

# THE WORLD HERITAGE TENTATIVE LIST AS A SOCIO-ECONOMIC FORCE IN NATIONAL CONSERVATION

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## **Abstract**

Cultural heritage is considered a non-replaceable resource not only of the local but of the global communities and its worth in real economic terms and added value needs to be evaluated.

The World Heritage Convention is a unique mechanism for one side of a dialogue between global and local, but, together with the new UNESCO Convention for intangible heritage, it needs an Esperanto to communicate at the grass-roots level. The effort is now in the evaluation of the narratives of World Heritage on National Lists and not only National Heritage on World Lists. The script for this dialogue can be seen in the World Heritage Tentative Lists. These are ideas that are *bottom-up* for the world and *top-down* for the State-Party.

National Heritage can be defined as all those resources identified on the territory of a State Party for which they have custodianship and stewardship for its sustainability. To benefit from this dialogue a further refinement needs to be made to a National Register. While the sites can be considered on a one-to-one basis, there is the need for an on-going process of evaluation of their significance within themselves as a cultural subject, as an historic theme or as a geographic region. This demands a sense of poetry, optimism and delight that are the responsibility of those that care and understand.

The balances between the needs for change and development and conservation have to be assessed within the context of the irreversible loss and its potential for the well-being of those who might enjoy this value. To establish the criteria for evaluation, and for a Tentative List, there is a need to identify and work with the stakeholders who might range from the owners of the properties, the visitors and those that have direct or indirect economic interest. They will also include national and regional interests.

This paper will look at the possible evaluation processes and their potential for the socio-economic growth of the local communities.

## **The World Heritage Tentative List as a socio-economic force in National conservation**

Cultural heritage is considered a non-replaceable resource not only of the local but of the global communities and its worth in real economic terms and added value needs to be evaluated.

The World Heritage Convention is a unique mechanism for one side of this dialogue, but, together with the new UNESCO Convention for intangible heritage, it needs an Esperanto to communicate at the grass-roots level. Local responsibility is inherent in the World Heritage Convention and elaborated on in its Operational Guidelines. The effort is now in the evaluation of the narratives of World Heritage on National Lists and not only National Heritage on World Lists. The script for this dialogue can be seen in the World Heritage Tentative Lists. These are ideas that are *bottom-up* for the world and *top-down* for the State-Party. The National Heritage can be defined as all those resources identified on the territory of a State Party for which they have custodianship and stewardship for its sustainability. This means in simple terms the promoting of activities needed for the handing over of those resources in a responsible manner, enhanced, to the next generation. Sustainability is also defined by Professor Randall Thomas as about poetry, optimism and delight; energy, CO<sub>2</sub>, water and waste being secondary.... and, in the words of Louis Kahn, the measurable is only a servant of the immeasurable.<sup>1</sup>

To benefit from this dialogue a further refinement needs to be made to a National Register. While a National Register is considered on a one-to-one basis, there is the need for an on-going process of evaluation of the significance of the sites within themselves as a cultural subject, as an historic theme or as a geographic region. This demands a sense of poetry, optimism and delight that are the responsibility of those that care and understand.

The balances between the needs for change and development and conservation have to be assessed within the context of the irreversible loss and its potential for the well-being of those who might enjoy this value. To establish the evaluation there is a need to identify and work with the stakeholders who might range from the owners of the properties, the visitors and those that have direct or indirect economic interest. There are also national and regional interests for the identification of the issues that are on the public agenda at local, regional and global levels.

The need of a national register on a one-to-one basis

The on-going process of evaluation of the sites within themselves as a cultural subject, historic theme or as a geographic region

The sense of poetry, optimism and delight are the responsibility of those that care and understand

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas, R. Ed Sustainable Urban Design – an environmental approach, Spon Press, 2003

These evaluations are part of a dialogue between the World and National Heritage.

A further refinement needs to be made to the National Register. The Esperanto is the definition of significance.

significance		cultural	historical	geographical	ntangible
	universal				
	regional				
	ocal				

### **The Israeli Experience Background**

On the 6<sup>th</sup> January 2000, the State of Israel ratified the Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972 becoming the 158<sup>th</sup> and one of the last nations to be signatory to the Convention. The attitude of Israel towards itself and towards the world is obviously going to change. It demands that we all develop new ways of thinking, learn new skills and integrate them from the knowledge which we can get from without, which previously was somewhat closed to us. What we have tried to do over the past two years is to generate the basis for Israel's position in the World Heritage Convention by convening the Israel World Heritage Committee and preparing a Tentative List of sites to the Convention. In this way we are trying to encourage dialogue between other professional disciplines and in other countries.

I would see the outcome of this course is there will be more people involved with the World Heritage Committee in Israel, more people involved in consulting, preparing files for the World Heritage, so we will expand the circles of people that are really dealing with this.

### **The World Heritage Convention for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972**

The World Heritage Convention has two distinct components. It is the protection for World *Cultural* and *Natural* Heritage. The World Heritage Centre at UNESCO coordinates the activities of the Convention and administers the World Heritage List which presently includes ....cultural sites.....natural sites and..... mixed sites. The sites are inscribed on the basis of their nomination by States Parties and their evaluation by the representatives of the Advisory Bodies to the Convention. There are three Advisory Bodies to the Convention - ICOMOS, the International Council of Monuments and Sites in Paris, which is the advisory body for Cultural Heritage; the IUCN, the International Centre for the Conservation of Nature in Gland, which is the advisory body for Natural Heritage and ICCROM, the International Centre for the Conservation of Cultural Property in Rome, which is concerned with the aspects of

training. These advisory bodies work at the international level, ICOMOS being an NGO, IUCN and ICCROM being IGO's.

The acid test for inscription to the World Heritage List is that of *universal significance*. There are six sub-criteria for Cultural Heritage and four for Natural Heritage. With the expanded representation of sites around the world, the WHC is now evaluating the various groups of heritage and its representation by type and region. This will be the basis for a wider discussion on the future of the Convention after 30 years of its activities. The first five criteria for the Cultural Heritage deal with the aspects of architecture and archaeology as evidence of cultural meaning while criteria (vi) refers to the intangibility of the proposed site. Much discussion has been opened on this facet of heritage and whether according to the Convention it can stand on its own.

Therefore, the understanding of what really is *universal significance* demands a dialogue amongst ourselves to define exactly how we want to present ourselves and how we are presented within the world context. The final outcome is that there are a series of criteria, to which a site is evaluated, in order to achieve the status of World Heritage.

### **The Israel World Heritage Committee**

What normally happens when a convention is signed. But who does Cultural Heritage belong to? The first issue, the decision regarding which governmental ministry should take responsibility. This is important because there are numerous overlapping activities including the Ministry of Environment with its responsibility for the National Parks Authority and the Nature Reserve Authority; the Ministry of Education with its responsibility for the Antiquities Authority, the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Culture and responsibility of the Council for the Preservation of Sites and the Ministry of Interior with their responsibility for planning. Serendipitously the Israel National Commission for UNESCO took the Convention under its wing, under the aegis of the Ministry of Education. Thus the Israel World Heritage Committee, IWHC, was set up within the Israel National Commission for UNESCO. The Commission has some seven sub committees, dealing with a wide variety of subjects in education, science and culture, with each committee developing its own pattern of work. The IWHC has developed a pattern of co-option and process of decision-making by consensus; it attempts to bring together all interested authorities and activists from all walks of life.

The Israel Antiquities Authority and ICOMOS formed the first grouping of the Committee. The Nature and Parks Authority were then co-opted together with the Ministries of Environment, Tourism and Interior. The relevant local NGOs were invited, opening it up to groups, including the Society for the Preservation of Nature, Friends of the Earth/Middle East, the Israel Architects Association-Heritage Section and the Council for the Preservation of Sites. We are still open to other groups, which are involved in the protection of heritage in Israel. At the last meeting of the IWHC the representative of DOCOMOMO was accepted as a member of the Committee. The Israel Lands Administration is to join the IWHC as an executing agency for the

comprehensive land policies of the government and not in its role as determining the policy of the government as a budget generator.

## The Tentative List

The first obligation was to present a Tentative List to the World Heritage Centre in UNESCO, enumerating the possible potential sites to be inscribed by Israel to the World Heritage List. The booklet published, including 23 sites, was presented to UNESCO in June 2000 and deposited at the World Heritage Centre at its Committee meeting in Cairns, Australia in November 2000. The concept is that a national committee works 'bottom-up' vis-a-vis the world and 'top-down' within the country. In other words, Israel says to the world, "This is our Tentative List," which I will call the Oscar nominations. Then from that basis we discuss with the interested parties in Israel and those who are to prepare the necessary background material for the proposed nomination.

In preparing the list, the Israel World Heritage Committee decided on the Delphi method. Each of the participating Ministries, Authorities and NGO's were asked to independently submit a list of proposed sites. At this first stage no contact was made between the bodies. The Council for Preservation of Sites, naturally, proposed sites like Chatzer Tel Chai, which have significance for the Council. Other sites like Masada and Acre, were proposed by the majority of the bodies. We then started to appreciate exactly how each group interpreted the term *universal significance*.

We tried to look at it as a window into Israel. In other words on one aspect we just said, "What is the Cultural Heritage within Israel? How shall we present it? What is the balance and what are the issues?" It is what we call VPC, very politically correct in as much as that it tries to look at various aspects of all the people who have touched place. The approach is that we are custodians of place. We do not expect the Italian government to claim any activity in Caesarea or in Bet Shean in the same way, strangely enough, we have a different parallel discussion, in that I would not claim to have any sovereignty on sites of Jewish culture in other countries. It would be reasonable for us to propose cooperation and technical assistance and develop joint activities and dialogue, but each person is the custodian of their place.

We then attempted to present as wide a range of sites as possible within the country. We also believe that Cultural Heritage knows no boundaries, so therefore it is quite reasonable to show the sites of Israel on a map without indicating the political and national boundaries. The sites are presented by geographic regions from north to south, including the Galilee, the plains of Bet Shean, Jezreel, and the Coast, Jerusalem and the Judean Hills and the sites in the Negev.

Starting with the Galilee - we have Tel Dan and the sources of the Jordan, being the earliest known technological arch in the world. Therefore it is under technology. Number two are the early synagogues in the Galilee. It is the idea of identifying synagogues as the first metaphysical space. It is not wonderful architecture, but it is the cradle of monotheistic prayer.

The Galilee Journeys of Jesus and the Apostles. There was enormous pressure to propose Nazareth, but the problem is that it there is no authenticity. We tried to find a

solution by using the journeys between Nazareth and Tiberias and the Mount of Beatitudes, Mount Tabor and to use that as a cultural route.

Acre has now been inscribed. The Sea of Galilee and its ancient sites. Again the Judeo-Christian sites around the Sea of Galilee, Churubab Minim, again it is not a wonderful site, but its importance is, it is one of the first sites of the Omayyad period and it is part of a serial nomination, which could be then linked then, the earliest Omayyad palaces of the early Moslem period in this area of the world.

The Horns of Hittim was objected to as an independent element by the Israel Antiquities Authority that was the only veto that which was put on. I personally have enormous affinity for the Battle of Salah-a-din in the space. The space is wonderful; you can actually be there and feel that you can see the battle-taking place. We linked it with Arbel, so you have Arbel Nabi Schwaib and Karnei Chitim as one element.

The Plains of Bet Shean, Jezreel, and the Coastal region represent the central area of Israel and include the Bahai buildings, the prehistoric sites of Ubadiyah, Shaar Hagolan and Mt. Carmel. Again Ubadiyah being the first 'hunter-gatherer' site outside Africa and Shaar Hagolan being the 'early-farmer' site, close to each other.

Deganya and Nahalal were first proposed by the students in my course 'Introduction to Conservation' at the Department of Architecture of Bezalel. My first reaction was of amazement, but I must admit they made an argument that convinced me that it is more than reasonable to put Deganya and Nahalal on our Tentative List. I think that we all know of the utopias proposed over the centuries, but when we find them actually being translated into physical form, in patterns that are part of town planning, they become something quite special. Eleven, Beit Shean, which is part of Decapolis. Twelve Caesarea. Again Caesarea probably would not get World Heritage standing as another archaeological site, but because of the port, the complex water systems of its hinterland and its cultural significance, it should achieve World Heritage status..

I want to dwell for a second on the thirteen, which are the Bauhaus Buildings in Tel Aviv. Modern heritage is now coming into fashion. Only in the past three years, there have been nominations in Modern Heritage in the World Heritage Convention adding to Brazilia being nominated in 1987 and the Bauhaus buildings of Dessau and Weimar in 1996, the Reitweld-Schroeder House in Holland, the Horta Houses in Belgium and the Mies van de Rohe House in Slovakia. The arguments now which are taking place is that you cannot inscribe modern heritage without having proper criteria. In other words, is it the icon of their style? Is it the first of the style? Is it the main building of the architect? There is going to be a time out on this to discuss the proposal of the criteria for modern heritage. I have asked that both the ICOMOS, the Architects Association and the Schools of Architecture consider taking action and trying to evaluate the 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture in Israel so as together with DOCOMOMO, which is a young and powerful group, to be able to work out exactly what would we perceive then as criteria to evolve into 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture. I can say as Chairman is that I see that the nominations of the Bauhaus buildings in Tel Aviv as one of the most important nominations which we are going to do in Israel of all this list. We might inscribe Beit Shean on the World Heritage. I mean it is going to be quite interesting, but it is not going to make a dent anywhere. But to put World Heritage in

the middle of Tel Aviv will highlight and will change the perception, both professionally and publicly, to what really heritage means. I think that if we were to wait another year there wouldn't be anything left and if we were to have done it a year before, the plan for Tel Aviv for the conservation of Tel Aviv would not have been in place. There is going to be an enormous lobby, which we are going to have to do on this. We are being supported by Germany because they have the Bauhaus Buildings of Dessau and Weimar on the list, so therefore it becomes a point of interest. It is called the White City of Tel Aviv - the nomenclature is being changed. It is called the White City, some thousand buildings. So you can see therefore there are certain things which are structured by criteria, they are called criteria but also in a committee I think that as Chairman of the committee, the committee itself works with a feeling of soul and exactly really do we need within the country.

The white mosque in Ramle, it is the first Islamic City and has its recognition.

Jerusalem, we won't go into it. People who are interested can see the last month was the United Nation's comment on Jerusalem, which is a story within itself, but we asked for the Mt. Zion to extended to the existing Old City, which is already declared. The Region of Caves and Hiding, each one in itself isn't worth very much, but the whole area encompassing an area populated with a quarter of a million people during the Roman Byzantine period in the area of Beit Guvrin is a story within itself, which again has interest.

In the southern are of the country, the Negev, there are included Masada, and the Machtishim country which has been supported by Professor Emanuel Mazor from the Weizmann Institute. We are working hard on bringing together a discussion on the Great Rift Valley to move the Machtshim as a declared site. Shivta and Mount Karkoum within the area of the Negev and Timna become then a group which we are going to discuss in a much wider scale over the next years perhaps when peace comes together with Finan in Jordan.

The last two are serial nominations - the biblical Tel and the Crusader fortresses. But what we do have in Israel, is that we have got lots of them. So I think what you have is a collection, we can say we have got tens of these Crusader fortresses is in itself really critical and what we wanted to do is then develop it within a wider scale.

### **Cultural and Natural Heritage of our Region**

What we proposed consists of three separate appendices, (a) collections in the form of multi-national serial sites, (b) sites with trans-national boundaries and (c) cultural routes. These appendices, which are included in the Tentative List of the State of Israel, were proposed at a time when the political climate was a little different, so hence they might look quite strange at this moment in time. But I think that they remain there as a *list of hope*.

While the collections highlight the Biblical Tel and the Crusader Fortresses there are also the Decapolis and the first Omayyad Palaces. In addition we have enumerated the Desert Monasteries of Byzantium, Rock Art and the Port Cities of the Levant.



The trans-national boundary sites represent the Natural Heritage of the Region and are centred along the 7500 kilometre of The Great Rift Valley. The segments in Israel include the River Jordan and its sources, the Dead Sea, Arava Valley with its industrial archaeology and the Gulf of Aqaba. These are all sites which belong together with our neighbors and we are hoping that this will be discussed at the forthcoming experts meeting of The Great Rift Valley, which will take place after the festivals in October in Israel under the auspices of the World Heritage Centre at UNESCO.

The last group is that of cultural routes, the spice route and the Nabatian settlements, the Via Maris, the Narrow Gauge Ottoman Railways and the Pilgrims Routes - in the Footsteps of Abraham, Jesus and Mohamed. Routes can be identified in many forms and patterns, but the idea is to generate thoughts that Cultural Heritage is not something restricted to particular boundaries, but is also devolved of nationalism and that uses the concept of World Heritage, not as *casus belli* but that of *consensus*.

### The future role of the IWHC

The policy now is to summarize the activities and appraise our Tentative List. The Tentative List can be changed at any time. But what we are now looking within this phase of our activities is that we now have to work 'top-down' within the country, because up till now most of our effort has been 'bottom-up' towards UNESCO. But this should also include the developing of grass-roots activities and the pride of place that is so important to our environment.

The IWHC prompts people, for instance, we said, "What about Caesarea?" and the people in Caesarea said, "We don't want to suggest it from World Heritage." The Bahai people came along and said, "Well, we want to think about it." They want to go to the Bahai community around the world and think about what would happen if the first site to the Bahai community would be then declared. So there are people who thinking about it. Other people who are rushing ahead would like to do it. There is other gentle encouragement.

So what we are looking at, then the policy now is to first of all to create then another level, which we have never had in Israel. We have local, we have district and we have national sites. We have never thought about widening it. So we have ourselves world sites. So we now want to create this new pyramid, which will then allow people to then have a greater understanding about the structure and criteria of the sites.

World Heritage Sites		Tentative List			
					World
					National
					Regional
					District

						ocal
			The living City		Local tradition	

We then link this whole subject to World Heritage and link it back and bring it into the day to day planning and design activities of the country.

Once sites are inscribed on the World Heritage List a programme of monitoring, management and maintenance is developed. This represents the combined effort between the authorities, the sites managers and ICOMOS, who are the independent professional monitoring force for WHC. This is a whole new aspect of the relationship between the various authorities as new work and activities become available and with its new skills, which we all have to learn.