



Cultural landscapes and the UNESCO World Heritage List: perpetuating European dominance

Christoph Brumann & Aurélie Éliisa Gfeller

To cite this article: Christoph Brumann & Aurélie Éliisa Gfeller (2022) Cultural landscapes and the UNESCO World Heritage List: perpetuating European dominance, International Journal of Heritage Studies, 28:2, 147-162, DOI: [10.1080/13527258.2021.1941197](https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2021.1941197)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2021.1941197>



© 2021 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



Published online: 21 Jun 2021.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 3984



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Citing articles: 1 View citing articles [↗](#)



Cultural landscapes and the UNESCO World Heritage List: perpetuating European dominance

Christoph Brumann^a and Aurélie Élisabeth Gfeller^b

^aMax Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle, Germany; ^bÉcole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), Lausanne, Switzerland

ABSTRACT

The introduction of cultural landscapes within the framework of the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention is widely hailed as a landmark achievement. While it is often described as a boon for the recognition of non-European cultural heritage, we show that this is largely a myth. In the drawn-out gestation process, European countries' listing ambitions were crucial, and topics such as Indigenous sites were brought up by the Global North while a concern for, as well as representatives from, the Global South were largely absent. Introducing the category in 1992 significantly broadened the types of acceptable sites, but European countries continued to dominate just like for other cultural heritage, filling the World Heritage List with vineyard landscapes rather than the sacred mountains that were first inscribed. European states also eagerly used extra nomination slots for cultural landscapes while non-European List leaders prioritised natural heritage and the conventional cultural heritage they had not yet exhausted instead. Moreover, non-European cultural landscapes have struggled to gain expert approval, as is demonstrated for African nominations. The mere introduction of a new heritage category thus does not suffice to alter a dynamic more than ever determined by national self-interests.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 17 February 2021
Accepted 6 June 2021

KEYWORDS

UNESCO World Heritage;
cultural landscapes;
Eurocentrism; ICOMOS;
Global North-South relations

Introduction

The recognition of cultural landscapes in the framework of the 1972 UNESCO Convention for Safeguarding of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage is often seen as a key achievement of this intergovernmental treaty. There is no criticism to speak of, and instead, much applause for a category that expanded global notions of cultural heritage to include new kinds of sites bridging the accustomed divide between culture and nature. Cultural landscapes are a popular category, accounting for every tenth entry (114 of 1,121, as of 2020) in the World Heritage List established by the Convention. They have spurred a rethinking of national heritage frameworks, with countries such as Australia (Lennon 2016), Canada, Japan, or the United States introducing them on a national level and with the Council of Europe adopting the European Landscape Convention, which also highlights heritage value.¹ In terms of global visibility and influence, cultural landscapes are a success story, supporting their assessment as a 'UNESCO flagship programme' (Rössler 2006) by an official of the World Heritage Centre, the secretariat of the World Heritage Convention. Other than the Nara Document on Authenticity of 1994 (Gfeller 2017; Brumann 2021, 55–8), nothing authorised by the governing body of the Convention, the World Heritage Committee with its twenty-one member states, has had a greater impact on global cultural heritage policies.

CONTACT Christoph Brumann  brumann@eth.mpg.de  MPI for Social Anthropology, Advokatenweg 36, Halle 06114, Germany

© 2021 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Part of the support for cultural landscapes rests on the perception that the introduction of this category in 1992 was a boost for the non-European world. An unquestioned focus on monumental built heritage had hitherto led to a numerical dominance of European properties on the List, and if non-European countries lacked the tangible remains of famous ancient empires such as those of Mexico, India, or China, they could only shine through their natural sites. With the new category, however, obstacles for a full recognition of non-European cultural heritage were allegedly cleared, and this is supposed to have been a key objective of the move.

This idea is clearly reflected in initial assessments of the category. ‘UNESCO’s Medium-Term Plan for 1996–2001 and World Heritage Conservation’ of 1994 argued that

[t]he recent revisions to the Convention’s criteria, which introduce the idea of cultural landscapes, now allow the international recognition of new forms of non-monumental cultural heritage of different cultures, and correlatively of associated beliefs and traditions. This widening of the Convention’s concept of cultural heritage . . . will allow the states which are not yet Party to the convention and whose national cultures have produced few or no ‘monuments’, to join the Convention and find their place.²

Addressing the Committee in Naples, UNESCO Deputy Director-General Adnan Badran said in 1997:

as you know the List has been criticised within and outside of UNESCO for being heavily skewed in favour of the monumental heritage of European cultures and for not adequately reflecting the heritage of living cultures from other parts of the world. The Committee’s introduction . . . of the category of cultural landscape has begun to redress this imbalance to a certain extent.³

A decade later, with 66 cultural landscapes on the List, the director of the World Heritage Centre contended that the cultural landscape category had been ‘in a way the precursor of the considerations of the Global Strategy for a balanced and representative World Heritage List of 1994’. ‘The trend has been confirmed over time’, he added, that cultural landscapes

provide an opening of the World Heritage Convention for cultures not or under-represented prior to 1992: the inscription of the Kaya Forest Systems in Kenya or the Chief Roi Mata’s Domain in Vanuatu, the Kuk Early Agricultural site in Papua New Guinea or the Tobacco production of Vinales [*sic*] Valley in Cuba. None of these sites would have had a chance prior to 1992 of being recognized as cultural heritage on a global scale. This is the major importance of the inclusion of the cultural landscape category in the operations of the Convention. (Bandarin 2009, 3)

Based on archival research (Gfeller), ethnographic fieldwork at the Committee sessions and other meetings (Brumann), and interviews with key protagonists and the analysis of online official documents (both), however, we demonstrate that the idea of cultural landscapes being a trailblazer for non-European cultural heritage is largely a myth. Concerns for global equity played only a minor role in the adoption process, with very few representatives from the Global South involved in the discussions. While the category did allow for the recognition of cultural heritage that would have had difficulties qualifying earlier, European numerical dominance has been even stronger for cultural landscapes than for other cultural sites on the List. Instead of dismantling European hegemony, the new category has actually boosted it, undermining rather than supporting the Global Strategy. This, however, is not due to conceptual deficiencies. Rather, we argue that the nomination, evaluation, and decision routines of the World Heritage institutions, the ways in which lingering Eurocentrism plays out in these, and the key role of national self-interests have played a crucial role.

Conceptualising cultural landscapes

The inclusion of both cultural and natural heritage under the single umbrella of the World Heritage Convention was widely seen as an innovative move, given that outside North America, they are most often administered by distinct government bodies relying on separate conservation frameworks. The Convention, the story goes, ‘established a unique international instrument recognizing and protecting both cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value’ (Rössler 2018, 10).

The treaty did not merge the two realms, however, reflecting the fact that distinct initiatives converged only in the last moment (Stott 2011; Batische and Bolla 2005; Brumann 2021, 42–4). Several actors each produced a draft convention for the 1972 United Nations (UN) Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm: the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which had proposed a UN list of national parks and nature reserves as early as 1958; the US government, the first proponent of a ‘Trust for the World Heritage’ in 1966; and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which was known for its widely publicised campaigns to safeguard cultural heritage such as the Nubian monuments of Abu Simbel and Philae. Into 1972, the adoption of separate legal instruments for nature and culture appeared conceivable (Batische and Bolla 2005, 27, 31–2). Only then were the two concerns fused, and the Convention came to be deposited with and administered by UNESCO, in part because the US government and IUCN viewed it as a way to strengthen national commitment and involve the Soviet Union and the ‘developing countries’. Consequently, the text of the Convention defined cultural and natural heritage in separate articles, and it only posited links when mentioning the ‘place in the landscape’ of the cultural property type of ‘groups of buildings’ and when defining cultural heritage sites as ‘works of man or the combined works of nature and man’.⁴

In 1977, after the treaty had come into force, the first ‘Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention’ defined separate cultural (six) and natural (four) criteria for selecting the heritage with ‘outstanding universal value’ (OUV) that the List would include.⁵ The only mutual connections drawn were the references to ‘man’s interaction with his natural environment’ in natural criterion (ii) and to ‘exceptional combinations of natural and cultural elements’ in natural criterion (iii). Expertise was also partitioned, as two different bodies were set in charge of evaluating cultural (the International Council on Monuments and Sites, ICOMOS) and natural (IUCN) sites proposed for inclusion on the List. The inscription of ‘mixed properties’, starting with Tikal National Park (Guatemala) in 1979, made little difference, as such sites were assessed independently by ICOMOS and IUCN for their separate cultural and natural characteristics rather than for the interaction between these.

It took a European treaty state that already boasted 13 cultural World Heritage sites but just one natural site to initiate the eight-year debate that led to the adoption of the cultural landscape category. At the 1984 annual session of the World Heritage Committee, a French delegate from the Ministry of the Environment pleaded for expanding natural criterion (iii) to facilitate the identification of ‘exceptionally harmonious, beautiful, man-made landscapes’.⁶ This characterisation reflected the centrality of aesthetic qualities in French visions of landscape (Charles and Kalaora 2009; Corbin 2001, 42; Roger 1997). In the meeting, the delegate cited both non-European and European examples – the terraced rice fields of Southeast Asia, the terraced fields of the Mediterranean region, and certain vineyard areas in Europe. In truth, the primary objective was to allow the World Heritage inscription of such domestic landscapes as the vineyards of Champagne and Burgundy and the Cevennes National Park,⁷ all of which now have World Heritage status. The French delegate later explained that ‘old rural countries like France, Italy, and the United Kingdom’ were ‘in an uncomfortable situation’ because they did not have the American concept of ‘wilderness’ that had shaped the definition of natural World Heritage. Therefore, they needed to ‘find something else’ to include in the Convention (Cameron and Rössler 2013, 61).

The French Ministry of the Environment was in charge of natural heritage, and initially IUCN took the lead in the debates, with ICOMOS dragging its feet even though the organisation was led by another Frenchman at the time. With the Committee instructing IUCN, ICOMOS, and the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) to elaborate guidelines for the identification of ‘mixed cultural/natural rural properties or landscapes’,⁸ a meeting took place at ICOMOS headquarters in Paris in 1985. IUCN tabled the report that served as a basis for discussion.⁹ This was in line with its goal of enhancing the standing of its ‘Category V Landscapes’ (one of the IUCN-protected area management categories established in 1978¹⁰) through the World Heritage inclusion

of ‘those internationally important places which best show how man and nature, and conservation and development, can exist in harmony’.¹¹ The draft guidelines endorsed at the meeting – still on ‘rural landscapes’ – reflected IUCN’s initial suggestions, with an emphasis on the ecological notion of harmonious balance between land-use patterns and the landform as well as the vegetational cover.¹² Significantly, the types of places the author of the report and the IUCN participant to the meeting (both British) had in mind were all European (the Florentine hills, the French vineyards, the English Lake District), except for the terraced rice fields of Bali. At the ensuing annual meeting of the Bureau, a sub-body of the World Heritage Committee, several concerns were raised about these guidelines.¹³ Michael Parent, the president of ICOMOS, in particular worried that introducing into World Heritage an ‘ethnographic’ dimension, which to him was central to the characterisation of rural landscapes, would unsettle the well-ordered world of aesthetically and historically grounded cultural heritage principles.¹⁴ Therefore, these guidelines were not approved.

At the same 1986 Bureau session, however, the British representative suggested presenting a nomination of a rural landscape as a test case for the existing Operational Guidelines and the proposed changes,¹⁵ and in 1987, the Lake District was put forward for listing as a mixed site. This mountainous area structured into radiating valleys by the movements of ice-age glaciers was shaped by a long-established agro-pastoral land-use system. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Romantic movement celebrated the Lake District in paintings, drawings, and words, and villas, gardens, and parks were created to enhance these features (Denyer 2013). Probably because the assigned task was merely to assess the cultural (ICOMOS) and natural (IUCN) features of the Lake District, rather than consider the human-nature interaction, the World Heritage coordinator of ICOMOS – Léon Pressouyre, yet another Frenchman – judged that this site was worth listing based on cultural heritage criteria. IUCN, however, did not view this nomination through the lens of its ‘protected landscape’ category or the proposed new World Heritage ‘rural landscape’ category. Instead, it questioned whether the Lake District ‘was truly a “natural” site in the sense of Article 2 of the Convention (ie. Nature not modified by man)’.¹⁶ Consequently, the nomination was deferred.

Criticism against the European interests behind the World Heritage recognition of landscapes arose when the Lake District was resubmitted as a cultural nomination in 1990, but it came from within the Global North, not the Global South. The National Park Service, in charge of the Convention within the US government, argued that the creation of a new landscape category would worsen the imbalance between European and non-European World Heritage sites (with the former amounting to 46% in 1990). ‘Cultural heritage in Southeast Asia, the Pacific islands, Africa, and Latin America’, a telegram to the US embassy in Paris stated, ‘may be said to be variously non or under-represented’, and yet ‘landscape proposals have not been strongly advanced by member nations from these regions’.¹⁷ The National Park Service had a point: the delegates who had been advocating a thematic study on rural landscapes in 1989 were European or North American (Canada, France, Italy, and Greece), with only a single Mexican joining them.¹⁸

Although the Committee deferred the nomination of the Lake District once more in 1990, citing a lack of criteria and entrusting the secretariat of the Convention (administered until 1992 by staff members from two divisions within the larger UNESCO Secretariat, Ecological Sciences and Physical Heritage) to elaborate them,¹⁹ the British remained at the forefront of World Heritage recognition of landscapes through their national committee of ICOMOS. In spring 1990, a paper by one of its members was circulated both within ICOMOS internationally and at a meeting of the Alliance for Historical Landscape Preservation in Seattle. ICOMOS UK was keen to see a working group created. Having received favourable feedback from several other ICOMOS national committees, it launched this group in May 1991 with ten members – including individual experts and ICOMOS international scientific committees, all from the Global North (Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, Hungary, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the USA, and Yugoslavia) except for the Sri Lankan Oxford-trained archaeologist Senake Bandaranayake.²⁰ The goal was to promote a broad international agenda, with a focus on ‘landscapes with distinctive features that are the

product of economic and social systems' as well as landscapes deriving their significance from 'close links to people, events or ideas of particular historic interest'.²¹

Following World Heritage Committee instructions, the Secretariat – most likely the Division of Ecological Sciences – presented a new criterion for 'cultural landscapes' (the term that had replaced 'rural landscapes') to the Bureau at its June 1991 meeting.²² This caused friction with ICOMOS UK, which challenged the notion of the 'harmonious balance between nature and human beings' that lay at the heart of the proposed definition. This 'quasi-ecological metaphor' was criticised for failing to provide a clear basis for identifying and protecting 'cultural landscapes', opening the door to landscapes with no specific features beyond a distinct vegetation, and being politically unacceptable since perpetuating the harmonious balance implied arresting the development of traditional societies.²³ Despite such strong ecological undertones, IUCN was also critical, echoing the US government's qualms about the implications of a new criterion or category for existing World Heritage imbalances whereby Europe outdid the rest of the world and culture outdid nature.²⁴ Since IUCN had de facto handed over landscapes to ICOMOS, the creation of a new landscape category would further reduce the proportion of natural sites on the List (a mere 27% in 1990 even when including the mixed sites).

Under its new leadership, ICOMOS soon scaled up its opposition. In October 1990, a reform-minded Canadian conservation architect, Herb Stovel, had been elected secretary general of the organisation. In 1991, he clashed with Pressouyre, causing the latter's resignation as ICOMOS World Heritage coordinator. Stovel was very critical of the revised criterion proposed by the Secretariat towards the end of 1991. Tensions escalated in 1992 as ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre – the new UNESCO unit created in spring 1992 to take over secretariat duties – each came up with a plan for a meeting of experts on cultural landscapes. The Centre, headed by the former chief of the Division of Ecological Sciences, Bernd von Droste, was set on asserting itself but had limited financial resources. Striking an alliance with the French Ministry of the Environment, it put forward the idea of a French-funded meeting to be convened by the Centre. The French saw this as an opportunity to advance both an old objective – securing World Heritage status for their landscapes – and a newer concern – exerting a conceptual influence on the evolution of the Convention.²⁵ Stovel, however, wanted ICOMOS to take the lead in 'fostering the Convention's intellectual development' and viewed the role of the Centre as that of a mere facilitator.²⁶ The idea of having the meeting organised jointly by ICOMOS and the Centre and hosted by the French in the newly established Vosges Regional Park emerged after intense debate over responsibilities, dates, venue, objectives, and financial support.²⁷

Though Stovel employed an internationalist rhetoric, the movement for World Heritage recognition of landscapes would only add North American and Oceanian experts to European ones, as opposed to encompassing the whole world. Stovel's proclaimed objective was to transform ICOMOS into an organisation 'reaching beyond Europe to support and legitimize conservation activities in every corner of the world'.²⁸ His plans for the event resonated with this grand objective. Blaming the French for pursuing 'national interest',²⁹ he envisioned a meeting that would be 'truly global and truly representative of all the disciplines with an interest in the subject'.³⁰ This involved inviting representatives from Africa and South America, as well as Indigenous representatives from Canada and Australia 'so that the Canadian native does not come across as a "token" representative (too often the case here)'.³¹ In the end, however, the participants of the October 1992 Vosges meeting included seven Europeans, one North American, one Asian (the aforementioned Bandaranayake), and three Oceanians, none of them Indigenous. Additionally, four French government officials, two UNESCO World Heritage Centre staff members and one ICOMOS secretariat staff member (all Europeans, albeit one of Arab descent) joined the meeting. The list of participants was the outcome of 'some horse-trading' between ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre.³² These discussions, however, focused on which specific experts from the North to invite rather than on identifying potential participants from the South. The new ICOMOS World Heritage coordinator, British industrial archaeologist Henry Cleere, and Stovel placed much emphasis on ensuring

‘proper ICOMOS representation’. They also ruled out ‘ecologists’ and made sure the “Anglo” element’ would outnumber ‘the French contingent’³³ but did not answer their own question ‘Africa and South America – ideas?’³⁴

It was a non-Indigenous Australian who gave a distinct, intangible flavour to the subcategory of ‘associative cultural landscape’ that subsequently provided an opening to the cultural heritage of the Global South. At the Vosges meeting, participants discussed three subcategories for cultural landscapes: landscapes intentionally created by humans, organically evolved landscapes, and associative cultural landscapes.³⁵ Reflecting an agenda developed in the Australian context, archaeologist Isabel McBryde heavily redrafted the proposed definition of associative cultural landscape,³⁶ which had hitherto been connected to battlefields and landscapes celebrated by poets and painters for their visual qualities.³⁷ Due to growing Indigenous activism, Australian archaeologists had embraced – some willingly, others reluctantly – a collaborative approach acknowledging Indigenous values (Langford 1983; Sullivan 1985; Turnbull 1997; Murray 2011). Through her work with Aborigines, McBryde had learned about their sense of place and the strong spiritual qualities they attach to the landscape (McBryde 1990, 1992, 1995, 1997, 2000). She integrated these notions, which challenged most meeting participants, into the definition of associative cultural landscape.³⁸ In one British participant’s words, ‘the idea that a cultural landscape could have no physical elements took us by surprise’. ‘Fortunately’, he added, ‘I had read about “song-lines” so could just about get to grips with the concept’ – the term ‘song-line’ referring to the ‘Dreaming stories’ expressed through song, dance, painting, and storytelling in Aboriginal cultures.

Efforts to involve actors from the Global South, however, remained limited. Although the ICOMOS Landscapes Working Group urged its corresponding members to bring in voices from Asia, Latin America, and Africa, Bandaranayake remained the only such participant.³⁹ Concerns for the heritage of the Global South were present only at the very end, through the discussion fostered by McBryde. Instead, meeting participants spent much time discussing topics that reflected their own national agendas and priorities, such as whether beauty ought to be a defining characteristic of World Heritage cultural landscapes.⁴⁰ The driving forces behind the debates and frictions on World Heritage landscapes lay elsewhere, including efforts to promote home-grown forms of heritage in the Global North, competing agendas between ICOMOS and IUCN, and rivalry between a newly assertive ICOMOS and the freshly founded World Heritage Centre.

While cultural landscapes are portrayed as a breakthrough, the bridging of the gap between culture and nature was not as strong as is often claimed. In 1988, the Committee had temporarily ascribed ICOMOS the principal responsibility for evaluating mixed sites, giving IUCN a consultative role.⁴¹ Some of its members had warned that IUCN was “‘missing the boat” by this virtual handing over of “mixed” cultural landscape type [*sic*] of nominations to ICOMOS’.⁴² This is what de facto happened for cultural landscapes (if not for mixed sites in the long run), notwithstanding the fact that the New Zealander chair of the IUCN World Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas participated in the Vosges meeting and supported the reform. The role of IUCN has remained limited to the desktop evaluation of the natural features of cultural landscapes, with ICOMOS taking the lead, and in Brumann’s impression, IUCN considers the exclusively natural properties to be its primary task. Moreover, in 1992 the Committee did not only adopt the cultural landscape subdefinitions proposed by the Vosges meeting participants, amending the cultural criteria to accommodate the new landscape category, but also removed the phrases drawing connections between culture and nature from natural criteria (ii) and (iii) because they were considered inconsistent with the Convention’s definition of natural heritage. This means that if anything, the boundary was sharpened.

The introduction of the cultural landscape category happened against the backdrop of growing criticism of the Eurocentric bias of the List. In 1988, the Committee had earmarked funds for a ‘global study’ designed to promote the representativeness and completeness of the List. The resulting ‘Global Strategy for a Representative, Balanced and Credible World Heritage List’ of 1994 moved World Heritage towards an anthropological take on culture and created an explicit opening

towards Indigenous cultures (Gfeller 2015; Brumann 2014, 2080–81, 2021, 53–5). The Nara Document on Authenticity,⁴³ endorsed in 1994 by forty-five experts, introduced the notion of cultural relativism into the assessment of heritage authenticity, which had hitherto been shaped by modern European conservation theories (Gfeller 2017; Brumann 2021, 55–8). Finally, that same year, two expert meetings were convened – one in Canada and the other in Spain – to promote new World Heritage categories, canals and routes (Gfeller and Eisenberg 2016). Significantly, all these efforts to broaden the conceptualisation of cultural World Heritage beyond its primarily European origins were driven by actors who were firmly anchored within the Global North but had hitherto been at the periphery in geographical (Australia, Canada, Japan, Norway) or disciplinary (anthropology, landscape architecture, industrial archaeology) terms. Actors from the Global South neither advocated nor shaped these conceptual reforms, even though the Global Strategy and the Nara Document on Authenticity were more explicitly intended to open the List to their heritage than the cultural landscape category.

Listing cultural landscapes

The first two cultural landscapes to be declared World Heritage by the World Heritage Committee were not new to the World Heritage List: Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (a.k.a. Ayers Rock/The Olgas, Australia) had already been inscribed in 1987, and Tongariro National Park (New Zealand) in 1990, under natural criteria. Now, however, they were re-nominated with added cultural criteria that recognised the spiritual significance of these mountains for Indigenous communities.⁴⁴ The Committee specifically encouraged this for Tongariro, which had initially been submitted as a mixed site by Australia.⁴⁵ After lengthy debates,⁴⁶ both properties were re-inscribed as cultural landscapes, Tongariro in 1993 and Uluru-Kata Tjuta in 1994. Following in 1995, the palace and parks of Sintra (Portugal) became the first ‘intentionally designed’ cultural landscape and the rice terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras (Philippines) the first ‘organically evolved’ cultural landscape on the List.

Going through the subsequent 110 World Heritage cultural landscapes highlighted on a special World Heritage Centre webpage⁴⁷ and in other publications (Fowler 2003; Mitchell, Rössler, and Tricaud 2009) confirms that the new category opened doors. The Oceanian sacred mountains were joined by further sites of a largely associative nature where the material traces of the respective human activities are unimpressive in their own right. Three cases from 2008 can serve to illustrate the point. Sacred Mijikenda Kaya Forests (Kenya) is a ‘serial’ property consisting of eleven surviving patches of forest in the Kenyan coastal hinterland, which once contained fortified settlements that the Mijikenda ethnic groups had built from the sixteenth century onwards. Due to abandonment in colonial times, little beyond the layout has survived, but ritual use in tandem with traditional protection of the forests has continued to this day. Chief Roi Mata’s Domain (Vanuatu) was listed as representing cultural landscapes of Pacific chiefly systems and the associated practices of avoidance, which had protected this site of the last bearer of the Roi Mata title, who lived around 1600. The property includes the remains of the chief’s residential compound, the beachside cave on an adjacent island on which he died, a third island where he was buried, and the connecting sea space. Material evidence is slight and conjectural only – restricted to cave images that possibly depict the chief and to the fact that the excavated mass burial site contains a single central figure – but such limited evidence was outweighed by Roi Mata’s centrality in Polynesian oral traditions and historical memory. Le Morne Cultural Landscape (Mauritius) was inscribed as the shelter for maroons – enslaved persons on the run – that this striking and almost inaccessible monolith rising from the ocean provided for centuries. Again, both the historical record and the traces of human presence on the mountain – things brought from elsewhere, such as stone slabs in rock shelters and bones of sheep, or altered soil compositions that betray cultivation efforts – are patchy at best (Brumann 2021, 64–5), but the emphasis was placed on the maroons’ central role in their descendants’ oral and ritual traditions. The ephemeral human mark on these three landscapes did not prevent them from becoming cultural World Heritage. There are also a considerable

number of non-European hunting, pastoral, and agricultural sites on the List today, sometimes as scenic as Le Morne – such as the rice terraces in the Philippines, south China, and Bali – but the product of everyday subsistence activities, not the outcomes of attempts to create something monumental or aesthetically pleasing. As a result, cultural landscapes have expanded the world map drawn by the World Heritage venture: eight countries (Andorra, Gabon, Madagascar, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Togo, and Vanuatu) are only represented on the List through cultural landscapes, and three countries have no other cultural entry on the List (Chad, Iceland, and New Zealand), with all of these nations lying outside Europe or on its periphery. Seen this way, cultural landscapes have succeeded in broadening World Heritage horizons.

Nothing in the concept of World Heritage cultural landscapes, however, specifically rules out European sites. The subcategory of intentionally designed landscapes – defined as embracing ‘garden and parkland landscapes constructed for aesthetic reasons which are often (but not always) associated with religious or other monumental buildings and ensembles’⁴⁸ – has been used for parks and gardens around, for example, Baroque palaces, which now are often nominated under the cultural landscape category. Among the organically evolved landscapes produced by particular kinds of cultivation or livestock breeding, the coffee, rice, and tequila cultural landscapes elsewhere in the world are outnumbered by the European vineyard landscapes, of which there are more than a dozen by now.⁴⁹ Of the five mining cultural landscapes on the List, only one is outside Europe.⁵⁰ Even pastoralism – whose most elaborate cultural manifestations anthropologists would seek in the arid parts of Africa and Asia – has been good for five European inscriptions,⁵¹ with the rest of the world barely keeping pace. While the subcategory of associative cultural landscapes has led to the inscription of non-Western sacred mountains and groves, it has also provided the rationale for the listing of Val d’Orcia (Italy) and the English Lake District (finally inscribed in 2017), whose associative significance was found in their imprint on the pictorial arts. No particular kind of cultural landscape has provided an exclusive opening for non-European sites.

This leads to aggregate statistics that look surprisingly familiar: 56 of the 114 World Heritage cultural landscapes (49%) were nominated by a European country (see Table 1),⁵² as against 299 of 499 of other cultural and mixed World Heritage properties inscribed since 1993 (50%). Not only do cultural landscapes follow the pattern of European numerical dominance that has been remarkably resistant to Global Strategy efforts but they even fortify it, now that it has begun to wane. For Committee operations, the 2010 session in Brasilia was a watershed: Russia and the large and populous non-European member states of that body brushed aside the recommendations of the European-based expert bodies to unprecedented degrees, fulfilling treaty states’ wishes for more World Heritage inscriptions and fewer conservation requirements. A small group of European Committee member states initially resisted, but this new mode of operations consolidated over the next years, making it easier for all countries to win the coveted title (Brumann 2019, 2021, 83–97).

Table 1. Inscriptions of cultural landscapes and other cultural and mixed properties on the World Heritage List, 1978–2019.

	Cultural landscapes			Other cultural and mixed properties			All cultural and mixed properties		
	World	European share	<i>in %</i>	World	European share	<i>in %</i>	World	European share	<i>in %</i>
1978–1992	295	137	46.4	295	137	46.4			
1993–2009	66	35	53.0	355	199	56.1	421	234	55.6
2010–2019	48	21	43.8	144	50	34.7	192	71	37.0
Total since 1993	114	56	49.1	499	249	49.9	613	305	49.8
Total since 1978	114	56	49.1	794	386	48.6	908	442	48.7

Note: Cultural landscapes as listed on <https://whc.unesco.org/en/culturallandscape>; other numbers derived from the totals for Europe and North America (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/stat#d6>), subtracting those for Canada (cf. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/ca>) and the United States (cf. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/us>; note these countries’ two joint inscriptions). Numbers exclude Dresden Elbe Valley (Germany).

While this has decreased the European share to only 37% (71 of 192) of the cultural and mixed properties inscribed in the 2010–2019 period, down from 52% (371 of 716) in the 1978–2009 period, European cultural landscapes have proven astoundingly resilient: they made for 44% of all cultural landscape inscriptions (21 of 48) in the 2010s, thus slowing down the geographical re-balancing of the List.⁵³ The relative share of cultural landscapes among the more recently inscribed European cultural and mixed properties has doubled – from 15% in the 1993–2009 period to 30% thereafter.

The large number of European cultural landscape inscriptions is not due to preferential treatment: while nominations for European cultural landscapes were slightly more likely than non-European ones to find favour with ICOMOS in the 2010s, they were slightly less likely to be inscribed by a Committee increasingly oblivious to expert advice.⁵⁴ The large share of European cultural landscape listings is therefore a consequence of European countries nominating so many of them. They have been doing so for all kinds of properties: even with a more accommodating Committee, it is a challenge to implement preparatory measures at the site and draft a nomination dossier with hundreds or even thousands of pages responding to detailed requirements (Brumann 2021, 155–6). In the absence of substantial financial redistribution through the World Heritage system (Brumann 2021, 48–9), this is easier for states from the Global North, which muster the required technical and financial resources and specialised personnel. Also, official policies such as the Global Strategy are not binding. Measures such as pre-selection by independent experts, collecting similar candidate sites over a couple of years to then choose only the worthiest, or prioritising under-represented categories or countries while putting the well-covered ones on hold have never been implemented, and the Committee must decide upon each nomination no later than the year after its submission. This is ill-suited to give the likes of France, Germany, Italy, or Spain pause.

The European penchant for cultural landscapes, however, is also the consequence of a special measure to boost this type of cultural heritage. Countries were allowed to nominate two properties rather than just one from the 2006 session onwards, provided that one of them was a natural property (first as a requirement, then as a strong recommendation from 2009). From the 2014 session onwards, the recommendation became a requirement again and was broadened to include cultural landscapes, as these were likewise seen as an antidote to the dominance of conventional cultural heritage on the List. The treaty states made use of this ‘double nomination’ option 32 times between 2014 and 2019, and the contrast between Europe and the non-European world is striking: of 18 such nominations submitted by European countries, 15 met the requirement through a cultural landscape rather than a natural site whereas of the 14 non-European nominations, only a single one did.⁵⁵ This led to 8 European and 1 non-European inscriptions of cultural landscapes and 2 European and 9 non-European inscriptions of natural properties on the List. Obviously, not all these cultural landscapes would have been nominated quite so quickly without the special rule. This means that the latter ended up Europeanising World Heritage cultural landscapes even further.⁵⁶

Zooming in on the most active nominators of the 2010s – most of them long-established List leaders – reveals an analogous contrast (see Table 2): 20 of the 56 cultural and mixed nominations (i.e. 36%) submitted by the European leaders were cultural landscapes, whereas of the non-European ones, just 6 out of 45 were (13%). Turkey aligned with the non-European world where all but one of its nominations were located (despite the country being grouped with Europe in UNESCO affairs). Turkey boasts the remains of ancient empires just like China, Iran, India, and Japan, and these countries have not exhausted their noteworthy conventional cultural (and natural) heritage sites yet, partly because they started forging ahead belatedly. For European countries whose most obvious cultural sites have long made it onto the List, in contrast, the cultural landscape category offers opportunities to expand their World Heritage portfolios even further.

There are also indications of a subtler bias. Sub-Saharan Africa is often portrayed as lacking conventional monumental heritage in World Heritage discourse, and cultural landscapes might thus provide a route to proper recognition. Since 1993, this world region has indeed contributed

Table 2. Top European and non-European nominators compared, 2010–2019.

	Cultural landscape nominations	Other cultural and mixed nominations	Other natural nominations	Total
<i>European countries</i>				
Germany	6	16	1	23
France	4	8	6	18
Italy	4	6	6	16
Spain	6	6	2	14
Total	20	36	15	71
Turkey	2	10	1	13
<i>Non-European countries</i>				
China	3	8	8	19
Iran	2	11	4	17
India	1	9	6	16
Japan	0	11	2	13
Total	6	39	20	65

Note: see note 54 for details of what was counted and what not.

a larger share of cultural landscapes (14 of 114, i.e., 12%) than of other cultural and mixed properties (26 of 500, i.e., 5%) to the List. In the 2010s, 10 new African candidate properties (all sub-Saharan) were submitted as cultural landscapes (one of them twice).⁵⁷ ICOMOS did not recommend any of these for inscription, however, and found only Bassari Country (Senegal) to have OUV (while recommending a ‘referral’, which requires minor revisions before re-submission). The others were not declared devoid of such value; rather, and with just one exception, ICOMOS advised ‘deferral’, the more demanding postponement option that requires a major overhaul of the nomination. The ICOMOS evaluations point to a recurring pattern: all these candidate properties were found to have unsatisfactory boundaries (which excluded key components, included insignificant areas, or were entirely arbitrary), and all but one were assessed as lacking a proper documentation of key contents – such as an inventory, survey, or database – and a convincing comparative analysis (now a requirement).⁵⁸ ICOMOS thus declared itself unable to judge what, in essence, had not been properly delineated, identified, and contextualised. From what the evaluations suggest, some of these (unpublished) nominations must have indeed been quite far from the usual standards. For others, however, ICOMOS was unforgiving about what it saw as conceptual and methodological deficiencies. Kenya had nominated Thimlich Ohinga as a cultural landscape for the 2015 session but the ICOMOS evaluation saw it as an archaeological site and did not comment on its OUV for this reason.⁵⁹ And while in 2011, ICOMOS recognised that the boundaries of the Konso cultural landscape (Ethiopia) reflected real geographical and cultural borders and were no longer just drawn with a ruler as when first submitted a year earlier, the enlarged perimeters now included sections that the organisation saw as inferior so that it was still hesitant.⁶⁰ The evaluations recognised the antiquity and superior quality of the dry stone architecture in Thimlich Ohinga and quoted Ethiopia’s claim of ‘the most spectacularly executed dry stone terrace works in the world which are still actively in use by the people who created it’ for the Konso with apparent approval but still advised postponement for both sites.⁶¹

European cultural landscapes are often more harshly judged by ICOMOS – 14 ‘non-inscription’ recommendations (amounting to terminal rejection if adopted by the Committee) in the 2010s, as against only 4 for the non-European countries – but there is also more of a helping hand at times: two of these rejected European sites, duly withdrawn before the Committee session, were recommended for inscription by ICOMOS upon re-submission just one and three years later (as the only such complete turnarounds for cultural landscapes in that decade).⁶² Moreover, for the 2015 Committee session that also dealt with Thimlich Ohinga, Denmark nominated a series of Baroque parks in North Zealand specifically designed for royal parforce hunting. ICOMOS saw similar problems as with the Kenyan site – inadequate boundaries that excluded parts of the hunting rides, the lack of a survey of the rides and other traces such as marker stones, and

a weak comparative analysis.⁶³ A deferral would have been unsurprising, but instead, ICOMOS recommended inscription for the hunting parks, unusually proposing a supplementary OUV criterion that did not feature in the Danish nomination file. The Committee followed this recommendation, despite Senegal and Algeria's objecting to what in comparison to Thimlich Ohinga and another African site appeared as a lenient treatment. Brumann was told that the initial evaluation draft for the Danish hunting parks had indeed recommended a deferral but that the recommendation (not the text) was 'upgraded' in the internal ICOMOS process. The fact that Danish authorities had used the newly introduced option of discussing interim feedback with ICOMOS, which Kenya had not, and that they were spatially closer to the Parisian ICOMOS headquarters and very likely also better connected within European-dominated ICOMOS circles may have played a role. So may the assumption – shared with Brumann by a Global South contributor to the evaluation process – that Denmark, by way of its financial and organisational advantage, could be relied upon to address the weaknesses post hoc, in ways that Kenya could not. It is also conceivable that the members of the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel – the body that finalises the recommendations – felt more confident about upgrading a Baroque site, given that a majority are conservation architects and art historians trained in Europe and the Americas and are more familiar with European architecture and landscapes than with African ones (Brumann 2021, 239–41). There has been little effort to amend such tendencies: despite allegedly holding so much promise for the Global South, cultural landscapes are the topic of only two of the twenty-three 'thematic studies' conducted by ICOMOS to chart new heritage types since 1996. One of them, moreover, is on European vineyard landscapes. Africa only features in the titles of two other thematic studies dedicated to prehistoric rock art.⁶⁴

In the end, Thimlich Ohinga was listed after being re-nominated as an archaeological site in 2018, and the Committee inscribed a further three of the aforementioned African cultural landscapes against ICOMOS's objections, including Konso, but the other six were indeed deferred by the Committee or withdrawn by the nominating country and are still awaiting resubmission. If ICOMOS evaluators were as conversant with African as with European cultural heritage, we think that with non-Western cultural heritage the contrast would be less pronounced.

Conclusion

All this is not to deny the fact that the cultural landscape category offers the *potential* for bringing about a more inclusive World Heritage List, and we believe that it is this aspect, rather than practiced reality, which inspired the favourable assessments quoted at the outset. Given the diversity of what has been listed under this category, most countries should be able to find comparable candidates within their borders, and if, for example, tea landscapes were proposed for inscription as profusely as wine landscapes, non-European countries might shine.

The cultural landscape category, however, was not brought forward to make the List geographically more inclusive. The initial impetus came from the European heartland of conventional cultural heritage, and the innovative definition of the associative cultural landscape subcategory was suggested by contributors from the non-European Global North attuned to Indigenous cultures. Participation of the Global South in the gestation process was slight and of little concern for the leading protagonists. Once adopted, the cultural landscape category facilitated the nomination of new kinds of sites, opening up opportunities for non-European cultural heritage. No cultural landscape subcategory precludes European nominations, however, and not even European vineyard landscapes have been declared sufficiently covered yet, with Rioja and Chianti waiting in the aisles. In a dynamic driven by individual treaty states' uncoordinated nomination initiatives, the superior resources of European countries are decisive, as they also are more generally in a Committee whose members from the Global South have become more assertive (cf. e.g. Bertacchini, Liuzza, and Meskell 2017) but that continues to treat Europe well with regard to World Heritage titles (Brumann 2019, 2021, 224–256). Prioritising cultural landscape nominations in the 2014–2019 period ended up boosting European nominations, whereas

busy non-European nominators privileged other cultural and natural heritage. Furthermore, ICOMOS's limited ambition to come to terms with non-Western cultural heritage did not make things easier for cultural landscape nominations diverging from the accustomed European kinds. We see a clear parallel with the revised conception of authenticity (Gfeller 2017): while designed with non-European timber and earthen structures in mind, it actually helped listing reconstructions of medieval European buildings that had previously been considered unacceptable (Brumann 2021, 195–201).

Supporters of the status quo would object that nothing hinders non-European countries from putting forward cultural landscapes that meet the (allegedly absolute) OUV standards. While some may be postponed by the World Heritage Committee because of uncertainty about their value, they will, so the argument goes, eventually find their way onto the List once OUV is demonstrated. Non-European countries will thus catch up with France and Italy in due course, so that these two countries' combined total of 16 World Heritage cultural landscapes would no longer exceed that of the African continent. Yet this underestimates the degree to which the actual contents of the List shape everyone's perception of what constitutes proper World Heritage, including for cultural landscapes, and it presupposes that the affluent countries will stop pushing for more one day. Based on the evidence of recent Committee sessions, there is little to support this assumption. The creation of a new category alone is not enough to bring about substantial change in the World Heritage system, as the case of cultural landscapes vividly demonstrates.

Notes

1. Cf. https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/pages/9_cultural_landscapes-paysages_culturels.aspx, https://www.bunka.go.jp/english/policy/cultural_properties/introduction/landscape, https://www.nps.gov/subjects/cultural_allscapes/index.htm, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/landscape/home>.
2. WHC-94/CONF.1/2, p. 3 (<https://whc.unesco.org/archive/1994/whc-94-conf001-2e.pdf>).
3. WHC-97/CONF.208/INF.4, p. 3 (<http://whc.unesco.org/document/55>).
4. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext,Article1>.
5. CC-77/CONF.001/8 Rev. (<https://whc.unesco.org/archive/opguide77b.pdf>).
6. SC/84/CONF.004/9, p. 7 (<http://whc.unesco.org/archive/1984/sc-84-conf004-9e.pdf>).
7. UNESCO Archives, CLT WHC EUR 56, Alain Megret (Direction de la protection de la nature, Ministère de l'environnement), Reconnaissance dans le cadre de la convention du Patrimoine Mondial de la notion de paysages ruraux et culturels, 29 April 1992.
8. SC/84/CONF.004/9, p. 8 (<https://whc.unesco.org/document/889>).
9. UNESCO Archives, Central Registry, 3rd series, 502.7 A 101 WHC Part V, John Foster, IUCN Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas, The identification and evaluation of World Heritage mixed properties: discussion paper, September 1985.
10. Cf. <https://www.iucn.org/theme/protected-areas/about/protected-area-categories>.
11. UNESCO Archives, Central Registry, 3rd series, 502.7 A 101 WHC Part V, Adrian Philips (director of the Countryside Commission for England and Wales and member of the IUCN Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas), letter to James Thorsell (executive officer of the IUCN Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas), 16 August 1985.
12. SC/85/CONF.008/3, p. 7 (<http://whc.unesco.org/archive/1985/sc-85-conf008-3e.pdf>).
13. CC-86/CONF.001/11, p. 11 (<https://whc.unesco.org/document/897>).
14. UNESCO Archives, Central Registry, 3rd series, 502.7 A 101 WHC Part V, Michel Parent, Note introductive: réunion du 11 octobre relative à l'élaboration de critères relatifs aux biens mixtes naturels et culturels du patrimoine mondial.
15. CC-86/CONF.001/11, p. 11 (<https://whc.unesco.org/document/897>).
16. SC-87/CONF.004/11, pp. 9–10 (<http://whc.unesco.org/archive/1987/sc-87-conf004-11e.pdf>).
17. US National Park Service, Office of International Affairs Archives [NPS/OIA Archives], unboxed, folder: WHC Committee Canada 1990, US Department of State to US Embassy in Paris, telegram drafted by Richard Cook (NPS), August 1990.
18. SC/89/CONF.004/12, p. 11 (<https://whc.unesco.org/document/912>).
19. CLT-90/CONF.004/13, p. 8 (<https://whc.unesco.org/archive/repcom90.htm>).
20. David Jacques's private papers (DJPP), ICOMOS Landscapes Working Group [newsletter], 12 June 1991.
21. DJPP, ICOMOS Landscapes Working Group [newsletter], November 1991.

22. SC-91/CONF. 002/2, p. 3 (<http://whc.unesco.org/document/616>).
23. DJPP, ICOMOS Landscapes Working Group [newsletter], November 1991.
24. SC-91/CONF.002/15, p. 25 (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/15COM>).
25. Alain Megret, Reconnaissance dans le cadre de la convention du Patrimoine Mondial de la notion de paysages ruraux et culturels.
26. ICOMOS Archives, Courrier, 1992, Courrier envoyé/expédié, World Heritage Convention Review, ICOMOS notes prepared for the Paris meeting, 27–30 October 1992, enclosed with fax letter from Herb Stovel to Henry Cleere, 19 October 1992.
27. Herb Stovel Papers (HSP), Carleton University Archives, boxes Stov-Cleere 1/2/3; ICOMOS Archives, Courrier, 1992, Courrier envoyé/expédié and Courrier reçu.
28. HSP, box 4, folder: ICOMOS, Herb Stovel responses/letters, 1990, Herb Stovel to Roberto di Stefano, 12 September 1990.
29. UNESCO Archives, CLT WHC EUR 56, ICOMOS and IUCN, memorandum, 9 July 1992.
30. UNESCO Archives, CLT WHC EUR 56, Herb Stovel, ICOMOS meeting to assist the World Heritage Committee respond appropriately to nominations of cultural landscapes, 8 July 1992.
31. ICOMOS Archives, Courrier, 1992, Courrier reçu, Herb Stovel, Notes re Invitees for Cultural Landscapes Meeting, enclosed with fax cover from Herb Stovel to Leo van Nispen, 14 August 1992.
32. ICOMOS Archives, Courrier, 1992, Courrier envoyé, Henry Cleere, fax letter to Herb Stovel, 10 September 1992.
33. ICOMOS Archives, Courrier, 1992, Courrier envoyé, Henry Cleere, fax letters to Herb Stovel, 1 and 10 September 1992.
34. Herb Stovel, Notes re Invitees for Cultural Landscapes Meeting.
35. <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/pierre92.htm>.
36. Mechtild Rössler, interview with Gfeller, 5 March 2012.
37. DJPP, ICOMOS Landscapes Working Group [newsletter], June 1991 and March 1992.
38. David Jacques, replies to questionnaire by Gfeller, 1 May 2012; Susan Buggey, interview with Gfeller, 10 May 2012.
39. DJPP, ICOMOS Landscapes Working Group [newsletter], 12 June 1991; March 1992; August 1992.
40. Susan Buggey, interview with Gfeller, 10 May 2012.
41. SC/88/CONF.001/13, p. 6 (<https://whc.unesco.org/document/2124>).
42. UNESCO Archives, Central Registry, 3rd series, 502.7 A 101 WHC Part VII, Jane Robertson (UNESCO Secretariat), SC/ECO/5865/8.17, Report of my mission to Florence 10–11 May 1989.
43. <http://www.icomos.org/charters/nara-e.pdf>.
44. Details on all mentioned properties and the respective documents and decisions can be viewed on the World Heritage List website (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list>).
45. WHC-92/CONF.002/12, p. 45 (<https://whc.unesco.org/archive/1992/whc-92-conf002-12e.pdf>); WHC-93/CONF.002/2bis, p. 8 (<https://whc.unesco.org/document/922>).
46. *Ibid.*, p. 8; WHC-93/CONF.002/14, p. 39 (<https://whc.unesco.org/document/672>); WHC-94/CONF.003/13, p. 9 (<https://whc.unesco.org/document/739>).
47. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/culturallandscape>.
48. <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/pierre92.htm>.
49. Wachau (Austria); Burgundy; Champagne; Saint-Emilion (France); Tokaj (Hungary); Piedmont; Langhe-Roero and Monferrato; Conegliano and Valdobbiadene (Italy); Alto Douro; Pico Island (Portugal); Lavaux (Switzerland); and, with wine being somewhat less central in their OUV justifications, Loire Valley (France); Upper Middle Rhine Valley (Germany); and Portovenere/Cinque Terre (Italy).
50. Iwami Ginzan Silver Mine and its Cultural Landscape (Japan).
51. Pyrénées – Mont Perdu (Spain and France), Madriu-Perafita-Claror Valley (Andorra), The Causses and the Cévennes (France), Hortobágy National Park/the Pusztá (Hungary), and The English Lake District (United Kingdom).
52. 20 properties inscribed since 1993 are expressly characterised as a ‘cultural landscape’ or (in one case) ‘human-made landscape’ in the mandatory ‘Statement of Outstanding Universal Value’ but, for unclear reasons, do not feature on the cultural landscape webpage of the World Heritage Centre. These too, however, split evenly between European and non-European countries. All our numbers exclude Dresden Elbe Valley (Germany), a cultural landscape inscribed in 2004 and removed from the List in 2009 because of a controversial bridge project.
53. While this included two Indigenous landscapes in Greenland nominated by Denmark, a Polynesian cultural landscape nominated by France, and an Anatolian cultural landscape nominated by Turkey, all other properties were located in geographical Europe.
54. Of 40 European cultural landscape nominations, 15 (38%) were recommended for inscription and 22 (55%) were actually listed. For the 45 non-European cultural landscape nominations, the respective figures were 16 and 29 (i.e. 36 and 64%). Nominations are summarised in the table on the first pages of document 8B for each of

these Committee sessions and possible supplementary documents, such as 8B.Add, to which this table refers (documents of individual Committee sessions can be accessed from <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions>). Because of inscription in a different category or for unclear reasons, not all the listed 51 properties feature on the Centre's cultural landscape webpage. Numbers here and in Table 2 include all nomination instances of properties identified as cultural landscapes by either the nominating country or ICOMOS (not necessarily by both). Nominations struck or marked as 'withdrawn' in the tables are included, as this occurred in response to negative ICOMOS feedback and not because nominating states independently changed their mind. Mere extensions of already listed sites are excluded, as is also Ani Archaeological Site (Turkey), given that in the final submission in 2016, in response to ICOMOS's interim feedback, it was framed as an archaeological site rather than a cultural landscape.

55. The natural properties include 2 non-European mixed properties that were also nominated as cultural landscapes and 1 European natural property nominated together with a cultural landscape, but these three cases would have passed also under the pre-2014 rule. Our numbers exclude several additional cases of double or even triple nominations that did not require inclusion of a natural site or cultural landscape because they concerned contributions to transboundary nominations (covered by the quota of a different participating country) or mere extensions of already listed properties (exempt from the count since the 2016 session; we also disregard the one extension of a natural property prior to 2016).
56. It also encouraged bending the rules: Germany nominated Hedeby and the Danevirke as a cultural landscape in 2018, together with an ordinary cultural property. ICOMOS found it to be an archaeological site, not a cultural landscape, but nevertheless recommended inscription, and the Committee listed something that based on the rules could not have been nominated.
57. For unclear reasons, the Northern African countries (included in the count for Arab countries in World Heritage statistics) have no cultural landscapes on the List and did not nominate any in the 2010s.
58. Sessions documents INF.8B1 and any additional documents to which these refer (see note 53).
59. WHC-15/39.COM/INF.8B1, pp. 34–40 (<https://whc.unesco.org/document/135654>).
60. WHC-11/35.COM/INF.8B1.Add, pp. 2–15 (<https://whc.unesco.org/document/106677>).
61. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
62. Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří (Germany/Czech Republic) and the Prosecco vineyards of Conegliano and Valdobbiadene (Italy).
63. WHC-15/39.COM/INF.8B1, pp. 149–160 (<https://whc.unesco.org/document/135654>).
64. <https://www.icomos.org/en/about-the-centre/publicationsdoc/monographic-series-3/198-thematic-studies-for-the-world-heritage-convention>.

Acknowledgments

Brumann's initial research was funded by a Heisenberg Fellowship of the German Research Foundation (DFG). Gfeller's initial research was funded by a Swiss National Science Foundation Ambizione grant. We are grateful to Fanny Badache, Emilie Dairon, Leah R. Kimber, and Lucile Maertens for organising the 'Researching the United Nations and Other International Organizations' conference in Geneva 2018 in which we could discuss an earlier version. We wish to thank three anonymous reviewers and Brumann's colleagues in the Department 'Resilience and Transformation in Eurasia', in particular Lale Yalçın-Heckmann, for their valuable comments.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This work was supported by the Heisenberg Fellowship, German Research Association (DFG) (Brumann); Swiss National Science Foundation Ambizione Grant PZ00P1_136869/1 (Gfeller).

Notes on contributors

Christoph Brumann is Head of Research Group at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle, and Honorary Professor of Anthropology at the University of Halle-Wittenberg. He obtained his doctoral (1997) and habilitation (2005) degrees at the University of Cologne and also taught at the universities of Düsseldorf and Tübingen. In addition to UNESCO World Heritage, he has published on urban anthropology, cultural heritage, the economy of Buddhism, the anthropological concept of culture, utopian communes, gift exchange, and Japanese

society and culture. His most recent books include *The Best We Share: Nation, Culture and World-Making in the UNESCO World Heritage Arena* (2021), *Tradition, Democracy and the Townscape of Kyoto: Claiming a Right to the Past* (2012), and the co-edited *Monks, Money, and Morality: The Balancing Act of Contemporary Buddhism* (2021) and *World Heritage on the Ground: Ethnographic Perspectives* (2016). He is also the author of 'Heritage Agnosticism: A Third Path for the Study of Cultural Heritage' (*Social Anthropology* 22, 2014). He is a member of the Academia Europaea.

Aurélie Élisa Gfeller is Head of Programme and Project Management Services in the Research Office of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL) in Lausanne, where she manages Swiss and international fellowship and research funding programmes as well as large collaborative research projects. She received her PhD degree from Princeton University (2008) and was a research fellow at the European University Institute in Florence and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva. In addition to global heritage, she has published on the history of Franco-American relations and European integration and is the author of *Building a European Identity: France, the United States, and the Oil Shock, 1973–1974* (2012) and of 'The Authenticity of Heritage: Global Norm-Making at the Crossroads of Cultures' (*American Historical Review* 122, 2017).

References

- Bandarin, F. 2009. "Preface." In *World Heritage Cultural Landscapes: A Handbook for Conservation and Management*, edited by N. Mitchell, M. Rössler, and P.-M. Tricaud, 3–4. Paris: UNES.
- Batisse, M., and G. Bolla. 2005. *The Invention of "World Heritage"*. Paris: Association of Former UNESCO Staff Members.
- Bertacchini, E., C. Liuzza, and L. Meskell. 2017. "Shifting the Balance of Power in the UNESCO World Heritage Committee: An Empirical Assessment." *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 23 (3): 331–351. doi:10.1080/10286632.2015.1048243.
- Brumann, C. 2014. "Shifting Tides of World-Making in the UNESCO World Heritage Convention: Cosmopolitanisms Colliding." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37 (12): 2176–2192. doi:10.1080/01419870.2014.934261.
- Brumann, C. 2019. "Slag Heaps and Time Lags: Undermining Southern Solidarity in the UNESCO World Heritage Committee." *Ethnos* 84 (4): 719–738. doi:10.1080/00141844.2018.1471514.
- Brumann, C. 2021. *The Best We Share: Nation, Culture and World-Making in the UNESCO World Heritage Arena*. New York: Berghahn.
- Cameron, C., and M. Rössler. 2013. *Many Voices, One Vision: The Early Years of the World Heritage Convention*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Charles, L., and B. Kalaora. 2009. "Prégnance et limites d'une approche esthétique de l'environnement." In *Le Paysage: Un Projet Politique*, edited by M. Bédard, 27–43. Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec.
- Corbin, A. 2001. *L'homme dans le paysage*. Paris: Textuel.
- Denyer, S. 2013. "The Lake District Landscape: Cultural or Natural?" In *The Making of a Cultural Landscape: The English Lake District as Tourist Destination, 1750–2010*, edited by J. K. Walton and J. Wood, 3–30. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Fowler, P. J. 2003. *World Heritage Cultural Landscapes, 1992–2002*. Paris: UNESCO World Heritage Centre.
- Gfeller, A. E. 2015. "Anthropologizing and Indigenizing Heritage: The Origins of the UNESCO Global Strategy for a Representative, Balanced and Credible World Heritage List." *Journal of Social Archaeology* 15 (3): 366–386. doi:10.1177/1469605315591398.
- Gfeller, A. E. 2017. "The Authenticity of Heritage: Global Norm-Making at the Crossroads of Cultures." *American Historical Review* 122 (3): 758–791. doi:10.1093/ahr/122.3.758.
- Gfeller, A. E., and J. Eisenberg. 2016. "Scaling the Local: Canada's Rideau Canal and Shifting World Heritage Norms." *Journal of World History* 26 (3): 491–520. doi:10.1353/jwh.2015.0027.
- Langford, R. F. 1983. "Our Heritage – Your Playground." *Australian Archaeology* 16 (1): 1–6. doi:10.1080/03122417.1983.12092875.
- Lennon, J. L. 2016. "Sustaining Australia's Cultural Landscapes." *Landscape Journal* 35 (2): 271–286. doi:10.3368/lj.35.2.271.
- McBryde, I. 1990. "Those Truly Outstanding Examples . . .': Kakadu in the Context of Australia's World Heritage Properties – A Response." In *A Sense of Place: A Conversation in Three Cultures*, edited by J. Domicelj and S. Domicelj, 15–9, 46–52. Canberra: Australian Heritage Commission.
- McBryde, I. 1992. "The past as Symbol of Identity." *Antiquity* 66 (250): 260–266. doi:10.1017/S0003598X00081254.
- McBryde, I. 1995. "Dream the Impossible Cream? Shared Heritage, Shared Values, or Shared Understanding of Disparate Values." *Historic Environment* 11 (2–3): 8–14.
- McBryde, I. 1997. "The Cultural Landscapes of Aboriginal Long Distance Exchange Systems: Can They Be Confined within Our Heritage Registers?" *Historic Environment* 13 (3–4): 6–14.

- McBryde, I. 2000. "Travellers in Storied Landscapes: A Case Study in Exchanges and Heritage." *Aboriginal History* 24: 152–174.
- Mitchell, N., M. Rössler, and P.-M. Tricaud. 2009. *World Heritage Cultural Landscapes: A Handbook for Conservation and Management*. Paris: UNES.
- Murray, T. 2011. "Archaeologists and Indigenous People: A Maturing Relationship?" *Annual Review of Anthropology* 40 (1): 363–378. doi:10.1146/annurev-anthro-081309-145729.
- Roger, A. 1997. *Court Traité Du Paysage*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Rössler, M. 2006. "World Heritage Cultural Landscapes: A UNESCO Flagship Programme 1992-2006." *Landscape Research* 31 (4): 333–353. doi:10.1080/01426390601004210.
- Rössler, M. 2018. *UNESCO World Heritage Centre Background Document on UNESCO World Heritage Cultural Landscapes: Prepared for the Fao Workshop and Steering Committee Meeting of the Giahs Project (Globally Important Ingenious Agricultural Heritage Systems)*. http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/giahs/docs/WorldHeritage_CulturalLandscapes_MechtildRoessler.pdf.
- Stott, P. H. 2011. "The World Heritage Convention and the National Park Service, 1962-1972." *The George White Forum* 28 (3): 279–290.
- Sullivan, S. 1985. "The Custodianship of Aboriginal Sites in Southeastern Australia." In *Who Owns the Past? Papers from the Annual Symposium of the Australian Academy of the Humanities*, edited by I. McBryde, 139–156. Melbourne and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Turnbull, P. 1997. "Ancestors, Not Specimens: Reflections on the Controversy over the Remains of Aboriginal People in European Scientific Collections." *The Electronic Journal of Australian and New Zealand History* 27 (4): 1–18.