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**FROM HERDERS TO ARCHITECTS  
MAN'S IMPRINT  
ON WORLD HERITAGE**



Sydney Opera House.

## FROM HERDERS TO ARCHITECTS: MAN'S IMPRINT ON WORLD HERITAGE

Six thousand years separate the Sydney Opera House from Twyfelfontein. These two sites just inscribed on the World Heritage List add to its extraordinary richness, which the UNESCO Courier aims to illustrate. Among twenty-two new sites, the Courier focuses on five that reflect the diversity of world heritage down through the ages.



### “C” LIKE COMMUNITY: INTERVIEW WITH TUMU TE HEUHEU

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### THE DAWN OF HUMAN LIFE

As Twyfelfontein, Namibia's archaeological site, earns its place this year on the World Heritage List, The UNESCO Courier takes us on a journey backwards in time, to a selection of cultural heritage sites in different regions of the world where humans first marked their presence. **14**



### THE WORLD HERITAGE INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDING CAMPAIGNS

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It is a site in New Zealand, Tongariro National Park, which was the first cultural landscape inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1993. Cultural landscapes, for which intangible aspects are as important as tangible ones, have changed the face of World Heritage.

# “C” LIKE COMMUNITY

## INTERVIEW WITH TUMU TE HEUHEU



Tumu te Heuheu, Chairperson of the 31st session of the World Heritage Committee

*Tumu Te Heuheu, Paramount Chief of the Central North Island Tuwharetoa Tribe and Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee answers Jasmina Sopova's questions. He emphasizes the role of communities in the preservation of World Heritage.*

### **Does the distinction between tangible and intangible heritage apply to the Pacific cultures?**

Tangible and intangible heritage are often indivisible within the Pacific where the land is usually in customary ownership. An example is East Rennell which is a unique World Heritage site in that it is under customary ownership and management.

In Pacific cultures, indigeneity is not separate from heritage. Heritage defines cultural identity and cannot be separated from social, economic and environmental well-being. It can be viewed in a holistic way, that is to say that indigeneity embraces all life that is both tan-

gible and intangible, and is understood through cultural traditions.

### **You just launched the World Heritage - Pacific 2009 program. What does it entail?**

The Pacific 2009 Action Plan was developed at a World Heritage workshop held at Tongariro in 2004. It established the strategic objectives and priorities for Pacific Island nations and was structured around the four 'C's as outlined by the World Heritage Committee, namely: Credibility, Conservation, Capacity-Building and Communication. It also identified the need that necessary funds and resources be identified and made available through partnership efforts and related national implementation plans.

During the Pacific Island World Heritage workshop, held at Tongariro, in February 2007, it was most encouraging to note the significant progress made in the Pacific since the development of the Action Plan. This illustrates that important work is being done in Pacific Island countries especially

in regard to the preparation of Tentative Lists which are required for nomination to the World Heritage list. There was also considerable evidence of stronger links between Pacific Island delegates and technical experts who work in the Pacific.

### **What role should communities play in the protection of heritage?**

Communities are integral to the protection of heritage, both tangible and intangible. In the Pacific, this is particularly important given the intangible values, the unique Pacific culture and the fact that most land and resources are under customary ownership and control.

During our workshop, last February, it was agreed to add what is known as the 'fifth C' to the strategic objectives identified in the Pacific 2009 Action Plan. This 'C' is for community. Without community involvement and commitment heritage protection may not succeed. As well, it is believed that heritage protection should bring together the needs of communities because people need to be at the heart of conservation.

In practice this means that relevant communities are actively involved in the identification, management and conservation of all World Heritage sites.

### **What is your main objective as Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee?**

As Chair of the World Heritage Committee I want to promote the protection of the world's natural and cultural heritage (both tangible and intangible). In particular those parts of the world where there is under-representation on the List of areas needing protection.

The Pacific has one of the highest proportions of indigenous peoples



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Tongariro National Park, New Zealand.

within national populations and one of the lowest population densities of any inhabited region of the world. It is under-represented

in the World Heritage system and this role provides an opportunity to profile, promote and showcase the unique diversity of the natural

and cultural heritage of the Pacific to the world.

At the Christchurch meeting (Editor's note: 31st session of the World Heritage Committee which was held in New Zealand, from 23 June to 2 July 2007) an appeal to establish a Pacific fund to which the international community will contribute financially was launched. Among many things, this will help advance the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in the Pacific. ■

**Twyfelfontein, Namibia, a rock art site with few rivals, has just been added to the World Heritage List. It is on its boulders that the prehistoric inhabitants of the valley chose to reveal how they perceived their world.**

## GRAVE ENGRAVINGS



© UNESCO/Thomas Dowson

A giraffe, antelopes and a spotted lion with four toes: one of the most famous rock engravings at Twyfelfontein.

In a relatively remote and isolated valley in the semi-desert environment of western north-central Namibia is what must surely be the most spectacular accumulation of rock engravings in all of southern Africa. And certainly a rock art site with few rivals around the world. This well known group of rock art sites has come to be known by the misnomer 'Twyfelfontein', Afrikaans for doubtful fountain. The valley's spring is far from fountain-like, and although it is small it is actually quite dependable. The Damara name, /Ui-//Ais or jumping waterhole, is perhaps more ap-

propriate. Driving into the valley one is struck by the wide-open and sandy valley floor with its dry river beds. Even more striking are the valley sides and the enormous boulders that appear to be literally tumbling down towards the bottom. It is on these boulders that the prehistoric inhabitants of this valley chose to reveal how they perceived their world.

We know from excavations by Dr Eric Wendt, one of Namibia's pioneering archaeologists, that prior to European colonial engagements two kinds of people lived in the valley for extended periods of time. Ex-

cavated remains indicate that hunter-gatherer peoples were the first occupiers; artefact assemblages are typical of the Late Stone Age dating from 6000 to 2000 years ago. These Stone Age hunters and gatherers made most of the engravings and probably all the paintings; iconic imagery – depictions of animals and humans. Then sometime between 2000 – 2500 years ago the second group of occupiers arrived in the valley: Khoekhoen people who herded sheep and goats and had ceramic pots. Rock art made by the herders is unmistakably different to that of the hunters and gatherers; it is thought to be entirely geometric, including, at Twyfelfontein, pecked circles, and rows and rows of dots.

Much more is known about the rock engravings and paintings made by southern African hunters and gatherers, than the enigmatic geometric imagery of herder groups. In fact this distinction has only recently been developed by Sven Ouzman and Benjamin Smith, rock art researchers working in South Africa, and it enables a much greater understanding of the peopling of southern Africa and their making of the various rock art traditions there.

There are various estimates of how many engravings and paintings there are at the Twyfelfontein, but it is difficult, if not impossible to provide a definitive count. Ernst Scherz, who produced an impressive and unsurpassed documentation of Namibian rock art, said that there were around 2500 engravings, but modern estimates exceed 5000 individual depictions.

**The hunt:  
an interpersonal  
dialogue**

Painted and engraved images we see today on the rock surfaces of southern Africa, certainly those we can ascribe to hunters and gather-

ers, reveal a world in which both human and non-human beings actively engaged with one another, and their many and varied attempts to maintain the flow of supernatural potency between constituents of that world. The continued flow of supernatural potency between animals, and other animate and inanimate beings, and humans was fundamentally important for the reproduction of the world in which the hunters and gatherers lived.

Human beings, be they accomplished hunters, gatherers, or shamans, mothers or fathers, or their children, were all sentient beings, who in their day to day engagements with each other and the landscape in which they lived were intimately and actively involved in world-renewing activities. And those activities included hunting, gathering, sexual intercourse, and trancing to identify a

few. It is these human activities that tend to dominate the rock paintings. Hunting is a common theme in the rock paintings of southern Africa, including those at Twyfelfontein. For a long time images that depict the hunt and/or its paraphernalia were thought to depict hunter-gatherers attempts to acquire food. Our understanding of the way in which hunters and gatherers the world over think about the hunt shows this kind of interpretation is grossly naive. The hunt reveals an interpersonal dialogue between two sentient beings in the world: human and non-human animal. Hunting for hunter-gatherers is not simply about the procurement of food, it is a skilled way of engag-

ing with the world that ensures the circulation of supernatural potency. The hunted provides food and sustenance, while the hunter ensures he and his community behave respectfully towards this act of giving. So-called avoidance behaviours associated with the hunt are extensively documented for southern African hunter-gatherers. The Canadian anthropologist Mathias Guenther,

who has carried out ethnographic work amongst southern African San communities for several decades now, suggests that the presence of these actions shows that "activated in each hunt is a feeling of sympathy, and the implicit recognition that the animal is a moral and sentient kindred being".

**Something unfamiliar**

The engravings, particularly those at Twyfelfontein, have very few depictions of humans; by far the majority of the engravings at Twyfelfontein depict animals and their spoor. But many of these depictions are not simply realistic depictions of animals and their tracks. Often these engraved images have features that indicate we are dealing with something unfamiliar to our way of thinking about the relationship between humans and animals. A number of the depictions of animals have 'unreal' features. For example, many rhinoceros have exaggerated horns, lion spoor often have more than four toes, and giraffe are sometimes depicted with greatly elongated necks. These 'unreal' features demonstrate the active role animals were believed to play in maintaining the flow of supernatural potency.

The rock engravings at Twyfelfontein revealed a deeper understanding of the world to the hunters and gatherers that lived there in the past. Today these engravings set the stage for a different kind of relationship, that between tourists and the past. Despite the sad and unavoidable fact that tourism adds further pressure to the natural weathering processes that are slowly destroying southern Africa's cultural heritage, the rock art of the Twyfelfontein Valley continues to shed light on the different peoples that have created this irreplaceable heritage.

**Thomas A. Dowson,**  
a South African archaeologist,  
has carried out extensive research  
in the Twyfelfontein Valley,  
and the surrounding area.



Students from the University of Namibia copying engravings.



Twyfelfontein Valley at sunset.

# THE GRAND OLD LADY AND THE PLASTIC CHAIRS

On the border between East and West, the island of Corfu is shaped like a handle, thrusting from the Ionian Sea towards the Adriatic, not far from Italy. The little streets of Corfu, just inscribed on the World Heritage List, exude its Roman, Byzantine and Venetian past. The Greek artist Katerina Zacharopoulou takes us on a tour.



© UNESCO/Aida Boye

Corfu seen from the old fort.

For a long time Corfu has been a favourite destination for all sorts of visitors. Cosmopolitan society of the 1960s, tourists in groups, poets and academics, Greeks from the farthest reaches of the country – all who wanted to come visit this island had good reason. It is true that a place such as this – inhabited, ruled or described by such personalities as Dionysos Solomos, Jean Capo of Istria or Lawrence Durrell – has an aura that goes beyond its natural beauty, although that certainly plays a role in its renown.

Here, like everywhere, everyone forms, not to say draws, his or her own picture of the place. For me, I've kept the first, practically definitive impression of Corfu I was filled with when I arrived, still a child, with my parents, on this island that my mother was from, and with which my father had fallen so in love he'd partially abandoned his ties to his own birthplace, Constantinople. The contrast between East and

West gave me the feeling that I was coming from an indefinable place and arriving in a European city. A sensation that the island I could perceive from the boat, as it slowly approached the port, was the destination chosen by a fairy who sent me there so that I could discover secrets. I would later understand that this childish fantasy was inspired by two things: the roofs on the houses and the incredible, romantic landscape all around.

With its city dwellers and the Italian style of their ways, its villagers who all had the appearance, at the time, of administrators for important landowners, with the atmosphere of the nightlife of the 1960s dominated by the personality of Aristotle Onassis, "the richest man in the world", Corfu was indeed opening to me like a book of fairy tales.

Mainly there were the little streets that exuded History. History with European roots, with its lords and aristocrats, men of letters, painters

and musicians, with its struggles for independence, its avant-gardes and precursors, its fortresses and palaces, local and foreign customs, its peasant houses and lordly residences portraying the diversity of humankind.

## **Self-discovery**

Corfu is not a holiday island, at least for me. As Lawrence Durrell, who lived there, said: "Other countries may offer you discoveries in manners or lore or landscape; Greece offers you something harder – the discovery of yourself?" Corfu is certainly Greece, but also a Mediterranean bridge of the Orient towards the Occident. Besides self-discovery, it awakens in people something profoundly human, a sort of melancholy, indefinable nostalgia, something heavy, like a definitive and hopeless love, like a romantic interior landscape.

We each have our own paradise. And the island of mass tourism and a carefree life, turquoise sea and fancy hotels, the island in the travel agency brochures, isn't one. Real paradise is the smile of the Corfiot woman wearing a white scarf on her head, sitting in the afternoon on the step of her house in Aghios Markos, and behaving as if she didn't know that two steps from her peaceful village in Ypsos thousands of motorcycles are roaring, on the road to innumerable taverns, restaurants, cafes, bars and night clubs concentrated on the sea shore. The real paradise is the city in October when you wander the little streets and you discover the bookshop

“O Plous” (The Crossing), before a sudden shower pushes you into the Liston café. The real paradise are those fragrances whose origins you’re unsure of: a blend of air from sea and cypress, moistened earth and jasmine, from an old closed home and wet grass.

### **A cosmopolitan aristocrat**

There are in the world many deeply moving towns teeming with architectural treasures, surrounded by



Corfu is a «a cosmopolitan aristocrat who suffers from plastic chairs».

breathtaking vistas, exotic beaches...Corfu isn't the only one. But at the same time Corfu is unique. It's enough to go once at Easter

time to understand that. Corfu is simply spectacular on those days of mourning transformed into days of celebration. Musical groups multiply in the town, handsome young people, usually blond, play music, fireworks tossed from the Citadel complete the décor.

The Corfiots are very proud of their island, and let's be honest, they feel superior to Greeks from other regions. So do Cretans, you say, and people from the Cyclades too, but for other reasons. That is

## **CORFU: MEDITERRANEAN STEPPING-STONE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST**



© UNESCO/Adrian Reilly

The Old Fort by the Harbour.

**Colonized by the Corinthians around 734 B.C.,  
Corfu was dominated successively by the Romans, Byzantines, Venetians, French and British.  
The picturesque island, whose Old Town of the same name has just been added to the World Heritage List,  
has kept souvenirs from all these phases.**

In the Ionian Islands, Corfu lies farthest to the north, close to the Albanian coast but also the closest point in Greece to Italy. Because of its strategic position on the border of East and West, the small and scenic island has been caught up in the Mediterranean's battles and conquests throughout history. A Corinthian colony from about 734 BC, it fell successively into the hands of the Romans, Byzantines, Venetians, French and British. For four centuries, however, its fortifications were used to defend the maritime trading interests of the Republic of Venice against the Ottoman Empire.

Corfu has been a part of modern

Greece since 1864, yet it still treasures remnants of foreign influence in its chequered past, all the way down from antiquity. The splendid Venetian citadel, today the setting for concerts and other cultural events, testifies to the tumultuous sieges Corfu endured. Both the Old Citadel and New Fort, outstanding medieval military monuments built by Venice's best architects and engineers and restructured by the British, have been selected for the World Heritage List.

Between the two fortresses midway along the island's eastern coastline, lies Corfu's Old Town. With its labyrinth of quaint little streets crammed within

the fortifications, it too is now part of the World Heritage site. Marked by its Italian-style architecture, it also boasts Eastern Orthodox churches (one containing the mummified remains of patron Saint Spiridion) while its vast main esplanade incorporates a very British cricket field. In structure and form, as well as in its life-style, arts and letters, Corfu represents a unique entity, having absorbed by osmosis both Eastern and Western characteristics. This ensemble has been preserved alive and substantially intact until today, and World Heritage recognition will help keep up that momentum.



Orchestras abound during August festivities in Corfu.

contrast sometimes takes on excessive proportions. Is it possible to make past, nature and globalization coexist without damage?

Corfu is a cosmopolitan aristocrat who suffers from plastic chairs. Fast-food doesn't suit her any more than motorcycles and vulgar behaviour. She needs to be treated like a great lady in the old days, with respect...But, we know, in our day, just about everywhere in the world, great ladies are having a difficult time.. ■

a question that concerns and it is History, far from what I'm talking about. What I mean here, it seems to me that Corfiots, as heirs to a great civilization, are both ancient

and modern. They are Greek, but also a little Italian. They care about their heritage, and at the same time they destroy it. Like everywhere in Greece, you say, but in Corfu the

**Katerina Zacharopoulou,**  
Greek artist, directs and presents a show about art, "Time for Images", on ET1, the national television channel.

Jewel of Mughal architecture, the Red Fort in Delhi was built in a unique style – shahjahani – by India's fifth Mughal emperor, Shah Jahan. This new World Heritage site has grown in historical stature with the passage of time and now symbolizes India's independence. For its founder, it was heaven...then hell.

# SHAH JAHAN'S HEAVEN AND HELL

## THE RED FORT IN DELHI



Shahjahanabad's Red Fort (Old Delhi).

"If there be a paradise on earth, it is here, it is here" reads the inscription at the entrance of Qala-a-Mubarak'a'. The couplet by the Persian poet Amir Khusrau reveals the intention of Shah Jahan's architects. They designed a citadel to match the Koran's description of paradise, not unlike Ispahan in Iran.

Shah Jahan is known as the man who so loved his favourite wife, Mumtaz Mahal, "light of the palace", that after she died in 1631, he put 20,000 builders to work on the famous Taj Mahal in Agra; the mausoleum in her memory was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1983. He was also a mighty emperor who



“They have inlaid stone flowers in marble,  
which surpass reality in colour, if not in fragrance.”

Abu Talib Kalim, Shah Jahan’s court poet.

brought the greatest glory to the Mughal empire, founded in the 16th century by Babur, “The Leopard”, descendant of the fierce warlord Tamerlane – to whom we owe another fabulous World Heritage site, the 14th century Samarkand, now in Uzbekistan.

Shah Jahan will undoubtedly be remembered as the dynasty’s greatest art lover and builder. His legacy, the Qala-a-Mubarak’a’, known as the Red Fort, was a citadel at the heart of the capital, serving as both imperial residence and government headquarters.

### **The new red capital**

When he decided to move the capital from Agra to Delhi in 1638, the emperor gave orders to build his “paradise on earth” on the banks of the river Yamuna, just like the Taj Mahal. Today it is called Old Delhi, but then it bore the name of its founder: Shahjahanabad.

Begun in 1639 and completed probably in 1648, the Red Fort accommodated some 3,000 people. It is the first Mughal palace fort designed according to an octagonal grid pattern, which later became an architectural characteristic of the dynasty. Made primarily in brick, clad

with sandstone or red marble, it represents a harmonious fusion of Persian, Timurid and Indian elements, yet it is based on Islamic prototypes. The unique style, also distinguished by its complex geometric compositions, is named after the emperor: Shahjahanani.

Connected in the north to Salimgarh, an earlier fort built by Isma Shah Sur in 1546, the walls of the Red Fort stretch out for more than two kilometres. Their height varies from 16 metres on the river to 36 metres on the town side. Two entrances allowed access to the citadel: the Delhi and Lahori gates. The first was used by soldiers and servants of the court. The second, facing the town of Lahore and giving onto the Chatta Chowk (palace market) was reserved for visitors and the emperor himself. A wide north-south road ran alongside the market. It set the border between the military camp to the west and the palace in the east.

### **Peacock throne and lotus pool**

When the powerful and inconsolable Shah Jahan arrived for a public audience in the hall designated for that purpose, the Diwan-i-Am, he passed by the drum house (naubat khana or

naqqarkhana), a three-storey rectangular building for the musicians. In the audience hall stood the throne, incrustated with semi-precious stones, as elaborate and majestic as Solomon’s if not an actual copy.

But an even more sumptuous throne awaited him in the Diwan-i-Khas, the hall for private audiences, where he met his ministers and courtiers. More than 100 rubies and the same number of emeralds enhanced the splendour of the two peacock effigies standing behind the royal seat, as well as countless diamonds, sapphires and rare pearls. The famous Peacock Throne had been taken as war booty from Iran by Nadir Shah. It was in 1739, a century after construction of the Red Fort had begun, when the “Persian Napoleon” had devastated Delhi with fire and sword.

Having disposed of affairs of state, Shah Jahan retired to the Khas Mahal, his private pavilion with bedrooms, prayer rooms and a tower from which the emperor would speak to the people. The Khas Mahal was part of a series of royal pavilions in white marble giving onto the Yamuna, linked one to the other by a channel whose sparkling waters justified its name of Nahr-i-Behisht, the stream of paradise.

To relax, Shah Jahan would retreat to one of the hammams, where hot and cold water flowed through pipes and the walls’ floral motifs created the impression of a garden. And at

© UNESCO/Robin Searle



The Red Fort’s walls are more than two kilometres long.

© UNESCO/Robin Searle



The Red Fort’s walls hide unexpected treasures.

the southern end of the alignment was the ultimate paradise: the zenanas, or women's quarters, consisting of one-storey pavilions also linked with channels and pools. His wives and mistresses lived in the Rang Mahal pavilion (palace of colours), with ceilings adorned with gold and silver motifs reflecting the water and white marble of the magnificent lotus pool, a favourite ingredient of Mughal architecture.

### **Symbol of power**

Shah Jahan lived less than 20 years in earthly paradise and ten years in hell, in the very same place. When he fell ill in 1657, he was deposed and imprisoned in the fort until his death

in 1666, by his own son Aurangzeb.

Thanks to the latter we have the Moti Masjid, the Pearl Mosque, which he built for his own use in 1659, to the west of his father's hammams. The white marble mosque's prayer room floor is inlaid with the outline of a prayer carpet in black marble. To the north of the mosque is laid out the splendid Hayat-Baksh Bagh, the life-giving garden, its sections also separated by water.

But little remains of the heavenly gardens. Since its construction, the fort has undergone much modification, the British in particular considerably changing its structure. In 1857, when the British crown took command of the Raj, it made the fort the British In-

dian Army's headquarters. As a result, pavilions were torn down and colonial style military buildings replaced them, while Mughal gardens were transformed into English ones.

In 1947, after India declared its independence, the Indian army took over the Red Fort and turned it into the symbol of the British colonial power's defeat. The proof: the first Independence Day celebrations took place there, on 15 August 1947. And since then, every year, the Prime Minister gives his Independence Day speech on this historically significant site.

**Appasamy Murugaiyan,**  
Indian linguist

In Kaiping, Guangdong province (China),  
several thousand fortified towers stand: the diaolou.  
Their unique architectural style blends Western imports  
with traditional Chinese elements.

## THE DIAOLOU OF KAIPING

ate one night in 1922, more than 200 bandits advance single file in the darkness. They have just abducted the 23 pupils and headmaster of the Chikan village school and they are leading them back to their hideout. Their route takes them past the village of Yingcun, dominated by the Hongyi Lou, a diaolou built by Chinese émigrés on their return from the United States for the protection of their families. They stored their weapons in it and installed an electric generator and an alarm siren, brought back from overseas.

As soon as the sun sets, men stand guard at the top of the fortified tower, where villagers sleep. That night they spot odd, furtive shadows. Immediately they turn on the searchlight, sound the alarm... The petrified bandits are trapped in the glare and din of these unknown devices. From the

© UNESCO/Zhu Wenjian



An Lu, fortified towers in Zili village (Kaiping).

top of the diaolou, the guards open fire. Panic ensues. Several bandits are shot; others head for the hills, while some of the prisoners flee. The villagers capture 12 bandits and save 17 pupils and the headmaster. Word of this exploit spreads far and wide. Now every town wants its own diaolou.

### **Secular guardians**

Today, some 20 diaolou in the sub-prefecture of Kaiping are inscribed on the World Heritage List. Two hours from Canton, Guangdong's capital, and four hours by boat from Hong Kong, Kaiping is in a remote corner of the province. Its diaolou stick up in the background of villages, in green groves of bamboo or banana trees. Some loom above the rice paddies, on top of small mounds. They take various forms: castle keeps capped with crenellations and embrasures, ornately decorated belfries, finely sculpted towers. Some are made of stone, some in pise (compressed earth) and others in brick, like the Yinglong Lou, the oldest of the diaolou still standing from the 16th century. Most, however, were built out of reinforced concrete between 1920 and 1930 and comprise four or five storeys. A distinguishing characteristic is their blend of Chinese and western architectural elements.

The diaolou were used for defence in times of upheaval. They flourished particularly in the late Qing dynasty (1644-1911), when countless local wars ravaged China – the bloody Taiping rebellion (1851-1864) to cite but one – and during what is known as the Warlord period, when power-hungry military leaders wreaked havoc in the country, between 1916 and 1926.

### **Double-Happiness and Acanthus leaves**

But dangerous times are not the only explanation for the profusion of diaolou. Their construction was financed by émigrés. At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th

century, Kaiping was a centre of Chinese emigration. Many of its citizens worked as coolies (the name given to Chinese economic immigrants) in Southeast Asian mines and plantations, participated in the California gold rush and railroad construction across the American continent, or opened laundries, restaurants and

to have a determining impact on this unusual architectural style, with reinforced concrete making cantilevered construction possible and facilitating domes and other rounded forms. This was a great novelty. Incidentally, the expression “upside-down wok” is used in Chinese literature of the time to designate a cupola.

### **A matter of prestige**

The diaolou represented prestige. They were status symbols, flaunting the prosperity and power of their owners, who consequently spent lavish sums on them. Some of the towers belonged to a single family and were used as residences. Others were funded by a village or several families, with everyone getting a small room in which to store valuables or take refuge in case of danger. And some – like the Fang Clan watch tower near Zili – were lookout points, erected in strategic places on the outskirts of villages.

The diaolou built by communities were often named after the village or the traditional chieftain, while others were described by their function. Once the name was chosen, renowned artists were called in to trace the characters in calligraphy, which were then carved or moulded and displayed at the top of the main façade. The inscription adorning Rui-shi Lou, a nine-storey diaolou in the village of Jinjiangli, is the work of an abbot and celebrated calligrapher from Canton's Temple of the Six Banyan Trees.

Most of these diaolou are abandoned today, but nothing about their appearance evokes desolation. At nightfall, their sombre silhouettes stand at attention above the houses and continue to watch over the villages of Kaiping.

**Patricia Batto,**

French Sinologist, is currently working on a book on the Kaiping region.

© UNESCO/Zhu Wenjian



An Quan Lou, fortified tower (Kaiping).

shops.

Returning home, they introduced the extraordinary composite architecture of the diaolou, which melds, for instance, auspicious Chinese motifs like the Double-Happiness symbol with acanthus leaves or classical colonnades from the west.

They also imported cement and steel into the region, which turned out

© UNESCO/Zhu Wenjian



When the cupola appeared in local architecture, it was called “upside-down wok”

Octavio Paz, Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros and other celebrities have left their traces on the campus of the University of Mexico. Spreading out over seven million square meters, this intellectual breeding ground is also by its architecture a unique example of 20th century modernism.

# PEOPLE FOR THE UNIVERSITY THE UNIVERSITY FOR THE PEOPLE



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The façade of the Rector's building decorated by David Alfaro Siqueiros.

The Central University City Campus of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) rises up above a sea of volcanic lava. More than 150,000 students, teachers and staff work, and in some cases live, in this southern part of the valley of Mexico, which the volcano Xitle ("little navel"), today extinct, engulfed 2,400 years ago.

Distant from the city in the past, the university campus is now a part of it. The demographic explosion has obliged its "inhabitants", nicknamed "Pumas", to share their oasis of science, art and sport with the 20 million people living in the Mexican capital. "The architecture of the Ciudad Universitaria is such that even those who have not studied at the University identify with it, because it's a very Mexican space," declares Lourdes Cruz González Franco, researcher and coordinator of Mexican architects' ar-

chives. She underlines, "There is no clash between the Ciudad Universitaria and the big city. On the contrary, they are perfectly integrated with each other in a fluent exchange."

The CU, as most people call it, has been instrumental in the major urban growth that Mexico City has known in the second half of the 20th century: since the beginning of its construction, avenues have come into being, others have been enlarged, like the Insurgentes Avenue, one of Mexico City's most emblematic.

## **Functional space**

The Ciudad Universitaria was devised in the 1940s to concentrate in a single space all the different schools and departments of UNAM, up until then scattered all over the capital. The construction began in 1949 over seven million square metres and lasted for

three years. "Mario Pani, Enrique del Moral and Mario Lazo opted for a modern architecture using cubical volumes and glass prisms. The functional and rational vision of space gave a new interpretation to an environment that the Xitle's lava had made inhospitable," explains Lourdes Cruz.

Though the complex was designed more than 60 years ago for a population of some 25,000 people, the Ciudad Universitaria has lost none of its functional character today, even though in the 1970s it became necessary to add two new developments – one for scientific research and the other for human sciences – as well as a cultural centre and several multidisciplinary campuses.

## **Beautiful space**

The site that has just been inscribed on the World Heritage List corresponds to UNAM's central cam-



The CU is a masterpiece of architecture, engineering, landscaping and art.

pus. It represents a unique example of 20th century modernism in regard to architecture, engineering, landscaping and arts. It is furthermore a modernism largely inspired by Mexican tradition. The campus comprises the most noteworthy buildings including the Rector Tower, the Central Library and the University Olympic Stadium used for the 1968 Olympic Games and the 1986 soccer World Cup.

Seen from above, the open stadium resembles a volcano surging out of the earth. Like other CU buildings, it was constructed out of volcanic stone from the Xitle. Famous Mexican painter Diego Rivera (1886-1957), known for his murals, decorated its façade with a high-relief multicoloured mosaic symbolizing the homeland, peace, the university and sports. "This masterpiece of Diego Rivera's mural painting was intended to retrace the history of sport in the pre-Hispanic and contemporary world and to continue all along the stadium's enclosure, but it was left unfinished," says Lourdes Cruz.

Another symbolic building, the Rector Tower, with its coat of arms representing a double-headed bird (Mexican eagle and Andean condor) and its aphorism, "The spirit

will speak through my race", is further proof that in Mexico, art and architecture are one. The facades of this high tower, a landmark students rely on, is adorned with three painted murals by another famous Mexican, David Alfaro Siqueiros (1896-1974), with eloquent titles: "People for the university - the university for the people", "Dates in the history of Mexico" and "New University emblem".

The painter and architect Juan O'Gorman (1905-1982), born of an Irish father and Mexican mother, gave us the 4,000 square metres of frescoes covering the Central Library facades. Thanks to O'Gorman, the outside walls of the ten-storey building decorated in multicoloured stones from different regions of the country tell the story of Mexico from the pre-Hispanic era to modern times, dramatizing the age-old duality of life and death.

### **Space for involvement**

With 18 departments, six national schools and 28 research institutes, the CU provides fantastic study space. But it also provides space for leisure. Its platforms and staircases open to the sky, recalling

those of pre-Hispanic cities like Teotihuacan (north of Mexico City) and Monte Albán (Oaxaca, south of the country), are crammed with students resting or rehearsing theatre pieces, taking advantage of the décor and the acoustics. "We have a feeling of freedom," says Zully Góngora, drama student, who with a group of schoolmates is preparing a play in front of a wall made of volcanic stone and decorated with pre-Hispanic symbols.

And Luis Alberto García, a graduate of the political science department at UNAM, adds, "We Pumas are proud of CU, not just because of its architecture but also because some of our country's great thinkers passed through its lecture halls." He mentions, among others, three Mexican Nobel Prize winners: Alfonso García Robles (Peace, 1982), Octavio Paz (Literature, 1990) et Mario Molina (Chemistry, 1995).

An intellectual breeding ground, the CU was in the middle of the action when student protests culmi-



The CU's Central Library was decorated by Juan O'Gorman.

nated in the tragically well-known massacre of Tlatelolco, which occurred outside its walls 10 days before the start of the 1968 Olympic Games. Students have also held regular major strikes – 1968, 1987, 1999 – aimed primarily at defending free public education, as guaranteed by the Mexican constitution. So far, they have been successful.

**Gerardo Tena,**  
Mexican journalist

## The dawn of human life

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Rock paintings, Tassili n'Ajjer (Algeria).

**As Twyfelfontein, Namibia's archaeological site, earns its place this year on the World Heritage List, The UNESCO Courier takes us on a journey backwards in time, to a selection of cultural heritage sites in different regions of the world where humans first marked their presence.**

### **Lower Valley of the Awash (Ethiopia)**

In 1974, scientists in eastern Africa unearthed a remarkably complete skeleton of a female hominid, an early ancestor of humans. The team from the Institute of Human Rights nicknamed her Lucy, after the Beatles song, dating her at more than 3 million years old. Small in height, she had long arms and short legs which allowed her to walk upright, marking an important step in human evolution. This site has been on the List since 1980.

### **Sangiran Early Man Site (Indonesia)**

Inscribed on the List in 1996, this fossil-rich area on the island of Java has been continuously inhabited for the past one and a half million years. The Dutch anatomist Eugene Dubois discovered the remains of the Java Man here in 1891, one of the earliest specimens of "Homo erectus". In the 1930s, the anthropologist GHR von Koenigswald found more remains, notably Sangiran 2 who could be as old as 1.6 million years.

### **Archaeological Site of Atapuerca (Spain)**

These caves constitute an exceptional example of continuous human

occupation, dating back to nearly a million years ago when the earliest known Europeans settled here, leaving behind drawings, stone tools and other traces of their civilization. This unique geographical location also provides a link to the human evolutionary line from Africa. It was inscribed on the List in 2000.

### **Kakadu National Park (Australia)**

This site, on the List since 1981, is home to a wide range of wetland and woodland ecosystems, containing many rare species. Ancient rock drawings attest to cultural traditions going back more than 50,000 years, making it the continent's oldest known human settlement. Its cultural landscape is a unique showcase of the relationship between humans and their environment.

### **Serra da Capivara National Park (Brazil)**

Discovered in the 1960s, these mountains are home to several hundred caves painted by the communities that inhabited them as far back as 25,000 years ago, leaving an invaluable testimony of their hunting practices, dances and other rituals. Some of the oldest archaeological elements

in the Americas are preserved here, as well as unique plant and animal species, unknown elsewhere. This site is on the list since 1991.

### **Tassili n'Ajjer (Algeria)**

As early as 7000 BC, when the Sahara was a green and fertile place, generation after generation of Tuareg illustrated the animals around them. Today, thousands of these rock paintings and engravings, spread out in an area covering 80,000 square kilometres, provide one of the world's finest open-air museums of prehistory. This national park was inscribed on the List in 1982 and is also a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve since 1986.

### **Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump (Canada)**

At the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, below a promontory plunging 18 metres into the valley below, are remains of thousands of game, arms and tools. The native people of the North American plains practised a hunting custom 6,000 years ago, driving buffalo over a precipice, thereafter working the hides and bones in workshops in the down in the valley. This site was added to the list in 1981.

# The World Heritage international safeguarding campaigns



View of Paharpur's Great Monastery (Bangladesh).

**UNESCO's international safeguarding campaigns, the first of which was launched in the 1960s, often served as a springboard for the nomination of sites on the World Heritage List. Indeed, the very concept of World Heritage developed from these early initiatives. Some examples from among the 26 campaigns.**

## **Monuments of Nubia (Egypt and Sudan)**

The construction of a dam threatened to submerge the 3,000-year-old monuments and temples of ancient Nubia when UNESCO launched this campaign in 1960. Over a period of 20 years, a total of 22 monuments and architectural complexes were painstakingly dismantled stone by stone, and reassembled on other sites, an immense technological challenge requiring 40 technical missions from five continents. The Nubian Monuments were inscribed on the List in 1979.

## **City of Venice (Italy)**

UNESCO launched this campaign in 1966 after the city was devastated by floods a year earlier, providing technical expertise and financial aid. The international synergy from this project was an important source of inspiration to the founding efforts of the 1972 World Heritage Convention. Venice and its lagoon were inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1987.

## **Moenjodaro (Pakistan)**

When the campaign was launched in 1974, the ruins of this huge city, built entirely of unbaked brick in the third millennium BC, were threatened with flooding from the Indus

River and encroaching salinity. Moenjodaro was inscribed on the List in 1980. The campaign was completed in 1997, setting up a master plan to ensure the sustainability of the conservation work.

## **Island of Gorée (Senegal)**

This island, the largest slave-trading centre on the African coast, was already placed on the List in 1978, when UNESCO appealed to the international community in 1980, not only to protect and develop its architectural heritage, but also to preserve this reminder of human exploitation as a sanctuary for reconciliation.

## **City of Hué (Viet Nam)**

Capital of unified Viet Nam in 1802, Hué was a political, cultural and religious centre under the Nguyen dynasty until 1945. Its 19th century palaces, mausoleums and pagodas were ravaged by war, monsoons and vegetation. The safeguarding campaign, launched in 1981, led to the listing of the complex of Hué's monuments in 1993.

## **Tyre and its Surroundings (Lebanon)**

Besieged by Alexander and Nebuchadnezzar, threatened by war, urbanization and the erosion of time, this ancient Phoenician city

was entered on the List in 1984. A "heritage alert" drew international attention in 1987, followed by a safeguarding campaign in 1998. A UNESCO mission visited the site in 2006 and reported on post-war damage.

## **Historic Monuments of Paharpur and Bagerhat (Bangladesh)**

Bangladesh is home to two cultural treasures – the monastery complex of Paharpur, built around 780 AD, and the 13th century mosque city of Bagerhat. Over time, monsoon floods, tropical vegetation and soil salinity have not spared them. In 1985, as Bagerhat became a World Heritage site, the safeguarding campaign began.

## **Jesuit Missions of the Guaranís (Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay)**

From 1609 onwards, the Society of Jesus set up missions within the frontiers of several South American colonies. These were intended to serve as models for integrating the indigenous population, socially and culturally as well as politically and economically. A number of these missions were inscribed on the list from 1983 to 1993. The campaign for their restoration was launched in 1988.



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