



Introduction

What makes the concept of World Heritage exceptional is its universal application. World Heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located.
—United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

On 24 June 2011, the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO added the West Lake Cultural Landscape of Hangzhou to the World Heritage List, claiming that it is a “perfect fusion between man and nature” (UNESCO 2011). The deputy mayor of the city of Hangzhou, Zhang Jianting, broke into tears.

The tears not only showed Zhang’s expression of excitement but meant something more. According to Zhang, the designation marked the end of a long frustration with the nomination process. Since the beginning of its preparatory work in 1990, the West Lake had been the subject of a great amount of misunderstanding from the West. As Zhang recalled, a Western heritage expert once said, “There are thousands of lakes like that in my hometown” (*China Daily* 2011). The true significance and the aesthetic philosophy that informs and is inscribed in West Lake itself received little attention and interest from Westerners during the nomination. Therefore, the designation was taken as signifying that the West had finally come to recognize and appreciate the philosophical significance and values of China’s cultural landscape aesthetic.

However, it is still very shocking to me (and probably to most readers) that a Chinese official could break down in tears simply because the West finally recognized the value of a Chinese heritage site. There is an apparent paradox behind the tears. If, as the UNESCO statement says, World Heritage Sites are universal and “belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located,” there should be no separation between the West, the Chinese, and all other peoples. Yet

Mr. Zhang's tears show us the opposite side of the story: World Heritage seems to have created a stronger division between China and the West.

The division is more evident as we reflect on China's strategy for World Heritage nomination, which could be said to be a "heritage boom" in recent years. The first group of Chinese heritage sites was listed as World Heritage in 1987. Over the past thirty years, although Italy, France, Spain, Greece, and Germany, among other Western countries, have dominated the World Heritage List, the number of sites in China has quickly risen from zero to fifty-two. The pace is the fastest in the world, just like the pace of China's economic growth. By February 2018, fifty-two sites in China had been added to UNESCO's World Heritage List, with a further sixty-one currently on the tentative list.¹ China has been the most active and high-profile nation in the World Heritage arena. According to Meskell et al. (2015), not only is China active in nomination numbers, but the State Party has been sending the largest delegation group to the World Heritage Committee sessions: twenty-nine official delegates per meeting between 2002 and 2013. "Being the second" on the World Heritage List creates national pride.

As Silverman and Blumenfield note (2013: 6), China's enthusiasm for World Heritage reflects the state's strategy of creating a national cultural soft power. This is revealed in the Five-Year Plans on Cultural Heritage published every five years by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage (SACH). According to the thirteenth Five-Year Plan, one of the accomplishments of the twelfth Five-Year Plan was that "World Heritage Sites of China has increased to 50, becoming the second of the world." And an aim of the thirteenth Five-Year Plan is to "strengthen the nomination, conservation and management for World Heritage." Given that, the Chinese efforts in listing World Heritage Sites are to show and underscore the difference between China and the world, especially the West.

This paradox is the core curiosity that inspired me to write this book. Why is World Heritage so important for the Chinese? Also, as perhaps the most active World Heritage player nowadays, China's strategies, acts, and utilizations of World Heritage at both global and domestic levels help us understand not only its heritage policies but also the political, cultural, and social contexts that shape the policies. In this book, I will examine the role of UNESCO's World Heritage program in its discursive and institutional interplay with the Chinese cultural preservation system. Three dimensions of World Heritage in China should be addressed: the universal agenda, the national practices, and the local responses. How is Chinese nation building progress shaped by the supposedly universal program? How are common Chinese people's lives entangled with the nation's World Heritage boom? And what part does the interplay between

the universal, national, and local play in the reflection and reshaping of China's political, cultural, and social contexts?

This book introduces a sociological and reflective lens through which to view UNESCO's efforts to establish a universal cultural model. I argue that the World Heritage program has provided scripts for different stakeholders, especially nation-states, to perform in different modes for particular interests. The universal model, seemingly hegemonic, is in fact largely constrained by the discursive and substantive structures of cultural preservation within national borders. There has been less a universal cultural model than a nation-oriented agenda of heritage issues. The book also epistemologically investigates how narratives of the past—collective memories of the heritage sites—are reframed through an exogenously derived discursive frame, with apparent nationalistic discourses. What are the roles of national and local authorities in this process? And finally, in a “world society,” who has the power to make whose heritage and for what purposes?

World Heritage Craze in China

World Heritage has become prevalent in China's public sphere. The news of West Lake's designation as a World Heritage Site inspired nationwide excitement and celebration. Immediately after the designation, thousands of Chinese people used Weibo—the most popular Chinese miniblog site, which is similar to Twitter—to circulate the news. Hundreds of media reports about the designation came out the next day. The central government nominates and manages heritage sites, and local governments and people are preoccupied with World Heritage. As Zhu and Li (2013) show, in the World Heritage Site Emei, the local government proactively maximizes local social and economic benefits of the World Heritage Site title by interpreting and identifying the site in its own way, which is remarkably different from the official designation.

Even small towns that are barely known to people in their own provinces have announced their intent to compete for a World Heritage nomination. In 2004, the small ancient town of Qikou, located on the shore of the Yellow River, hosted the International Symposium on the Protection of Ancient Architecture in Qikou, which suggested that the ultimate goal of the preservation project was to get Qikou placed on the World Heritage List. Local officers and scholars acknowledged that this goal seemed impossible but admitted that the statement itself would strengthen public and tourist impressions and bring more bureaucratic attention in the form of financial support. The case of Qikou reveals that the national preoc-

cupation with World Heritage does not rest merely on the designation. Rather, it is deeply anchored and implemented in political, social, and cultural discourses.

World Heritage has been cognitively and practically entangled with not only substantive issues of historic preservation but also the discursive structures of history, culture, and politics. The rhetoric of World Heritage constitutes a new nationalistic sensation, which in turn provides terminological weapons for young Chinese patriots to legitimize their anti-Western sentiments and actions. In January 2007, Chinese TV personality Rui Chenggang² wrote a blog entry that was the beginning of a crusade against a Starbucks retail store in the Forbidden City, the palace of late imperial China between 1406 and 1911 and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Rui said that the store marred the solemnity of the Forbidden City and undermined Chinese culture.

He claimed, “The Forbidden City is a symbol of China’s cultural heritage. Starbucks is a symbol of lower middle-class culture in the West. We need to embrace the world, but we also need to preserve our cultural identity. There is a fine line between globalization and contamination” (Watts 2007). The campaign soon became front-page news, which rapidly spread around the world. Thousands of people responded to Rui’s blog, many calling for Starbucks to leave the historic site. Among the responses, one frequently mentioned term was “heritage”: “We should protect our heritage,” “Starbucks has trampled over Chinese World Heritage!” The result was that Starbucks closed this retail store.

The anti-Starbucks crusade highlights a paradoxical aspect of the UNESCO World Heritage program: it inevitably oscillates between its original intention to promote cultural preservation for all humankind and local utilization to deepen cultural distinctions between groups, nations, and cultures (Barthel-Bouchier and Hui 2007). World Heritage nomination, designation, and management have become more a signifier of a nation’s image and self-esteem than a “world” project. For example, preeminent historian Luo Zhewen remarks that all the World Heritage Sites in China represent the nation’s “ancient history, unique land of charm and splendid scenery . . . for thousands and even hundreds of thousands of years, the cultural tradition of the Chinese nation has all along continued without interruption, which is rarely seen among the ancient civilized states” (Luo 2008: 20–21).

In this sense, World Heritage symbolizes what Tunbridge and Ashworth call “the permeability of political frontiers to aesthetic ideas” (1996: 58). Contentions for World Heritage nominations have increasingly become a regional concern. In 2004, the Republic of Korea nominated a local traditional festival, called Ganjeung Danojie, to become a World Intangi-

ble Cultural Heritage. This evoked a nationwide anti-Korean sentiment in China because the Chinese people believed that the nominated festival originated from, and remained largely affiliated with, China's Duanwu Festival (Dragon Boat Festival). Many people condemned South Korea for "stealing heritage from China." The retired professor and heritage expert Wu Bingan, who first discovered South Korea's agenda, wrote a letter to cultural authorities appealing for intensified efforts to defend Chinese traditions. Public reactions were much more heated than Wu's appeal.

Accusations against South Korea proliferated in mass media and internet forums. However, the Chinese government and most heritage intellectuals remained cool headed and objective in the debate, acknowledging that the festival nominated by South Korea was different from the Chinese festival. The difference, admitted by the government, was ignored by the public because of lack of education about this kind of national heritage. In 2009, the Ministry of Culture nominated China's Duanwu Festival as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage. Jing Qinghe, director of the Intangible Culture Heritage Protection Center of Hubei province, said that the Ganjeung Danojie instance provided an opportunity for the Chinese to learn from others about the preservation of national heritage (Wang 2009).

Both the Starbucks crusade and the Duanwu debate show that the Chinese are now discursively well equipped to use the language of World Heritage for nationalistic ends. Nevertheless, the protection and preservation of old landscapes and architecture were not commonly practiced in imperial China. As Baode Han (2006) argues, in imperial China, old architecture and landscapes were not considered worth preserving. David Lowenthal agrees, arguing that Chinese "esteem for tradition goes hand in hand with recurrent destruction of material remains" (1998: 20). This being the case, we should ask: What has caused the extensive preoccupation with World Heritage (and heritage preservation in general) in contemporary China?

Lowenthal lays out two general causal factors for the current heritage boom in Western countries: "traumas of loss and change and fears of a menacing future" (ibid.: 11). He suggests that postmodernity isolates and dislocates individuals from their original roots, namely family, neighborhood, and nation. Increasing longevity, family dissolution, mass migration, and the development of technology have all reformulated arrangements of time and space, whereby the interest in heritage has grown because people wish to remember the past and do so by "clinging to remnants of stability" (ibid.: 6). Lowenthal's account may explain why China is increasingly enthusiastic about cultural heritage.

Like the West, China has witnessed "traumas of loss and change and fears of a menacing future" in recent decades. However, this accounts

only for the preoccupation with heritage in China: it is inadequate to explain why China is so preoccupied with the designation “world” for their heritage sites. To explain this interest, we need to first review the UNESCO World Heritage program. What does World Heritage mean? What was it created for? And to what extent has it represented the world?

World Heritage Convention

The aforementioned anti-West Starbucks crusade was effectively articulated, organized, and fostered around the conceptual weapon of Chinese cultural heritage. Ironically, the movement reveals a characteristic paradox: the core message of “heritage” is in fact derived from this campaign’s target—the West. The original meaning of “heritage” in Chinese—*yi chan*—is identical with that in English: that which has been or may be inherited; any property, and especially land, which devolves by right of inheritance.³ Until China ratified the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, or World Heritage Convention (WHC), heritage in Chinese rarely entailed cultural implications. It merely referred to heredity, probate law, and taxation.

It should be noted that the extension of the meaning of the term into the cultural dimension in the West is also new. Tunbridge and Ashworth write that the expansion of the meaning of “heritage” is a recent phenomenon. It has expanded from the primary meaning of an individual’s inheritance from an ancestor into at least five much broader categories: (1) any physical relict surviving from the past, (2) a nonphysical aspect of the past, (3) all accumulated cultural and artistic productivity, (4) elements in whole or in part from the natural environment, and (5) the industry that is based on selling goods and serves with a heritage component (1996: 2–3). As Lowenthal observes, in the West, the modern meaning of heritage as cultural patrimony and legacy can be traced back only to the mid-1970s. This new usage, however, has rapidly spread throughout the world (1998: 4–5).

In fact, historical preservation was well organized in the West before heritage became the guiding concept. As early as the 1830s, cultural preservation in Great Britain became an intellectual and artistic concern, culminating in the establishment of the Commons Preservation Society in 1865 in order to protect beautiful lands. As public interest in preservation increased, the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty was founded in 1895 because of concerns about the destructive influences of industrialization on the preindustrial landscape (Barthel 1996: 13–15). In the United States, in contrast, the preservation movement was

more locally oriented. Until the 1930s, the federal government had little involvement. At the public level, the National Park Service started to play a more important role in preservation. In the private sector, the founding of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1949 marked a breakthrough in cultural preservation in the United States (*ibid.*: 20–23).

In addition to these endeavors bounded within national parameters, a transnational initiative for historic preservation emerged after the two world wars. These wars included the massive devastation of world famous places, such as the historic Warsaw. In 1955, the Hague Convention was instituted to promote protection for historic monuments during wars. In the meantime, industrial construction that engendered destruction of historic sites drew increasing scholarly and public attention to the state of cultural heritage in developing countries. The construction of the Aswan High Dam in Egypt during the 1960s provoked the worldwide cooperative rescue of the temples of Abu Simbel. The rescue gave the United Nations hope and the desire to create a more ambitious convention for global heritage preservation. A series of proposals were presented to UNESCO, which eventually culminated in WHC in 1972 (Turtinen 2000).

WHC addresses the growing issues of social and economic change that aggravates the poor situation of heritage sites of “outstanding universal value.” More importantly, it maintains that “it is incumbent on the international community as a whole to participate in the protection of the cultural and natural heritage” (UNESCO 1972: 1). This explicitly articulated goal of heritage preservation is consistent with the United Nations’ fundamental principle of the “culture of peace” (Di Giovine 2009: 75). It is crucial to acknowledge that “parts of the cultural or natural heritage are of outstanding interest and therefore need to be preserved as part of the world heritage of mankind as a whole” (UNESCO 1972: 1).

Accordingly, nation-states are simultaneously empowered to facilitate heritage preservation by working with transgovernmental organizations and required to allow outside forces and resources to be involved in their domestic cultural affairs. Di Giovine indicates that this is a “distinctive placemaking endeavor” to reformulate territorial perceptions to create a universally framed understanding of the world, which consequently promotes the culture of world peace (2009: 77).

WHC is a flagship program of UNESCO. Its rhetoric of “outstanding universal value” develops a set of narratives that effectively diffuse the moral responsibility for cultural preservation as a universally adopted principle. In mid-2001, the Taliban regime of Afghanistan decided to destroy the Bamiyan Buddhas to clear the nation of non-Islamic elements. Global society responded with extreme concern and demanded that the Taliban desist from such activities. Although UNESCO failed to dissuade

the Taliban government, the massive global anxiety their destruction engendered showed that the international belief in the principle of cultural preservation for “all humankind” had been widely accepted. Moreover, since then, the Taliban regime has been portrayed as culturally illegitimate by world society because it violated this fundamental norm of the world cultural system (Di Giovine 2009: 332; Meskell 2010: 193).

The discursive and institutional reputation of WHC lies not only in its intergovernmental nature. Its rhetorical credibility is derived from its embodiment of an objective, scientific, and politically neutral authority. As stated in the convention, its mission is to establish a close, collaborative relationship with the existing nongovernmental organizations for cultural preservation, including the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), and the International Union for Preservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). By consulting with these advisory bodies “in their respective areas of competence and capability, [the committee] shall prepare [its] documentation and the agenda of its meetings and shall have the responsibility for the implementation of its decisions” (UNESCO 1972: 8).

With assistance from these scientific and professional nongovernmental organizations, WHC provides the world with a successful example of “cosmopolitan law,” which transcends the boundary of nation-states and underscores basic humanitarian values (Held et al. 1999). It also maintains its institutional legitimacy in its formation of the World Heritage Committee, a transnational committee consisting of twenty-one States Parties that have ratified the convention. The committee is empowered to inspect and evaluate the state of preservation of heritage sites. The most remarkable program in the convention is the World Heritage List, an inventory of heritage sites that meet one of ten criteria for outstanding universal value.⁴

The transnational committee is required to consult with the professional bodies for the nominations: ICOMOS for cultural heritage, ICUN for natural heritage, and ICCROM for advice on restoration techniques and training (Turtinen 2000). Another factor that reinforces the power of WHC is its list World Heritage in Danger (UNESCO 1972: 6). This list empowers the committee to strengthen its image as an objective judge, thereby reinforcing the discourse of the universality of cultural preservation.

By 2017, 1,073 sites had been added to the World Heritage List. The list helps States Parties reconsider and redefine their heritage within the discursive framework of “outstanding universal value.” It to some extent builds a world culture of cosmopolitanism (Meskell 2016). As Diane Barthel-Bouchier and Ming Min Hui (2007) suggest, a number of World Heritage Sites have acquired a characteristic that makes them candidates

for “cosmopolitan memory,” a notion originally developed by Levy and Sznajder (2002) to articulate such events as the Holocaust. According to Barthel-Bouchier and Hui, the narrative that World Heritage belongs to all humankind has created and promoted the cognitive mapping of World Heritage’s cosmopolitan value for the people who have no territorial or cultural connection with it. In this sense, WHC and its affiliated lists is an ideal peacemaking achievement of cosmopolitanism that entails “a process of ‘international globalization’ through which global concerns become part of local experiences of an increasing number of people” (ibid.: 87).

World Heritage as a Field of Scholarship

Researchers have reviewed the accomplishments of WHC over the past forty-five years. As Christina Cameron suggests, perhaps the most successful achievement of WHC is the dissemination of a series of concepts that shape today’s heritage field, such as outstanding universal value, authenticity, integrity, and cultural landscape (2016). In addition, it has raised public awareness and increased the capacity of civil society for involvement in heritage conservation. Another unexpected consequence of WHC, says Cameron, is the emergence of the interdisciplinary field of heritage studies. World Heritage has become a field of scholarship, which has given rise to a “heritage discourse,” with a set of theories, concepts, methodologies, and research topics. As a result, a new field of literature on heritage has evolved. Courses, departments, research centers, and even global academic associations have been developed accordingly.

The rise of academic reflection on World Heritage has brought a critical approach to the understanding of WHC and its affiliated conventions, advisory bodies, practices, and future. With the increasing influence of the *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, and the follow-up Association of Critical Heritage Studies formed in 2012, a new and influential paradigm of heritage studies has taken shape, with the help of Laurajane Smith, especially. The paradigm can be seen as a “discursive turn” in heritage studies, or a “paradigm change” (Logan, Kockel, and Craith 2016: 18).

Criticisms about World Heritage should be addressed and analyzed. As Meskell pointed out at the fortieth anniversary of WHC, there are three key challenges that the convention faces: the increasing time gap between suggestions by advisory bodies and the committee’s final decision, the overt politicization of the committee, and UNESCO’s fiscal crisis. I will not delve into the fiscal issue in this book but will focus on the other two challenges. As elaborated below, the politicization of World Heritage has

challenged the credibility of its universal claims and concepts, and the discrepancy between recommendations of advisory bodies and the final decisions of World Heritage listing reveals the strong intervention of States Parties in the nomination process, a representation of proactive national construction of the past with World Heritage.

To fully explore the discursive construction of and challenges for World Heritage, four key concepts need to be addressed before my analyses: politicization of heritage, universality, memory and identity, and nationalism. The first two revolve around the WHC's practical and conceptual paradoxes, while the last two reveal an in-depth nexus between heritage and nation building. In the next sections, I will review four main bodies of literature on or related to World Heritage revolving around its politicization; the question of universality; the relation between heritage, memory, and identity; and the national construction of past with heritage resources. My discussion of the literature provides an overview of the evolution of actual practices and academic reflections on World Heritage.

Politicization of World Heritage

Although it is claimed to be politically neutral, WHC is criticized as being an arena of tensions and contentions. The nomination and designation processes for World Heritage Sites have been increasingly politicized. Such politicization is first manifested in the disjunction between the recommendations of the advisory bodies and the final decisions of the World Heritage Committee. As observed by former ICOMOS World Heritage advisor Jukka Jokilehto (2011), the credibility of WHC is at stake because an increasing number of newly designated sites were originally not recommended by ICOMOS. The increasing frequency of WHC's neglect of ICOMOS's evaluations reflects political pressure from States Parties. States Parties are countries that have ratified the World Heritage Convention.

Jokilehto (2011) describes the decision making for World Heritage designations in 2010. Fourteen nominations were recommended by the advisory body for inscription (39 percent of all nominations), but the World Heritage Committee finally accepted twenty-three nominations (64 percent). In the early years, the evaluations of the advisory bodies were mostly accepted by the World Heritage Committee; the increasing disjunction reflects the professional organizations' weakened role and a more intense political situation for World Heritage. Jokilehto indicates that World Heritage designation has become more likely to be decided in a lobbying process than in scientific evaluation.

As Meskell reveals, the politicization of World Heritage first appears in

its committee. There has been a geopolitical alliance, such as Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS), that are proactively engaged in nominating potential sites. The annual meeting of the committee is like a marketplace in which States Parties lobby for inscription. The lobbying was even institutionalized in the 2013 amendment to the Rules of Procedure. According to Cameron, the politicization was unexpected and “is a reflection of the global situation, where national interests and regional alliances vie for a greater say and a fair distribution of power and resources” (2016: 331).

Meanwhile, the politicization of World Heritage involves competitions and tensions between nation-states in terms of either the legitimacy or the ownership of the nominated sites. Olwen Beazley (2010) cites the nomination of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) in Japan as an example of this, suggesting that the final designation involved a series of contested narratives about the meaning and embodiment of the site. While Japan hoped to describe the site primarily in terms of its mnemonic value for a traumatic event of the first atom bomb to be dropped on human beings, the United States contested Japan’s proposal by attempting to control the narrative of the place.

The United States saw the site as unsuitable for inclusion on the list because it is war related and sought to avoid its embarrassing role in the event (Beazley 2010: 57). Therefore, although the memorial was added to the World Heritage List in 1996, the United States still holds a different narrative of this site from the Japanese statement approved by the World Heritage Committee. Beazley concludes, “Although assumed to be a depoliticized process, the nominations to the World Heritage List is deeply politicized” (*ibid.*: 45).

Not only does World Heritage generate political tensions, but it has also created and reinforced brutal and bloody conflicts between nation-states. The most revealing example is the armed conflict between Thailand and Cambodia over the ownership of Preah Vihear Temple. The temple has been a pivotal point in boundary contentions between the two nations for hundreds of years (Winter 2010). Thus, the designation of the temple as a World Heritage Site of Cambodia on 7 July 2008 engendered much controversy. While the Cambodians were celebrating the designation, the Thai government received a lot of pressure locally for not taking action before the designation.

As a result, the border tension quickly intensified, as both countries sent troops into the area. Since then, a series of military actions have been undertaken by both sides, ending with a number of fatalities. The situation intensified in early 2011. After two Thai nationalists were sentenced by a Cambodian court to up to eight years in prison for espionage, a Thai

bombardment at the Preah Vihear Temple evoked a clash at the site and evacuation of thousands of Cambodian civilians (BBC News 2011).

In May of that same year, the nationalist tensions were inflamed again, resulting in military clashes and the deaths of at least twelve people, including one civilian (Huey-Burns 2011). The tension culminated in Thailand's withdrawal from WHC after the committee decided to consider Cambodia's management plan of the Preah Vihear Temple. According to Suwit Khunkitti, Thailand's minister of natural resources and environment, the World Heritage Committee ignored Thailand's suggestion that the plan would intensify rather than solve the border conflict. "They ignored it and they did not care about our sovereignty and territory" (*The Nation* 2011). This case vividly demonstrates what Tunbridge and Ashworth call the "dissonant heritage" (1996): the contemporary use of heritage often engenders conflicts and dissonances, in spite of its ostensible purposes of solidifying and reinforcing coherences.

In addition to the political conflicts engendered by the WHC, the nomination and selection process is often contested. A major part of the global heritage program is the list-making procedure (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004). This, however, is highly selective and sometimes redefines the cultural narrative of the heritage being nominated (Di Giovine 2009; Smith 2006; Turtinen 2000). A great variety of the meanings of a site may be curtailed with fixed categories and narrative frames.

In order to nominate a site for World Heritage, a State Party should first establish a tentative list that includes the potential candidates for designation. These sites' "outstanding universal values" need to be described and justified with the standards defined in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. The guidelines provide a clear narrative format and a set of forms for the States Parties to complete the application. In addition to the justification of outstanding universal value, the nominator should also provide detailed agendas for heritage management and preservation and should outline precise procedures of protective measurements.

The management, preservation, and measurements are all assessed by the advisory bodies against the criteria. From 2004 to 2017, each year, each State Party was allowed to nominate up to two heritage sites for evaluation.⁵ In order to increase the chance of designation, each nomination needed to be described in strict compliance with the criteria. For those sites that entail multiple narratives, the nomination dossier needed to focus on the "most suitable theme." According to Harrison, because of the cultural diversity of a nation, it is impossible to "attribute a single set of positive values to a single 'canon' of heritage" (2013: 145). As he observed in Malaysia,

The distinct inequalities that characterized the treatment of different ethnic groups at different points in Malaysia's history are largely ignored in the interpretation of the heritage of George Town, which instead focuses on the great variety of religious buildings of different faiths, ethnic quarters, the many languages, worship and religious festivals, dances, costumes, art and music, food, and daily life as if these were somehow all treated equally in the past. (ibid.: 155)

For another example, Assisi in Italy was originally nominated as a heritage town of the medieval era, but this characteristic was not distinguishable, as there were a great many medieval towns in Italy. Therefore, the central narrative of the site shifted from an architectural landmark to a cultural landscape with religious meanings: the birth and expansion of a philosophical movement, the Franciscan movement (Jokilehto 2011).

The selective modification of heritage value is especially apparent in the nominations from developing countries. As Di Giovine observes, although Angkor Wat's meaning changed a number of times since its construction and it was always a memorial, the World Heritage Committee designated it merely as an important archaeological site in Southeast Asia. This narrative, says Di Giovine, "suggests ossification rather than a continually evolving living history" (2009: 89). He further reflected on the selective nomination process and indicated that the World Heritage Committee tends to use common descriptive terminology to underscore the sites' representation for pastness, which largely neglects cultural continuities. The terminological commonality engenders a level of universality in the World Heritage Sites, which are juxtaposed and made "to be understood in the same way," creating a "homogenizing sense of place" (2009: 78).

The Question of Universality

The homogenizing effect is rooted in the principal mission of the World Heritage program—universality. However, this is also one of the major challenges of WHC. It is criticized as UNESCO's hegemony of heritage making, as well as a reflection of Eurocentrism in the field of heritage conservation. The claim of World Heritage's universality has created its rhetorical paradox. As Harrison shows, there are two subtly different ways WHC articulates universality: one is the universality of each World Heritage Site, which is said to represent values universal to all humans; the other is the universality of the World Heritage List, which means that the selection of sites should take into consideration cultural diversity, especially marginalized groups' right to equal representation. In other words, WHC "expresses itself as a *totalizing* discourse representing a *global* hier-

archy of value” (Harrison 2013: 116). Therefore, it is inherently conflictual to claim both senses of universality, which has generated a series of difficulties for practices in reality.

Jan Turtinen argues that WHC and its affiliated advisory bodies are powerful actors that define and diffuse the concept of cultural heritage. World Heritage is constituted on the basis of the assumption that the whole heritage system has a center-periphery binary. The international (mainly Western) expertise serves as the central actor that defines and interprets the heritage, whereas local knowledge is highly standardized and formalized in the institutional system. In this sense, WHC creates a “global grammar” in which the traditions and cultures of the local people are made sense of in a formalized fashion. This discursive hegemony lies in the application procedure, which is fully controlled by the World Heritage Committee. “It is through the application of this global grammar locally that the dispersed sites can be reinterpreted and reorganized as a heritage of human kind” (Turtinen 2000).

The discursive power of the “global grammar” is seen by many scholars as not merely an institutional consequence. Rather, as Rudolff and Buckley reveal, the Eurocentrism of World Heritage is not about the dominance of European States Parties in the World Heritage Committee but about the hegemony of conceptions (2016). World Heritage (and in a broader sense the concept of heritage itself) is challenged as an embodiment of the hegemonic dissemination of Western values into non-Western cultures. The language of heritage that proliferates in the contemporary world, as Lowenthal suggests, is mainly Western.

Its aims and traits are assessed in similar terms in Bergen and Beirut, Tonga and Toronto. The same concerns with precedence and antiquity, continuity and coherence, heroism and sacrifice surface again and again, nurturing family bonds, strengthening fealty, and stressing stewardship. Most heritage is amassed by particular groups, but media diffusion and global networks make these hoards ever more common coin. (Lowenthal 1998: 5)

Using the concept *authorized heritage discourse*, Laurajane Smith criticizes the fact that the predominant heritage language originates from the Western culture of elitism. The materiality and high-culture narrative excludes the possibility that local cultures can be treated equally. The authorized heritage discourse created the present heritage practices, which became hegemonic, so that “the ‘preservation ethic’ is imposed on non-Western nations” (2006: 21). This discourse differentiates material heritage from its intangible aspects, such as language, knowledge, rituals, and folk lives.

WHC can thus be seen to be a result of this discursive control. It “unintentionally identifies a hierarchy of monuments” and has even “further institutionalized the nineteenth-century preservation ethic” (ibid.: 96). Smith also analyzes the role of global institutions as the authorized heritage agencies in shaping local discourses. Framed by the discourse, they impact preservation policies and practices at both national and international levels. The international charters and conventions serve as discursive devices that articulate a “correct knowledge” that is to be taught in a top-down manner. “Heritage management, preservation, preservation and restoration are not just objective technical procedures, they are themselves part of the subjective heritage performance in which meaning is re/created and maintained” (ibid.: 88).

Smith’s statement is derived from postcolonialism theory, which maintains that the narrative and knowledge of developing countries are highly dependent on the dominant discursive power of the West. Edward Said argues that the social and rhetorical construction of the “Orient” primarily functions in creating a binary between the East and the West. By imagining the former as exotic, mystical, and romantic, the latter acquires its own positional superiority (1979: 7). For Said, the West has established a powerful discursive device that characterizes the Other on the basis of its own imagination, that is, the East is always timeless, frozen, and, above all, anachronistic, in comparison to the West’s progressiveness. Also, Said suggests that Orientalism not only resides in elite and governing classes but also occurs in social movements organized by workers and feminists (Said 1993).

Ostensibly, Said’s remark is applicable in understanding World Heritage, which tends to emphasize the designated sites’ traditional and anachronistic characteristics (Di Giovine 2009). However, both Smith and Said fail to acknowledge the importance of local actions that promote or resist the hegemonic discourse. The overemphasis on the constitutive power of the West is challenged by Arif Dirlik, who finds that Orientalist discourse can never be effective in the Oriental world unless this rhetoric is adopted and implemented by native agents. He calls this process “self-Orientalization” (1996). Similarly, Homi Bhabha claims that the constitution of the Orientalists not only lies in the colonialists themselves but also includes the colonized Other. Bhabha suggests that Orientalism is conceptually ambivalent. He uses three concepts to depict the actual relationship in cultural colonization—hybridity, mimicry, and third space—which all suggest the complicated dynamics between the Western colonialists and the colonized objects: the latter has engaged in imitating the former when it also has a lot of freedom to resist it (1994).

Reevaluation of Western hegemony has become evident in World Heritage rhetoric and principles in recent years, and both UNESCO and non-Western countries have taken action, culminating in the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, or the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention (ICHC), which endeavors to revise the current terminology of heritage into a broader conceptual and technical scope, considers the global diversity of cultural practices in non-Western cultures. This new convention is seen as a challenge to the authorized heritage discourse of WHC at both practical and philosophical levels (Smith and Akagawa 2009).

However, new debates have emerged since the negotiation and development of ICHC. Some Western countries have not acknowledged its relevance, including the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, Canada, and Switzerland (Kurin 2004: 66). Furthermore, as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2004) and Hafstein (2009) say, the new Intangible Cultural Heritage lists⁶ will inevitably generate meaning distortion because of the evaluation criteria. Therefore, Kreps argues, the new ICHC, in spite of its original goal of protecting the diversity of indigenous cultures, “can lead to the standardization and homogenization of practices that are inherently varied, and governed by specific cultural protocol” (2009: 204), thereby undermining the real cultural vitality in local communities. Also, William Logan suggests, the ICHC is a new Pandora’s box for heritage practitioners in that “the common issues of subjectivity and authenticity are likely to inflame existing global/local tensions” (2001: 56).

The founding of ICHC and the continuing skepticism about its effect point to the dilemma encountered by almost all international organizations that are discursively idealized with humanitarianism. That is, any discursive invention that aims to reconcile the hierarchy and binary between the dominant and subordinate groups will eventually be manipulated and controlled by those in power. The real locals may not have a chance to express, let alone the ideal expectation of, “globalization from below” or “grassroots globalization” as proposed by Appadurai (2001).

Tomlinson, for example, finds that even though the “environmentalists have tried to embrace the localist perspective . . . the environmental movement as a whole has tended to reinforce the globalist perspective” (1999: 190). A seminal work by Gayatri Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (1988) explicitly addresses the problem of the peripheral or marginalized peoples, claiming that they will never escape from the marginal status in the processes of power and knowledge. Similarly, with respect to the nomination tensions surrounding the Hiroshima Memorial for World Heritage, Beazley concludes that the tensions are primarily between the

Japanese government and world society, whereas the real victims are completely silenced (2010).

Heritage, Memory, and Identity

Heritage is dialectically linked to identity. As Anico and Peralta put it, “Identities, in order to be effective, have to have some kind of materiality” (2009: 1). Therefore, heritage is a kind of cultural and political resource used by any group to create or reinforce collective identities. And heritage “distills the past into icons of identity, bonding us with procurers and progenitors, with our own earlier selves, and with our promised successors” (Lowenthal 1994: 43). From a broader theoretical perspective, the link between heritage and identity is established through the mediation of “collective memory.”

Emile Durkheim argues that collective memory is one of the major “intellectual and moral frameworks” of society (1973 [1925]: 277). As a student of Durkheim, the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs elaborates the concept of collective memory by arguing that memory is socially shaped and constituted. Halbwachs distinguishes memory from history, indicating that history is dead memory and is externally situated above groups, whereas memory has to be constituted within particular social frames at the collective level (1980). Furthermore, memory and identity are reciprocal.

On the basis of collective memory, groups make sense of their distinctiveness vis-à-vis others, forming collective identities. As Eric Hobsbawm puts it, “To be a member of any human community is to situate oneself with regard to one’s (its) past, if only by rejecting it” (1972: 13). Gillis maintains that the core meaning of both individual and collective identities is sustained with memory (1994: 3). Also, as Peter Novick observes, “We choose to center certain memories because they seem to us to express what is central to our collective identity” (2000: 7).

The relationship between memory and identity is convincingly analyzed by Jan Assmann (1995), who revisits Halbwachs’s (1980) ambivalent topology of individual and collective memories and suggests that a large-scale cultural memory should be understood differently from the memory formed through daily communications (communicative memory). This cultural memory is constituted within particular ritual components such as festivals and symbols, which in turn transmit cultural messages into a particular consciousness of belonging—cultural identity.

However, the mechanism by which collective memory shapes collective identity is not simple. Instead, the memory-identity nexus is dialectic

tically conditioned and situated in processes in which collective memory is represented and articulated. There has been a longstanding debate in the field of memory studies on the very nature of memory: is it durable or malleable? The durability approach contends that it is the past that defines our memory. As Schudson says, “the past shapes the present, even when the most powerful people and classes and institutions least want it to” (1989: 113). But the faculty of the past is contested in a constructivist approach, which characterizes collective memory as a representation and device for present interests. Because memories are malleable, “we need to understand how they are shaped and by whom” (Burke 1989: 100). To transcend this paradigmatic dichotomy, Barry Schwartz acknowledges the reciprocal association between the past and the present. He characterizes collective memory as both political and cultural systems, arguing that the past is “neither totally precarious nor immutable, but a stable image upon which new elements are intermittently superimposed” (Schwartz 2000: 203).

This debate is instructive for our understanding of heritage, which embodies both the durability and malleability of memory. On the one hand, its material form represents the continuity of the past. On the other, it is a symbolic arena for malleable interpretations and narratives. Halbwachs states that spatial surroundings and people’s sense of their attachment to their surroundings play a very important role in shaping collective memory. “Every phase of the group can be translated into spatial terms” (Halbwachs 1980: 130). Thus, the physical forms of the past can solidify the collective identity across generations and spaces. This affinity has been largely agreed on in collective memory studies (Barthel 1996; Crane 2000; Vinitzky-Seroussi 2002; Wagner-Pacifici 1991; Young 1993).

Moreover, scholars also admit that heritage is selectively interpreted and sanctioned with certain discursive means. When different groups impose distinct narratives on one heritage site, the collective memory of the heritage is inevitably instrumentalized. For example, as Susan Crane puts it, museums “inhibit random access in favor of orderly, informative meaning-formation” (2000: 4). Likewise, in order to make sense of the present, heritage interpretation should be formulated with a credible memory collectively sanctioned (Anico and Peralta 2009).

Lowenthal sees the selectiveness of heritage interpretation as a positive construction for group identity. He distinguishes heritage from history: “Heritage and history rely on antithetical modes of persuasion. History seeks to convince by truth and succumbs to falsehood. Heritage exaggerates and omits, candidly invents and frankly forgets, and thrives on ignorance and error” (1998: 121). Thus, Lowenthal optimistically states that heritage even requires falsified historical legacies, which are integral

for identity formation (ibid.: 132). He lays out three ways in which heritage alters history: updates the past by garbing its scenes and actors in present-day guise, highlights and enhances aspects of the past now felt admirable, and expunges what seems shameful or harmful by consigning it to ridicule or oblivion (ibid.: 148–72).

Many scholars, however, see the instrumentalization of heritage in a negative light. Patrick Wright (1985) attacks the heritage industry for its legitimization of the triumph of an elitist culture and nostalgia. In a more critical manner, Robert Hewison contends that true history is absorbed into and overwhelmed by the heritage industry. He criticizes the commodification of heritage and contends that the meaning of heritage embedded in the heritage industry has been alienated from its origin (1987). Likewise, Raphael Samuel sees the heritage industry in Great Britain as “a way of compensating for the collapse of British power” (1994: 243).

Hobsbawm and Ranger’s *The Invention of Tradition* (1992) is a seminal work on heritage’s constructive and instrumental function; it argues that groups, especially nations, tend to create new traditions in order to secure and maintain their national cohesion. In the transformational period of the nineteenth century, old traditions no longer functioned to maintain group identity. Therefore, officially or unofficially, invented traditions offer and legitimate the newly constructed class and national identities. For instance, as Hobsbawm suggests, between 1870 and 1914, there was a period witnessing a process of “mass-producing traditions” in Europe due to the rapid formations of classes, nations, and the Socialist movement.

The mechanism by which collective memory and identity are shaped by heritage in Europe is explicitly analyzed in Sharon Macdonald’s *Memorylands: Heritage and Identity in Europe Today* (2013). In this volume, Macdonald argues that because of the fear of cultural amnesia, there has been a burst of memory work, such as heritage sites, memorials, and museums, which are being created and maintained to remember the past. According to Macdonald, the memory work is largely conditioned by spatial and temporal contexts. That is, there is not an all-encompassing cultural blueprint for the mnemonic practices that are associated with heritage. Instead, European memory “is characterized more by certain changes underway, and also by particular tensions and ambivalences, than by enduring memorial forms” (Macdonald 2013: 2). There are always multiple forms of memory and identity: local, national, European, and even cosmopolitan.

Heritage and the Construction of National Past

Although the nexus between heritage and identity has multiple forms, the most fundamental and powerful linkage is the one between heritage and

national identity. The collective identities embedded and embodied in heritage are primarily oriented toward symbolic inclusion and exclusion in the discourse of nation-states. The rise of nationalism in the late nineteenth century brought about an unequivocal affinity between memory and the nation (Olick 2003). The transformation of both temporal and spatial frameworks facilitated the increase of interest in and capabilities of “imagining” the national community (Anderson 2006). Collective memory studies are well established in theorizing the dialectic processes of memory and the nation. It is largely agreed that memory and national identities are established and sustained through material or symbolic practices, such as traditions, historical figures, urban landscapes (Hancock 2008), commemorative activities, and national calendars and myths (Ben-Yehuda 1995).

However, in the meantime, the real environments for the development of memory are argued to be eroding as historical narratives became increasingly controlled and rearticulated by the powerful nation-states. Pierre Nora states that the rise of *lieux de memoire*, sites of memory, is at the cost of the demise of *milieux de memoire*, real environments of memory (1989: 7). Hence, “Modern memory is, above all, archival. It relies entirely on the materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the recording, the visibility of the image” (ibid.: 13). Insofar as the real environments of memory are eroded, it is arguably much easier for the nation-states to create a dominant unitary discursive frame to narrate national history by controlling the sites of memory.

The relationship between memory and national identity is therefore repressive. China’s history has been bifurcated because a linear grand historical narrative has established the repressive teleology of history and silenced those “different and non-narrative modes” (Duara 1997: 19). Moreover, there is no monolithic national memory. Rather, there are various forms of memories, such as official memory, vernacular memory, popular memory, local memory, and, broadly, counter-memory (Jelin 2003). In these, collective memories may be multivocal or fragmented, as are heritage interpretations (Anico and Peralta 2009).

The attempt to create a totalizing and unitary narrative for the past is also evident in heritage. Although heritage supplies sentimentalized sources of national identity, it is more true that it is a political resource for the nation-states (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996). Kate Moles, in her discussion on the heritage construction for a Dublin park, finds that in spite of the multiplicity of narratives embedded in a particular heritage site, the state process of legitimation and authentication is always oriented toward creating only one sole national narrative, which helps define and incorporate a concrete national history (Moles 2009: 130). As a

political instrument, heritage serves to deliberately diffuse and disseminate state-supporting ideologies in order to secure the legitimacy of the state.

This ideological instrumentalization of heritage is manifested in the Communist regime's strategies for historical restoration in China. As mentioned earlier, Luo Zhewen explicitly claims that China's World Heritage Sites implicitly substantiate that "the cultural tradition of the Chinese nation has all along continued without interruption." In fact, the rhetoric of historical continuity has long been one of the most important discursive devices used by the Communist regime to claim its legitimacy. As Joseph Levenson observes, the Communist Party employs a strategy of "museumification" in order to restore symbols of the feudal past for ideological usage. Rather than destroying all the historical remains, the state separated the cultural relics' physical remains from their spiritual essences. By storing them in museums, the state maintains the narrative of historical and cultural continuity inherited from preceding dynasties, while simultaneously characterizing the relics as static and frozen in history to avoid any potential challenges for the present:

The communists themselves were "restoring" (in a way), not scuttling the past. Their way was the museum way. The restoration—of imperial places or classical reputations—was not a restoration of authority but of a history which the Chinese people (under new authority) could claim as its national heritage. Their historicism enabled the communists to keep the Chinese past as theirs, but to keep the past passé: the communists owned the present and would preside over the future. (Levenson 1968: 76–82)

Since Levenson's seminal work, the museumification of Chinese heritage has been examined by many scholars regarding various heritage sites, and all assert that the state has established a strategic discursive means to claim legitimacy. Even after certain sites have been designated as World Heritage, the state has continued to maintain its strategic museumification with the newly introduced universalistic model. For example, James Hevia finds that the World Heritage designation of the Tibetan-style buildings in Chengde has allowed the Communists to reinforce the articulation of ethnic harmony and cohesion, in order to solidify its legitimacy in Tibet (2001). A study by Tamara Hamlish on the Forbidden City's transformation from imperial palace to World Heritage Site finds that the process of the museumification of the Forbidden City is configured in, as well as empowered by, the World Heritage rhetoric (2000).

With respect to the World Heritage program, nation-states to some extent utilize rather than simply abide by the UNESCO discourses. As Logan observes,

Some governments make use of the “external enemy” for domestic political reasons, such as the wish to forge national cohesion, rather than because of real differences over heritage issues. Other governments “collude” with UNESCO for similar domestic reasons, hoping to gain prestige and electoral support for being seen to operate “internationally” or obtain international recognition of the national culture. (2001: 54)

A more revealing strategy employed by nation-states when nominating World Heritage is to create a “totalizing and correct” narrative of history in its nomination dossiers. Sophia Labadi (2010) has surveyed a number of dossiers and points out that the central aim of many nominations is to create a linear presentation of history. Articulating a glorious past with a symbolically stable history imbues the nation with a narrative of continuity and eternity with the deliberate interpretation of the heritage site, thus providing a rhetoric for national pride and a legitimization of the nation. Also, as Labadi (2013) indicates, the opportunity to realize this linear history lies in the very paradox of WHC itself. It is the concept of outstanding universal value that “encourages States Parties to focus on the positive and ‘safe’ historical accounts associated with the nominated site rather on polemics and tensions connected to it” (Labadi 2013: 67).

As Beazley suggests, “World Heritage inscription can assist in the unwelcome homogenization of cultural difference within the boundaries of nation-states” (2010: 63). Nation-states, hence, seem to be empowered, rather than disempowered, by the globalization of culture. A major challenge to the ideal of fostering a World Heritage preservation program lies in the power of states to produce and manipulate of heritage (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996). Simply put, World Heritage Sites are still firmly embedded within national boundaries. The World Heritage program reflects a contradiction in that it superficially propagates universalism while stressing cultural identity with national sentiments at a more substantial level. It is still unclear how World Heritage can reconcile the binary between national identity and cosmopolitan memory (Barthel-Bouchier and Hui 2007).

The Neoinstitutional Approach

As shown above, the current literature on heritage has explored and reflected on both macro- and microaspects of the heritage boom over the past decades. The criticisms of the politicization and universal claims of World Heritage underline the dominant, Eurocentric power of the universalizing/Westernizing World Heritage. By contrast, the literature on memory and identity emphasizes the power of nationalism in creating

a totalizing historical narrative via World Heritage nomination. Nevertheless, the paradox of China's current World Heritage craze is still confusing: a nation with a sophisticated strategy of "museumification" is ardently preoccupied with global recognition, especially with giving its heritage sites the title of "World."

If, as Levenson and others have convincingly demonstrated, the state can maintain its legitimacy by restoring its heritage in museums and asserting its embodiment of cultural continuity, the world-level recognition of this national heritage should be understood as an optional rather than an inevitable choice. Why then is it so important that this powerful state-controlled discourse be recognized and acknowledged by world society? If, on the other hand, the Westernization or homogenization of heritage is irresistible, why have so many World Heritage Sites been tied to national identities or even provoked transnational tensions and conflicts? The central question, then, is how does a culturally and economically strong non-Western nation-state like China engage in negotiating with a Western heritage discourse while simultaneously maintaining its own ability to totalize its national heritage?

A neoinstitutional approach serves as a sophisticated tool to answer these questions. This approach argues that the isomorphism of a world culture is not forcibly imposed by a dominant power. Instead, it involves an associational process. Drawing from DiMaggio and Powell's notion of "mimetic isomorphism," John Meyer et al. (1997) suggest that this type of isomorphism is distinct in that it is created on the basis of neither a coercive nor a normative mechanism. The two key elements of this isomorphism are (1) context and (2) legitimacy.

The context (environment) consists of cultural models that are enacted by embedded actors. According to Drori and Krucken, world society is formulated with authoritative actors that are diffuse and normative in nature. "Nation-states adhere to global norms of justice and progress and enact related scripts of social policy in order to be regarded as legitimate members of world society" (Drori and Krucken 2009: 14). In this sense, the power of diffusion is "soft," rather than direct physical contact. Meyer believes that the international systems, as organizational structures, act as "scriptwriters" that provide normative frameworks by which actors can play their roles in appropriate ways (Meyer 2009c: 44).

The legitimacy of the nation-states is derived from the script learning and practicing procedures. The world cultural model and its related discursive system, although stateless, are integral to the articulation of nation-state identities. The nation-states address the core meaning of their identities as the dominant actors, in spite of the variations in local perceptions, resources, and cultural settings (Meyer 2009b: 156). Thus, "world-cultural

principles license the nation-state not only as a managing central authority but also as an identity-supplying nation. . . . Moreover, in pursuing their externally legitimated identities and purposes by creating agencies and programs, nation-states also promote the domestic actors involved” (Meyer et al. 1997: 160). The set of domestically developed changes of the current cultural system, therefore, has to be understood as an infusion with the world cultural model.

The neoinstitutional approach offers two analytical dimensions to aid in our understanding of China’s World Heritage system: (1) how has it been established and transformed with an exogenously derived cultural model? and (2) how is the pursuit of a national identity then internally legitimized and enacted with this world cultural model? Neoinstitutionalism implies that not only the text of the model but also the acts of “mimetic isomorphism” empower the nation-states’ international identity and legitimacy.

The most compelling feature of World Heritage is that it reveals a characteristic dynamic of national identity formation. That is, it is not merely constructed in the distinctions vis-à-vis the Other but also constituted and celebrated in the Other’s perception, recognition, and appreciation of the distinctions. The institutional and discursive formations of China’s cultural heritage are exogenously framed with a world cultural model provided by WHC. But this process is not coercively imposed by a dominant world (Western) power. Instead, it entails the active involvement of the state; and the state involvement is constitutive of national identity in two dimensions—domestic homogenization and international recognition. The world cultural model serves as a set of scientific and rational scripts that empower the state’s cultural legitimacy.

Neither the state nor WHC has gained full discursive control over heritage interpretation. What is happening in the interaction between the two is constant negotiation, communication, and reconciliation, which are all contingent on particular textual and contextual settings. The state has to manipulate its heritage narratives in accordance with a universal framework, and WHC’s power lies only in its decision for designation, which is largely problematic and unconstructive for actual narrative articulation.

Although memory and identity are still largely bounded within nation-states, they have been articulated and framed in a process of “heritagization” that is exogenously enacted and configured. The politicized process of the selection, nomination, and management of World Heritage is itself constitutive of the creation and transition of collective memory and identity. One creative means employed by the state is Heritage Enlightenment. The state has deployed a set of practices to “educate” the people to adopt the narrative transition from cultural relic to cultural heritage, to be aware

of the importance of national heritage, and above all to be responsible for heritage protection and publicly active. In sum, the enshrinement of World Heritage and the deployment of Heritage Enlightenment are integral to the state's discursive power over not only cultural affairs but also social and political agendas.

The Book

Because WHC serves as a scriptwriter, it is analytically useful to examine the relationship between the convention and the state in two dimensions: (1) contexts of the scripts, and (2) texts of the scripts. The former involves the organization and transformation of the state's heritage institutions, including the forms, policies, laws, international conferences, and other affiliated activities and agendas. The latter consists of narratives of particular heritage sites, their formation and transformation, and local responses to them.

The major documents analyzed in this book include hundreds of official announcements, circulars, regulations, and unpublished sources. In addition, I have collected and analyzed newspapers and magazines, mainly *China Cultural Relics* and *China Cultural Heritage*. The official documents and newspapers and magazines with official backgrounds are a helpful tool in tracing the discursive transformation of cultural preservation—from cultural relics to cultural heritage—and, especially, the influence of the UNESCO World Heritage program on this transformation.

The “script texts” were collected at three carefully selected World Heritage Sites: Fujian Tulou, the Historic Monuments of Dengfeng, and the Great Wall. For each heritage site, the foremost “site of memory” lies in its nomination dossiers for World Heritage designation. The production of the nomination files, however, involves a multistep procedure. In order to apply for World Heritage designation, each nomination must submit a set of documents that includes the description and the justification of its cultural and historical significance and value. Local bureaus first submit the applications to the state, and then SACH makes the final nomination to UNESCO.

This book will explore how the universally developed values and criteria for World Heritage are represented in the nomination files. The application documents represent only an officially stated justification of the site's significance and value. They may entail differences from how the site is actually viewed and narrated in society. Therefore, I will explore media narratives describing the heritage site. The way the World Heritage discourse influences the Chinese will be revealed in the conjunctions and

disjunctions between the current and the old narratives (before designation) in Chinese media.

In addition, participant observations on heritage tourism and interviews conducted with both local residents and tourists help to explore the perceptions of World Heritage and the cultural memories embedded in the heritage narratives as well as how these processes have shaped particular national and local identities. Also, similar observations and analysis were made of communications between the locals and international tourists.

Chapters 1 and 2 will examine the discursive formation and the transformation of China's heritage preservation since 1949. Chapter 1 analyzes the organizational and conceptual interactions between China and the World Heritage program, demonstrating that the knowledge and the scripts of World Heritage have dialogically shaped the Chinese heritage preservation system and empowered China's status in world society. Chapter 2, taking a domestic angle, discusses how the state translates, manipulates, and utilizes the World Heritage scripts to articulate national solidarity, ethnic harmony, and cultural continuity to develop and reinforce the state's legitimacy.

Chapter 3, 4, and 5 will investigate three particular World Heritage Sites in China. In Chapter 3, I explore how the local identity of Fujian Tulou is embodied not only in heritage per se but also in the making and managing of heritage. In Chapter 4, I examine how a taken-for-granted historical identity of the Historic Monuments of Dengfeng can be completely altered in accordance with WHC. In Chapter 5, I discuss how the Great Wall's original meanings of war and exclusion are replaced by the narrative of global peace and cultural inclusion through its World Heritage designation and international tourism. I also explore how this new narrative is managed to articulate the state's cultural identity and confidence in world society. Finally, I conclude by suggesting that contemporary nation-states acquire and legitimize cultural identity not only by creating distinctions vis-à-vis the Other but also through the Other's recognition and appreciation of the distinctions.

Notes

1. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/cn>.
2. In 2014, Rui was taken in for questioning by local prosecutors; he was then in custody for years. The crime he was charged with was assumed to be politically oriented. His probable crime has nothing to do with his position in the Starbucks case.

3. The definition is from the Oxford English Dictionary.
4. World Heritage includes two major types, cultural heritage and natural heritage. The first six criteria are designed to evaluate cultural heritage sites. The next four criteria are for the evaluation of natural heritage sites. If one site meets at least one standard from each category, it can be designated as mixed heritage.
5. In 2000, the World Heritage Committee issued the Keynes Resolution, which aimed to solve the increasing imbalance in world heritage designations, allowing only one State Party to nominate one heritage site for consideration each year. In 2004, the Keynes Resolution was revised to allow each State Party to nominate two sites, with at least one of them being natural heritage. However, in 2016, the Keynes Resolution reverted to each State Party being allowed to nominate only one site.
6. The Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.