



PUSH



Promoting dialogue and cultural Understanding of our Shared Heritage

Reviewing our Shared Heritage

June 12 - 14, 2007. Jerusalem

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY PUSH REGIONAL WORKSHOP



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Introduction

The idea for the Promoting dialogue and cultural Understanding of our Shared Heritage (PUSH) project developed through many discussions between faculty members and administrative representatives from Al Quds University and the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design with the aim of encouraging cooperation between academics in the region. The PUSH project builds on the UNESCO recommendations for academic networking and dialogue to foster mutual respect for cultural and natural heritage. Bolstered by the addition of The Jordan Society for Sustainable Development, the tri-lateral PUSH project aims to create a regional dialogue on issues of cultural and natural heritage, resulting in concrete benefits at the national and regional levels.



To that aim, PUSH works to break down cultural prejudices by building greater understanding of the region's shared heritage as a means to respect and appreciate the cultures of the 'other' thereby advancing peace in the region. Furthermore, by identifying important sites of natural and cultural heritage, PUSH brings international attention to the rich cultural and natural heritage of the region in need of preservation.

Since the PUSH project was initiated in October 2006, the three partners have worked to synthesize the available inventories of cultural and natural heritage through discussions with stakeholders including other universities, research institutions, private consultants and local non-governmental organizations. During the discussion and evaluation process each PUSH team has been in constant dialogue with the other two teams, to draw attention to the commonality of sites located in Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian areas. Weekly meetings were held at the management level, augmented by regular full team meetings in Jerusalem, and constant email and phone discussions. These meetings and discussions enabled team members to create the necessary synergy between the three national lists, as well as to create and expand professional cross-border linkages between the three partner institutions.

As a result, each team produced a publication entitled Exploring the Shared Heritage: Draft Inventory of Sites of Shared Regional Heritage. Each inventory describes no less than thirty examples of shared cultural and natural heritage sites. The breadth of the sites is unparalleled; from rock art, to religious and historical buildings; from cultural routes, to sites of early technological development, each of which illustrate the important historical, cultural and natural heritage shared by the peoples of the region.

The Regional Workshop described in this Executive Summary brought the three PUSH teams and numerous local, regional and international experts together to review the important inventories and plan the next stages of the PUSH project.

We welcome your comments and participation in this unique discussion.



Executive Summary of PUSH Regional Workshop

Overview

The purpose of the Regional Workshop was to review the three parallel PUSH publications entitled *Exploring the Shared Heritage: Draft Inventory of Sites of Shared Regional Heritage*, gain perspective on the work and accomplishments achieved by the PUSH project to date and move forward by addressing questions about the next steps of the project. Furthermore, although over forty bi-lateral and tri-lateral meetings had been held since the inauguration of the PUSH project, this was the first time the tri-lateral team came together to meet in full.



The PUSH project's Regional Workshop was held on June 12-14, 2007 at the YMCA in Jerusalem. The workshop was attended by the full PUSH team, including student, faculty and administrative representatives from Al Quds University, Bezalel Academy of Art and Design and the Jordan Society for Sustainable Development (JSSD), in addition to the six regional PUSH Peer Reviewers, a panel of visiting international peer reviewers and various invited regional stakeholders. Upon arrival guests received copies of the *Exploring the Common Heritage: Draft Inventory of Sites of Shared Regional Heritage* published in parallel by the three PUSH partners in addition to other supplementary materials.

Introduction

The workshop began with opening statements from Dr. Yusuf Natsheh who introduced the three PUSH partner institutions, reviewed the project's timeline and mission statement and revisited the PUSH project's first year accomplishments. The overview was then followed by a brief presentation of several example sites described in the PUSH publication *Exploring the Shared Heritage: Draft Inventory of Sites of Shared Regional Heritage*. Introductions of the assembled participants followed.



The Meaning of Common Heritage

Session 1:

*Presented by Professor Simon Goldhill,
Professor of Greek, Cambridge
University; Fellow, King's College,
Cambridge.*

Professor Goldhill raised numerous questions focused on the meaning of shared heritage illustrated through the explanation of several Greek words. Professor Goldhill posed several provocative questions such as; "What would happen if we termed the sites as 'sites of contested cultural heritage?'" He asserted that "the written explanation of a site be a brief set of facts, the truth, which none the less recognizes the different histories of the site, which notes its symbolic role and its historical functions, and tries to indicate why people have cared about it, without forcing any particular agenda".

The lecture was followed by a lengthy question and answer session focused on defining terms, language and practicality. There was general support for the word "shared" as an expression of the positive influence the PUSH project hopes to have on the understanding of the shared heritage in the region. A semantics discussion ensued which aimed to clarify the definitions of the following terms: shared, dialogue, cultural understanding and heritage. It was agreed that the notion of heritage changes in space and time and its interpretation is what is important in a contested country. A dominating subject was the issue of inclusivity versus exclusivity in the narrative. It was agreed that we must define which physical sites we would like to include and that there must be a strong narrative thread which connects the serial sites.



After several hours of discussion numerous questions remained unresolved such as: Do we have the ability to respect and understand the other's interpretation? How do we remain in constant recognition of the other? How do we allow multiple stories to be told while not destroying the archeological evidence? Numerous questions surrounding the political issue of ownership followed, not only in terms of physical possession but also in terms of sharing a memory. Several participants noted that truth is in it of itself a contested issue and that human engagement in a site is what is important since people transfer onto the physical site the human story and value. The fundamental interest of the project is not only to explore the different narratives but also to allow a person to separate the history and tradition of the land from his/her national identity, allowing for greater historical honesty and understanding. The discussion ended with a practical discussion of how to use cultural heritage sites to promote dialogue and cultural awareness and an analysis of the project's available tools and next steps.



Criteria for Shared Heritage

Session 2:

Presented by Professor Professor Henry Cleere, former ICOMOS member and consultant to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee.

Professor Henry Cleere guided the workshop participants through the objectives and structures of relevant cultural heritage conventions. The PUSH Project, with its basic goal of promoting shared heritage, is regional in its application and deliberately focused on the identification of heritage elements that demonstrate the physical and historical communalities of this group of states. Professor Cleere noted the difference between the regional and local goals of the PUSH project and the World Heritage program and emphasized the need for objective selection criteria, management, conservation, presentation, and education. It is the shared cultural significance of sites and monuments that must determine their recognition under the PUSH criteria. He further noted that it is important that there be comparability between the sites and monuments which would make up a PUSH transboundary serial group, both in terms of historical and symbolic significance and the overall state of protection and conservation. Professor Cleere asserted that the eventual success of PUSH will depend upon the selection of successful pilot projects which should be representative and relatively straightforward to implement.

The lecture was followed by a discussion concerning site selection. Participants voiced a preference for areas as opposed to sites or monuments, specifically cultural landscapes typical to the region such as hills, olive trees, irrigation and water systems.

This led to a discussion of difficulties the project faces in promoting the concept of shared heritage in a highly polarized region. Participants asserted that in order to influence public opinion PUSH must involve the local communities. Partnership with the Friends of the Earth Middle East's (FoEME) Good Water Neighbors project was discussed as a mutually beneficial way to begin work at the community level as FoEME has a longstanding presence in Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian communities, particularly throughout the Jordan River Valley. The Jordan Valley cultural landscape is an exceptionally illustrative example of a shared regional site as it is situated between Europe, Asia and Africa.

Discussion concerning the project's need for an early success in a community in order to make a lasting impact followed. Consideration must be given to the limited time of the project. Marketability and the use of the site were also mentioned as important factors. Participants noted their collective hope that the project's current framework will be PUSH I, the beginning of a much longer project.



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Geographical, Historical and Biographical Narrative Alternatives

Session 3:

**Presented by Neil Silberman, Director of the
Ename Center for Public Archaeology and
Heritage Presentation in Belgium.**



Mr. Silberman's analysis offered a fresh perspective on the overall implications of the *Exploring the Shared Heritage: Draft Inventory of Sites of Shared Regional Heritage* publication by focusing on the narrative themes inherent in the site selection. Mr. Silberman found that an examination of the distribution of sites over historical periods revealed a distinct pattern of central themes identified by each PUSH team as well as the project as a whole. Silberman found that through the site selection process the PUSH project placed a marked emphasis on the Roman to Islamic periods. Mr. Silberman then divided the sites into four thematic groups; urban and rural life, coexisting religious traditions, industrial and agricultural innovation and relationship to the environment. Using these four themes, Mr. Silberman stressed that we can untangle the conflicting narratives to create a new narrative of past and future highlighting the commonality of the narratives in respect to the Palestinian, Jordanian and Israeli sites. Thus, the PUSH project could be considered the heritage project for the future. He further noted that at this point an understanding of what the site inventory tells us about how we identify ourselves is also noteworthy.

The subsequent discussion period began with the suggestion to utilize the four themes, individually select sites and move on to experimentation. Participants noted that the project needs to be honest with itself and be aware that through our efforts we are creating an additional layer of narrative. Mr. Silberman noted that one of the most important elements of the project is the tri lateral working process, making the documentation of the process critical. Guests noted that the inventories were compiled primarily by architects and archeologists, and that there would surely be great differences in their composition if there were sociologists, economists and other professional representatives involved. Numerous other questions arose such as: What role can the site play for the communities. How can PUSH empower communities? and How can we prepare ourselves for opposition within the communities?



The Summary of Conference Outcomes and the Selection of a Short List of Pilot Sites

Session 4:

***Presented by Professor Daniele Pini,
University of Ferrara, Italy.***

The majority of the logistical session was devoted to allowing individuals to suggest criteria for site selection and promote specific sites. Recommended criteria for site selection included; the selection of less politically contested sites ideally located adjacent to communities interested in cross border projects where the heritage site could be promoted as an economic asset. It was further advised that in promoting the grassroots understanding of our shared heritage PUSH should address young people, students and schools. To do this PUSH must meaningfully involve school systems and administrations and possibly involve teachers in the initial planning stages. Clearly, this type of grassroots cross border work requires support from the community.

The three Project Managers closed the workshop with words of gratitude to the workshop organizers and the many guests who came from afar at their own expense to participate in the PUSH project.



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Next Steps

Following the conclusion of the Regional Workshop in Jerusalem partner teams began preparing *Our Shared Heritage*, a publication which will merge the first three draft national inventories to produce a single inventory of outstanding sites of shared heritage due out at the end of 2007.

During the second year of the project, PUSH will select six pilot sites from the *Our Shared Heritage* publication to concentrate its activities in for the remaining year. At each of the six pilot sites, PUSH will prepare site manuals, brochures and information boards, in addition to conducting tour guide trainings focused on the shared cultural heritage of each of the sites. These efforts will encourage the building of an inclusive understanding of the area's rich heritage. The project will conclude with an evaluation and a proposal for replication of the action.



Regional Workshop Agenda

Regional Workshop Tour: Tuesday, June 12th, 2007

09:00: Tour of Jerusalem's Shared Heritage Sites:

Sites of Shared Regional Heritage to be visited:

Mount Mukkaber

Mount Zion

St. Stephan Gate

St. Anne/ Salahiyya

Mount of Olives

Church Of Mary/ Tomb

Nabi Samuel

Regional Workshop Agenda: Wednesday, June 13th, 2007

09:00 Registration and Coffee

09:30 Welcome and Overview of Project, YMCA Library

Project Managers: Dr. Yusuf Natsheh, Mr. Khaled Nasser and Professor Michael Turner

10:15 Session I: The Meaning of Common Heritage

Professor Simon Goldhill, King's College, University of Cambridge

Open Experts Panel Discussion:

Chaired by Dr. Yusuf Natsheh, Al-Quds University PUSH Project Manager

12:30 Lunch, YMCA Dining Room

14:00 Session II: Criteria for Shared Heritage

Professor Henry Cleere, Former World Heritage Coordinator, ICOMOS

Open Experts Panel Discussion:

Chaired by Professor Michael Turner, Bezalel Academy PUSH Project Manager

16:15 Session III: Geographical, Historical, and Biographical Narrative Alternatives

Neil Silberman, Director of the Ename Center and President of the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites

Open Experts Discussion:

Chaired by Mr. Khaled Nassar, JSSD PUSH Project Manager

18:15 Closing Statements: Dr. Yusuf Natsheh

19:00 Financial Managers Meeting

20:00 Dinner

Regional Workshop Agenda: Thursday, June 14th, 2007

09:00 PUSH Staff and Invited Guests Meeting: YMCA Board Room

Opening Chaired by Professor Daniele Pini, University of Ferrara

Session I: Summary of Conference Outcomes

Session II: Selection of Short List of Pilot Sites

11:00 Conclusions/ End of Conference

Regional Workshop Participants

PUSA Team

Elizabeth Koch: Project Coordinator.



Al Quds University

Dr. Yusuf Natsheh: Project Manager.
Dr. Marwan Fayaz Abu Khalef
Architect Osama Hamdam
Mr. Mohammad Jaradat
Mr. Amin Dawabshe, Financial Manager
Mr. Sameh Hallaq, Project Financial Coordinator



Bezalel Academy of Art & Design

Professor Michael Turner: Project Manager.
Dr. Doron Bar
Mr. Moshe Caine
Architect David Guggenheim
Ms. Kinneret Ben Amram, Deputy Director of Finances
and Administration
Student Assistants from the Department of Architecture
Anat Dror, Josef Israelshvili, and Rena Wasser



Jordanian Society for Sustainable Development

Mr. Khaled Nassar: Project Manager.
Ms. Rawan Haddad
Dr. Mohammed Waheeb
Mr. Salam Labaadi



PUSA Regional Peer Reviewers:

Professor Abdel Aziz, al-Albeit University
Mr. Adnan Budieri, Environmental Consultant
Dr. Nazmi al-Jubeh, Director Riwaq Center
Professor Ora Limor, Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Open University

PUSA International Guest Peer Reviewers

Dr. Henry F. Cleere,
Former World Heritage Coordinator, ICOMOS

Professor Simon Goldhill,
Fellow King's College, University of Cambridge

Ms. Claudia Liuzza,
Ename Center

Professor Daniel Pini,
Universita degli Studi di Ferrara

Mr. Neil Silberman,
ICOMOS International Scientific Committee and Ename Center



Expert Guests:

Dr. Gideon Avni, Deputy Directory Israel Antiquities Authority

Mr. Gideon Bromberg, Friends of the Earth Middle East Director, Tel Aviv Office

Ms. Mira Edelstein, Friends of the Earth Middle East, Tel Aviv Office

Dr. Eliezer Frankenberg, Deputy Chief Scientist, Israel Nature and Parks Authority

Mr. Eric Hansen, Royal Norwegian Embassy Representative

Ms. Alice Jaraiseh, Friends of the Earth Middle East, Bethlehem Office

Ms. Manal Al Khateeb, Friends of the Earth Middle East, Bethlehem Office

Ms. Anna Lena, UNESCO Ramallah

Dr. Khaled al-Qawasmi, Director Hebron Rehabilitation Committee

Architect Giora Solar, Executive Board Member, ICOMOS

Dr. Adel Yahya, Director Palestinian Education Exchange

Dr. Uzi Dehari, Deputy Director, Israel Antiquities Authority

Avner Goren, archaeologist and tour guide

The Meaning of Common Heritage

*Paper presented by Professor Simon Goldhill
Professor of Greek, Cambridge University; Fellow, King's College, Cambridge.*

For at least 800 years, the standard language of the elite in Jerusalem was Greek. From Alexander's time to the coming of Caliph Omar, if you didn't speak Greek you were excluded not just from elite culture, but from the institutions of court and palace. That is part of the heritage of Jerusalem, as much as it is of western culture, and so I am going to take the privilege of being a classicist by starting with three words of Greek, each of which will open a vista, I hope, on to the problems we are going to talk about today.

I take my first word from the first line of a play which has a claim to speak most directly from ancient Greek to cities and peoples in conflict in the modern age, Sophocles' great tragedy *Antigone*, a play which speaks vividly to any community faced by tyrannical law, social division, and, above all, the passions of extremism. The first line of the play is addressed by Antigone to her sister, Ismene, and it reads ὦ κοινὸν ἀπτάδελφον Ἰσμῆνης κάρα. that is, "Of common kin, my very sister, dear Ismene". Typically for *Antigone*, it is a full on way of saying "hello", an address that emphasizes with passion a bond between the two girls. They share kin, they have common blood, she is not just a sister, but a "very sister". Antigone has just heard that her uncle Creon, the ruler of the city, has given an edict. Their brother Eteocles who died fighting to preserve the city from invaders will be buried with full military honours; their other brother, Polyneices who led the troops against his own city, aiming to reclaim it for his own sovereignty, will not be buried but his body left to rot. Antigone, of course, is horrified at this different treatment of the two bodies, and has already decided to bury her brother, the one declared a traitor to the city. When she says to Ismene, "of common kin, my very sister, dear Ismene", she is not just saying "hello" but reminding her of the ties of blood that link the two girls, because she is going to appeal to her sister to join her in her venture to bury the traitorous brother, precisely on the grounds that he is their common kin, their very brother – even though he was attacking their own city. Ismene is frightened and unwilling to go against the authorities. The sisters quarrel and by the end of the first scene Antigone is yelling at Ismene that she is really no sister, and Ismene is calling her mad. They may have common blood but that is just a prelude to fighting.

Nor should that surprise us entirely. Antigone's father, after all, is Oedipus who slept with his mother and killed his father. Common blood is really dangerous in this world. The two brothers too have killed each other in the war: they have shared a common fate as the chorus remind us, they have killed each other with a common hand. This is a family that murderously rips itself apart. Creon, the king, for his part is obsessed with the commonwealth: the bonds that tie citizens, the claims of the state, the community. He puts that above any family ties. His commitment to the political destroys him as much as Antigone's commitment to the family destroys her.

The whole play is a profound reflection on the play's first word, κοινόν: the common, the shared. First it shows how different ideas of what is shared, lead to conflict. Ideals of what's common – the family, the state, the human race – can conflict with each other and produce violent rows. Second, it shows what happens when commitment to ideals of what is shared become extreme: disaster follows. The distortion of seeing things from only one side – even sharing – leads to self-destruction. Antigone kills herself, Creon is totally destroyed because they could not control what it means to care for the family, or to do one's duty to the community.

I begin with *Antigone* to make two simple points which must underlie our discussion today. First, sharing is not a simply positive term. Parents in England often say to squabbling children: play nicely, share! But *Antigone* reminds us that sharing isn't necessarily nice: it can be the nastiness of feud, mutual murder, the worst destructiveness of diseased families. When we talk of shared cultural heritage,

we have to be very careful that we don't use the word "shared" without recalling and defending against its dark side. "Shared" cultural heritage in the Middle East will always also be a shared history of violence, and we can't expect to ignore this. A shared history of violence between groups, and within groups. Second, Sophocles reminds us how often what is shared becomes an aggressive appeal, an attempt to force people into a position: because you share this blood with me, you must think like me and do what I do... And Sophocles shows how dangerous and extreme such demands for complicity can be.

My second Greek word is ἐπιχώριο, which can be translated as "local" ". It is a common word in Greek works about cultural heritage. It is used in phrases like, "that's what the locals believe". In every single case that Herodotus, the father of history, uses the word epichorios, he uses it to refer to people who are not like himself, who are not proper Greeks. So he says about the foreign places he visits, "that's a local custom there". And he often uses it to dismiss these places as odd and exotic and not like us: so he says about the Egyptians – a country he actually admires for its wisdom and antiquity – that women go to the market while men sit at home and weave, sons do not have to support their parents, but daughters do, and men pee sitting down whereas we pee standing up. That is, Egyptians do things upside down, and that is how you can tell that they are not Greek. It's a way of expressing who we are by defining the other as the negative, the opposite of us – and a very common strategy it is too.

Thucydides, however, the founder of scientific history, uses the same word in a quite different way. Every time he uses the word "local", he uses it to refer to himself and Athens where he was born and bred. This is what we do, he says, this is our local custom. He sees the idea of the local as a way of describing himself and his people to others. So he will explain that "here in Athens we have a collective grave for war heroes, it is our local custom ...". The distinction between Herodotus' habit and Thucydides' habit is crucial for how we think about the issues of cultural heritage. The stories we tell about places, customs, people, may always be ways of talking about ourselves but there are quite different positions we can take. We can explain ourselves to others, we can use the other to define ourselves. We can exclude or include. Whatever story we are to tell about shared cultural heritage will depend on what position the speaker adopts. And who the audience is imagined to be.

If we try to imagine the signs in any problematic archaeological site – and what site in this region isn't problematic? – we can see how insistent this difficulty can become. Where history is contested, who writes the sign and for what audience, becomes a pressing anxiety: but it comes down to how you negotiate the problem of the local. Are you describing a site as an insider for insiders, or as an outsider for insiders, or as an insider for outsiders or as an outsider for outsiders? Cultural heritage depends on story telling. Cultural heritage is not material, although it is often focused on material objects: it is a dynamic and changing relation between a community and its material culture and its patterns of behaviour, a relation which is constantly formed and transmitted through stories. Without the stories, there is no cultural heritage. But a story cannot be told neutrally. There is always a position for the speaker, somewhere to speak from. So where is that place in the case of sites of shared and conflicting meaning? Who is the local here? Who is the audience?

The word ἐπιχώριο, local, shows us, then, that heritage depends on stories, on passing on stories, and stories are always told from a position, a position on a map of insiders and outsiders. We cannot hope to find an answer to the immediate questions of this conference if we don't recognize that the position of story teller and audience is essential.

My third Greek word is στάσι, which is the word Greeks use to describe "civil discord". I want to read you one of the most famous passages of the historian Thucydides, as he describes what he calls the "new extravagances of revolutionary zeal, expressed by an elaboration in the methods of seizing power and by unheard-of atrocities in revenge". He writes: "To fit in with the change of events, words, too, had to change their usual meanings. What used to be described as thoughtless acts of aggression was now regarded as the courage one would expect to see in a party member; to think of the future and

wait was merely another way of saying one was a coward; any idea of moderation was just an attempt to disguise one's unmanly character; ability to understand a question from all sides meant one was unfitted for action. Fanatical enthusiasm was the mark of the real man, and to plot against an enemy behind his back was legitimate self-defence." And he concludes "love of power operating through greed and through personal ambition was the cause of all these evils. To this must be added the violent fanaticism which came into play once the struggle had broken out. Leaders of parties had programmes which appeared admirable...but in professing to serve the public interest they were seeking to win the prizes for themselves. In their struggle for ascendancy nothing was barred; terrible indeed were the actions to which they committed themselves, and in taking revenge they went further still". Thucydides declared that he wrote his history as a "possession for all time", but even so this seems to me to be an eerily and depressingly precise account of our contemporary world of political stasis. What I want to emphasize is the sharpness with which the historian recognizes the distortions of language that follow from stasis and in turn contribute to its escalation. And the moral collapse that the shifting of words' usual meanings brings. This is the necessary third step in recognizing the difficulties of talking about shared cultural heritage. Telling the story of the past is inevitably tied up with the distortions of contemporary politicised language and the violence which it fuels and is fuelled by. In stasis "shared cultural heritage" all too easily becomes violently opposed stories in mutually dismissive languages. Finding a shared language in which to tell the story of cultural heritage will mean facing up to what has happened to the language of culture in contemporary conflict.

My three Greek words, then, lay out an initial set of problems for talking about shared cultural heritage. First of all, we have to recognize that the shared can and will involve conflict, and also attempts to force individuals into an ideological programme. Second, all stories of cultural heritage are told from a particular position, but finding the right position is especially awkward when the topic is contested cultural heritage. Who is the local and who is the outsider? Is this my shared story or not? Third, the history of violent conflict which has so scarred this region has had a dire effect on the sort of language we can use, and on the sensitivities to moral positions that come from careful language.

That may seem like enough problems for one day. But I have three big questions which follow directly from what I have said. My first question is this: How much truth can we bear? That is, in this conflictual world where there are so many local political pressures and ideological demands to toe the party line, can the authorities who will be charged with managing sites of shared cultural heritage actually commit themselves to truth, or will it all prove too dangerous and awkward? Let me give an example of what I mean, and if you don't mind, I will be a little provocative by taking an example from Jerusalem, and I hope you don't mind if I share a fantasy with you. When you go the Temple Mount Plaza there are signs informing the visitor where he or she is and what to see and how to behave. My fantasy is about what you actually might want to put on such a sign, and what you might put on a sign at the entrance to the Haram al-Sharif. I wonder first of all whether it would be acceptable to point out more clearly that the Western wall is the retaining wall built by Herod at the end of the first century BCE. The sign at present could easily lead one to think that this retaining wall was built back in the 6th century BCE. It might be nice to mention that the temple and a good deal of its wall was destroyed by the Romans in 70, and that the top few courses were built by Muslims much later. But what would be thought if the sign also mentioned that the splendid plaza was built in 1967 by knocking down the Mughrabi quarter? Or that worship here started in the 18th century? My point is this: there is a very long history of building, destroying and rebuilding on this site, which intertwines Jewish, Roman, Christian, Muslim, and Moroccan communities at very least. It is a site of shared cultural heritage. Could we allow a story that tried to tell such a story – without an aggressive political agenda? A story which recognizes that history interweaves these different communities, however much some people from each of these communities would like them to be absolutely separate and sovereign. And that things change here, however much some people in each community pretend that things have always been just like this or this.

And what would happen at the entrance to the Haram al Sharif if there was a parallel sign reminding everyone of expected standards of behaviour on the Haram, but also of the fact that the place became sacred to Muslims because of the Night Journey of Mohammed, a journey to this spot precisely because of its associations with the story of Abraham, David, Solomon, and because it was here that the Temple had been built. It could also mention that the Haram was developed as a Muslim site from the seventh century, after years of Christian neglect, a story of development which would include not only the century when it was ruled and built on by the Crusaders but also the period of the Ottoman Turks, the empire against which Arabs revolted in the twentieth century. Again, the point of such a bare narrative would be to remind all concerned that the stories of different groups are indeed intertwined, but even within such complexity there are or should be some basic shared facts.

Well, I said that was my fantasy. But there is a strong and fundamental point that lies under my fantasy. Shared cultural heritage, if the sharing is to go beyond the conflict of competing stories and aggressive claims, needs to establish some basic points of agreement and I don't know of any better criterion than truth. It would need immense self-confidence, bravery and honesty to let such a story to be told. My suggestion, note, is not that the story should be one which everyone wants to hear or agrees should be told. It is not a call for the lowest common denominator: but a story which tells the truth, and allows for interpretation. So that's my first question: How much truth can we bear?

My second question follows on from this first question: How many stories can we bear? Everyone knows that these days as soon as I say truth, someone is bound to say "whose truth?", or "who knows what the truth is?" and similar familiar questions of the cynical modern academy – questions I have asked myself on enough occasions, and which are inevitably part of modern history writing. So let us remember that in the Middle East, if anywhere, there are competing stories about pretty well anything. Shared cultural heritage also means multiple stories. Can we allow such an idea in the management of any site? Different stories may be told not only between Muslims, Christians and Jews, say, but also within such groups: where orthodox and secular Jews may take opposed views of a site, or Greek Christians and Protestants, or Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims. Could we imagine a site of shared cultural heritage which paid tribute to multiple stories? Which recognized that there are different interests and different versions of what counts.

There is an obvious tension between my first two points: commitment to truth and recognition of multiple stories. How can we be committed to truth and committed to recognizing multiple stories? I think you can be, and I think the tension can be creative rather than wholly debilitating. Indeed, not only is it possible to hold on to both ideas, but I would say also that this tension is absolutely central to Judaism and Islam. Both Judaism and Islam hold onto some basic and unnegotiable truths, which they take to be binding, authoritative and everlasting. But both Judaism and Islam multiply stories in midrash and hadith, and both have intense interpretative traditions of law, ethics and literature where stories also spin off in complex, argumentative tapestries. Both Judaism and Islam have different sects who produce very different accounts of things. And neither Judaism nor Islam cares to read its central texts of the Torah or Qu'ran without commentary – without supplementing the text of the word of god with further stories, ideas and discussions.

This leads then to my third question: what language can we use? "Sites of shared cultural heritage" is a phrase which brings its own difficulties. First of all, "heritage". Heritage brings to an English ear the idea of stately homes and museums. This can give a misleading idea of what is at stake in the Middle East. Here we are talking about sites of passionate religious and political involvement. Heritage may have too passive a ring. Cultural heritage also threatens to ignore what matters here: it is rarely culture per se, but history, and with history identity, and with history and identity, politics and religion. Culture can involve all these things, but can sound rather bland for what's at stake here. But the real problem is "shared"? Shared between whom? Does shared mean different sides have to agree or overlap? Does

shared mean a shared agenda as well as a shared history? Shared seems to imply that there is one thing which more than one group can have a bit of: the problem is rather that there is one site with multiple and competing stories, and in some cases multiple and competing claims of ownership based on those stories. "Shared" doesn't quite get it. "Common" might be better, or "interwoven" or even "overlapping". But I wonder what would happen if we really bit the bullet and said what we mean, and called them "sites of contested cultural heritage". It is the contest we need to learn to live with.

Let me end positively by imagining the sort of sign I would like to see, and to avoid too much controversy, I will take the Parthenon on the Acropolis in Greece. Perhaps something like this. "This temple to Athene is a triumph of classical Greek art. It was built by the Athenians under Pericles as the crowning achievement of their imperial building programme in the fifth century BC. It contained the famous statue of Athene by Pheidias, and was used as a treasury. It was a celebrated building throughout antiquity. The Parthenon was converted into a church by Christians, and used for some 800 years as such; it was then used as a mosque by the Ottomans, who ruled Athens from the 1460s. In 1687 a Venetian shell exploded an Ottoman gunpowder store in the Parthenon, and destroyed much of the building. It remained unused after this. The Acropolis was cleared to reveal the ruin we now see by the German King of Greece in 1834. It has become a lasting symbol of the importance of the ancient Greek past for subsequent generations." A brief set of facts, the truth, which none the less recognizes the different histories of the building, which notes its symbolic role and its historical functions, and tries to indicate why people have cared about it, without forcing any particular agenda. It even allows for some nationalism without endorsing its naïve forms. My vision I suppose is the day when groups of school kids from any community can visit any site in the Middle East with respect and a decent historical appreciation, fostered by educational programmes on site, in school, and with guides that pay due attention to truth and to multiple stories, in language that brings about a decent recognition of the other without sacrificing the importance of one's own cultural identity. It means letting people see more than one side of a question: but that to me is the essence of a mature political citizenship and mature self-understanding through history.



The UNESCO World Heritage Convention 1972 and the PUSH Project

Paper presented by Henry Cleere

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Introduction

There appear at first sight to be a number of similarities between the objectives and structures of the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention and the PUSH Partnership for Peace Project. The object of this paper is to identify those similarities and also to highlight some fundamental differences between the two concepts, so as to enable PUSH to benefit from the successes of the UNESCO Convention and at the same time to avoid the adoption of policies and procedures that are not appropriate for PUSH. The paper will concentrate on the cultural heritage, but the same considerations and parameters apply equally to the natural heritage.

The Convention

The awareness of the significance of the cultural heritage of humankind at national level may be claimed to have begun in 1666, with the promulgation of a Royal Proclamation in Sweden. There has been a steady build-up of legislation and the concomitant administrative mechanisms since that time (Cleere 1989; Prott & O'Keefe 1984; 1989). It was, however, not until the 1920s that concern began to be expressed regarding the protection of the cultural heritage of the entire world, as distinct from that of individual states, as part of the work of the League of Nations. Much discussion followed but virtually no action: the only positive result was the work on the convention on the protection of the cultural heritage in time of war (the Hague Convention 1954). With the establishment of the United Nations, this work fell into programme of UNESCO. However, there was no strong impetus to draft the Convention until the 1960s, when international awareness of threats to the natural heritage developed, starting in the USA, and work began on drafting an international convention.

Awareness of threats to the cultural heritage quickly followed. However, UNESCO had supported the conference of architects which in 1964 produced the seminal "http://www.international.icomos.org/charters/venice_e.htm" "new" International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, better known as the Venice Charter (ICOMOS, 2001). This led to the creation – again with UNESCO support – of ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites) in the following year. The idea of protecting the cultural heritage was integrated into the natural heritage drafting, and the final text was approved, as the Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage (better known as the World Heritage Convention), by the UNESCO General Conference in November 1972. There are several excellent general accounts of the genesis of the Convention (eg Slatyer 1984; Batisse and Bolla, 2005). The authoritative history is to be found in an unpublished PhD thesis (Titchen, 2005).

The Convention is very much a product of the 1960s, with its emphasis on threats – post-war reconstruction, the economic boom years, the opening up of Third World countries to investment from the developed countries, improvements in agricultural techniques, the immense expansion of extractive industries, and the post-World War II population explosion. In its Preamble it stresses "the importance, for all the peoples of the world, of safeguarding this unique and irreplaceable property," and goes on to state 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 mankind as a whole." This statement introduced two important concepts regarding the heritage – those of "outstanding universal value" and the role of all nations in protecting certain aspects of that heritage and its values.

Article 1 of the Convention defines three broad categories of cultural property:

Monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements and 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 of man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological points of view.

Article 2 defines the categories of natural property: 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.

The fundamental criterion common to these definitions is that of "outstanding universal value," a criterion that is impressive but vague. In the period between the signing of the Convention in 1972 and its ratification by twenty countries in 1975, the World Heritage Committee set up after the implementation of the Convention, conscious of the impossibility of working with a single criterion, expanded this in more precise terms. There are now ten criteria, which are set out in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 2005, paragraph 77): represent a masterpiece of human creative genius; exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design; bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared; be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history; be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change; be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance; contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance; be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features; be outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals; contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.

To qualify for inscription on the World Heritage List, a property must conform with one or more of these criteria. It must also meet the test of authenticity in design, material, workmanship, or setting and it must comply with stringent requirements relating to its protection, planning, and management.

The UNESCO World Heritage Committee has three professional advisory bodies. For cultural properties it is ICOMOS and for natural properties it is the World Conservation Union – IUCN. The

["http://whc.unesco.org/ab_iccro.htm"](http://whc.unesco.org/ab_iccro.htm) International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) is the professional adviser on all matters relating to training for cultural properties. ICOMOS and IUCN make recommendations based on consultation and desk studies and on site evaluation missions to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee on the suitability of nominated properties for inscription on the World Heritage List. Decision-making is the sole responsibility of the Committee, which consists of the delegates of twenty-one countries elected from the nearly two hundred countries that have ratified the Convention (known as States Parties) and which meets annually, in a different country each year.

Weaknesses and strengths of the Convention

One of the weaknesses of the Convention stems from the fact that nominations to the World Heritage List may only be made by the governments of sovereign states that have ratified the Convention (States Parties). Any form of objective selection is largely negated by the existence of differing political, ideological, and economic systems within those governments and the present-day frontiers, which have little or no relevance to cultural history and geography. To take an example, a number of individual European states have successfully nominated their finest medieval Gothic cathedrals, but there has been no attempt to select the most outstanding monuments of this category across the entire geo-cultural province of Gothic religious architecture, regardless of the latter-day frontiers. As a result the List includes several Gothic cathedrals that represent the best in individual countries but cannot lay claim to “outstanding universal value” within that category of cultural property.

Another serious weakness of the World Heritage Convention is the piecemeal approach that has been adopted towards nomination and inscription. In its early years, the emphasis within the Convention was based largely on western perceptions of heritage value, in the form of classical Greek and Roman, medieval, and later art and architecture. Certain ancient civilizations, such as those of Egypt and prehispanic Latin America, were recognized, along with the long and rich heritage of the Indian subcontinent and, latterly, China, but the World Heritage List remains skewed both culturally and geographically. It is only in recent years that the net has been cast more widely, to embrace cultural landscapes, the industrial heritage, and the art and architecture of the late 19th and 20th centuries, which have made it possible for more countries to find their heritage on the List.

A major analysis of the World Heritage List and the tentative lists (of potential nominations) prepared by the States Parties was carried out by the Advisory Bodies in 2003 and 2004, with the objective of identifying those regions and types of property that are poorly represented on the List. That for the cultural heritage (ICOMOS, 2005) recognizes the need for a more holistic and culturally more eclectic approach to the identification of potential World Heritage sites and monuments so as to make the World Heritage List more representative of the vast sweep of human achievement and balanced in its content. This broad approach, long advocated by the Advisory Bodies, has recently been adopted by the World Heritage Committee. One element of the Committee’s current policy has resonances with the PUSH project. Encouragement is being given to what are known as “serial transboundary [or transnational] properties.” Transboundary properties are defined in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO, 2005, paragraph 134) as occurring “on the territory of all concerned States Parties having adjacent borders,” whilst serial nominations (op. cit., paragraph 137) “include component parts related because they belong to: a) the same historico-cultural group; b) the same type of property which is characteristic of the geographical zone; c) the same geological, geomorphological formation, the same biogeographic province, or the same ecosystem type; and provided it is the series as a whole – and not necessarily the individual parts of it – which are of outstanding universal value.” Paragraph 138 goes on to specify that a serial nominated property “may occur: a) on the territory of a single State Party (serial national property); or b) within the territory of different States Parties, which need not be contiguous and is nominated with the consent of all States Parties concerned (serial transnational property).”

Among the handful of serial transnational properties that are already on the List are the Jesuit missions of the Guayrá in Argentina and Brazil (though not yet including the closely related missions in Paraguay), the Pilgrimage Routes of Santiago de Compostela (though still two separate properties, one in Spain and the other in France), and the Roman frontier works (Limes) in Germany and the United Kingdom, eventually to be extended down to the Black Sea. Ambitious projects that are in the pipeline include the Silk Routes from China to Turkey and the Great Rift Valley.

What can the PUSH Project learn from the World Heritage Convention?

It would be undesirable – and, indeed, unwise – for the PUSH Project slavishly to model itself on the World Heritage Convention, since the fundamental objectives of the two systems do not coincide. World Heritage Listing is, as its name implies, designed to preserve and protect the most outstanding elements of the heritage of humankind, and so the highest cultural values and management provisions are essential. The PUSH Project, with its basic premise of shared heritage, is regional in its application and deliberately focused on the identification of heritage elements that demonstrate the physical and historical communalities of this group of states. The World Heritage Convention serves as a highly relevant and well established model, in that it represents a process of thought and overall format based not on universal value, but rather on shared regional value. Here, therefore, are some points that should be taken into account when setting up and implementing the operating parameters for PUSH.

The need for objective selection criteria

It is essential that there should be agreed criteria for the selection of sites and groups for PUSH recognition. The World Heritage criteria (see above) are stringent, and there is no case for the imposition of this level of cultural value as a criterion. It is the shared cultural significance of sites and monuments that must determine their recognition under the PUSH criteria. However, it is important that there should be comparability between the sites and monuments making up a PUSH transboundary serial group, in terms both of historical and symbolic significance and of overall state of protection and conservation. Serious discrepancies between components could seriously devalue the overall impact of the group.

Management and Conservation

Similarly, outline plans must be drawn up and their implementation initiated that define a compatible level of conservation and management of components. Once again, overall minimum standards must be laid down to prevent unfavourable comparisons being made between individual component sites. The opportunities for collaborative action in this case should be seized, in order to emphasize the shared nature of the heritage and the approach to its preservation.

Presentation and education

Here again compatibility is all-important, so as to underline the concept of shared heritage. An agreed message is, of course, fundamental, but this should be reinforced in the form of a common format for all forms of presentation – signage, guides, publications, interpretation centres, etc. This is one of the most important and in many ways easiest media for delivering the PUSH message. It is very important that emphasis should be laid on common educational facilities. For example, teachers' notes prepared to an agreed format, and in the same way material for students, as well as facilities for handling artefactual material and carrying out simple tasks such as excavation and site surveying, should be produced to a common standard and format.

Pilot projects

The eventual success of PUSH will depend upon the selection of successful pilot projects. These should be a) representative and b) relatively straightforward to implement.

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Geographical, Historical, and Biographical Narrative Alternatives for PUSH

Presentation by Neil Asher Silberman

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Now that we have touched on the general points of Heritage and Common Heritage I want to get to the specifics and offer some suggestions about the steps that lay ahead. Since the main focus of the PUSH project is to forge a common narrative from the three inventories that have been compiled by the three partners, I want to spend the next few minutes speaking about narratives without taking them for granted, because narratives are not self-evident structures. When they are interesting, powerful, or inspiring, they can move people, change behaviors, begin political movements, and help forge a common vision of the future. But they can also chain us to old ways of thinking, even though the everyday realities— and even the best intentions of the storytellers— have changed.

A Project with Big Ambitions: Heritage for Peace

PUSH is not a normal heritage project; it has some very big ambitions. Its stated objective is “to break down cultural prejudices by building greater understanding of the region’s shared heritage as a means to respect and appreciate the cultures of the ‘other’ thereby advancing peace in the region” And we all know that in this part of the world, and in particular, the history of the region for the past century, it is narratives about antiquity and tradition that have created or at least sustained the bloody, cruel, and seemingly unresolvable conflict that PUSH itself is meant to help overcome.

3 Narratives: 1 Inventory

In fact, in an important way, PUSH seeks to reverse the process of how heritage is used in this region. For in the traditional way of dealing with the past, the narrative has always come first. Whether it is the story of ancient Israel, linked with its peoples’ dream of redemption, the Christian vision of a sacred moment that occurred here 2000 years ago that would transform the world through its saving power, or the unbreakable link of a people to its land and traditions— or all three of them— the same store of antiquities have always been used to illustrate three separate stories. They are symbols, battle flags, for continued conflict.

3 Inventories: 1 Narrative

But in reversing the process, with the narrative as the outcome, not the precondition, new possibilities arise. With each of the peoples coming together, selecting sites that powerfully mark their shared and unshared landscapes, with the intention of creating a single narrative. Whether that narrative as finally crafted and written will end up just in the file cabinets of the EU or whether it will impel some basic changes not only in the conservation of the heritage, but in the minds of the people depends on many factors— political, intellectual, economic— not the least of which is the literary factor— how skillfully and well the single story is made.

What is a heritage narrative?

A heritage narrative is composed of a good story. It is more than a sequence of events or facts and contains characters or people confronting challenges. It involves dramatic encounters with opponents and significant insight or change. There are four main types of narratives: decline, progress, suffering and restoration. The “decline” narrative begins in a golden age which declines into a world of decay. The “progress” narrative evolves from primitive to advance. The “suffering” narrative starts from a genesis which develops into a golden age and then declines into suffering and exile. The “restoration” narrative begins with a birth as a nation, developing into a golden age which decays into suffering,

occupation or exile, and then ascends into national rebirth. We have absorbed these narratives so deeply that it is difficult to avoid choosing one of them— consciously or unconsciously— no matter what our contemporary outlooks may be. And the problem here is that while there are elements of all the stories, told by varying groups of people...

A Direct Conflict of Narratives

For the Israeli and Palestinian peoples, their narratives are dangerously intertwined, so that according to the great epics of their nations, one people's golden age, is the other's period of desolation, and one's period of national rebirth is seen by the other as a tragic catastrophe

The Raw Materials

There are 94 sites in total: Al-Quds 31, Bezael 30, JSSD 33. There are 11 main types/themes, covering approximately 10,000 years. So how can we tell a new story, how can we weave a powerful new narrative? Here are the raw materials. A series of sites in search of arrows and meaning that avoids the trap that we are now in. I will get to the issue of the themes in a few minutes, but first I want to talk about the divisions of the time span of 10,000 years.

Chronology

Chronology can offer us a surprising glimpse at the narrative that is being written about the past that is shaped not by a view to the future, but to longstanding perceptions that lie at the heart of the present conflict. For here I have done my best to make the large divisions and get some idea of a baseline, if we were to go without any preconceptions would be significant. Leaving out the Paleolithic which would skew this picture even more dramatically, we have the earliest Neolithic and Chalcolithic 8000-3500, the Bronze and Iron 3150... if it tells us anything it is that the cultural changes are getting shorter and shorter— but that may be our perception. But the fact is no one remembers everything equally whether a people or an individual some things are more important, others are boring, so let's take a look at how the inventories depict the past.

The Al Quds sites show a steady growth in attention through the Classical and Byzantine period with a highpoint in the Islamic period and a sharp drop of after that. The movement is certainly focused on Islamic heritage with a strong tie to the civilizations of the Hellenistic and Roman periods that went before.

The Bezael sites are somewhat unexpected in light of the traditional Israeli interest in the Biblical period. For whatever reason intellectual or political, there is a complete lack of biblical with only half a site at Karkom. The focus instead seems to be on the classical period in both Jewish and non-Jewish sites. Islamic gets much more attention— there is no hint of a creation myth here.

The JSSD has its own chronological pattern— in which the Byzantine period, particularly in connection with religious sites is stressed. Ecology is quite high, but there is no Ottoman period at all. Now these are the individual expressions. How do they look when we view them as a single chronological narrative?

What we get is a general fixation on a period from 350 BCE to 1500 AD— two thousand years out of the total that is much more visible in the Project's "vision" of the heritage than the whole 10,000 years. Looks like a tragic turning point narrative— with its upsweep from prehistory to the formation of the three great religions— and from that a fairly steady decline. It looks like you are laying the groundwork for a fairly nostalgic and backward-looking...

The Themes

The following themes are predominant: Ecology and the Environment, Settlements (Urban and Rural), Industrial/Agricultural Techniques, Religious Sites, Fortresses, Palaces, Trade Centers, Rock Art, Prehistoric Sites, Cultural Routes, and Historical Figure. But does it have to be so bleak? What's significant are the themes they have found important that gives a human dimension to the story as a whole, in fact the selection of themes offers the moral of the story— highlighting the elements that created the golden age— and whose abandonment caused the decline.

The Importance of Remembering Ahead

The themes, Urban and Rural Life, Coexisting Religious Traditions, Industrial and Agricultural Innovation, and the Natural Environment are the themes of interest to the groups. We should begin to consider the project as a new narrative of past and future. We need to move from monuments to dialogue. The PUSH narrative must strive to do this— to go beyond the standard methods of site selection and presentation— to address the issues that are most pressing and immediate, in which the point of the narrative is not to convey some definitively harmonious epic of three peoples in this region, but to get them to start thinking about history, heritage, and identity in new ways.

