

## Problems and Prospects of International Serial Nominations for an Accurate UNESCO World Heritage List

As a consequence of the greater prominence and recognition accorded to World Heritage, there is a growing range of interests and motivations behind seeking World Heritage inscription. In the past, cultural monuments and sites from Slovenia were often not the domain of interest of local or state authorities for the nomination and inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The first attempt to inscribe a monument of national importance on Slovenia's list after the fall of Yugoslavia was the Franja Partisan Hospital nomination, but it was unfortunately unsuccessful. The extremely well equipped clandestine partisan hospital which remained intact until the end of the Second World War was designed to provide treatments to as many as 120 patients at a time, but saw almost ten times as many during its operation. The monument of national importance had all the specifications and characteristics of outstanding universal value, but there was no appropriate management system, which was a reason for the deferrals of the nomination (fig. 1).

The World Heritage List (WHL) is the most successful initiative regarding heritage protection undertaken on a worldwide scale. Such an opinion can be justified by many arguments. The WHL has reached a remarkable level of quantity and quality development, a new and very comprehensive evaluation system of nominations for the WHL and combines cultural and natural heritage with common frameworks (Szmygin 2010). The popularity of the World Heritage Convention (WHC, 1972) is also beginning to create major challenges: as more properties are added to the list the system is reaching a critical overload. Today the serial and transnational nominations have become a trend and support for trans-boundary properties or properties consisting of different component parts for thematic reasons (called serial properties) have also been increased (fig. 2).

The idea of preparing a serial and transnational nomination for the Silk Road in Central Asia and China arose from the 2003 UNESCO World Heritage Periodic Reporting Cycle, where the Asian State Parties identified this nomination as a vital source of development for the future preservation of heritage sites along the Silk Road. Serial/transnational nominations are an appropriate mechanism for the development of World Heritage nominations where heritage of Outstanding Universal Value consists of more than a single property (*World Heritage Committee, Thirty second Session Quebec City, Canada, 2008*). The first successful attempt to encourage international co-operation in the field of archaeology in Europe was made in 2005 when the Hadrian Wall became part of the major trans-national Frontiers of the Roman Empire-World Heritage and when the World Heritage Com-

mittee agreed to change the property's name (Hadrian Wall, a UK World Heritage in its own right since 1987). This was an example of the British and German governments joining together to create the Frontiers nomination, because the sites provided potential to unite the people in many countries in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

In recent years Slovenia was involved in one serial transnational and one transcontinental nomination. The first was a serial transnational nomination of the Prehistoric Pile Dwellings around the Alps (Switzerland, Austria, France, Italy, Germany and Slovenia) and the second was Heritage of Mercury, Almaden (Spain) and Idrija (Slovenia), the latter with many problems.

The first attempt for such a nomination (Idrija on the Mercury Route of the Intercontinental Camino Real) with four state parties was problematic because of different interests, a lack of appropriate management systems and of a development of relevant policies. This was the case in spite of the fact that the main goal of a global strategy as a result of the ICOMOS analysis (*Filling the Gaps, 2005*) was to ensure a more representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List concerning the typological framework, which is based on categories used for the classification of cultural heritage, like the under-represented industrial heritage.

Firstly, the nomination was led by Switzerland and there were eight reasons why the pile dwelling sites were inscribed on the Unesco World Heritage List:

- i) architectural structures of entire settlements and excellently preserved organic remains provide comprehensive insight into the history of early farmers in Central Europe, their way of life, agriculture and animal husbandry;
- ii) the sources around the Alps reveal the cultural variety of and interaction between the early farming communities;
- iii) dendrochronology offers palpable information about chronological time spans and processes;
- iv) in the precisely dated sites of the settlement, technological progress can be traced – for instance in the steps that led from copper to bronze to iron
- v) the settlement sites are valuable sources of information and archives for the natural sciences such as archaeobiology and climate research
- vi) the abundant sources allow us to build a true-to-life reconstruction of the past and turn archaeology in museums and in media into an adventure
- vii) the sites at the bottom and along the shores of the lakes are threatened by erosion, large-scale land-filling, dredging and construction

viii) the UNESCO World Heritage label can support the comprehensive protection of these unique sources and reinforce the awareness of their worldwide uniqueness (Palafittes, 2009).

The town of Idrija with the Ministry of Culture of Slovenia began the process of inscribing the mercury heritage on UNESCO's World Heritage List in 2006 and the site was on the Tentative List of 1994. Initially, the nomination was made together with Almaden, San Luis Potosi and Huancavelica mercury mine in Peru, in relation to the intercontinental route Camino Real. In the second stage, a nomination focused on the mercury heritage in relation to silver mining, together with the San Luis Potosi mine in Mexico – however, the nomination did not gather sufficient support.

The third, successful stage of the nomination focused on mercury mining in relation to technological and industrial processes that influenced the economic and cultural development of the two regions and it was successfully completed in 2012.

In spite of the fact that the serial nomination which specifically related to mining and industrial activities that had an evident worldwide impact on the moulding of cultures, the economy and social changes, mainly on both sites of the Atlantic, and which are without a doubt insufficiently represented on the World Heritage List were not successfully prepared and they were not inscribed on WHL.

The last nomination to inscribe the sites on the WHL started in 2010 and was successfully completed.

The mercury mining sites of Almaden and Idrija produced a great part of the mercury existing at the world scale representing in a comparative way the highest level of production obtained from mines of this nature. Both mines complemented each other in sending mercury around the world, and mainly to America which gave path to outstanding economic, social and cultural changes on this continent and in Europe, and on the development of science and technology, as witnessed by the exchange of know-how and equipment. This serial nomination contains such exceptional cultural value from the standpoints of history, science and technology that its significance transcends the borders of countries and becomes of universal importance, both for the present generation and for those to come. They are key elements articulating a process that lasted for centuries and linked several parts of the world. This process made a significant contribution to the shaping of cultures on both sites of the Atlantic. This cultural fertilization was bilateral, as there were exchanges in both as well as in the most important directions, thus adding value to all of them as part of the historic process mentioned as well as the most significant accumulations of technology in the production of mercury in the history of humankind.

Therefore, this serial nomination is based on its relevance due to the historic-social and technological building of specific mining engineering, artistic-architectural and territorial values calling for the upkeep of their essential qualities leading to a proper understanding of their past function as concerns mining technology, architecture and lifestyles associated with these peculiar manifestations of human genius applied to the extraction and processing of minerals.



*Fig. 1: Franja Partisan Hospital after reconstruction*

*Abb. 1: Franja Partisan-Hospital nach dem Wiederaufbau*

*Fig. 2: Idrija, Joseph's shaft*

*Abb. 2: Idrija, Joseph-Schacht*





*Fig. 3: The Garden of All Saints, Ljubljana, by Jože Plečnik, 2013*

*Abb. 3: Der Garten von Allerheiligen, Ljubljana/Laibach, von Jože Plečnik, 2013*

The new preparation of the serial transnational nomination of the Dinaric Karst is based on a different approach, especially in the early preparation stage. The States Parties established an International Coordination Group (ICG) for the preparation of this transnational nomination and for the agreement concerning the World Heritage serial transnational property (Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Montenegro and Serbia) and they worked closely with WHC, ICOMOS and IUCN. At the international level together the State Parties' permanent delegations to UNESCO and the national authorities act as contact body for the World Heritage Centre and the World Heritage Committee in all questions relating to the serial property. It obtains and coordinates information from the administrations of State Parties on any private initiative relating to the components of the serial property. Its actions

and projects are determined in a regularly reviewed action plan.

The Dinaric Karst is an extensive karst region of South East Europe which extends over 60 000 km<sup>2</sup> from the Friuli Plain in Italy to Lake Skadar in Southeast Montenegro and from Pannonia in the North, to the Adriatic Sea and its islands in the South. The region is therefore the largest contiguous karst land in Europe and it is one of the largest karst lands of the world. Due to the location, geological structures, tectonics and climate, the karst landscape developed in a variety of forms, ranging from a whole set of different landscapes, karst plains and high plateaus to high mountain karst. The Dinaric Karst is exceptionally important for the history of geological, geomorphological, biological and karstological research and is described as a special type of landscape characterized by underground water flow, close

depressions, dry valleys, fluted rock outcrops, disappearing rivers, caves and large springs. Karst landscapes are also distinctive from the surrounding areas due to the vast rocky surface and a lack of surface water. Due to a lack of soil settlements and scarce agricultural land characteristics of the cultural landscape and adaptations of the population have developed. The main problem from my point of view is that the cultural heritage as a result of this specific natural landscape is not part of the nomination.

Another serial and transnational nomination in preparation (Czech Republic and Slovenia), probably more complex, is the architectural heritage from the first half of the 20th century, actually the works of architect Jože Plečnik. He was an architect who worked in Prague, Vienna, Zagreb, Belgrade and other places and of course in Ljubljana.

Plečnik was a Slovenian architect who began his career in Vienna and Prague (Prelovšek 2008) and then established himself above all in Ljubljana with architectural achievements that gave the city a noble new appearance after the long Baroque period. Ljubljana testifies to Plečnik's exceptionally creative contribution to the development of architecture, urbanisation and building materials, decorations; he was given free reign in the design of promenades, river banks, bridges, sculptures, squares, all decorative arts, as well as architecture, parks, sacral buildings, stadium and finally the Garden of All Saints (fig. 3).

His interventions at Hradcany Castle (Prague) were detailed and complex, confronting not only architectural problems and questions of adaptation and interventions but also issues of how to represent national identity. His charge was to update a language of myth that bore on the history and the identity of the Czech people (Alofsin 2006). He followed the same aim in Ljubljana where he made an archaeological reinterpretation of a Roman wall, the consolidation and restoration of a medieval monastery and in the end designed an unfinished idea for an archaeological park in the town of Ljubljana with Roman houses, fountains, gardens and a view of the mountain of Krim (Stele 1928, pp. 12–13) His implementation of Ljubljana's architectural works with ancient architectural elements but in untraditional forms and to display Ljubljana as a "Mediterranean" town respecting the original Roman cadastre was probably connected also with the original roots of Roman Ljubljana, "Colonia Iulia Emona", which was a typical rectangular town of the Mediterranean type (Gaspari 2010) (fig. 4).

Throughout his fruitful and relatively long life Plečnik stuck to the artistic and moral tenets of the Secessionist movement. Under the specific circumstances, created out of benevolent offers by Masaryk in Prague and by the comparatively provincial character of his native Ljubljana, he was given reign to fully develop his architecture based on the humanistic tradition of Antiquity, and in the process set in

*Fig. 4: Cobblers bridge, Ljubljana by Jože Plečnik, 2013*

*Abb. 4: Schusterbrücke, Ljubljana/Laibach, von Jože Plečnik, 2013*





Fig. 5: Church of St. Michael, Barje near Ljubljana, 2012  
 Abb. 5: St. Michaels-Kirche, Barje nahe Ljubljana/Laibach, 2012

motion the only serious critical alternative to the mainstream of 20th century Functionalism (Prelovšek, 2008, 22) (fig. 5).

Many other sites from Slovenia besides the mentioned Franja Partisan Hospital – recently awarded the European Heritage Label, although two years ago it was almost completely destroyed in a flood following torrential rain – and the architectural legacy of Plečnik are on the list of submissions for the Tentative List. The Sečovelje salt pans with the medieval town of Piran is part of the Mediterranean salt pans category, the mentioned intermittent Lake Cerknica is part of the Dinaric Karst nomination, the Alps are part of a joint nomination of the Alps as a whole (Fužine hills), Claustra Alpium Iuliarum is part of the European fortifications system from late Antiquity. In terms of cultural and mixed heritage, preparations are under way for the nomination of the Kozolci (hayracks).

## Conclusions

In the end, if we evaluate the majority of serial and transcontinental nominations we could conclude that they are becoming a trend and positive approach in the context of international cooperation, interdisciplinary dissemination and sustainable preservation of cultural heritage. The appropriate management system involves the commitment of qualified professionals and technicians as well as the development of relevant policies, strategies and conservation and management plans. The lack of such systems has been recognized as one of the principal problems in a large number of sites already on the WHL (Icomos, 2010), just as much as a lack of regular monitoring of the sites (Pirkovič; Šantej 2012, 49).

We all agree and support the role of heritage as an engine for human and social development, but only in a sustainable way that will guarantee the inter-generational transfer of these non-renewable resources. Although the Convention prescribes that World Heritage is part of the heritage of humankind and that the basic idea is identification, preservation and conservation, the inclusion of a new heritage site on the World Heritage List is often also a source of local and

regional pride. For this reason, one of most important issues for active preservation of cultural heritage in the future are management plans and the real cooperation and integration of the local community and state authorities into the projects from the early beginning.

## Zusammenfassung

### Probleme und Aussichten einer akkuraten UNESCO Welterbeliste: Sloweniens Tentativliste

Aufgrund der größeren Bedeutung und Anerkennung, die man dem Welterbe beimisst, gibt es eine wachsende Bandbreite von Interessen und Motivationen, die hinter dem Bemühen um Welterbeeintragung stehen. Die Popularität der Welterbekonvention beginnt zu erheblichen Herausforderungen zu führen. Indem neue Stätten der Liste hinzugefügt werden, erreicht das System eine kritische Überlastung. Heutzutage werden serielle und transnationale Nominierungen zum Trend, und die Unterstützung für grenzüberschreitende Güter oder für solche, die aus thematischen Gründen aus unterschiedlichen Komponenten bestehen (serielle Nominierungen), hat auch zugenommen. Die Idee, eine serielle und transnationale Nominierung für die Seidenstraße in Zentralasien und China vorzubereiten, entstand 2003 aus dem UNESCO-Welterbe Periodic Reporting-Zyklus, in dem die asiatischen Vertragsstaaten diese Nominierung als wesentliche Quelle für die Entwicklung des zukünftigen Erhalts von Erbstätten entlang der Seidenstraße identifiziert haben. Serielle bzw. transnationale Nominierungen sind ein angemessener Mechanismus für die Entwicklung von Welterbenominierungen, wo es den außerordentlichen universellen Wert bei mehr als einer Stätte gibt (Welterbekomitee, 32. Sitzung, Quebec City, Kanada, 2008). Der erste erfolgreiche Versuch, zu einer internationalen Kooperation im Bereich der Archäologie in Europa anzuregen, erfolgte 2005, als der Hadrianswall zu einem Bestandteil des transnationalen Welterbes Grenzen des römischen Reiches wurde und das Welterbekomitee zustimmte, den Namen zu ändern (der Hadrianswall war bereits seit 1987 eine eigenständige Welterbestätte Großbritanniens). Dies ist ein Beispiel, wo die Regierungen von Großbritannien und Deutschland sich zusammengesetzt haben, um einen gemeinsamen Antrag zu formulieren, denn diese Stätte besaß das Potenzial, Menschen in vielen Ländern Europas, des Mittleren Ostens und Nordafrikas miteinander zu verbinden. In den letzten Jahren war Slowenien an zwei erfolgreichen seriellen, transnationalen oder transkontinentalen Nominierungen beteiligt. Die erste betraf eine serielle Nominierung von prähistorischen Pfahlbauten im Alpenraum und die zweite das Quecksilbererbe in Almadén (Spanien) und Idrija (Slowenien). Momentan befasst sich die neue und aufgewertete Tentativliste aus Slowenien mit dem Dinarischen Karst als transnationale Nominierung für das Naturerbe und mit der seriellen Nominierung des architektonischen Erbes der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts (Architekt Jože Plečnik). Mit einer Liste weiteren Erbes ist sie eher von örtlichem und regionalem In-



Fig. 6: Church of the Most Sacred Heart in Prague by Jože Plečnik (1928–1932), Czech Republic, 2010  
 Abb. 6: Kirche des Heiligsten Herzens des Herrn in Prag von Jože Plečnik (1928–1932), Tschechische Republik, 2010

teresse. Der Beitrag konzentriert sich auf die neuesten seriellen Nominierungen und die damit verbundenen Probleme.

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