures are produced and reproduced (Held et al., 1999:328). But what is peculiar and ironic in the nationalising of World Heritage is that it makes use of what it actually negates, which, indeed, also gives an extra twist to the notion of the transnational.

A few years ago Pakistan nominated a natural heritage site located in Kashmir, and thus made that nomination part of the country's conflict with India over this disputed area. Pakistan made reference to the principles of "common heritage" and "outstanding universal value", and pleaded that the site be inscribed on the list irrespective of its geographical location. A parallel case was Jordan's nomination of Jerusalem in 1981. This indicates that national territory still matters, and that the World Heritage system sometimes is used in conflicts played out on the international arena. Moreover, World Heritage sites can also be highly desired regionally and locally, for touristic purposes, publicity, and identity. World Heritage renders visible and voices local places in the global ecumene. However, although conflicts do occur, and economic interests increasingly penetrate World Heritage, there are no tendencies to "risk scenarios" of cultural clashes as depicted by Huntington (1996) and Barber (1996).

Considering the principle of representativity and representativeness, it should be noted that there are very few heritage sites on the list with clearly intended negative associations. In part this has to do with the generally positive connotations of the word - heritage is usually something "good" - but it has also to do with the World Heritage system itself. In a system where it is the States Parties' task to select and nominate, old injuries and atrocities are often smoothed over or left out, especially now when World Heritage has become so popular in large parts of the world. World Heritage has become very prestigious. Put crudely, for some States Parties World Heritage has become the Olympic Games of heritage, where entries of new sites on the list are prizes in an

international competition. Just like world exhibitions have been, and still are, arenas for international competition and ranking (Ekström, 1994; Löfgren, forthcoming), World Heritage provides an arena for the same purposes. In this respect, World Heritage and Wilk's example of beauty contests seem to be parallel cases. This increased international competition is by some of the World Heritage people seen as highly problematic, since it further enhances the imbalance of the list. World heritage has become increasingly politicised, and the principle of expertise is more often set aside.

However, one should not forget that heritage as acts of selecting, framing and exhibiting also are acts of seclusion. Since heritage over times has been closely tied to the framework of the state, and still is today, there are voices that never have been and perhaps never will be heard, e.g. certain minority groups and diaspora. It should also be noted that there are many places that never will become World Heritage sites due to local resistance, although they do qualify according to World Heritage criteria. This was the case when the National Heritage Board and the Swedish Government intended to nominate Markim/Orkesta, a cultural landscape north of Stockholm. The local proprietors were opposed to this proposition, and made it very clear that they had no desire of being regimented from Paris.

Indeed, the currently so popular term *heritage* is unstable and ambiguous like others that have been used in the realm of public culture, and, as Regina Bendix (2000) rightly notes, what distinguishes heritage is its capacity to hide the complexities of history and politics. Clearly, the making of World Heritage, the heritage of humankind, is no exception.

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