

Chapter 7

Ruins of Engenho São Jorge Dos Erasmos as a Case Study: World Heritage Nomination in the Context of Hyperinflation and Depredation of Cultural Properties

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Abstract The chapter aims to discuss the chances of the Brazilian National Monument Ruins of Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos (the current Advanced Base of Culture and Extension of the University of São Paulo, in Santos—São Paulo State) of winning the status of World Heritage site. We carry out the discussion in such way to providing a critical reflection on the heritage conception in the Western World, and the relevance of new heritage as a chance to reassessing the demands and needs of the contemporary. From this discussion, we highlight the exceptionality contained in such case concerned to heritage. This exceptionality resulted from successive episodes related to the beginnings of a unique period in the history of humankind. Thus, such heritage figures as an iconic representative of the ethnic and cultural connection between Amerindian/African from the beginning of American colonization and also a part of the major movement that will end up originating the capitalism in the future. Moreover, we emphasize that more important than the proposition itself, the path taken for its eventual attainment may help to further the stories and memories linked to such heritage, which will certainly help to understanding the fact that, the destruction by awkward causes and the configuration of extremism from all sorts of nature should not suppress the spreading of preservation policies, but instead strengthen the request for safeguarding.

Keywords Ruins of engenho são jorge dos erasmos · Museums · Archaeology · World heritage · Historical heritage

Considering the destructive reality of locations from different regions of the globe regarded as World Heritage sites—especially in the Middle East due to the strength of political-paramilitary groups, such as the self-nominated Islamic State (ISIS),—

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any discussion on the creation of a new World Heritage seal of approval holds a lot of subjectivism. Such events made the heritage matter something beyond the simple need for conservation of material or immaterial cultural traditions of humankind. In the Western world (Poulot 2009, 98), the understanding that heritage means the continuity of one people's culture, or simply a set of their characteristics, contributed to the approach of this concept in a more comprehensive way: the core of such meaning overcame the classification of mere human construct, being referred as *cultural property* by many.

Criteria started being used in the protection of World Heritage sites, such as documents like Heritage Charters and also merit selections (tentative lists of local, regional and global heritage), with the objective of employing a set of predominantly universal propositions. However, the strength of drastic destruction put at stake the humanist dimension proclaimed by these documents, as moments of social upheaval lead to social commotion. This logic makes it necessary for us to understand why at this point of history there are still retrograde actions such as the ones practiced by certain groups of people. Knowledge on the preservation of World Heritage historically had a very troubled formation path. It was only in the 50s, in international conferences, that it was possible to develop wider understanding about it when UNESCO defined that cultural heritage comprised architectural monuments, archaeological sites, old objects and structures with historical, cultural and artistic value; properties that represented cultural sources of a society or social group.

However, UNESCO did not concentrate the ownership of these properties. The protection of cultural heritage has become the main task of States interested in owning properties with this seal. This means that each country is responsible for taking care of its properties to make sure it will be included in the list and therefore be worthy of differentiation.

Considering the complex framework in which the concept of *heritage* is placed in the international scope (hyperinflation and depredation), this text aims to raise preliminary discussions on a hypothetical case study: the chances of the Monumento Nacional Ruínas Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos [Brazilian National Monument Ruins of Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos] (the current Advanced Base of Culture and Extension of the University of São Paulo, in Santos, state of São Paulo) of winning the status of World Heritage site. First, this is a case study with no prescriptive pretension of serving as reference for future nomination files, despite the fact of it approaching the process to this end. This is a projection that might be used in the future to subsidize further research of similar nature. To do so, this discussion will be carried out based on two documents: the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, published in 2011, and the *World Heritage Resource Manual—Preparing World Heritage Nominations*, published in 2013—both available on the World Heritage Centre website, an organization associated with UNESCO.

There is no doubt that developing a World Heritage nomination takes time and effort. Such nomination refers to what is called *outstanding universal value* of properties, which presupposes that this process should not be mainly motivated by

opportunities of economic development. It is very important to approach the economic potential of properties, but exclusively focusing on this premise can decrease the chances of nomination.

In this sense, the World Heritage Committee, responsible for selecting the list of World Heritage nominations, recognizes the *outstanding universal value* of a property if it meets one or more of the criteria designated by this Committee according to the Operational Guidelines (paragraphs 77/78): to be considered of *outstanding universal value*, first the property must follow the integrity and/or authenticity conditions and have an adequate system of protection and management to ensure its care.

As shown in preparation documents, there are several different ways of preparing a nomination. However, some advisory bodies consider that there are some basic principles behind promising nominations. In this text, we will present the ones that seem fundamental for us in the consolidation of this proposal by the Brazilian National Monument Ruins of São Jorge dos Erasmos. The preparation of a nomination file (a very detailed document on the claims and on the properties' potential) can take years, comprising the establishment of appropriate support mechanisms, the gathering of confirmatory material, consultation to the ones interested, legal assistance, and especially the formation of a Committee responsible for the documents that go along with the nomination text.

7.1 What Was This Place Before and What Is It Now?

Among the sugar-producing units held in Capitania de São Vicente, we highlight the one previously nominated “Engenho do Governador” that ended up being known as “Engenho dos Erasmos” since the Schetz family from Antwerp has bought this piece of land. According to Paul Meuers, a Dutch researcher, the Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos was active until the eighteenth century; throughout this period, it produced sugar cane for export in addition to “rapadura” and “aguardente” for domestic consumption. However, over this century it is possible to note the decay of the property. For the production of sugarcane and its by-products, in addition to the factory itself, the Engenho also comprised administrative and residential units, including dependencies for slaves (“senzalas”). According to Stols, the written documentation says that a Engenho consisted of “[...] a very large house with six flights of stairs, a “senzala” also containing a smithy, ramparts and two houses covered with good and strong roof tiles [...] all these houses stand at a similar height and are really close to each other, in a way that no other farm could be more secure”.

There are some divergences regarding the date when the Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos would have been built. Historians such as Maria Regina da Cunha Rodrigues and Pedro Taques de A. Paes Leme point out the old Engenho do Governador as being the first one from Capitania de São Vicente (1533). Francisco Martins dos Santos says that it was the second one (1534–35) and Basílio de Magalhães and Paul Meurs believe that the Engenho of Erasmos was the third

project of this type to be built in the region. After the decrease in sugar cane production, the ruins of the ancient Engenho were forgotten for more than three centuries, having to survive inclement weather and abandonment (Image 7.1).



Image 7.1 Ruins of Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos

Only in 1943, the land where the ruins were located was purchased by Otávio Ribeiro de Araújo, who decided to divide the property and donate the Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos to the University of São Paulo (USP) in the year of 1958.

In the same year, Luís Saia, head of the 4th District of the Board of Directors of Historical and Artistic National Heritage of Brazil, reported to the president of the Special Committee of Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos that he had carried out a prospection and defined the architectural party as “Azorean model, of real type and moved by water” (Saia 1978). However, it is important to highlight that this Engenho is the one and only copy in the Brazilian National territory of times when sugar were essential for business and the economy of the colony.

Since the donation to the University, the successive decades were marked by the requalification of the space for historical, archaeological, and architectural research. Currently, the Brazilian National Monument is not only the oldest physical remnant of the Portuguese presence in the American continent, being also a paradigmatic space dedicated to heritage preservation and education projects open to the public of all ages.

7.2 What Characterizes a World Heritage Site?

If the heritage concept comprises material and immaterial elements, these being natural or cultural, from the past or the present, in which a particular group of individuals recognize their identity, a *World Heritage site* is something or a place considered of great value for everyone, regardless of its location or intrinsic characteristics.

For Antonio Blanc Altemir, the notion of World Heritage implies “the recognition of the existence of common and superior interests considered more important than the immediate and particular objectives of the States” (Altemir 1984, 202). According to Guido Fernando Silva Soares in the preface of the work of Fernando Feliciano, the first one to study the World Heritage seal of approval in Brazil: “these properties belong to humanity, because any foreigner, young or old, who looked at these constructions would have to recognize the geniality and universality of the human spirit that is present wherever there is its most typical manifestation: the construction of its history and habitat” (Soares, Apud Silva 2013, 24).

The extent of the notion of heritage here used “comprises from historic monuments to oral and popular traditions, underwater treasures to parks and reserves of natural lands, ruins, among others, showing how current this reflection is and proposing actions regarding heritage protection” (Werthain, Apud Lanari Bo 2003, p. 9). In this sense, joining the list of World Heritage Sites is important not only for the recognition of the value of a certain property, but also because it would mean that it will be able to rely on UNESCO’s financial and legal protection. Following this concept, to be included in the list of World Heritage Sites, properties must be of outstanding universal value when it comes to history, art, sciences, conservation

and natural beauty—a criterion that is very difficult and vague by definition (Choay 2001, p. 78).

These criteria carry the Western understanding of value dictated by the European history and its creations. Following these criteria, countries such as Italy and Spain stand out among those with the highest number of registered properties. The high concentration of European and American cultural properties in the list of World Heritage Sites compared to the scarce number of properties from other areas of the globe, such as the ones from the African and Asian continent, calls our attention to the close relation between economic power and protection.

Being elected one of the World Heritage Sites is currently seen as a clear vector of transformation and visibility, considering it triggers development with sustainable international tourism and public policies that imply the commitment of administrative authorities—this way resulting in benefits (of small, medium and large scale) to the population of the place—which certainly would only be applicable if some of the organizations that administrate the properties would be willing to ensure its care. There is need to have in mind that the World Heritage seal of approval does not only mean fame and honor, but also several responsibilities.

In the past decade, UNESCO developed strategic objectives known as “the five C’s”, which are prescribed the following actions: (1) reinforcing the **Credibility** of the World Heritage Sites list; (2) ensuring the effective **Conservation** of World Heritage properties; (3) promoting the development of effective **Competences** in State parties; (4) increasing public awareness, participation and support for World Heritage by using **Communication** and (5) enhancing the role of **Communities** in the nomination of the World Heritage Convention.

Currently, among the “five Cs”, permanent communication, emphasis on communities and, above all, the development of effective competences of State parties remain as the most important actions of the entity. This way, the ownership of World Heritage sites must respect the sovereignty of the State in question; despite the similarities and/or possible differences of interests or opinions on management and preservation of properties, there is need to ensure the organs responsible for the maintenance of cultural properties are doing their job. State parties must be fully aware of the legal elements they have to consider to make sure the list is well managed. In Brazil, at least three decades ago, the Brazilian Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage [Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN)] has been building a solid credibility as an indicator of cultural properties. For this reason, the following steps (from the potentiality diagnosis of properties to its inclusion in the tentative list) deserve special attention.

7.3 Tentative List of the State Party

Each country that is part of the Convention indicates a list of possible properties that have the potential to become a world heritage site. The tentative list of cultural properties is an instrument of strategic importance at service of the World Heritage

Committee. This is a selection of properties that can be nominated to the World Heritage list and State parties (i.e., signatory countries of the organization) are encouraged to come up with new lists every decade. The stages of this long journey must be included in a short and feasible schedule. Under no circumstances, the desire of obtaining the seal of approval must represent an individual whim rather than a consolidated collective proposal that comprises the heritage as a common good to all. As affirmed by Salvatore Settis, the most competent critic of Italian heritage legislation currently: “*Impossibile conjugare il bene comune in prima persona!*” (Settis 2014, p. 56).

In two recently published books: *Paesaggio, Costituzione, Cemento—il battagliaio del ambiente contra il degrado civile, e Azione popolare: In Cittadini per i bene comune*, the Italian archaeologist draws attention to the fact that a policy not that is not committed to common properties usually ends up encouraging the prevalence of particular/private ones. This might be one of biggest concerns of Committees that ask for the World Heritage seal of approval. Discussions contained in studies as the one by Settis provided us essential tools to a deep understanding of heritage preservation both locally and internationally. For this reason, it is common to see some of the points contained in Settis’ studies in solid and well-documented nominations.

Once the Intergovernmental Committee of Protection to World Cultural and Natural Heritage or simply Committee of World Heritage cannot consider a nomination to the World Heritage Sites list if properties are not included in the tentative list of their respective State parties, which is a mandatory requirement to achieve the seal of approval.

It is known that a tentative list is a list containing properties located in the territory of each State party that are considered likely to be nominated to be included in the World Heritage list. Therefore, State parties must add to the tentative list the names of the properties they consider a cultural and/or natural heritage of *outstanding universal value* they intend to nominate in the upcoming years [Articles 1, 2 and 11 (1) of the World Heritage Convention]. Tentative lists are a useful and important planning instrument for State parties, the World Heritage Committee, Secretarial and Advisory Organizations, as they serve as an indication for future nominations.

In Brazil, the Brazilian Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage grants exclusive guidelines to the first stage of nomination. In the country, there are state superintendencies that feed Brazilian tentative lists periodically. According to the work developed by IPHAN and Itamaraty/Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the process of institutionalization of material and immaterial Brazilian heritage; their projection and international validation ranged in the past four decades, from a shy and even silent position to effective interventions and dialogues with the States.

The Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (or Itamaraty) is responsible for coordinating the several internal positions to achieve harmony, particularly in the case of the Convention of 1972 and its agreements and resolutions. Cultural relations in the international field aim to provide greater understanding among different people. In the diplomacy field, culture is one way of creating an adequate

environment to understanding by the exchange of ideas, experiences, and heritages. Aware of their position in the formulation and implementation of heritage proposals, IPHAN and Itamaraty are consolidated partners in the maintenance of the seal of approval that UNESCO granted them.

This way, nominations must respect the following order of prepositions to succeed: (a) IPHAN/State superintendence election of properties to include in the tentative list; (b) superintendence analysis of election feasibility; (c) guiding to the central superintendence, in which the nomination request will be assessed according to its relevance and value. If judged appropriate, the plea is registered in Brazilian indicative list.

After all the stages, nominations will be ready to undergo phase two, a very detailed and comprehensive phase that heads to the World Heritage Seal. However, to contribute to the establishment of a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List, State parties are invited to consider if their properties are already well represented in the list and in the case of the answer being affirmative, avoid presenting new nomination proposals [Resolution approved by the 12th General Assembly of State Parties (1999)]. It does not seem for us that this is the case of Brazil, a country where at least until the present moment (2015) holds 19 World Heritage sites from a total of 1031. Next, we will address the discussion on the specificities of this second stage:

As shown by Silva (2013, p. 94), the World Heritage list is not just a simple inventory of natural and cultural properties. It was first created to call the attention of the public opinion on the need for preserving properties considered of *outstanding universal value*. Appreciating specialness is one of the fundamental premises of this Committee. To be included in the World Heritage list, properties have to prove *outstanding universal value*, meet at least 10 of the criteria imposed by the International Committee, besides having to follow integrity and authenticity conditions and fill protection and management requirements.

Therefore, there is a minimum of six indicatives of significance and exceptionality: (a) *outstanding universal value*; (b) at least one criterion of absolute importance among the ten listed; (c) relevant conditions of integrity and authenticity, and (d) requirements on management and protection; (d) perception of preservation of buffer zones; and (f) comparative analysis to justify the special aspects of the property.

In the case of the Brazilian National Monument Ruins of São Jorge dos Erasmos, the identification of their exceptional qualities and attributes, i.e., elements associated with its *outstanding universal value*, will have to consider two distinct categories of analysis: the Engenho is considered a monument and an archaeological site at the same time.

In its widely known text called *Document/Monument*, Jacques Le Goff carries out a careful analysis on the several types of historical production overtime, discussing the relation between document and monument, considering both of them as part of a same body: a reference to the relations men had with the past, the monument acquires the status of historical evidence. Therefore, from a historian's perspective, a monument is the starting point to get to know a historical fact.

By turning it into a current document, we give a new meaning to the past. (Le Goff, 1984, p.96)

The concept of a monument designed by the Venice Charter comprises isolated architectural creation, as well as the environment in which it is inserted. A monument is inseparable from the environment and the history of where it is located. Hence, we acknowledge the value of monuments as modest works that with time acquire cultural significance (Gasperini, Apud Silva 2013, 55). This idea ended with the concept of musealization of monuments, especially in the urban area, no longer being a source of contemplation but a something that is actually useful to society.

The eventual election of the Brazilian National Monument Ruins of São Jorge dos Erasmos to the World Heritage site should consider the premise of “voluntary perpetuation”, respecting one of the only architectural remains of a relevant historical period to the formation of Americas, but also as witness of a period of transformations in the *modus vivendi* of those who lived in this place. This way we conclude that the nomination to the seal of approval not only aim to protect the material property, i.e., the sugar mill, but also its *spiritu loci*, stories, experiences, and memories that are part of one of the oldest ruins of Engenhos from the American continent.

7.4 Understanding the *Outstanding Universal Value* of the Brazilian National Monument Ruins of Engenho São Jorge Dos Erasmos and Nomination Criteria

To be considered of *outstanding universal value* means having a cultural and/or natural significance so extraordinary that it transcends national borders and becomes equally important for the current and future generations of humankind. In this sense, both the *World Resource Manual* as the *Operational Guidelines* highly recommend that a *Declaration of Outstanding Universal Value* be prepared in a very solid and rigorous manner way before the writing process of the nomination file starts. This declaration is mandatory to achieve successful nominations.

The *Declaration of Outstanding Universal Value* must describe potential properties of universal value with the objective of giving information on its protection, conservation, management, and monitoring. The Declaration must be able to explain the value and the attributes of properties to decision-makers, politicians, and the general public. After having ensured its place in the tentative list, the next step requires even more effort, in addition to the constitution of a synergistic team that guarantees the compliance of the next steps. It will be essential to diagnose if the knowledge on properties is enough or if there is need to do more research on it. In the case of the Brazilian National Monument Ruins of Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos, it is possible to note that this would be the first problematic item of a list

of concerns. Until the potential properties of *outstanding universal value* are established and justified, it is not possible to develop other aspects of the nomination. To further the knowledge on the old Engenho becomes a fundamental task to the consolidation of nominations.

Despite being unique and presenting several characteristics that make it electable, problems from sparse and unorganized documentation will have to be minimized from a set of research to be carried out with international files (public and private) that certainly will help expanding the limits of knowledge acquired on the old Engenho.

Therefore, the first question to be answered is: after recognizing the outstanding values of this property, would the general information on the Ruins of the Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos be enough according to World Heritage nomination standards? If the answer were yes, which characteristics would be chosen to be included in the nomination file? If the answer were no, which cultural elements should be preserved and/or discovered to be considered of useful to future nominations? Possible answers to this double question will guide the purpose of the next steps.

After understanding of outstanding values of properties, the first item to be highlighted concerns the selection criteria that will be used to evaluate the properties. This stage is one of the most important because it will define the bases in which heritage will be identified. Currently, there are ten identified criteria for nomination to World Heritage Site and properties must fit in at least one of them. Criterion II will be the focus of this nomination because it puts together elements that feature great significance to this heritage, distinctions that might help qualifying and quantifying its history and that also make it the protagonist of the initial episodes in the history of Brazil and of the American continent, as well as its connections with Europe.

We highlight *en passant* some characteristics that justify this criterion as a way of representing its most essential distinctions; at this point there is no need to worry about analytical insights that would be carried out when (or if) the nomination text were sent to analysis. This way, to be approved in criterion II, properties must “represent a clear exchange of human values over time or within a cultural area of the world that contributed to the development of architecture or technology, monumental arts, urban planning or landscape design” (UNESCO 2013, p. 37).

As suggested by the *Manual*, the keyword for this criterion is “exchange of human values”. That is the case of the old Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos, the only remaining in a certain degree of authenticity and preservation compared to Engenhos built in the first decades of the sixteenth century in the island of São Vicente, in the Southeast region of Brazil. This place promoted and registered the exchange of human values resulted from ideas that influenced other areas; these ideas originated in three different sources in which it is possible to identify actions from part of already adapted Natives and European colonists and, later with African slaves, condition that evidenced cultural fusion and adaptation to places considered emblematic given its nature in the formation of the new continent, of its economic system and identity.

Researchers of this former Engenho attested over the past five decades several characteristics that allude to its exceptionality as an iconic representative of the ethnic and cultural connection between Amerindian/African, both serving as witness of this unique copy dated from the beginning of American colonization. In this sense, Engenhos come up as the first urban regular settlement (Ferlini 2012, p. 45; Schwartz 1988, p. 98), establishing the mode of production that founded the economic and social bases not only from Brazil but also from the American continent at the beginning of the 16th century. These ruins are included in the great movement that will end up originating capitalism in the future, figuring a representative monument of a vast company of colonial export. Knowing this process contributes to the understanding of the origins that comprise this space/heritage and it also helps explaining its relation with system that resembles the capitalist ideal. Therefore, these characteristics meet the exceptional nature of the typology of this property, illustrating a significant stage in the history of the American continent.

Compared to the other existing criteria, this criterion refers to associations that may not represent tangible impacts on properties, despite being evident. The problem is: to what extent the exceptionality of the Brazilian National Monument Ruins of Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos is associated with another type of event that is considered of exceptional importance by itself? To what events the Engenho would be associated with? It is known that the process of building, maintaining and using the Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos, while agricultural manufacturing represented the result of a period when almost all the areas of the globe have been explored, populated, and integrated by European colonialism. Using the mercantile capital as a vector of development, expansion, and dissemination of knowledge, European modern man, born during Renaissance, ended up advancing in decades what has not been done in centuries. Due to his restlessness, he headed to remote lands to employ and generate more capital. In a dominant process, people were engaged in the production of wealth. Native Amerindians and Africans were enslaved to work in the extraction of precious metals, in the harvest of fruits from the earth, and in agricultural disputes.

Ending in the third decade of the sixteenth century, in a historical context of several transformations, this Engenho has evidence of the time it had been built both in visible and invisible structures. As a sugar manufacture, it followed the standards determined by European trade and the needs of the time, a time when tropical genres represented a great and extremely profitable demand for its sellers since it were naturally nonexistent in the old continent. Its establishment and edification followed the needs of its products: it was located by a river (it ended up having the same name of the Engenho) that flows into an estuary, easing the access to the port of the village of Santos, where the production could be shipped to Europe. Installed in the Western slope of the massif that divided the island of São Vicente, founded over a “sambaqui” with a rear and wide-ranging view; the waterfalls and vegetation cover of the slope of the hill provided, respectively, hydraulic power to the water wheel and wood to the furnaces. From the heritage left overtime, it is possible to understand the importance of geography as a determining factors for colonists to get to choose that place. The imposed choice is evident to

take the South Coast as a starting point for the development of the first effective core of Portuguese colonization in America.

As a manufacture and proto factory (Christofoletti and Leite 2010, p. 34), the Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos represented one of the earliest forms of production organization in Portuguese America; with the capital invested, it was possible to incorporate Native Americans and Africans in the making of sugar, developing production activities in the colony for more than three centuries. Heir of everything of contemporary at the time, geographic intelligence of natives together with European expertise helped creating the epic adventure printed in the remnants of this old Engenho of sugarcane, because of its architectural asset or constitutive geography or even its little explored underground. Hence, the Engenho São Jorge dos Erasmos, despite seeming incipient machinery, proved to be important not only regarding sugar economy—when it comes to the Capitania de São Vicente or the colonial system—but also referring to a new way of operating the world. (Siqueira et al. 2014, p. 68)

Therefore, the exceptionality contained in the Brazilian National Monument Ruins of Engenho de São Jorge dos Erasmos is directly associated with the succession of episodes that represent the beginnings of a unique period in the history of humanity: the awakening of men in a new time (Ferlini et al. 2013, p. 16).

7.5 Final Considerations

In a context of hyperinflation and heritage depredation, the understanding that properties should mean the continuity of the culture of a people, or a set of its characteristics, still leaves space to the expansion of the meaning of such word. We understand that the idea of considering the Brazilian National Monument Ruins of São Jorge dos Erasmos a World Heritage site is a chance to revise the knowledge on this space and develop its potential as the central part of decisive moments of our identity. Most importantly than this proposition, the path followed by its eventual achievement can contribute to the deepening of stories and memories associated with this heritage. In the twenty-first century, while we see advances in democratization of knowledge, we also see retreats in the elimination and preservation of artifacts and constructions that resemble human trajectory. Depredations, war crimes, and religious extremism favor the stealing of cultural properties with the objective of selling them to the black market, and also aiming to achieve systematic destruction and social hypersensitivity on loss and forgetfulness. We cannot ignore that Western countries share the guilt in these atrocities, first for having gathered fanatics to overthrow discretionary governments and also for being an advantageous receptor of illicit traffic of cultural properties, which today is one of the most profitable in the world. To fight the indiscipline generated by lack of feeling of belonging, there is a long and narrow but quite possible solution: knowing to preserve, preserving to make it last, making it last to share. Human beings have

been realizing that sharing duties, as well as the sharing rights can help in the consolidation of a less destructive society more inclined to accept plurality. To think about World Heritage in this mess is the same as waving a flag of hope among stares of a watchful humanity lost between depredation and the production of new heritage.

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