

## World Heritage and Tourism

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## **Chapter 1**

### **World Heritage and Tourism: From Opposition to Co-production**

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The relationship between World Heritage and tourism is a long standing and complex one. Despite tourism being mentioned only once amongst the 38 articles of the 1972 'Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage'<sup>1</sup> (UNESCO 1972) it has been a constant reality in the day to day practices of site management and has long underpinned how World Heritage Sites are perceived, encountered and experienced in the wider social and political realm. Over forty years and more since the Convention, consideration of tourism as an active variable in the production and consumption of World Heritage has shifted, from being implicit to ever-more explicit in both policy and practice.

There are of course numerous sites on the World Heritage List which, for reasons of protection, day to day management, or issues of physical and perceptual access, do not attract significant numbers of tourists. In addition, the designation of World Heritage status may fall upon sites, particularly urban sites, which already have some degree of tourist activity.

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<sup>1</sup> In the 1972 Convention, the term 'tourism' appears only once, in Article 11.4 which defines the property that may appear on the List of World Heritage in Danger "may not appear on this list of the cultural and natural heritage which is threatened by serious and specific dangers, such as the threat of disappearance caused by accelerated deterioration, large-scale public or private works, rapid urban or tourist development, destruction due to changes in the use or ownership of the land changes deep due to unknown causes; abandonment for any reason, armed conflict or threat of burst, calamities and disasters, large fires, earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions, changes in water level, floods and tidal waves ".

However, in the main, it is difficult to think of World Heritage Sites without imagining swarms of tourists taking photographs, lines of parked tour buses and attendant souvenir stalls. Anyone arriving at a World Heritage Site is confronted by the realities of tourism; significant numbers of tourists, along with a service sector which has developed in scale and scope to meet the needs of the temporary but recurrent tourist population. Aside from some signs of the long term attrition of physical fabric and litter, there are seldom markers of excess tourists immediately visible. Negative impacts tend to be cumulative and hidden, revealing themselves rather more subtly through price inflation, community displacement and acculturation. More direct and visible is the process of infrastructure developments associated with tourism development and while not necessarily within the boundaries of World Heritage Sites it has been argued that they can impact on the quality of the site (Leask and Fyall 2006). Certainly within the academic literature considerable attention has been given to studies which exemplify the problems that tourism can, and does, pose to the both the physical fabric of cultural and natural heritage sites and to the socio-cultural well-being of nearby local communities. Such studies have fed, and are fed by, a pervasive discourse which suggests that tourism is *de facto*, a threat to World Heritage. But while the impacts, whatever their extent, are assessed, measured and managed, wider geo-political questions are raised regarding the category of World Heritage itself and whether there is indeed some degree of a causality between site designation and the ability to attract tourists., However it goes without saying that World Heritage Sites are not homogeneous, and their management is not monolithic (Di Giovine 2009; Bourdeau, Gravari-Barbas and Robinson 2011). They differ considerably in terms of their reputation, the extent of the tourism flows in which they are situated, and the extent to which the State and related actors contribute (Ashworth and van der Aa, 2006). It is this diversity in the face of the uniformity of production, and production at the nexus between the global and the local, which creates an interesting 'heritagescape' (Di

Giovine 2009) and an interesting field of research (Djament-Tran, Fagnoni and Jacquot 2012).

The entanglements existing between tourism and World Heritage are in evidence across the marketing and communication networks that pervade the developed and developing world. Many destinations, whether at the national or at regional scale, privilege ‘world’ heritage amongst their inventories of attractions to visit in actions of genuine pride, but also in the knowledge that they carry an additional appeal for the tourist market. Tour operators devise their routes and itineraries to include World Heritage Sites as ‘highlights’ and there are operators that specialise in packaging World Heritage centred itineraries. The British based company Hurlingham Travel offers what it presents as the ‘World’s Most Expensive Vacation’ (at \$1.5 million) to see all of the World Heritage Sites in ‘luxury’, cutting through some 157 countries (<http://hurlinghamtravel.co.uk/>). While it appears that no one, at the time of writing, has undertaken the tour it demonstrates in the extreme the prestige that is loaded onto the World Heritage label. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) itself plays to the realities of the iconic role of World Heritage Sites in national tourism marketing campaigns and frequently carries advertisements for country destinations in its World Heritage Magazine that frame heritage sites and landscapes, not only as having particular values which need protecting but as places for tourists to visit. More indirectly too UNESCO is caught up in the dilemma of promoting World Heritage Sites whilst at the same time seeking their protection from the excesses of tourism. In 2008 for instance, UNESCO collaborated in the publication of the popular promotional guide ‘1001 Historic Sites You Must See Before You Die’ (Cavendish 2008), which while offering a Preface by the then Director-General of UNESCO, Koichiro Matsuura, warning on the dangers of poorly managed tourism, nevertheless provided a highly visible promotional message.

Guide-books similarly give prominence to World Heritage in their prescriptive narratives of destinations. Visual texts directed to prospective tourists by way of national advertising campaigns and filmic montages that aim to provide a scopic overview of place in a limited time, again, strongly feature images of World Heritage Sites and, in a similar vein, creative works of film, literature and commercial advertising, have, knowingly and unknowingly, increasingly employed World Heritage Sites as both background and foreground for story purposes. In the vernacular recollections of journeys and holidays that now litter cyberspace in the form of blogs and personal diaries, replete as they are with copious photographs, visits to World Heritage Sites are accorded a degree of detail and reverence and a visit to them has become a kind of social marker of achievement. What is important to note about these various representations of World Heritage and their intersections with the realms of tourism is that they speak of a process of both conscious and unconscious appropriation whereby the sites, structures and landscapes that have been accorded 'outstanding universal value' (OUV) through the UNESCO procedure, are then projected and promoted for possessing this value by agents that normally have had no direct input into the processes of valuation and assessment. Such appropriation is an entirely rational action on a number of grounds.

First, for a tour operator or destination marketing organisation, it is common sense to draw upon those resources that will attract tourists by virtue of their strong aesthetic appeal or some other feature that will 'promise' the tourist a note-worthy experience. What we may term the 'attractiveness' of World Heritage requires deeper interrogation and we will return to this later. The consistent and longstanding highlighting of World Heritage in tourism marketing campaigns acts to further embed sites in public consciousness and accentuates their value. They accrue their own social capital by virtue of their very presence in the public

sphere. The overlap of World Heritage Sites with the iconic markers of international travel and tourism that pre-date the 1972 Convention – the Pyramids of Giza, Statue of Liberty, Coliseum of Rome, Taj Mahal, etc. - points to a recognised value *outside* of the UNESCO process and that resonates with a wider system of representation and recognition that tourism taps into and which Barthes (1972) recognised in his well known critique of the guidebook as a form of reductionism. Many World Heritage Sites map directly onto well established ‘must-see’ tourist attractions.

Second, the ways by which the tourism sector draws on World Heritage speaks to an accepted authority of UNESCO and the inter-active processes of nomination and inscription between Nation state and the transnational influence of this United Nations body. Implicitly this is an acceptance of the ten criteria used to evaluate World Heritage and the over-arching concept of ‘outstanding universal value’. Though not articulated as such, those elements within the vast, diverse and fragmented tourism sector that readily adopt the images and stories of World Heritage, are effectively validating the power of UNESCO in deciding that some aspects of tangible cultural heritage is more important/significant/outstanding than other aspects. Within the discourse of marketing, UNESCO provides the ultimate endorsement of a product, taking it from the self-appointed processes of national interest and parochial concern and into the apparent realms of something ‘objectively verified’ and of ‘trans-national’ importance. This allows a tour operator, or a destination, to move away from saying that tourists should visit a site because the national or regional authority suggests we *should*, but rather implies there is a higher and more pervasive/persuasive voice that can direct the tourist to something special.

Third, and related to the above, the layers of value that accumulate through the label of World Heritage and the additional pulling power this implies, is perceived to bestow a potential economic premium in the form of an increased volume of tourists plus, additional tourist-related development, mainly in the form of retail and accommodation. In terms of attracting increased numbers of tourists Fundamental economic rationality entails that the category of World Heritage presents a market opportunity to those engaged in tourism. While we can recognise the diversity of sites, the dissemination of norms, discourse through the international conventions (Cousin 2008), together with the role played by international institutions and the mass media in the promotion and diffusion of World Heritage values and, what Marcotte and Bourdeau (2006, 2012) note as the reputation of the World Heritage label, all points to the power and pervasiveness of a *universalist* perspective (Benhamou 2010) and to the UNESCO meta-narrative claim of unity in diversity (Di Giovine 2009), with the World Heritage List as the emblematic expression of this.

### **Being ‘Part of the World’ and the ‘World Brand’**

The rationale that gave rise to the 1972 Convention and the category of World Heritage fundamentally remains as one of protection and preservation of sites, monuments, cultural and natural landscapes, for the benefit of wider humanity. Through the State signatories to the Convention (190 member states have ratified the Convention as at September 2013) UNESCO fulfils a paternalistic role as a guardian of cultural and natural heritage ‘under threat’ and recognised to be ‘unique and irreplaceable’ and whose ‘deterioration or disappearance’ would constitute a ‘harmful impoverishment of the heritage of all the nations of the world’, presumably including the handful of nations that have not signed up to the Convention. At one level it could be argued that to be included in the World Heritage List was to acknowledge the fragility and uniqueness of a particular site and an awareness that it

is under particular threat. At another level this could be seen to suggest the weakness of governance for heritage on the part of the member states and their inability to protect their own sites. In cases relating to developing countries where the principles and practices of heritage management and appropriate legislation for site protection may not have fully evolved, intervention through the efforts of UNESCO as a response could be welcome. Reading the sheer number of sites now designated as World Heritage and taking into account the unaltered text of the Convention, it would seem that there have never been so many heritage sites in need of protection.

To *be* a World Heritage Site is to have participated in a process of evaluation. At one level this is a kind of accreditation; an outcome or reward for matching up to a set of criteria, widely accepted. A heritage site, property or landscape is ‘tested’ against the over-arching concept of Outstanding Universal Value. This itself has been long debated inside and outside of the UNESCO sphere and while firmly embedded in the 1972 Convention and remaining the fundamental condition for the inscription of World Heritage, since the Convention and particularly since the first twelve sites were inscribed in 1978, there have been numerous attempts to examine and refine the concept and the way it is mobilised in selecting Sites for the World Heritage List. Over the years the criteria have been refined and since a review of Operational Guidelines in 2005 there are now ten criteria; the first six dealing in the main with cultural heritage and the remaining four dealing with natural heritage.<sup>2</sup> The Operational Guidelines themselves have undergone several reviews in the normative course of their on-going ‘testing’ against sites submitted for inclusion on the List and though the principle of OUV has remained sacrosanct in the listing of World Heritage, we can identify shifts in the

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<sup>2</sup> The Operational Guidelines (for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention) are periodically revisited and revised in response to wider debate and emergent knowledge born out of practice. Within the Guidelines, concepts central to the production of World Heritage, such as ‘authenticity’ and ‘integrity’ are examined along with management and planning concepts such as ‘buffer zones’.



ways it has been interpreted. Christina Cameron (2005) in a keynote paper to a Special Expert Meeting on the World Heritage Convention held in Kazan identified that in the mid-1980s the interpretation of the term Outstanding Universal Value had shifted from something which equated to ‘best of the best’ and was in effect applied to sites which were already widely recognised as being ‘iconic’, to an interpretation of sites being “representative of the best.”<sup>3</sup> In the Operational Guidelines which came into being in 2005, Outstanding Universal Value was defined as being “so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity.” (UNESCO, 2005) This is a powerful claim and it begs so many questions: In *what* ways do World Heritage Sites transcend national boundaries? How does this transcendental value manifest itself? And what is actually meant by the term *common* importance for present and future generations and, important in what sense? Despite elaborate and nuanced discussions which have taken place over the years around the concept of OUV and the attendant World Heritage Criteria it is noticeable that adjustments have been slight and even re-enforcing (Parent 1979)<sup>4</sup>. Value is largely defined as relating to the material being of the Site with emphasis upon issues such as integrity and authenticity. Historical values, along with artistic or aesthetic values, are given primacy in what Michael Petzet (2005 p.9) refers to as “classical values”. We can see the lineage tracing itself back to Kant with this emphasis upon non-instrumental values almost in a self generating and self-sustaining way to produce, via a rational and objective process, World Heritage. But whatever intellectual challenges the concept generates, the key point is that it has accepted *authority* through the signatories to the Convention; an authority that has also been accentuated through accumulated practice.

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<sup>3</sup> Cameron noted the growing Tentative List almost as an indicator that the World Heritage List was moving inevitably to an enactment of the definition of “representative of the best.”

<sup>4</sup> For instance, Michael Parent in 1979 attempted to refine the criteria and at a Global Strategy Meeting in Amsterdam in 1998, focus was on emphasizing the universalism inherent in the concept.

Accepting the parameters of World Heritage is to recognise a *category* of heritage.

Understanding World Heritage as a category is useful in that it allows us to consider not just what is included in the category but also what is excluded. This in turn encourages us to focus on the implications of belonging to a particular category or not. Most categories are recognised as being constructed according to the shared properties that their members share. However, this classical, objectivist view of categories is dependent upon the external hand of the people doing the categorising and is not solely dependent upon ‘real world’ similarities (Lakoff, 1990). While it is important that we recognise the subjectivist, relativist realities of the World Heritage category, this does not necessarily challenge its value. The observation of the steadily climbing total of sites that belong to this category attests to its functionality as well as to its success. With or without knowing how a site measures up to the concept of OUV, there is a desire to be part of the category. The key to understanding this lies in way in which sites are projected to a level of ‘world’ recognition. At the same time in creating and embellishing the ‘World Heritage’ category a distance of separation is created with the rest of what we term heritage. This ‘other’ heritage is *de facto* de-valued in relation to its more extra-ordinary, ‘significant’ counterpart. Public meaning and attachment to ordinary heritage may or may not be altered but in terms of prioritising resources to maintain and manage heritage it would seem that there is displacement in favour of designated World Heritage.

The term ‘world’ is laden with expectations and assumptions that are made manifest when it is widely accepted and applied. It carries within it several meanings. It implies universal acknowledgement akin to the notion of a ‘world’ championship where, out of the processes of contestation between several, a winner emerges. It implies ranking and reward, whereby ‘world’ heritage receives a metaphorical gold medal and as a consequence other heritage sites

do not. In principle a claim as to what constitutes OUV needs to be clear and unambiguous. In practice OUV is a matter of judgment, collectively arrived at and based in experience that is inevitably relative and subjective where the line between World Heritage winners and losers is a fine one. This is not to denigrate the subjectivity of the approach but merely to recognise it.

Locating World Heritage within a wider understanding of global sociology is helpful in allowing us to understand the desire to be part of what Elliot and Schmutz (2012) term the 'Universal Cultural Order'. The 'world' as a holistic entity, as something greater than the sum of its parts and which implies action and conduct as 'global' in scope, is a distinctly modernist idea born in the period between the two world wars and picked up institutionally in the fervour post World War Two optimism. As Pemberton (2001) has argued, the idea of the global is a seductive one with a rhetoric that pervades the cultural sphere as well as economic and technological interests. The meta - message of World Heritage is a courageous, positive and powerful one – that there are tangible reminders of the past – which have the capacity to remind us all, now and in the future, of the successes and failures of humanity. We should remind ourselves that World Heritage is project of UNESCO in the context of the United Nations emerging out of twentieth century turmoil, war, ignorance and the ongoing threat of physical and intellectual destruction. The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, adopted by UNESCO in 1954, was symbolic of an emerging ideal of a 'culture of the world' and of a concern for 'mankind' that transcended the nationalisms of conflict. The Hague Convention focused on of protection of heritage (Sandholtz, 2007) and much paved the way for the 1972 World Heritage Convention (Carducci, 2008).

To believe in, and speak of concepts such as ‘mankind’, the ‘international community’, ‘common humanity’ and critically, OUV, in 1972, was a bold venture and very much part of a decidedly modern vision of the world. It also reveals an interesting intellectual continuity with enlightenment thinking, particularly in its evocation of Kantian notions of moral value and universal aesthetic taste applied to both the works of man and nature and capable of being arrived at through a rationality that was also seen to be universal. In picking through the text of the Convention and indeed through the various iterations of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the Convention and within the vast numbers of reports which lie behind the inscription of each World Heritage Site, there are the footprints of the philosophy which adheres to a belief in a universalism which of course is only reflecting the UNESCO rationale of “intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind”.

Hitchcock (2002), in discussing the process of inscribing Zanzibar Stone Town in Tanzania on the World Heritage List in the year 2000 evokes Benedict Anderson’s (1983) notion of ‘imagined communities’, constituted in this case by World Heritage Sites, as if collectively belonging to an international world order and subject to agreed laws and policies. Certainly in the processes of assembling a case for, and the narratives of, inscription, it is easy to see how state parties can comprehend the discourses of UNESCO as being somehow representative of a transnational governing power. The language, not only of the World Heritage Convention but of the declarations, recommendations and day-to-day communiqués surrounding it, project an air of transnational authority which is in counterpoint to the realities of policies and finances being firmly embedded in individual states; what Galla (2012, p.3) refers to as the difference between soft and hard law. This brings a national reality to the concept (ideal) of transnational policy and is a key source of dissonance in the production and management of World Heritage.

To *have* a World Heritage Site within a region or nation state carries considerable symbolic value. The value of having some mark of global status is part of the process of identity construction. In the same way that world champions in sport are appropriated by nation states, region, cities and even more localised communities, being acknowledged as ‘having’ a World Heritage site is a way of participating in the world. To be able to display the World Heritage badge is to be a member of the ‘being part of the world club’ and in part, it helps to explain the desire for nations to keep proffering candidates for inscription. What is telling about the World Heritage List as it approaches 1,000 sites is not only the burgeoning number of properties already inscribed but the longer list of properties which have been submitted on the Tentative List. Two interesting issues emerge. The first relates to the notion of ‘having’, for while World Heritage status can and is widely proclaimed by a member state it is also signalling the movement to the realms of global ownership – for the world, on behalf of the world. In legal terms this of course is only metaphorical ownership. Moreover, legal ownership is not the same as moral ownership and brings up issues around the ways by which member states seek to inscribe sites and the level to which communities of interest are, or are not, involved in the process.

The second issue returns to the potency of the ‘world’ concept. The privately instigated campaign of the New Seven ‘World Wonders’, the brainchild of mobile phone millionaire Bernard Weber was designed to create a category of important heritage sites. The campaign which began in 2002 and culminated in 2007 when the ‘new’ Seven World Wonders were announced clearly differed in its approach from UNESCO and the public voted for their favorite heritage site in open competition style. The website for the campaign proudly proclaimed that ‘the Official New 7 Wonders of the World have been elected by more than 100 million votes to represent global heritage throughout history’

(<http://world.new7wonders.com>. After initial liaison UNESCO distanced itself from the

initiative. What could loosely be termed an ‘alternative’, if shorter list, of World Heritage was compiled over a short period of time and without any scientific scrutiny or detailed consideration. The list of seven sites were voted into existence and all had already been inscribed on the ‘official’ World Heritage List. What was interesting about this campaign, despite the criticisms of UNESCO, was the way it was enthusiastically embraced by the governments of the final twenty finalists. It pointed to a need for ‘world’ recognition and also to the exposure it gave such sites which correlated in the minds of the supporting nations to increased number of visitors. While significant research is lacking with regard to the impact of this campaign, there is evidence that some sites did generate increased volumes of tourists through the exposure brought about by the campaign.

Inscription on the World Heritage List is not normally accompanied by additional resources for site protection. A World Heritage Fund does exist to allow UNESCO to support remedial work for urgently threatened sites but this is extremely limited totalling approximately \$(US) four million in 2013; this being derived from contributions and donations from the majority of member states. Rather, being on the World Heritage List implies a long term resource commitment with finances required for the management of site. In a sense, the promise of finances having to be committed to the maintenance and management of a site could be seen to be a disincentive to states. Two related issues materialise. The first is that while a site foremost needs to demonstrate *Outstanding Universal Value* and a management plan in place, there is no precise requirement for member states seeking to have properties on the list to make explicit budgetary commitments to the site. Deterioration of a property due to lack of resource would however show up through Periodic Reporting and the UNESCO World Heritage Committee retains the overall sanctions of flagging the site as being in danger and ultimately, ‘de-listing’ the site. The second issue relates not to the perceived financial costs of listing a site but to the perceived financial benefits of this. The conventional argument is to

point to the raised profile of being a World Heritage Site and the symbolic capital this represents. This is essentially an argument of leverage based upon a premise that the site will attract financial resources because of the public and political recognition attained. But this would appear to be more of a working assumption rather than a scientific argument and requires further research. Anecdotally, World Heritage Sites seem to struggle with models of financial sustainability and in line with many other heritage sites are located in the realm of public subsidy by virtue of their more intangibly expressed ‘non-use’ values (existence value, bequest value etc.) within the public policy domain.

Here is one of the key paradoxical issues related to being on the World Heritage List. Designating a site as World Heritage is founded upon a particular notion of value, collectively expressed and endorsed through the signatories to the 1972 Convention. The concept of Outstanding Universal Value, is accepted as being a common measure of value to demarcate ‘World Heritage’ from ‘other’ heritage however, this is largely considered as a form of intrinsic value and as such it treats sites and properties as essentially non-market ‘goods’. And yet, once a site has been accorded this value – in material terms it bears the World Heritage symbol - it becomes marketable. It is this ‘branding’ process which appears to facilitate touristic interest, or *increased* touristic interest to the site. Symbolic value is bestowed upon a site by virtue of the processes, narratives and discourses drawn from the 1972 Convention and played out by designated individuals and organisations. This ‘brand value’ can stimulate visits to the site and in various forms and formats be transformed into economic value. This transformation can be dramatic as in the case of the Iwami Ginzan silver mine complex on Honshu Island in Japan when before it was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2007 it attracted around 15,000 visitors a year. As a World Heritage Site in 2008 it attracted nearly 1 million visitors (Russell 2011).

There are of course less dramatic examples and others where the label of World Heritage has produced little or no effect. However, empirical research on the role of World Heritage in stimulating an increased volume of tourists is largely absent and studies that exist are complex and show considerable variation (Arezki et al. 2009; Cellini 2011). Yang, Lin and Han (2010) for instance indicated that in China, the cache of World Heritage Sites was significant in explaining the increased numbers of international tourists to certain destinations. In counter-point, in a study looking at the World Heritage Site of the Portuguese Quarter in Macau, Huang, Tsaur and Yang (2012) indicated no significant effects of World Heritage Listing on tourism, aside from a short-term increase in tourist interest. Such studies, though increasingly needed, do point to the problems of de-limiting the World Heritage 'effect' from a wider range of active variables and also direct our attention to the time taken to establish the World Heritage brand (Poria, Reichel and Cohen 2011), as well as the time taken to forget it.

### **Heritage and Tourism as Concomitant Phenomena**

Although the relationship between heritage and tourism is often difficult to quantify and has evolved from the intersections between different 'philosophies' involving actors with divergent and even opposing approaches (Lazzarotti 2003), over the past two centuries both phenomena have exhibited similar trends. The category of heritage has undergone a thematic expansion through chronological space while tourism has also undergone expansion in volume and variety. Tourism through its production of images and narratives has long played an integral role in the construction of heritage. Guide books, for instance have frequently had the effect of privileging and sanctioning heritage for tourist audiences, even when local communities have remained less convinced of their relevance. Even Goethe was struck by the



surprise of residents in Italy to the enthusiasm and emotion displayed by foreign tourists towards local churches and ruins (Poulot 2006). At the same time it is swiftly recognised, in line with Urry's (1990) basic concept of the 'gaze', that what directs the eye can generate wealth.

Guide books and other media vehicles also act to reinforce what Smith (2006) terms the 'authorising discourse of heritage' within the domains of tourism. Heritage, in the form of selected buildings, monuments, landscapes and traditions are highlighted as worthy of tourist visitation. This selectivity and apparent reverence of sites/sights stimulates tourist activity and through a combination of activities and the circulation of records and representations – the sharing of photographs, comments, stories, etc. – reinforces the heritage discourse and locates heritage within routes and itineraries practiced by tourists and commercialised by the tourism sector. Tourists and tourism, although not directly connected to heritage are implicated in its production and development which in many parts of the world acts as a real 'machine' to produce wealth (Gravari-Barbas 2009). The enhancement of heritage sites by heritage stakeholders (architects, conservators, protection agencies etc.), even when engaged in 'anti-tourism' discourse, are nevertheless involved in the development of tourism working to standards that are specifically sought after by tourists (Gravari-Barbas and Guichard-Anguis 2003). The example of Mont St Michel in France is paradigmatic in this instance. It was built, having served as a prison, as a 'monumental tourism product' by allowing its restoration to be guided by public opinion and the expectations of visitors which sought to preserve its lyrical and romantic aesthetic (Gravari-Barbas 2012). A further example of how tourists are complicit in the production of heritage is provided by Gaudi's Sagrada Familia in Barcelona. Although the reasons for seeking completion of the cathedral are numerous, a persuasive argument relates to the three million tourists that visit the cathedral each year.

Such dialogical relations between heritage and tourism are complex, intimate but now embedded in the discourse of heritage but they take on an additional significance with respect to the category of World Heritage. The global ‘brand value’ that World Heritage status implies, provides enhanced visibility and an ‘added value’ amongst domestic and international tourists and amongst the tourism industry. Actual evaluation of what the touristic implications are from UNESCO inscription are not that common, indicating the practical issues of measurement and the conceptual issues of data interpretation, however, work by DuCros (2006) on the World Heritage Site at Lijiang in China and by Gravari-Barbas and Jacquot (2013) on a number of sites in France would appear to validate the relationship between World Heritage branding and increased tourism summarised in the idea of a ‘UNESCO effect’. However, econometric studies are not clear in this (Prudhomme 2008). Increases in attendance at UNESCO sites sometimes mask the underlying growth of tourism. For example the increase of visitors to Australian natural sites inscribed on the World Heritage List is seen to be bound up with a wider increase in tourist numbers relating to concerted marketing efforts (Buckley 2004). Researchers have also highlighted the differing methodologies used (Van der Aa 2005) and the risk of economic reductionism (Prigent 2011).

From a demand perspective the World Heritage label, like other labels (Reinus and Fredman 2007), can be seen as an additional and attractive feature that taps into wider motivations for visiting heritage sites and also fits with the idea of tourists accumulating symbolic capital (Thurlow and Jaworski 2006) and, in principle, being willing to pay more for a visit to World Heritage properties (Dixon, Pagilola and Agostini 1998). From the supply side many World Heritage Sites are actively engaging in their own ‘transformation’ into tourist destinations.

This involves a web of organisations and local actors involved with tourism development, promotion and marketing (Shackley 1998; Boyd and Timothy 2006), whose interests lie in the wider destination concept and who may not have been involved with the processes of site nomination and designation.

The prospect of World Heritage Sites morphing into World tourism destinations with the promise of attendant economic is clearly attractive to Nation states and specific regions.

There is a substantive cost to nominating a heritage site for inscription on the World Heritage list. A report by consultants Price Waterhouse Coopers (2007) on the costs and benefits of World Heritage drew attention not only to a range of benefits that went beyond the economic, but also to the costs of the process of achieving UNESCO designation. Estimates of the costs that included research, the production of technical reports and the management of the process and of the sites, and which excluded direct capital spend upon the Sites themselves varied considerably but were still significant and into hundreds of thousands of pounds sterling. In some cases significant monies have been spent on the inscription process only to have failed. Getting on the World Heritage List therefore has its costs and risks. The Price Waterhouse Coopers (2007) Report did seek to highlight a wider set of benefits that flowed from World Heritage designation – regeneration of places, the building of new partnerships, educational benefits, community cohesion and civic pride. These have been identified in a range of studies (see for instance: Salazar and Marques 2005; Kim, Wong and Cho 2007), but the implicit, if not explicit benefit sought from designation is some form of economic return most frequently expressed as an increase in tourism activity and related investment.

## **Tourism: From Threat to Development Tool**

Over past decades there has been a marked shift in way that UNESCO has recognised and responded to the international social fact of tourism. The 1972 World Heritage Convention has been characterised as a response to the threats posed by the excesses of urbanisation and industrialisation evident from the mid 1960s. Francioni (2008) cites the flooding of the Nubian monuments of the Upper Nile and the 1966 floods in Venice and Florence as two events that generated international co-operation directed toward the protection of heritage sites. While the building of the Aswan Dam in the upper Nile Valley was very much a product of wider modernisation in Egypt, the flooding of two important ‘heritage’ cities in Italy was, in the main, a natural disaster. Notably, neither of these oft cited stimuli for the 1972 Convention has nothing directly to do with any threat from tourism. By way of context, the perceived threats from industrialisation need to be seen as part of longer term, international governmental recognition of growing environmental concern that was to culminate in the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm and the ‘Stockholm Declaration’ that emerged from that event in the same year of UNESCO Convention. The issue was not that cultural and natural heritage were under immense touristic pressure. Out of the first twelve sites that were accorded World Heritage status in 1978, none could be said to be significantly pressured by large numbers of tourists, although some such as the Galapagos Islands could be said have had an innate sensitivity and capacity issues to tourists. That said the number of tourists to the Galapagos Islands in 1979 was a mere 12,000 compared to over 180,000 in 2012 (<http://www.galapagospark.org/>).

In the early days of the operation of the Convention, the protection of cultural and natural sites by putting them on the World Heritage List related more to a general sense of concern for the threat of damage from rapacious industrial growth and attendant rapid urbanisation

rather than from tourism *per se*, which was still very much in a phase of nascent development. This concern was most prescient with respect to the developing world and less developed countries, which have witnessed rapid phases of economic growth, environmental degradation and social change. It was not so perceptive regarding the long process of de-industrialisation that has impacted upon developed nations since the early 1970s. Over the post 1972 period early expressions of concern about industrial development threatening sites have given way to concerns about tourism as economies have sought to diversify and re-build not through primary and secondary development but through the tertiary or service sector. Key to this has been the rapid expansion of global tourism, though with considerable geographical variations. The growth of leisure tourism across the globe over the past thirty years in particular has paralleled increased public and national interest in heritage generating concern that the pace and intensity of the consumption of heritage was becoming a direct threat to some sites.

As is widely accepted tourism rapidly became one of the foremost drivers for modernisation, particularly in places in the world where heritage, along with associations of the spectacular and the exoticism of otherness, was readily open to appropriation into the wider project of development through tourism. It is thus not surprising to see how the narrative of protection against the excesses of tourism has emerged with regard to World Heritage. Tourists, through their sheer volume, through 'inappropriate' behaviours and the commercial tourism sector, through similarly inappropriate development, have largely been portrayed as a threat to World Heritage sites. This essential tension is evidenced by the first ICOMOS Charter on Cultural Tourism (1976) which effectively characterises tourism as an inevitable, if largely negative force bearing down on cultural heritage. A far more insightful and balanced perspective was echoed in the 1999 version of the ICOMOS Charter (ICOMOS 1999) which

recognised the dynamic inter-relationships between tourism and cultural heritage and, importantly, the need to build partnerships to address issues of management in the context of sustainable and responsible development. The ICOMOS Charter, though directed toward a broader conception of cultural heritage and not specifically to 'world' heritage and the structures and processes of the 1972 Convention, set out principles aimed at engaging the tourism sector, in both its public and commercial guises, more closely with the heritage conservation sector; predominantly a state/public sector concern.

The ethos of the ICOMOS Charter has been slow to permeate the strategic and operational aspects of UNESCO's World Heritage Centre. The pressures to absorb more explicit actions regarding the interface between World Heritage and tourism have come from various directions. Various meetings and conferences organised through State parties and focusing upon specific regions, types of heritage or approaches to tourism management have been held over the years. Similarly, there have been reports and documents published through UNESCO which have drawn attention to the need to consider tourism as directly relevant to the World Heritage List and that have drawn upon case studies of sites that have been placed under undue pressure from tourist numbers and tourism development. In addition, the negative impacts of tourism have surfaced as part of the normative processes of World Heritage Site reporting, relating to 'periodic reporting' and the 'state of the conservation reports'. Through such reporting, that is a requirement of the 1972 Convention, sites are able to signal issues and problems that are affecting or threatening the 'Outstanding Universal Value' (OUV) and impacting upon their authenticity and integrity. This has been very much in line with the idea that tourism is seen as a *threat* to the World Heritage status of sites.

However there has been a gradual re-assessment of the relationship between World Heritage Sites and tourism that can be said to fall into two overlapping phases. The first can be characterised as emphasising a balanced approach to the management of World Heritage. The Introduction to the ICOMOS (1993) World Heritage Sites Handbook for Managers openly called for a balance to be attained between the needs of conservation and access to the public (tourists). However, implicit in this balance was still a hierarchy where conservation concerns preceded those of tourism. Tourism development was seen to logically follow virtuous conservation, and generate revenue that could be ploughed back into conservation. This concept of 'balance' is also evident in the manual published by the World Heritage Centre (Pedersen, 2002) which states: 'visitor management is a balancing act' (p 12.). World Heritage management plans covered the issue of tourism, with the desire to manage its impacts and flows while promoting its benefits. This call for a balanced approach was also informed by developments beyond concern for World Heritage and within a wider context of forms of more sustainable tourism. The heritage – tourism relationship and the need for balance was very much framed in rather narrow economic terms directed to the specificities of the site and the ability of the site to maintain its OUV through the management of tourism and ideally through the income it generated. In a sense tourism was seen to be an important instrument of the heritage conservation sector. Understanding, rather measuring, the specific impacts of tourism on World Heritage Sites, was part of a calculus that could open up resources for the management of the site.

A second phase which has emerged more recently relates to a more expansive conception of tourism that is seen to cut across the specifics of World Heritage Sites and into a more integrated and developmental model. Over the past decade or so there has however been a shift in the way that tourism is perceived by UNESCO. In the first instance tourism has been

recognised as a phenomenon that cuts across many policy sectors within the remit of UNESCO. The suite of international Cultural Conventions that have emerged post 1972 (the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, the 2003 Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage and, the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions) while all are still very much dedicated to protection and preservation, are laden with touristic implications both negative and positive. The strand of UNESCO's work that has focused upon the all-embracing concept of sustainable development began to recognise the role that tourism could play in the advancement of the Millennium Development Goals set at the United Nations Summit of 2000. The 2002 Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development focused on the mechanisms to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and in line with this tourism began to be recognised not solely as a threat to culture and its expressions through heritage but as a potential agent for sustainable development particularly for developing countries rich in cultural and natural heritage. Robinson and Picard (2006) for instance, examine the ways in which tourism was increasingly central in the relationships across UNESCO's full remit between heritage (tangible and intangible), cultural diversity, biodiversity and the ways it is fundamental to social, cultural and economic development.

Rather than tourism development being seen as polarised against the interests of World Heritage, it is World Heritage that is increasingly being seen as a potential driver for development that includes sustainable tourism. Various recent initiatives point towards this re-orientation. The World Heritage Centre has entered into various partnerships with 'non'-heritage organisations in recognition of the potential benefits these relationships can bring and in recognition of the success of, and demand for, the brand value of UNESCO and World Heritage. A partnership with TripAdvisor is indicative of this. In part the partnership was



geared to involve tourists in the monitoring of World Heritage Sites but it was also a way of indicating that World Heritage has something to offer TripAdvisor and its millions of users. A partnership with Nokia involved the creation of Phone applications relating to World Heritage sites to provide them with greater visibility and, a partnership with Google Street View aimed to provide virtual tours and new insights into selected World Heritage Sites. These links with commercial operators demonstrate an acceptance on the part of the World Heritage Centre to effectively position World Heritage as a focus for global tourism interest. It is recognised by the World Heritage Centre that local communities and actors now seek to use sites as the focal point for the development of tourism and the economic benefits it can bring. This is recognition of wider UNESCO agendas to address the sustainable development agenda and in particular the alleviation of poverty and the targets of the Millennium Development Goals. In part this can be seen as ‘top-down’ strategy emanating from the World Heritage Centre but it is also recognition of a ‘bottom-up’ strategy which reflects initiatives and demands from the tourist sector.

The institutionalisation of this new strand of thinking relating to the World Heritage and tourism relationship came with the signature programme on ‘World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism’, passed by the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee in St. Petersburg in 2012. This Programme seeks to provide answers to the challenges of both World Heritage policy and territorial tourism development. The stated mission of the Programme states that it will:

“Facilitate the management and development of sustainable tourism at World Heritage properties through fostering increased awareness, capacity and balanced participation of all stakeholders in order to protect the properties and their

Outstanding Universal Value whilst ensuring that tourism delivers benefits for conservation of the properties' sustainable development for local communities as well as a quality experience for visitors." (UNESCO, World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism, p.5)

This language, indicative of the Programme, marks an approach that has come to embrace tourism not as a threat but as a tool for development. It still has the concept of OUV and its protection at its heart but recognises that World Heritage Sites are indeed attractive and popular tourist destinations. The tourist and importantly the community, are recognised as co-producers of these World Heritage Sites and need to participate in their management and in the benefits that can be generated (Casti 2013). This involves effective partnerships and collaboration across a variety of stakeholders. It is interesting to note that despite the recognition of the tourism potential of World Heritage as a key driver for national, regional or local policy makers and indeed, as a driver for inscription, the attendant discourse still appears to obscure direct references to tourism and surrogate language used that refers to local development and the upholding of local identity.

### **The Implications of Inscription**

We are witnessing a shift in the meaning of the World Heritage List in social, political and economic terms. The reasons for what is a re-evaluation of the World Heritage concept are multiple, complex and require further interrogation by researchers, however, we can recognise the following. Whatever the philosophical and ethical challenges the idea of World Heritage still poses and whatever the inadequacies within the structures that uphold and operate the concept, it remains highly successful. It exists as a highly visible iconic global

brand and as such has accumulated added value and a commercial potential that within a world of brands and relational marketing gives it considerable power and influence. At the same time, within a world still struggling with poverty, displacement, exclusion and under-development, heritage can be a critical resource able to lever sustainable forms of development. Furthermore, and central to this volume, World Heritage is having to be flexible to the very real pressures but also the opportunities that international tourism presents us with. The concept of OUV which lies at the heart of the World Heritage idea remains but other more instrumental values that arise from this are being recognised. We cannot ignore the reasons why Nation states and communities wish to be part of the World Heritage List. The desire to be part of the world, to display one's identity and tell one's story and to reap benefit from tourism and associated development is real and needs to be managed as well as been acknowledged. Nor can we dis-invent the List. We can remove Sites against set criteria but we have to deal with not just the properties but also the impacts and implications of these properties for locals, communities, and tourists alike.

The chapters in this book all deal with the implications and impacts of being on the World Heritage List and also of getting onto the List. They each examine different cases and display different methods of approach, but all shed light on the realities of being on the List. Halpenny and Arellano (Chapter 2) examine five Canadian World Heritage Sites and how the label of World Heritage has been used to generate greater consumer awareness of these sites and also has been useful in deterring inappropriate tourism development. Shieldhouse (Chapter 3), using a statistical approach, also looks at the influence of the brand label of World Heritage based on a cases of Mexican historic cities. He demonstrates, as others have, that the label of World Heritage itself may not be sufficient to attract tourists and that investment in supporting infrastructure is also required. The strength of the World Heritage

brand can do much to encourage tourists but of course the presence of the latter can change local community life. In chapter 4, Xiang and Wall examine the implications of designating Mount Taishan as World Heritage on local villagers. Mount Taishan was one of the first sites in China to be inscribed on the World Heritage in 1987 and at the time some locals were relocated. Focusing on a particular village the chapter examines that in the face of loss of land and traditional livelihoods, the locals have become deeply involved with the provision and delivery of tourism services and have adapted their local practices in the face of some over 25 years on the World Heritage List.

In counterpoint to a site listed for a many years, in Chapter 5 Martínez looks at a serial transnational site on the Tentative World Heritage List, the Silk Road. A key issue for making it onto the World Heritage List is the need to deliver a credible and coordinated management plan. Given the diversity of stakeholders involved and their interests this may be problematic and within this there is clear need to understand the possible consequences of being World Heritage. While the tourism potential of the Silk Road is significant Martinez reminds us that that nomination does not necessary guarantee direct and immediate growth in the number of tourists if other conditions regarding protection and management are not previously secured. While inscription on the World Heritage List can generate significant profile for sites and for attendant local communities, Jimura (Chapter 6) suggests that sites may already be well known to national and international tourists and have local and national value. Focusing on Japanese sites and in particular the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, Jimura examines how local identities and wider recognition can pre-date inscription so that the inscription process can act as a form of validation. The impact of listing is picked up by Keshodkar (Chapter 7) who examines the hardships and quality of life experienced by Zanzibar Stone Town residents and questions the ‘value’ of the World Heritage designation

imposed on them, implying that inscription fell short of the promises it suggested. Indeed, it is argued that being on the World Heritage List actually prevents positive change for the residents through modernization of the site.

The processes of inscribing World Heritage are complex and remain open to contestation and debate. In Chapter 8 Shortliffe opens up debate around the gendered notion of heritage and asks whether gender should be considered important in terms of (World) Heritage, especially in the fields of site selection, interpretation, marketing and tourism. Shortliffe argues that heritage is not gender neutral and should be taken seriously as an analytical category. This is not only about simply *adding* women to an existing World Heritage framework but is also about recognizing that the heritage of humanity must represent both men and women. The complexities of World Heritage production are also picked up by Salazar (Chapter 9) who in a case study from Indonesia problematizes the management of World Heritage Sites as sustainable tourism destinations. While much of the theorizing on World Heritage management has relied upon inherited or borrowed (Euro-American) conceptions and assumptions about what should be valued and privileged, this chapter illustrates that the significance of heritage – be it natural or cultural, tangible or intangible – is characterized by ever-changing pluri-versality and thus an extended and necessary process of dialogue, negotiation and collaboration.

With the tourist becoming an increasingly important actor in World Heritage Management, understanding the tourist experience has also become important. In Chapter 10 Cutler, Doherty and Carmichael examine the experience of educational tourists at the Historical Sanctuary of Machu Picchu, Perú. Analyzing the immediate reactions of visitors and their use of photography provides an insight into how tourists experience and gain meaning from the

World Heritage Site. This in turn can be used to inform planning, policy and interpretation relating to the Site. Reed (Chapter 11) also picks up on the ways in which tourists experience World Heritage in her study of Cape Coast Castle and Elmina Castle, two UNESCO World Heritage sites in Ghana. Reed analyzes the interactions between the Sites and tourists' social lives (including local Ghanians) and identifies different motivations. Central to Reed's discussion are questions of who really owns these sites, who has the right to brand them in a particular light, and what this means for inclusion and exclusion of segments of the public.

The theme of how World Heritage Sites are increasingly managed with the development of tourism in mind is picked up by Khirfan in Chapter 12 where she undertakes a comparative analysis of the Management Plans for two UNESCO World Heritage cities, Aleppo in Syria and Acre in Israel. Blending concepts from urban design and environmental psychology with those from tourism studies, Khirfan focuses on the extent to which these two plans influence the users (both residents and foreign tourists) of these World Heritage cities and how they experience the distinctiveness of place. Hurnath and Sambadoo (Chapter 13) focus upon place and local residents in their examination of the World Heritage Site of Le Morne Cultural Landscape Mauritius. They look at ideas of attachment to the World Heritage Site in terms of 'insider' / 'outsider' status and problematize these categories as fluid and open to negotiation. This manifests itself in terms of varying senses of attachment and belonging to the heritage site and also in territorial conflicts. Closely related to tourist attachment to a World Heritage Site is the way in which it is interpreted. There is much research to be undertaken on this theme and Crawford (Chapter 14) exemplifies this by focusing upon a geological World Heritage Site, the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast in North Ireland, UK. Crawford presents and discusses a case study on tourists' expectations and experiences of the site and reveals a need for interpretation that will generate closer tourist engagement.

Community engagement with World Heritage Sites is picked up in Chapter 15 where Fukushima examines the case of Catholic churches built on the Goto islands in Western Japan. This study examines the changes in value over time relating not only to the original value of the churches to the community, but also the value in dismantling and relocating the churches. It is argued that the original, intangible values of the churches to the communities need to be taken into account, in addition to the value of the historic buildings. Community is very much at the centre for Chapter 16 where McClanahan examines the case of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site in Scotland. She focuses upon how the ‘values’ of a World Heritage Site in Scotland became entangled in competing moral discourses relating to political economy and ideas about cultural and historic ‘sustainability’. The proposal to build a ‘wind farm’ within view of the World Heritage Site, and the subsequent debates that ensued regarding aesthetic ‘authenticity’ of the site and its value as a community ‘commons’ demonstrate how World Heritage values are locked within wider debates of social value.

The processes of negotiation between stakeholders are in-built into the production and management of World Heritage and this can be significant for local communities. Brown and Oliver (Chapter 17) look to the ways in which World Heritage status and the tourism it generates has been important in re-shaping perception of Northern Ireland’s post-conflict. Central to this are the ways that the processes of engaging with World Heritage also engage with local communities allowing them to see beyond their differences. In Chapter 18 da Silva examines different World Heritage Sites of Portuguese origin located outside the boundaries of contemporary Portugal. She shows how emotions flow in different directions and are negotiated at different levels in an attempt to understand the attraction of some places while others are forgotten. Finally in Chapter 19 Brantom examines directly the values upon which

the World Heritage system is based and those which are embedded in the notion of sustainable tourism. Always open to the process of negotiation, Brantom explores the implications of shared values for both World Heritage and the process of tourism management.

The diversity of case studies and commentaries presented in this volume deal with the complexities of being inscribed on the World Heritage List, at all stages of the process. In some ways the issues raised are pertinent to *all* heritage sites but are given a heightened profile and intensity by virtue of the 'world' status. Collectively, the cases firmly point to the close and inescapable intersections that now exist between World Heritage and tourism to the extent that tourism is no longer a mere 'epiphenomenon' of the heritage process (Gravari-Barbas, 2012), but rather as both a central factor in its production and a consequence of that production - desired, real and imagined.

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