UNESCO: The Emergence of the Ideals of Peace and World Heritage

Denis Fernando Radun*
Fernando Cesar Sossai**
Ilanil Coelho***

Abstract: To what extent does World Heritage promote the ideals of peace advocated by the United Nations and its specialised agencies, particularly UNESCO? This article discusses the emergence of UNESCO's ideals of peace, mainly in the context of its constitution, questioning these ideals in the face of war disputes involving the Temple of Preah Vihear (Cambodia), included in the World Heritage List in 2008. Such issue is deepened from the analysis of the UNESCO Convention on the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972) as an instrument of international relations, eventually triggered in geopolitical disputes that go beyond the field of heritage. This article argues that the manufacture of world heritage can make paradoxical the realisation of the ideals of peace defended by UNESCO within the United Nations system. It is based on relevant bibliography, on primary sources collected at the UNESCO Archives (Paris, France), on digital platforms maintained by this Organisation (UNESDOC Digital Library), and on the content of the litigious process between Cambodia and Thailand, handled by the International Court of Justice, regarding the dispute for sovereignty over the region where the Temple of Preah Vihear is located.

Keywords: UNESCO; world heritage; international relations; Temple of Preah Vihear; world peace

Introduction

'Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed' (UNESCO 1945). The preamble statement of the Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) announced its ideological mandate, namely to 'build peace in the minds of men and women'. In this context, the promotion of an ideology of peace and understanding between peoples is associated with intellectual cooperation in the areas of education, science, and culture among the States Parties to the Organisation.

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*   Univille University, Joinville - SC, Brazil; denisradun@gmail.com. ORCiD 0000-0001-5004-1036.

**   Univille University, Joinville - SC, Brazil; fernandosossai@gmail.com. ORCiD 0000-0002-6757-4151.

***   Univille University, Joinville - SC, Brazil; ilanilcoelho@gmail.com. ORCiD 0000-0002-2903-404X.

This article aims to problematise the relationship between the ideals of peace built at the time of UNESCO's constitution (1940s), as well as to discuss to what extent the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 1972) is used as an instrument of international relations in geopolitical disputes that go beyond cultural heritage issues. Therefore, we conducted a study on the inclusion of the Temple of Preah Vihear (TPV) in the World Heritage List (WHL). Located in a border area between the Kingdoms of Cambodia and Thailand, the TPV was the scene of a war conflict between these Southeast Asian states. Since the 1950s, the region has experienced military tensions motivated by the dispute over the exercise of sovereignty by those Kingdoms over the region where the TPV is located. In 1961 this dispute was taken to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), created synchronously with the United Nations (UN). In fact, in 2008, the year in which the TPV was included in the WHL, the conflict gained more violent proportions and the heating up of military tensions resulted in the death of Cambodian and Thai citizens, as well as the forced displacement of peasants who inhabited the region. This conflict prompted a new ICJ trial in 2011, on the sovereignty over the TPV. Considering the complexity and the current developments of the case under analysis, our hypothesis is that the management of world heritage may turn paradoxical the meeting of the ideals of peace and understanding among peoples advocated by UNESCO.

Established in London from 1942 to November 1945, after a sequence of meetings of allied ministers of education, held with the aim of planning the intellectual reconstruction of the post-war world, UNESCO's constitution was marked by recent painful memories concerning the events of the World War II, whose conflicts had officially ended in May of that year. The memories of the violence committed by the Nazi and Fascist regimes were especially present, revived by the proximity of the beginning of the trial of Hermann Göering and 22 other Nazi criminals by the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg. Another element present was the fear that a future war of global dimensions could be engendered by the rivalries and war competitions between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, former allies in the confrontation and consequent defeat of the Nazi and fascist regimes. It was the virtual beginning of the Cold War. The scenario of a real conflict, recently experienced, and of the possible repetition of violence in the near future, was the background for the conventional construction of UNESCO's purposes as well as for the creation of its ideals (Pereira 2010).

In its 75 years of existence, one of the main action fronts of UNESCO in the cultural field has been the construction of international reference documents aimed at valuing and protecting cultural heritage. From the UNESCO Conventions of 1954, 1970, 1972, 2001, 2003 and 2005, the Organisation has assumed a certain leading role in the production and dissemination of normative frameworks that still affect both the global modelling (Gfeller and Eisenberg 2016) and the network governance of heritage (Sossai et al., 2020).[1] Especially in 1972, with the Convention concerning the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the Organisation began to coordinate international work related to the recognition of World Heritage properties, with emphasis on the production of World Heritage Lists.[2] This Convention created the World Heritage Centre and its World Heritage Committee (WHC) with the mission of curating properties nominated for inclusion in

the WHL. According to information available on the WHC website, there are current-ly 1121 World Heritage properties recognised, divided into three main categories (cul-tural heritage, natural heritage and mixed heritage). The Convention stands out among other UNESCO conventions due to the number of its signatories. As of December 2020, UNESCO had 193 States Parties and 11 Associate Members, while the 1972 Convention had 194 signatories.

As a consequence of these discussions, this article is organised into four parts. The first part presents the plot of UNESCO's constitution, highlighting the actors and the main arguments that played a role in the creation and display of its axiology. The prob-lematisation of the key arguments that supported the speeches recorded in the minutes of the Conference for the establishment of UNESCO, the text of its Constitution (1945), followed by the preparatory document for the first session of the General Conference, together with the minutes of that session, allow us to understand the ideal embraced by the Organisation.

We then present the case of the TVP questioning its inclusion in the WHL and the justifications commonly used to support its recognition as a world heritage site. In this sense, we discuss arguments that linked the TPV to economic development through tour-ism activities in its region. Broadening the focus on the process of inclusion of the TPV in the WHL, we came across the complexity of the scenario of geopolitical and geoeconomic disputes that, implicitly, may have been the justification for the conflicting inclusion. In a third moment, we address the references foreseen by the 1972 Convention, which sub-sidise the recognition of a world heritage site. As final considerations, we question the power of the 1972 Convention as a legal tool, used in international relations that go be-yond the interest of promoting UNESCO's world heritage and which not always coincide with the strengthening of the Organisation's mission to promote peace and understanding among peoples.

In methodological terms, the research from which this article results is character-ised as interdisciplinary, bringing together theories and procedures specific to the fields of knowledge of Law, History and International Relations.[3] In this regard, this research has been carried out from an exploratory approach, as well as making use of analytical procedures proper to historical-documentary research. In more specific terms, through-out its development, in addition to the elaboration of annotations and summaries of rel-evant bibliography, numerous primary source analysis sheets were also produced. These sources were collected at the UNESCO Archives headquarters (Paris), in digital platforms maintained by this Organisation (UNESDOC Digital Library) and in the records of the litigious process involving the TPV at the ICJ.[4]

Finally, we hope that this article will be a relevant contribution to future research interested in understanding, not only the tensions that run through international rela-tions, in which certain national states dispute the possession and use of a cultural heritage located in a border region, but also the role played and the scale of influence of global organisations created in a context of war and which, even nowadays, continue to assume the mission of promoting peace and harmony among peoples, as is the case of the UN and UNESCO.

UNESCO, the history of its constitution and the ideology of peace

Between 1 and 16 November 1945, representatives from 44 allied countries met in London to establish UNESCO.[5] The event was the culmination of a series of meetings that had taken place since 1942, involving allied ministers of education who were in exile in the capital of the United Kingdom because of the occupation of their countries by the Nazis. The conference was organised by England and France and was chaired by the English minister of education, Mrs. Ellen Cicely Wilkinson (1891-1947). Organized in 11 plenary sessions and five commissions, the meeting aimed at approving UNESCO's Constitution.

The debates about the Constitution were based on two preparatory documents: *Draft Proposals for an Educational and Cultural Organization of the United Nations,* which came to be known as the English proposal for the UNESCO Constitution, and the *French Proposals for the Constitution or the United Nations Organizations of Intellectual Cooperation*, which came to be known as the French proposal. Education was the protagonist of the diplomatic speeches, evidenced by the emphasis on the need for an undertaking to denazify the territories hitherto occupied by the defeated Reich. Another role was given to science, which despite the consensus on its relevance, was not included in the name of the Organisation in those preparatory proposals. The inclusion of science in the Organisation's epithet came from a suggestion of the British delegation, in the person of the President of the General Conference, the same Mrs. Wilkinson (UNESCO 1945: 24).

After the election of Mrs. Wilkinson as president of that Conference, the opening of proceedings was preceded by the speech of the British prime minister, Mr. Clement Richard Attlee (1883-1967), a member of the Labour Party who had defeated the Conservative Winston Churchill on May 1945 elections. With the question '[d]id not wars, after all, begin in the minds of men?' Attlee set the tone for his speech, attributing the belief that common understanding among peoples would be the best way to secure peace. For Mr. Attlee, in democracy the minds of all people mattered, yet 'democracies [alone] did not prove sufficient to protect people against a readiness to wage war', so there was a need to educate the minds of ordinary people to become attuned to peace (UNESCO 1945: 22). Mr. Attlee's speech was taken up again in the plenary meetings of the following days, being referenced in the speeches of the representatives of the delegations of Ecuador, Iraq and Turkey (UNESCO 1945: 51, 52, 55).

The logic of building a peaceful mentality in ordinary men and women through education, science and culture, displaced the expectation of having only statesmen and diplomats as recipients of a project of peace and understanding among peoples. With the defeat of Nazism and Fascism, it became clear that it was not enough for the leaders of democracies not to promote war. In order to succeed, it was also necessary for a peace project to be believed by people around the world. The sufferings caused by Nazi and fascist violence were repeatedly portrayed in the speeches of the representatives from France, Belgium and Ecuador (UNESCO 1945: 27, 43, 50). The representative of the Belgian delegation expressed concern about the need for re-educating the masses and the youth subjected to Nazi training (UNESCO 1945: 43). Another moment during the Conference that evidenced the protagonism of the concern with the effects of the Nazi and fascist violence

and its victims who were murdered, tortured, or had their 'minds enslaved', occurred in the final act of the meeting, when the President invited those present to hold a moment of silence in their honour (UNESCO 1945: 93).

From the analysis of the minutes of the General Conference for UNESCO's Constitution, we can see that education, science and culture were linked as instruments, aimed at denazification and promotion of a mentality of peace among ordinary people to build understanding among nations. This axiology gained materiality in the final act of the Conference with the promulgation of the UNESCO Constitution (UNESCO 1945).

The UNESCO Constitution was systematised in three parts. The preliminary part, which includes the preamble, the normative part, which contains the governing text of the Organisation, and the final part, which expressed a set of transitional provisions, intended to regulate the period of validity of the legal act and, consequently, formally legitimised the existence of this international organisation.

The preamble to the UNESCO Constitution recorded a kind of axiology of the future for the Organisation: a space to perpetuate the spirit of that historical moment. In this context, the notion of peace and understanding among peoples was the protagonist. The preamble stated that the war that had just ended was due to disrespect for the democratic principles of dignity, equity, and mutual respect. These factors were associated with the dissemination of the doctrine of inequality among people and races. The prevention of war, on the other hand, should occur through understanding and trust among peoples, since the development of moral and intellectual solidarity would bring more solid bases for peace than economic and political governmental agreements. Finally, the ideology was articulated with the perspective of promoting equal opportunities for education, exchange of ideas and the use of the media for mutual understanding through knowledge of each other's lives.

The normative body of the Constitution was concerned with establishing the functions of the Organisation, the treatment of its members, the competences of its organs (General Conference, Executive Council and Secretariat), its relations with national cooperation commissions and its budget. UNESCO's relationship with the UN and the Organisation's legal status were also addressed. Finally, the normative body regulated the procedure for its alteration as well as the form of its interpretation, establishing the official languages and the forums that may decide interpretative disputes about the Constitution, which are the ICJ and arbitration courts. The final part of the UNESCO Constitution regulated the requirements for its validity, establishing the need for 20 signatory states and the place of deposit, fixed as the Government of the United Kingdom. Until the 40th General Conference, held in 2019, UNESCO's Constitution has undergone 23 amendments. After being ratified by more than 20 states (1946), the Constitution came into force and the first General Conference was held in Paris in 1946, at the Sorbonne. In addition to the constitutional text, a preparatory document called *'UNESCO: Its purpose and its philosophy'*, drafted by Mr. Julian Huxley (1897-1975), was sent to the signatory states. In the document, Huxley consolidated the linking of UNESCO's purposes with those of the UN and inaugurated it by echoing its preambular commitments.

Facing an Organisation with several fronts, Huxley proposed a philosophy to avoid contradictions. However, in his view, this philosophy could not surpass another, for instance, that of free market capitalism over Marxist communism, or that of Catholicism over Islam. (UNESCO 1946b: 6). Huxley argued that UNESCO should embrace a worldwide, scientific, and evolutionary humanism. World-wide so that individuals would be treated with equal opportunities and respect; scientific, because science would offer 'the greatest material basis for human culture', however, it should not be materialistic, but spiritual, with 'a truly monistic and unitary philosophical basis'; evolutionary, as opposed to ideal humanism, since, in his view, an ideal humanism meant a 'false philosophy' (UNESCO 1946b: 7).

The document highlighted the defence of evolutionism. In his words, Huxley advocated that 'an evolutionary approach provides the link between natural science and human history', thus UNESCO's general philosophy should, 'apparently be a scientific world humanism, global in scope and evolutionary in background' (UNESCO 1946b: 8). Huxley defended a comprehensive perception of evolutionism, linking it to natural science and its supposed social aspects as well as highlighting, for instance, that the advance in nuclear physics should be used by physics itself and by microbiology for peaceful purposes (UNESCO 1946b: 13).

According to Huxley, UNESCO should pay attention to 'levelling educational, scientific and cultural institutions situated below the average' in addition to overcoming illiteracy, which placed the fully educated human being in a world of 'superstition and petty tribalism' rather than placing one in a place of 'advancement' (UNESCO 1946a: 17). When addressing human values, Mr. Huxley proposed that the Organisation should not be 'neutral in the face of competing values', making the necessary choices for a better future. Neutrality would be controlled by the need to relate ethical values to the 'direction of evolution'. For him, the ideal tool to guide this relationship should be that of the 'biological progress', which would shape 'the superstructure to suit the principles of social advance' (UNESCO 1946b: 39).

In addition to the trauma of the Second World War, the tensions that later resulted in the Cold War, added a sense of urgency to the issues addressed in the preparatory document. Attentive to the post-war geopolitical context, Huxley advocated the need to avoid conflict through a reconciliation of diverse interpretations of the world, such as the Russian versus the American lifestyle, capitalism versus communism, Christianity versus Marxism. His faith was anchored in the 'inexorable dialectic of evolution' that would promote this conciliation 'before or after another war'. He assigned UNESCO a leading role in the task of bringing about this conciliation, in time to avoid a new war that would delay 'the march of human progress by centuries' (UNESCO 1946b: 61).

The document drafted by Mr. Huxley was attached to the invitation of the First General Conference sent to the states signatories to the UNESCO Constitution, observer states, and non-governmental institutions. From the first day of the Conference, ideas about the interpretation of the UNESCO Constitution proposed by the document permeated the speeches of the representatives of the delegations and also of the presidents of the plenary sessions.

In the first report of the Conference's preparatory committee, Huxley, in the role of Executive Secretary, informed those present that the Soviet government had been given a seat on the Executive Committee and that it had, nevertheless, left it vacant. The Soviet Union had also failed to be present at the Conference, not even sending an observer. He stressed that the absence of such representation makes it 'impossible to establish UNESCO as a truly global agency'. He further justified that 'Russia's participation in UNESCO would be of mutual benefit in facilitating the reconciliation of the conflicting ideologies that now threaten to divide the world', as there would be the possibility of sharing a common philosophy that would underpin a practical programme of common action. His speech advocated a conciliatory world view line, a line based on the assumption of the 'inexorable dialectic of evolution' (UNESCO 1947: 19).

The Soviet absence was interpreted by Mr. Hardman, then the president of the session, as evidence of the existing polarization in the world 'of two powerful opposing ideologies, which we may call Eastern and Western, or communist and individualist' (UNESCO 1947: 24). Such absence was also highlighted by representatives from Australia, Iran, Nicaragua and Costa Rica (UNESCO 1947: 34, 58, 59). This absence can be understood as a demonstration of distrust of UNESCO's totalizing project, which would follow the logic of global action undertaken by the UN. Another possibility is that of resistance to the conciliation of its interests with those of other states, especially with the USA, a political option maintained during the Cold War, under the mantle of the 'no agreement' policy. Regarding this policy, which guided the Soviet Union's relationship with the other states, Hobsbawm (1995: 184) explains that 'from Moscow's point of view, the only rational strategy to defend and exploit the vast but fragile new position of international power was exactly the same: no agreement'. The absence of a Soviet delegation also communicated to those present the lack of consensus regarding UNESCO's purposes, something that did not occur at the founding of the UN a few months earlier, in June 1945.

Huxley's work was celebrated and expressly mentioned during all plenary sessions, by representatives of the Brazilian, Belgian, Turkish, Canadian, Indian, Nicaraguan and Norwegian delegations (UNESCO, 1947: 33, 37, 49, 52, 54, 60, 61). However, there was no unanimity regarding the philosophy proposed by Huxley. The Minister of Education of the Netherlands, Mr. Gielen, presented the first counterpoint to evolutionism mentioned in the report of the Preparatory Commission. He said the Organisation should be mindful of the contribution that religious communities can make to mutual understanding among peoples (UNESCO 1947: 32).

Another counterpoint, presented more strongly, was that of Mr. Ribinkar, the representative of Yugoslavia. Mr. Ribinkar was emphatic in criticizing the announced philosophy of 'World Scientific Humanism' which, according to him, UNESCO was forcibly imposing on the peoples of the world. This is because, in defining its philosophy, 'UNESCO would have condemned conceptions of the world and of life that do not correspond to its philosophical concepts.' Questioning the claim of a single philosophy to guide UNESCO's purposes, Ribinkar exemplified his criticism by stating that UNESCO's philosophy 'rejects materialist philosophy and questions the scientific character of materialist dialectics' that was adopted in several states, including the Soviet Union. Furthermore, he drew attention

to the campaign carried out against the philosophy of historical materialism in favour of a 'European civilisation', and that said campaign had been equally embraced by fascist regimes. For him, 'a whole series of proposals by the preparatory commission, abusing the principle of the 'free flow of ideas', provokes the penetration of the masses by a propaganda planned by the opponents of peace and the instigators of new wars' (UNESCO 1947: 39). Ribinkar ended his speech by stating that Yugoslavia had valid reasons for not ratifying UNESCO's Constitution and requesting to participate in the Conference as an observer. His criticism was endorsed by the representative of the Polish delegation, Mrs. Gasirowska (UNESCO 1947: 52).

The vehement defence of the Soviet Union by the Yugoslav delegation was justified, above all, by the domination that the Eastern power exercised over that country through the 'Information Department of Communist and Workers' Parties'. Interestingly, Josip Broz Tito (1892-1980), leader of the post-war Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, would break with the Soviet bloc three years later, in 1948. The absence of the Soviet Union seems to have placed the Conference participants in a dilemma, that is, whether it would be possible to constitute an Organisation with a global reach without the participation of one of the world's greatest powers.

Another absence brought up in the Conference speeches, which placed the participants with another dilemma, was that of the representatives of Spain and Italy. Representatives from Chile, Mexico, Poland, Venezuela, Czechoslovakia, France and Uruguay noted Spain's contribution to European and American culture. The Uruguayan delegation also made the same deference to Italy. The dilemma presented here concerned how the integration of the Organisation with countries considered losers would or should occur, since the countries defeated in 1945 were the object of concern as recipients of the Organisation's actions. For example, the Minister of Education of the Netherlands, Mr. Gielen, registered his concern about certain groups in Germany who had received Nazi education and who 'are ignorant of the ideas of the democratic world' (UNESCO 1947: 32). However, the manifestation of the representatives of the delegations of the aforementioned countries was not only attached to the necessary process of re-education, or denazification, but also to the recognition of the cultural reference they represented and how the Organisation would deal with the need for their entries.

Mr. Huxley's report was approved, with no contrary votes or abstentions being recorded. In addition, he was elected the first Director-General of UNESCO (UNESCO 1947: 73). In short, Julian Huxley was one of the protagonist actors of the first UNESCO General Conference, which elected him President. His preparatory document for the event guided much of the debate in the plenary sessions. In a certain way, Huxley translated, or created, an ideology for UNESCO, adopting the evolutionist theory of biology to express a rationale for an alleged syllogism between the announced progress and the Organisation's axiology. Scientific discourse seems to have played the legitimising role of UNESCO's 'natural' action in the fields assigned to it. His institutional role was not that of a representative of a state delegation, a diplomat of a non-governmental institution, but that of the executive secretary. He was not even required to register his presence as an expert, indicating that the authority of his speech did not require preambles.

Yet the Conference to constitute UNESCO had Mr. Attle as its protagonist. The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, who spoke on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, represented England's authority on the matters of interest to UNESCO. Due to his role, his speech could not go unnoticed. This situation seemed to be unquestionable. The purpose of building peace and understanding among nations, as an ideal to be spread among ordinary people, somehow strengthened democracy as a fundamental value to prevent new totalitarianisms, and thus, avoid war.

The violent past of the Second World War, recently experienced, was present at UNESCO's founding Conference and was recorded in the meeting's minutes and in the preamble of its Constitution. The experience of the real violence of murders, tortures and 'slavery of minds', strengthened the definition of the ideals of peace and understanding among the peoples of the Organisation. On the other hand, the register of tension between West and East, the USA and the Soviet Union, established another limit in the construction of this ideology. Such concerns, as well as a real possibility that the terror of a world war proportions soon to be revived, were addressed in the preparatory document signed by Mr. Huxley and in the minutes of the First General Conference of UNESCO.

The ideals forged for UNESCO, in the events analysed, were formed from the experience and fear of wars of world proportions. Other more subtle forms of violence, involving the cultural or economic sphere, seem to have played a supporting role in this complex construction. With the exception of fierce criticism from the Yugoslav representative, who sought to warn against the instigation of new wars through the free flow of ideas, UNESCO's purposes were treated as an achievable project for the promotion of peace and understanding among peoples.

The perception of an achievable project opened a vast range for UNESCO's action in the field of culture. The 1972 Convention may be taken as one of the frameworks of UNESCO's governance. The Convention is a part of a series of initiatives, involving specialized agencies and agents, which sought to model procedures and establish an axiology for the manufacture of world heritage. Years later, the strength of this ideology of promoting peace and understanding among peoples was called into question, when an action of UNESCO itself, under the guise of cultural protection, through the application of the UNESCO Convention of 1972, became the trigger of a war conflict. It was precisely a religious temple, the object of disputes between kingdoms that did not understand each other, which received the careless touch of an action by the Organisation that resulted in damage, death, and the forced displacement of peasants.

The Temple of Preah Vihear: a UNESCO world heritage site and the war

'Today, the business of inscribing World Heritage properties has reached new heights, enticing almost all the nations of the world to ratify the 1972' (Meskell 2020: 139). According to Meskell, for an inclusion in the World Heritage List to occur, there are complex levels of interconnectivity between national and international interests. Registering assets becomes equivalent to investments in economic, cultural, military and political transactions and the inclusion is considered an investment in the future. In her words, the states

see 'UNESCO's recognition as an effective meaning of accumulating tourism revenues'. It presents itself 'increasingly, [as] a path towards greater self-determination in the face of competition and conflict' (Meskell 2020: 140). Thus, the inclusion of a site in the WHL interest nation states that make up both West and East, and the Global North and South. In this sense, the increase in states participating in the dispute for recognition of their properties as World Heritage, in this complex interconnectivity of interests, means the ambition and the exercise of a kind of 'soft power' in the arena of international relations (Christofoletti 2017).

In this context, on 8 July 2008, during the 32nd session of the World Heritage Committee, held in Quebec, Canada, the Temple of Preah Vihear was included in the WHL. The decision of the WHC was based on the TPV matching the criterion (i), defined by the 'Technical Guidelines for the Application of the World Heritage Convention', which serve to guide the identification of the outstanding universal value of a heritage site (UNESCO 2008b). According to the Operational Guidelines in force at the 32nd session of the World Heritage Committee, in order to meet this criterion, the site had to '(i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius'. Therefore, according to the summary of decisions of that session, chaired by Mrs. Christina Cameron (Canada), the aforementioned site fit perfectly, as 'Preah Vihear is an exceptional masterpiece of the Khmer architecture. It is very "pure" in both detail and decoration' (UNESCO 2008a).

Situated on a plateau of the Dângrêk Mountains, on the border of the Kingdoms of Cambodia and Thailand, the TPV was built during the reign of Suryavarman I, at the beginning of the 11th century and dedicated to the Hindu deity Shiva. With the decline of Hinduism in the region, the temple came to have Buddhist uses. Currently, it is a reference for both religions. Moreover, the TPV is a reference for the exercise of sovereignty by those two Southeast Asian Kingdoms. The dispute over the sovereignty of the territory where the temple is located, dates back to the 19th century, when Cambodia was part of the French Indochina protectorate, and led to armed conflicts that resulted in the death of citizens of both kingdoms and damage to the temple (Hauser-Schäublin 2011).

Cambodia currently has three inclusions in the WHL. The first of them, dating from 1992, is Angkor, an archaeological park with different remnants of the capital of the Khmer Empire (9th to 15th centuries). The Park consists of a set of buildings, among them the Hindu temple of Angkor Wat. The temple reappeared on the official Cambodian flag in 1993, following the movement for the restoration of the constitutional monarchy in that country. According to Fernandes (2017: 184) the listing of Angkor Wat plays an important role in Cambodia. Despite the destruction of other works of the Khmer architecture, the temple has received international tourists and this fact is due to the actions of UNESCO and, according to the author, 'the appreciation of the historical monument has contributed to the resurgence of Cambodia's national identity, and contributed to peace actions in the region'. The second inclusion was that of the TPV in 2008, and the third, in 2017, was that of the area of the Sambor Prei Kuk Temple, an archaeological site of ancient Ishanapura. The common feature among these cultural assets, in a first analysis, was that they had been considered representatives of the Khmer style and remnants of buildings. Angkor

and the TPV would also figure as symbols of Cambodia's national unity and pride, based on the achievements of the Khmer empire, the supposed origin of Cambodians (Hauser-Schäublin 2011).

As found by numerous studies (Peixoto 2002; Scifoni 2017; Sossai and Coelho 2018; Sossai 2020), a point to be highlighted is that an inclusion in the WHL has an impact on the promotion of tourism, which, when associated with cultural heritage, may lead to an economic activity from the interaction between visitors with the place visited and with people. In the case of the TPV, the site's touristic aspirations find echoes in the 'market of leisure and historical and heritage tourism' (Peixoto 2003), and also in visits and hospitality practices, analogous to tourism in the Asian continent itself, noted since at least the 17th century (Winter 2009: 317).

In 2010, the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom of Cambodia, following guidance from ICOMOS and UNESCO, announced the creation of a 177-hectare-ecomuseum, the construction of an ecovillage and the promotion of ecotourism. The inclusion of the TPV in the WHL has also attracted investment interest from Chinese companies for the construction of a motorway. This was motivated by the fact that access to the TPV is easier through Thailand. In this sense, Hauser-Shäublin (2011: 37) explains that the building of a motorway by Chinese companies was the first step in providing tourists with access to the area of Cambodia where the TPV is located. According to the author, it would have been very difficult to reach the temple otherwise. However, 'meanwhile, Thailand, has claimed an important area near the monument as its territory. This area is exactly the area where the main access road to the World Heritage Site is located'(Hauser-Shäublin 2011: 37).

When dealing with the touristic potential of the world heritage, Sossai and Coelho (2017: 142) warn about touristic heritage sites, which, even if economically profitable, can present 'quite complex problems, making the issue an unavoidable point on the agenda, to be dealt with by government and business agents as well as by researchers and scholars in the fields of heritage and tourism'. The inclusion of the TPV in the WHL highlights a complexity that goes beyond the common dichotomy regarding other assets included in the WHL and located outside the urban context, such as the demand for infrastructure and cost-effectiveness versus the flow of tourists that can damage the heritage. One of the complexities is the context of war in the region where the heritage site is located, and which was motivated by the dispute over sovereignty over the TPV itself.

Regarding the complexities to be faced when dealing with the TPV, it is worth mentioning that its exploitation as a world heritage site ended up being hindered by the use of war tanks. In 2008, an armed conflict broke out a few days after the TPV was included in the WHL, causing the deaths of military personnel and civilians, and forcing thousands of Thai and Cambodian peasants, who were living in the vicinity of the temple, to take refuge (Hauser-Schäublin 2011). The ceasefire took place in 2011, after Cambodia sued Thailand before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) which upheld it in 2013. In it, Cambodia pleaded for the ICJ to interpret its own decision, handed down in 1962, in a dispute involving the delimitation of borders between the two kingdoms.

The questioned map stemmed from a treaty signed between Siam and the French Indochina protectorate in 1907, with land demarcations made by French geographers that placed the TPV in Cambodian territory. For more than 20 years, the Kingdom of Thailand published the 1907 map as its official map (ICJ 2011). According to the case file, the interpretation was necessary because, despite recognising the territory on which the TPV is situated as Cambodian, Thailand claimed that the 1962 ICJ decision had not recognized Cambodia's sovereignty over the temple. The Thai interpretation was based on its military presence in the temple region since 1954. Thailand also claimed that an area of about 5 km² adjacent to the temple would have remained under Thai sovereignty due to an omission in the same decision (ICJ 2011). Despite the ceasefire, Thai troops remained in the temple area until 2013.

Given the imminence of an armed conflict in the region, whose military tension dates back to the 1950s, involving precisely the ownership of sovereignty over the TPV, the question that never ceases is: why did the WHC include the temple in the WHL if the main objective of the Organisation, to which it is linked, is to promote peace and understanding among peoples? Would the promotion of tourism have the power to make the WHC turn a deaf ear to UNESCO's supposedly peaceful ideals? Perhaps, the recognition of a site as an exponent of the human creative genius, capable of generating economic development through tourism, may have been the main explicit reason, but secondary interests partially revealed by Wikileaks and analysed by Meskell (2016: 80) show the strong influence of the United States of America in the case with the WHC.[6] According to the author, the interest of several US companies in the southeast Asian market, as well as gas exploration in the Gulf of Thailand, combined with the issue of Cambodia's debt to the USA, provided enough fuel for the listing of the TPV:

> During the period covered by the diplomatic leaks and discussed within them, there was an increase in interest from US investors in Cambodia, coming from large corporations like Boeing, not to mention Nike, McDonalds, Pizza Hut, and Marlboro. The issue of Cambodia's debt to the United States was also being considered. As the May 6, 2008, cablegram suggests, if the Preah Vihear dispute could be resolved, it might open a door to resolving the overlapping maritime claims in the Gulf of Thailand (Schofield and Tan-Mullins 2008). This would mean access to vast natural gas reserves to be exploited by US companies like Chevron, which later received extended concessions. (MESKELL 2016: 80)

Another factor flagged by the author was the geopolitical interest of the two kingdoms in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. In a way, Cambodia and the USA seem to have used the supposedly egalitarian logic of inclusions, that is intended to permeate the WHC, and even the homogeneous discourse of development through tourism under the aura of the peace ideal, to tactically capitalise on Cambodia's influence in the geopolitical context of Southeast Asia and, especially, to gain strength in the dispute over sovereignty over the TPV with neighbouring Thailand.

Listing the TPV would allow the implementation of other US economic projects, such as the exploitation of natural resources and the exposure of the Cambodian population to the consumption of certain American goods. The complexity of the case of the TPV shows that the association between heritage and tourism may have been an important argument to bring the temple's nomination to be appreciated by the WHL, as well as being a smoke screen for serving veiled international political and economic interests. The thousands of peasants who had been living at imminent risk of war since 1954 do not seem to have mattered in the decision-making. Even the physical integrity of the property may not have been an object of concern to the agents involved in its listing. By appearing as a kind of trigger to a war that resulted in deaths and partial destruction of the heritage property, the decision of the WHC antagonises the official objective of UNESCO, which is to promote world peace and understanding among peoples. It also warns us to the power that the 1972 Convention has acquired in the course of its existence as an instrument of international relations that, through its rigorous-looking normativity, allows the focus of the cultural property itself to be transcended.

The UNESCO World Heritage Convention: an instrument of international relations

The accession of numerous signatories to the 1972 Convention raises the argument that the instrument is a depositary of faith in the international scenario. In this sense, the question posed is: how is this legal instrument structured, in a way to attract interest in its adoption by so many signatories? How does the same instrument take into account the ideals of promoting peace and understanding among peoples?

According to the 1972 UNESCO Convention, world cultural and natural heritage may include monuments, groups of buildings and sites of interest, natural monuments, geological, physiographic and habitat formations for endangered species, as well as natural sites of interest or strictly delimited natural areas. The body defined by the Convention for the inclusion of a heritage site in the WHL is the World Heritage Committee. What World Cultural Heritage and World Natural Heritage properties have in common is the identification in each heritage of its supposed 'outstanding universal value' (OUV). These values are not expressed in the 1972 Convention. They were defined in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 1977).

The Operational Guidelines have already been edited 26 times, including the alteration of how the OUV should be assessed, with the details of its criteria. This is because the same body that has the competence to include the assets that have been nominated in the WHL also has the competence to shape the OUV by means of the Operational Guidelines. If we make an analogy with the organisation of the so-called democratic states, in which there is a separation between legislative, executive, and judicial powers, in the World Heritage Centre, the WHC accumulates the functions of legislating on the procedures for recognition of the OUV and also of judging the cases in which they are applicable or not – a typical format of authoritarian states. One way of minimising this

apparent authoritarianism of the WHC's action is the fact that the Convention assigns to the signatory states the initiative for nominations of properties for inclusion in the WHL. These nominations are subsidised by the national states and also receive technical assistance from experts.

The Committee is assisted primarily by non-governmental institutions: the International Centre for the Study of the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), the International Council on Monuments and Sites of Interest (ICOMOS) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and its Resources (IUCN). The Committee directs to the aforementioned institutions, the application of its programmes and the execution of its projects, and may also use other national or international organisations. Furthermore, a representative of each mentioned organisation has the right to a consultative vote at the Committee's sessions. Its services are also made available to the Director-General of UNESCO for the preparation of the Committee's documentation, the agenda and its meetings, and it will be with the Director-General to ensure the implementation of the decisions taken by the WHC. ICOMOS, as well as ICCROM and IUCN seem to contribute to the scientific legitimacy of the WHC's decisions, under the aura of impartiality. However, the WHC's impartiality and equal treatment of world heritage applications, which are supposed to reflect values of Western democratic societies, are thus questioned by Meskell:

> There is also a growing dissatisfaction with the advisory bodies and their members' extracurricular activities, including running consultancy companies, acting as consultants to specific States Parties, and generally doing business at World Heritage meetings. Some of these individuals hold high-level positions and are also involved in directing these intergovernmental agencies, evaluating dossiers, conducting field missions and reporting. ICOMOS has received considerable criticism for its 'closed club' operation, which many claim poses a risk to the credibility of its evaluations. (Meskell 2015: 15)

The work of the WHC is not public. Only its members and a few observers can see and hear the debates that take place in the meetings that result in the inclusion or not of a site in the WHL. The dossiers that subsidise the applications, the technical opinions of non-governmental institutions or scientific bodies that acted in the case, although dealing with a heritage that is intended to be a world heritage, are also not fully accessible to the public. Another feature of the 1972 Convention is the WHC's assignment to define the destination of the World Heritage Fund, provided that 'contributions made to the Fund shall not be subject to any political condition', and also to grant assistance for the protection of UNESCO's world heritage through studies, provision of experts, technicians and specialized labour, training of specialists, loans with or without interest charges, and non-refundable grants (UNESCO 1972).

Regarding UNESCO's ideal, the aforementioned Convention does not express any direct connection to its purposes. Although it does not expressly include the commitment of a world heritage project linked to the promotion of peace and understanding among

peoples, the preamble of the 1972 Convention presents the concern with the violence committed against these properties. It states that the States Parties consider that 'the degradation or disappearance of a cultural or natural heritage property constitutes an effective impoverishment of the heritage of all peoples of the world' and, in view of the extent and 'gravity of the new dangers threatening them, it is up to the international community, as a whole, to participate in the protection of the cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value.'

It would seem that this link has been naturalised and should be implied by the object of world heritage. However, it is not possible to say that the promotion of peace and understanding among peoples is an exclusive ideal of the Organisation's birth phase, motivated by the end of World War II and by the beginning of the Cold War. In fact, it is registered that in the UNESCO Constitution there is no mention of a direct and explicit link between world heritage and its contribution to the construction of peace and understanding among peoples. The individuals who were in charge of the Organisation exposed in their speeches the link between UNESCO and the UN and their common purposes.

It was during the management of René Maheu that the Organisation adopted the 1972 Convention. It should be taken into account that UNESCO is a specialized entity of the UN and integrates the so-called UN System. There is an umbilical link between these entities. This link is exemplified by Mr. Maheu, who presided over UNESCO from 1961 to 1974, in a speech delivered at the UNESCO palace on 22 October 1965. After reading the preamble and Article 1 of the United Nations Charter, Maheu stated that

> this [peace] is our faith and the reason why we work. UNESCO is linked, legally and ideologically, to the international system of the United Nations; its action in the particular field of competence has no meaning if it is not situated in this framework and in this perspective' (MAHEU 1966: 64).

However, despite the vows of loyalty to the purposes of the UN, the 1972 Convention presents in its text a desire for neutrality and impartiality that seems to displace to a second place the accomplishment of the ideals of peace and understanding among the peoples represented in the Organisation. Such ideology, within the scope of the Convention, embodies its existence only in an ethereal way, as an argument for the legitimacy of its actions. Far from the ambition of finding coherence in relation to the activities of the WHC and its interpretation and application of the UNESCO Convention of 1972, in fact, the assumption of an ideal and the ambition of ideological asepsis, displace the uses and appropriations of the world heritage object to paradoxical scenarios. From our perspective, dealing with the paradox within the scope of the actions of an international organization, which is openly committed to promote peace and understanding among peoples, means to scrutinize evidence of violence and wars in and through cultural assets and their contemporary appropriations.

Final considerations

UNESCO's world heritage axiology, which is also managed by the WHC, is covered in a veneer of scientificity, consisting in the establishment of supposedly objective criteria, a body of non-state scientific entities, and the advice of contract experts. Such scientificity is mainly based on the WHC's constitution rules, the 1972 UNESCO Convention, and the Operational Guidelines of 1972 Convention. The political and economic process involved in the recognition of a world heritage escapes the axiology of both UNESCO and the 1972 Convention. The hermetic nature of this process allows only a few people to access the means by which heritages are recognised, or, adopting the best expression of Heinich (2011), made. In addition to the significant number of signatories, in less than 50 years since the adoption of the aforementioned Convention, the WHC has recognised 1121 world heritages, attributing to them some OUV. In the French context, problematizing cultural heritage in general, Heinich has also faced the issue of the growth in the number of heritages. According to the author:

> The main reason why the national heritage ensemble has grown so fast during the last generation is probably not to be found in issues of 'identity', 'culture', 'post-modern society' or the like: instead, the reason lies in the introduction of more scientific methods of selection in the management of culture, which tend to minimize the place of beauty while extending the boundaries of antiquity, fostering the value of meaning, and adding the value of typicality to the more traditional value of rarity. (Heinich 2011: 125).

The extension of borders referred to by Heinich may be influenced by geopolitical and geoeconomic issues that, in fact, do not find in the ideology of promoting peace and understanding among peoples a hindrance to their accomplishments. The OUV and its interpretation in the operation of the 1972 Convention becomes changeable. In her critique of the production process of world heritage, Scifoni (2017: 95) clarifies that speeches both in the academic and institutional spheres often employ a vision of uniqueness for heritage, disguising and hiding the inequalities that permeate it. This vision results from an imaginary construction

> whether of a nation or of humanity, as a simulation of a harmonic whole, which abstracts social classes and equals everyone. It also abstracts the conditions of a world geopolitics in which economic and political power imposes a way of seeing culture.

Political and economic power employs a way of manufacturing culture and, consequently, a way of manufacturing world heritage.

Under the prism of the economic argument, the discussion of the listing and touristification of the TPV demands the displacement of the centre of gravity of the relationship of these two phenomena to events apparently not directly related to world heritage and tourism. Sossai and Coelho (2018: 142) stress this relationship, highlighting the need to

'rediscuss heritage from the perspective of its heritage-function in terms of the complex issues that emerge when we face how, for whom and with whom to outline the project guidelines that associate it with tourism'. That is, 'how', 'for whom' and 'with whom' reveal the importance of considering the silenced and silenceable factors in a listing process within the scope of the WHC, especially the importance of considering the people who live in and with the heritage.

Going further, if we question these phenomena from the perspective of UNESCO's ideals of promoting peace and understanding among peoples, we can question one of the logics that govern the inclusions in the WHL under the argument of economic development through tourism. This movement, which aims to place people (their physical integrity, their way of life) as a decision-making element, makes us question the very reason for the WHL's existence. This tension also shifts the notion of promoting peace and understanding among peoples from the ethereal , adjective, preambular sphere of the institution, to the pragmatic sphere of the heritage listing processes: there would be no sense, nor rationality invested in the production of world heritages if interculturality and affirmation of multiculturalism were not built as principles and means to achieve UNESCO's goals.

In the Cambodian case, the aforementioned Operational Guidelines (UNESCO 1977) technically allowed the inclusion of properties located in border areas between states or located 'in the territories of the States Parties concerned, that have a common border', called transboundary property (UNESCO 2008a). However, this technical argument was not enough to convince both states, the Kingdoms of Cambodia and Thailand, to list TPV as a transboundary heritage. The memory and the fear of the 1940s war, present in the emergence of UNESCO's ideal of promoting peace and understanding among peoples, seem to have been obliterated by the processes of heritage manufacture, which, in the process of the institutional trajectory itself, opened ways to be managed due to geopolitical and geoeconomic interests, transcendental to the cultural heritage itself.

This pretension of impartiality supported by a normative and hermetic set of world heritage management, on the other hand, allows ideologies and the most diverse policies to permeate the application of the Convention, making UNESCO's ideals of peace and understanding among peoples, besides being secondary, paradoxical in relation to the operation of the Convention in the most diverse circumstances. The political and ideological permeability of an instrument with a technical-scientific appearance is an argument to seduce states to become signatories of that Convention. It is possible, therefore, that the 1972 UNESCO Convention is not only an opportunity, but also a means to conclude certain international relations transcending the purposes of the Convention itself. Such incoherence, nurtured within the Convention, is one of the conditions that makes it so useful in the scenario of complex contemporary international relations (off-centre, multilateral, and multi-scale).

Notes

[1]   We refer to the following documents: Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict with Regulations for the Execution of the Convention 1954; Convention on the

Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property 1970; Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage 1972; Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage 2001; Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003; Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions 2005. Regarding the network governance of heritage, we understand that we agree with Sossai et al. (2020: 29), who state that this 'notion does take into account the complex work of world heritage production within the UNESCO institutional machinery. However, it goes far beyond that: it conceives, situates, and understands this notion as a heuristic tool for the analysis of transnational networks of agencying of cultural, natural and mixed heritage; network that interconnects the multilateral action of behind-the-scenes agents, governmental bodies, private institutions, international organisations, business sectors, among other unknown implicated in the process of world heritage production'

[2]   The World Heritage List is available on the World Heritage Committee's website, https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/ and the List of World Heritage in Danger is available on the same website: https://whc.unesco.org/en/danger/.

[3]   Doctoral research entitled 'Heritage Justice: UNESCO's role in conflicts involving world heritage', under development in the Graduate Program in Cultural Heritage and Society at UNIVILLE, subsidised with a scholarship from the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES). In such research, we make use of a set of sources from a larger project, entitled 'Behind the scenes at UNESCO: building consensus around world heritage properties', funded by UNESCO Research Support Fund and developed between the years 2017 and 2021.

[4]   Four primary source analysis sheets were produced, amounting to a total of 98 pages of data systematisation. The fields that make up these sheets are the following: page, quotation, translation into Portuguese, relevance to the research, actors and observations.

[5]   The delegations of South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, United States of America, Philippines, France, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Luxembourg, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Dominican Republic, United Kingdom, El Salvador, Syria, Turkey, Uruguay, Venezuela and Yugoslavia, as well as representatives of international organisations.

[6]   WikiLeaks is a multinational media and library organisation, founded by Julian Assange in 2006 and specialised in the publication and analysis of official, secret and/or censored data.

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Acknowledgments

About the authors

Denis Fernando Radun graduated in Law at the University of Joinville Region (Univille). He holds a Masters degree and is a Doctoral student in the Post-Graduation Program in Cultural Heritage and Society also at Univille. He is a member of the research group "City, culture and difference" and the research project "In the backstage of UNESCO: strategies for the network governance of world heritage" (1970-2020). His main research topics are heritage law and justice; heritage and international organisations; heritage policies; heritage and human rights; heritage; and trans modernity.

Ilanil Coelho graduated in History at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo. She holds a master's degree in Social Sciences from the Federal University of São Carlos, a PhD degree in Cultural History from the Federal University of Santa Catarina, and was a Post-Doctorate fellow at the University of Coimbra, Portugal. She is a Full Professor of the History undergraduate course and of the Post-Graduation Program in Cultural Heritage and Society at the University of Joinville Region (Univille). She is Head of the research group "City, culture and difference", (that is part of the CNPq directory) that is aimed at seeking possibilities for interlocution of cultural history with studies on the fields of cultural heritage, education and anthropology, and urban sociology.

Fernando Cesar Sossai holds a History undergraduate degree and a Doctorate and a Master's degree in Education. He is Professor and researcher at the University of Joinville Region (Univille) for the History undergraduate and Post-Graduate Program in Cultural Heritage and Society. He is also Head of Univille's Memorial Centre and Oral History Laboratory and Coordinator of the research project "In the backstage of UNESCO: strategies for the network governance of world heritage (1970-2020). His main research topics include UNESCO's world heritage (cultural, natural, and mixed); heritage network policies and governance; heritage and international organisations; heritage, development, and technology; and heritage and digital culture.

UNESCO: A emergência dos ideais de paz e patrimônio mundial

Resumo: Em que medida o Patrimônio Mundial promove a ideologia da paz preconizada pelas Nações Unidas e suas agências especializadas, particularmente a UNESCO? Este artigo discute a emergência do ideal de paz da UNESCO, particularmente no contexto de sua constituição, questionando essa ideologia diante das disputas bélicas envolvendo o Templo de Preah Vihear (Camboja), incluído na Lista do Patrimônio Mundial em 2008. Tal problemática se aprofunda a partir da análise da Convenção da UNESCO sobre a Proteção do Patrimônio Mundial Cultural e Natural (1972) como instrumento de relações internacionais eventualmente desencadeado em disputas geopolíticas que extrapolam o campo o qual patrimônio se propõe a abordar. O artigo argumenta que a fabricação do patrimônio mundial pode tornar paradoxal a realização dos ideais de paz defendidos pela UNESCO dentro do sistema das Nações Unidas. Este pensamento baseia-se na bibliografia pertinente, em fontes primárias recolhidas nos Arquivos da UNESCO (Paris, França), em plataformas digitais mantidas por esta Organização (UNESDOC Digital Library) e no conteúdo do processo litigioso entre Camboja e Tailândia acerca da disputa pela soberania sobre a região, onde está localizado o Templo de Preah Vihear perante a Corte Internacional de Justiça.

Palavras-chave: UNESCO; património mundial; Relações Internacionais; Templo de Preah Vihear; paz mundial