

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL: HERITAGE CONSERVATION
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN ETHIOPIA

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An analysis of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre's changing perception of the community's role in the conservation of World Heritage informs a discussion of the evolution of heritage conservation in Ethiopia. Case studies on two of Ethiopia's living cultural World Heritage sites, the Rock-hewn Churches at Lalibela and Harar Jugol, the Fortified Historical Town, illustrate how the site and local tradition bearers are of mutual benefit to each other in terms of the conservation of Outstanding Universal Value and the transmission of local cultural values to present and future generations. By comparing heritage conservation activities at the two properties, the treatise discusses the shift in the approach to decision making about conservation strategies from the conventional and top-down to the values-led and grass roots and identifies the downstream effects of program implementation at each site and development in the town on the historical built environment and the surrounding community associated with it.

With tourism, particularly cultural heritage tourism, recognized as a significant factor in national economic growth, the Ethiopian government is increasingly considering the country's World Heritage sites as economic assets as well as cultural resources. This changing appreciation is particularly relevant in the context of its effort to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goal of poverty alleviation. Since the conception of the 'Historic Route' over fifty years ago to promote international tourism in Ethiopia, the national leadership has valued the use of heritage sites to raise the country's international standing as well as bring in foreign exchange. Ethiopia's experience following the listing of its first World Heritage sites in 1978 provides lessons for its own consideration as well as that of other nations as they proceed with the development of additional national heritage sites as cultural tourist destinations. A key finding is the importance of expanding heritage conservation programs beyond technical assistance with site management and preservation to include public policy advocacy to promote and defend the interests of the World Heritage sites and the communities with which they are associated.

Key words: community participation, cultural heritage tourism, Ethiopia, Harar Jugol, living cultural World Heritage site, public policy advocacy, rock-hewn churches at Lalibela, sustainable development, UNESCO World Heritage Programme United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL: HERITAGE CONSERVATION
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN ETHIOPIA

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This treatise is submitted to the Faculty Of Goucher College in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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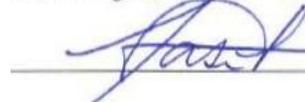
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PREFACE

Since the promulgation of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention of 1972, the notion of Outstanding Universal Value has been associated with the authenticity that a cultural heritage site derives from its feel and sense of place. Over the past decade, UNESCO has broadened its definition of authenticity to incorporate the traditional, customary practices, or intangible cultural heritage, affiliated with historical built environments, or tangible heritage. By understanding the linkage between the historical built heritage and the intangible cultural practices valorized by the 2003 *UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, heritage practitioners increasingly recognize the benefits of the synergy between them to both the conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of cultural World Heritage sites and the transmission of local cultural values to present and future generations.

To my family members, with gratitude for their unfailing support of all of my efforts.

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Living in Ethiopia during the past five years has given me the opportunity to learn about the country's rich, historical, built heritage. My initial exploration along the 'Historic Route' eventually led to my selection of the remarkable World Heritage sites at Lalibela and Harar, where the warm welcome of local residents amply testified to the renowned Ethiopian tradition of hospitality, as the subject of my treatise. I owe deep appreciation to several individuals, who took time from their busy schedules to answer many questions: in Harar, Abdulnasir Edris, Abdulnasir Garad, Abdullah Sharif, and Yasmine Zakaria, and in Lalibela, Asnake Endawoke, Fentaw Asnake Mekonen, Chombe Mulugeta, Getou Wodijo, Genet Sisay, Habtamu Tesfaw, and Berhanu Yohannes. I am also grateful for the lively, detailed commentary that my tour guides and the local museum guides provided. In Addis Ababa, I benefitted from discussions with Techeste Ahderom, Mengistu Gobezi, Sarah Hayward, Tibebe Terfa, Asfaw Tessema, Elias Yitbarek, and Ahmed Zekaria. Bahereh Smith, Douglas Smith, Marcy Rundquist, and Robert Rundquist offered astute editorial assistance on a late draft of my manuscript, while Pamela Flinton, reference librarian at Goucher College, provided much-appreciated technical assistance. I reserve my deepest gratitude for my three committee members, whose thoughtful insights and advice from the earliest stage of proposal writing through my revisions enabled me to bring this treatise to a satisfactory conclusion.

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Although Ethiopia's rich cultural heritage contributes immeasurably to the national economy and to the country's image abroad, it is more than an economic tool or an image-shaper. Across the country, communities perform customs related to their cultural identity. The United National Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) refers to these practices as 'intangible cultural heritage'. At the country's 'living' cultural World Heritage sites, these traditions are one with the historical built environment or 'tangible heritage'. Through ongoing, customary practices, such as festivals, music and dance as well as forms of dress, and the production of handicrafts and religious art and objects, the community contributes to a site's 'feeling' and 'sense of place', thereby supporting the qualities of 'authenticity' and 'integrity' that UNESCO considers primary features of a World Heritage property's 'Outstanding Universal Value'. As these sites continue to serve as dynamic centers of activity they in turn support the transmission of cultural values to future generations.

Because of the synergy between tangible and intangible cultural heritage, this treatise considers the 'custodians',¹ or 'tradition bearers',² who carry out rituals at

¹Webber Ndoro, "Traditional and Customary Systems; Nostalgia or Reality? The Implications of Managing Heritage Sites in Africa," in *Linking Universal and Local Values: Managing a Sustainable Future for World Heritage*, eds. Eléonore de Mérode, Rieks Smeets and Carol Westrik (Paris: UNESCO, 2004), <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/13> (accessed on April 19, 2014), 84.

Ethiopia's 'living' cultural World Heritage sites, as a constituency that deserves inclusion in deliberations about conservation issues. In fact, it proposes that not only is it their right to take part in the decision making process about site management and to share the material benefits from its potential development as a tourist destination, but also that their involvement in planning from design through implementation is an essential element of effective conservation strategies for heritage practitioners to consider.

In 2011, in honor of the fortieth anniversary of the World Heritage Convention of 1972, UNESCO proclaimed "World Heritage and Sustainable Development: The Role of Local Communities" as the theme of the decade from 2012 to 2022.³ The selection of this theme for the celebratory year and the decade signaled the advent of a new stage in the recognition of the importance of the community to heritage conservation and sustainable development that had been evolving over the past four decades. Although the World Heritage Programme had recognized community participation as one of the five pillars of its Global Strategy in 2007,⁴ at the programme's inception in the mid-1970s, that was not the case. The consideration of the local community as 'partners in site management' represented 'a shift in focus' by the World Heritage Committee.⁵ In an

²<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00259> (last accessed on June 26, 2014).

³UNESCO, *Looking Forward: Report on the 40th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention* (Paris: UNESCO, 2013), <http://whc.unesco.org/document/123559> (last accessed on July 12, 2014), 1.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Mechtild Rössler, "Partners in Site Management. A Shift in Focus: Heritage and Community Involvement," in *Community Development through World Heritage*, eds. M.-

exploration of site management practices and their impact on the conservation of the site and community life, this treatise examines initiatives at two Ethiopian cultural World Heritage properties, Lalibela and Harar, as case studies.

Although the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, hereafter called the Operational Guidelines, now strongly recommend the inclusion of the community, deliberations about site conservation often exclude segments of the community, whose participation would enrich the conservation strategy. Therefore, it is important for heritage partners to conduct systematic reviews of their programming in order to assess the level of community engagement, especially that of tradition bearers, whose involvement is particularly critical at living cultural World Heritage sites, where the ongoing practice of customs and rituals at a property contributes to the protection of its Outstanding Universal Value.⁶

The sharing of traditional knowledge, along with the continuity of customary activities, not only ensures the transmission of cultural values to present and future generations of the community, but also reinforces the sense of place of a cultural World Heritage site.⁷ In Ethiopia, this aspect is of particular concern at two living sites: the Rock-hewn Churches at Lalibela and Harar Jugol, the Historic Fortified Town. The former is one of the earliest sites inscribed on the World Heritage List, while the latter is one of the most recent. Both are experiencing increased pressure from their development

T. Albert et al., eds. (Paris: UNESCO, 2012), <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/31/> (accessed on December 4, 2013), 27.

⁶Eléonore de Mérode, Rieks Smeets and Carol Westrik, eds. *Linking Universal and Local Values: Managing a Sustainable Future for World Heritage*, 11.

⁷Ibid.

as tourist destinations to provide infrastructure to meet the needs of growing numbers of visitors. Combined with the natural forces of deterioration, these changes are affecting the historical fabric and setting as well as the community's ongoing practices, thereby threatening the Outstanding Universal Value of the sites.⁸

The designation of the Rock-hewn Churches at Lalibela as one of the first sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1978⁹ represented both the culmination of the first stage and the start of the next stage in the recognition and preservation of Ethiopia's rich and varied cultural heritage. The process that began in the 1960s with the identification of heritage sites by Emperor Haile Selassie I and the development of the 'Historic Route' to promote international tourism¹⁰ reflected the top-down, conventional approach to heritage management customary at the time. It was not until 1992 that a formal shift occurred in the implementation of the UNESCO World Heritage Programme "from a policy of not involving local people in the nomination of properties to the opposite, i.e. to consider them as partners in site management."¹¹

During the first decade following Ethiopia's ratification of the World Heritage Convention in 1975, UNESCO inscribed four of the country's national cultural heritage sites on the World Heritage List: the Rock-hewn Churches at Lalibela, the Fasil Ghebbi in Gondar, the Obelisks at Aksum, and the Stone Monuments at Tiya. Even before their

⁸<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1189rev> (last accessed on July 9, 2014).

⁹<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/18> (accessed on January 22, 2014).

¹⁰UNESCO, "Preservation and Presentation of Selected Sites and Monuments" (Paris: UNESCO, 1982), <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images0005/000526.052680eb.pdf> (accessed on September 15, 2013), 1.

¹¹Rössler, "Partners in Site Management," 27.

inscription, international recognition of the significance of the Lalibela site led to much-needed financial and technical assistance for its preservation¹² during a prolonged period of political strife and cyclical drought and famine.¹³ Despite the harsh conditions that prevailed in the country from the mid-1960s through the early 1990s, the national leadership considered the conservation of Ethiopia's cultural heritage sites a priority goal because of their value to the country's economic growth as international tourist destinations. UNESCO supported the government in its effort to build the institutional capacity required to manage the country's cultural patrimony, including its soon-to-be designated World Heritage sites.¹⁴ After the 1991 revolution and the establishment of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, UNESCO and the government continued to collaborate on the conservation of the country's World Heritage sites and the enactment of legislation to extend legal protection for its cultural and natural patrimony.

The early UNESCO programs focused on the creation of an institutional and legal framework. The *Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage*, hereafter 'the Master Plan of 1985', outlined provisions for the protection of Ethiopia's cultural and natural patrimony that continues to guide the management of the listed World Heritage properties as well as nationally-significant sites, such as the Lake Tana

¹²World Monuments Fund. *The World Monuments Fund. The First Thirty Years*. New York: World Monuments Fund, 1996.

¹³Paul B. Henze, *Layers of Time: A History of Ethiopia*, (London: Hurst, 2000), 229-341. Henze provides the historical context for the nomination and listing of Ethiopia's first cultural World Heritage sites.

¹⁴UNESCO, "Preservation and Presentation of Selected Sites and Monuments," 1.

monasteries and the Harar Jugol.¹⁵ The first UNESCO-Ethiopian Government project, followed a top-down, conventional approach based on accepted practice in the fields of heritage conservation and international development at the time.¹⁶ Within a decade, the follow-on project showed signs of the ‘values-led’ approach that was gaining acceptance in environmental conservation¹⁷ when it discussed the benefits of community participation in project implementation. Although primarily considering the community as the potential beneficiary of economic opportunities from jobs related to building restoration and handicraft production and sales to tourists, it also hinted at a role for community stakeholders as partners in decision-making about the site’s conservation and development as a tourist destination.

Although it is possible to trace the gradual emergence of the concept of ‘community’ as a pillar of the UNESCO World Heritage Programme through the periodic revisions of the Operational Guidelines, as recently as 2013, Sophia Labadi, former UNESCO expert and heritage management consultant, questioned “whether stakeholders’ views, needs and human rights considerations have been integrated into the proposed

¹⁵Flemming Aalund. “Restricted Technical Report RP/1984-1985/XII.4. Ethiopia. Operational action for the safeguarding of the immovable cultural heritage and its reintegration into modern life. Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage. Serial No. FMR/CLT/CH/85/139” (Paris: UNESCO, 1985), <http://www.tegnestuen-raadvad.dk/masterplan.pdf> (last accessed on May 18, 2014). UNESCO inscribed Harar Jugol on the World Heritage List in 2006.

¹⁶Rössler, “Partners in Site Management,” 27.

¹⁷Ibid., 28-9.

nominations”¹⁸ of properties that States Parties submit to UNESCO as potential World Heritage sites. Her critique serves as a basis for an assessment of local participation in heritage conservation in Ethiopia, starting with activities at the Rock-hewn Churches at Lalibela, the nation’s first cultural World Heritage site, and continuing through efforts to preserve the Harar Jugol, listed nearly thirty years later in 2006.

This treatise considers Labadi’s findings about UNESCO’s conceptions of Outstanding Universal Value and community engagement in heritage conservation in conjunction with information about the heritage conservation activities that Flemming Aalund proposed in the Master Plan of 1985.¹⁹ Together they inform an evaluation of the degree to which the local community associated with Ethiopia’s cultural World Heritage sites participated in heritage conservation projects. An analysis of the downstream effects of those activities on the sites and their surrounding communities reveals a number of opportunities and challenges for heritage practitioners related to community support, or a lack thereof.

Although community became one of the World Heritage Programme’s five strategic objectives in 2007, its form and desired outcome remained unclear. In addition to ensuring that the community receives an equitable share of economic benefits from the site’s development as a tourist destination, heritage partners need to recognize the right of the community to access the site for the cultural practices, such as religious activities,

¹⁸Sophia Labadi, *UNESCO, Cultural Heritage and Outstanding Universal Value. Value-based Analysis of the World’s Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage Conventions*, (Plymouth, UK: AltaMira Press, 2013), 154.

¹⁹ Aalund, “Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage.” The Master Plan of 1985 remains a basic reference for heritage management planning at the Ethiopian sites that it addressed.

traditionally performed there. For this reason, the ‘community function’ merits special consideration at living cultural World Heritage sites, such as Lalibela and Harar. This treatise proposes that in order to be effective, the long-term heritage conservation strategy for a living site requires not only the participation of community members with a vested interest in its development as a tourist destination, but also that of the tradition bearers, who perpetuate customs associated with local cultural values that the property embodies. Therefore, this treatise asserts that it is important that heritage practitioners identify the underlying concerns of the community as well as the needs of the site as part of the process of designing and implementing effective, sustainable conservation strategies.

Research Methodology

My interest in the role of the community in heritage conservation germinated about seven years ago, when I was living in Baltimore, Maryland, one of the United States’ fading, yet formerly grand, Industrial Era cities. However, it was my return to Africa in 2009 that provided a focus for my graduate research. Once in Addis Ababa, I realized that the city’s heritage faced many of the same problems as Baltimore’s – a surplus of deteriorating historic buildings, an epidemic of ‘demolition-by-neglect’, and an apparent lack of awareness of, if not disregard for, the contribution of heritage resources to the modern cityscape and the quality of life of local residents.

My decision to embark on a second Masters degree in historic preservation at Goucher College marked a return to my earlier interest in art history as an undergraduate, when I carried out in-depth field research on Gothic sculpture and architecture during a year-and-a-half-long independent study in France. It also coincided with my move to

Ethiopia, where I undertook research on the capital city's built heritage as part of my initial coursework. The decision to focus on the relationship between community and historic preservation was a logical outgrowth of my career in community development in Mexico, West Africa and Madagascar and a Masters degree in conflict management.

During my first month in Ethiopia, I began to visit heritage sites along the country's 'Historic Route': Lake Tana's island monasteries, Gondar's castles, Lalibela's monolithic churches, and Aksum's obelisks. In preparation for writing my treatise, I returned to Lalibela and visited Harar. I also examined documentation about projects that the national government had undertaken at Lalibela and Harar in collaboration with UNESCO, the World Bank and other international bodies, such as the European Union, and bi-lateral institutions, representing Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the United States, and non-governmental preservation organizations, such as the World Monuments Fund. An extensive literature review of primary source materials, including the 1972 Angelini report on Lalibela, the 2006 State Party nomination of the Harar Jugol and a 2010 mission report on activities in Lalibela for the World Heritage Earthen Architecture Programme, complemented oral interviews with local elders and leaders in the religious, government, academic, not-for-profit, and business sectors in both towns and the capital city of Addis Ababa. These informed my understanding of the role of the local community, government institutions, and partner organizations - primarily international agencies and nongovernmental organizations - in heritage conservation in Ethiopia and contextualized observations and analyses formulated during research and field trips.

Documentation on the UNESCO World Heritage Centre website provided up-to-date information on the status of the World Heritage sites in Lalibela and Harar. I also consulted works by experts in the field of heritage conservation, including John H. Stubbs, Sophia Labadi and Michael Di Giovine, and guides, resource manuals and publications by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, its Advisory Bodies, ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN, the World Bank, and heritage organizations, including the World Monuments Fund and the Global Fund for Heritage. I also consulted works on Ethiopian history and heritage by distinguished Ethiopian historian, Bahru Zewde, heritage conservator, Mengistu Gobezie, and restoration architect, Fasil Giorghis, British historians, A. M. Jones, Elizabeth Monroe, and Richard Pankhurst, and American experts on Ethiopian history and culture, Harold G. Marcus and Paul B. Henze.

An in-depth study of the conservation of the Rock-hewn Churches at Lalibela and the Harar Jugol provided a basis for a comparative analysis of the results of the approaches undertaken at the two sites. Lalibela is an isolated, rural village in the highlands of Ethiopia, whose culture is rooted in the traditions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Harar is a walled, medieval town in eastern Ethiopia, which is one of the earliest and holiest centers of Islam in the region. Representing distinct cultures, regions and time-frames in Ethiopia's history, the two towns are examples of places where changing political, economic and environmental factors, along with ingrained cultural patterns, influenced the degree and type of local engagement in heritage conservation and produced a range of outcomes on the heritage sites and the community.

Through the two case studies, it was possible to examine the relationship between each World Heritage property and its associated community and consider the connection

between intangible cultural heritage, such as religious rituals and music, and the protection of tangible heritage, the historical monuments. Since the traditional practices reinforce a site's feeling and sense of place, the participation of the tradition bearers within the community is as beneficial to the site as the site is to the them and the overall community. Therefore, this treatise considers broad-based, local participation as a basic component of long-term, sustainable heritage conservation strategies. To understand this concept, it is necessary to look beyond the community's material benefit from a site and acknowledge the reciprocity that exists between the property and its custodians and/or tradition bearers. Each is of value to the other: with the site both embodying, and providing a place for, the transmission of cultural values to present and future generations and the traditional community carrying out activities associated with the site's integrity and authenticity, the roots of its Outstanding Universal Value.

Through the case studies on the Rock-hewn Churches at Lalibela and the Harar Jugol, it was possible to identify the downstream effects of site management on the heritage resources and the local community. Michael Di Giovine's concept of the heritage-scape²⁰ provided a framework for understanding the layers of meaning attached to a World Heritage site. The assessment employed three SWOT analyses to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, associated with the management of each site. Finally, lessons learned from the analyses informed recommendations for future actions to preserve the nation's cultural resources for the benefit of present-day

²⁰Michael A. Di Giovine "termed UNESCO's newly ordered social structure the *heritage-scape*." Michael A. Di Giovine, *The Heritage-scape: UNESCO, World Heritage and Tourism* (Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2009), 6.

and future generations of Ethiopians and foreign visitors and for future studies on the intersection of heritage conservation and community development.

This treatise proposes that the listing of a national, cultural heritage site as a World Heritage property often leads to divergent visions for the site and its conservation: one, concerned with the protection of its aesthetic value for the enjoyment of present and future generations of Ethiopians and international visitors, and the other, focused on the potential return on investment in its development as a cultural tourist destination. The focus on international tourism in national strategies for economic growth is not a new concept and the anticipated benefit to the local as well as national economy is often an aspect of discussions about the merits of heritage conservation. However, potential trade-offs may arise that are detrimental to the integrity and authenticity of the World Heritage site as well as to the local culture. Using in-depth research and analysis on two Ethiopian cultural World Heritage sites, this treatise assesses the downstream effects of management outcomes on the living sites and their communities and proposes a series of recommendations for consideration by heritage practitioners as they plan and implement future conservation strategies in Ethiopia and elsewhere.

Organization

In my discussion of World Heritage and community participation, I examine the genesis of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention and the history of heritage conservation practice in Ethiopia from its earliest days until the present.

Chapter II provides an overview of the UNESCO World Heritage Programme from its inception in the mid-1970s. It traces the development of the programme's

Operational Guidelines and the introduction of community as the fifth pillar, or strategic objective, of its Global Strategy. The chapter considers how basic texts, such as the World Heritage Convention of 1972, the Operational Guidelines, the Budapest Declaration of 2002, the 2012 Kyoto Vision and Call to Action, and other declarations and program documents, relate to the management of the World Heritage sites in Ethiopia.

Chapter III introduces the historical context of the first heritage conservation efforts in Ethiopia under Emperor Haile Selassie I in the 1960s, followed by a summary of the accomplishments of early collaboration between the national authorities and UNESCO and an assessment of the increasing importance of cultural heritage tourism to the national economic growth policy.

Chapters IV and V introduce two Ethiopian cultural World Heritage sites, the Rock-hewn Churches at Lalibela and the Harar Jugol, the Fortified Historical Town, respectively. Each chapter provides historical background, information on the location and physical characteristics of the site, and an overview of past conservation activities and their current status. Separate SWOT analyses provide information on the activities, methods and results of the programs at each site.

Chapter VI, the treatise conclusion, presents a comparative analysis of the management outcomes at the two World Heritage sites, followed by proposals for future heritage conservation programming in Ethiopia and recommendations for additional studies on the intersection of community development and heritage conservation, an area that falls within the purview of the UNESCO World Heritage Programme's theme for the present decade, "World Heritage and Sustainable Development: the Role of the Local

Community.” The treatise also underlines the need for heritage practitioners to engage in public policy advocacy to promote and defend the interests of World Heritage sites and foster the incorporation of local, regional and national heritage conservation and protection into the planning and implementation of community development programs throughout Ethiopia and other countries.

CHAPTER II THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY IN HERITAGE CONSERVATION

With the adoption of the *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, hereafter ‘the World Heritage Convention’, in November 1972, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) affirmed its support for “the conservation and protection of the world’s heritage . . . of outstanding interest . . . and [needing] to be preserved as part of the heritage of [humankind] as a whole,” as mandated in its Constitution.²¹ From the outset, the *Operational Guidelines for the Management of UNESCO World Heritage Sites*, hereafter ‘the Operational Guidelines’, reframed ‘outstanding interest’ as ‘Outstanding Universal Value’, meaning “cultural and/or natural significance, which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity,”²² a definition that has remained unchanged since the beginning of the World Heritage Programme.

When a UNESCO member ratifies the World Heritage Convention, as a State Party to the Convention, it becomes eligible to nominate national cultural and natural heritage properties for consideration as World Heritage. During the nomination process, a

²¹*Basic Texts of the World Heritage Convention*, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/562> (accessed on October 25, 2013).

²²<http://whc.unesco.org/archive/opguide13-en.pdf> (accessed on December 12, 2013).

State Party identifies the characteristics that contribute to a site's national significance and outlines a management plan for the property.²³ Following a property's inscription on the World Heritage List, UNESCO and the State Party enter into a binding agreement to protect and manage the World Heritage property to ensure that "the outstanding universal value, the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity at the time of inscription, are maintained or enhanced in the future."²⁴ Among the first group of twelve properties that the UNESCO World Heritage Committee approved for listing in 1978 were two Ethiopian sites: the Rock-Hewn Churches at Lalibela and the Simien National Park.²⁵

In the early days of the World Heritage Programme, "most World Heritage nominations were prepared and processed by central institutions and ministries...without any consultation with local community and stakeholders."²⁶ In fact, as late as 1992, the Operational Guidelines recommended that "in all cases, so as to maintain the objectivity of the evaluation process and to avoid possible embarrassment to those concerned, States Parties should refrain from giving undue publicity to the fact that a property has been nominated for inscription pending the final decision."²⁷ As a result, there was little community participation in the nomination and subsequent management of early World Heritage properties. However, signs of the shift toward greater community involvement that began in the international development field in the 1970s and 1980s were evident in

²³Ibid.

²⁴*Basic Texts of the World Heritage Convention.*

²⁵<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/ethiopia> (accessed on November 6, 2013).

²⁶Rössler, "Partners in Site Management, 27.

²⁷<http://whc.unesco.org/archive/opguide92.pdf> (accessed on April 19, 2014).

the outcomes of two UNESCO-Government of Ethiopia collaborations during that period. For example, the Master Plan of 1985 developed under the second project promoted community development through heritage-related activities, such as cultural tourism with home-stays in village accommodations and traditional handicraft production, in addition to specific heritage conservation actions.²⁸

By 1995, a revision of Operational Guidelines linked the “participation of local people in the nomination process . . . [with enabling] them to have a shared responsibility with the State Party in the maintenance of the property.”²⁹ This change reflected the new emphasis on the importance of local participation in project planning and implementation that became common practice in the environmental sector and gradually spread to heritage conservation, following the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.³⁰ With natural as well as cultural and mixed properties inscribed on the World Heritage List, UNESCO, its Advisory Bodies, ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN, began to address the potential contribution of the community to conservation efforts through its participation in the elaboration and implementation of heritage conservation strategies. As a result of community involvement in deliberations on the meaning of heritage and the conceptualization of key terms, such as ‘authenticity,’ new conceptions of ‘Outstanding Universal Value’ and ways to evaluate natural and cultural heritage sites and landscapes

²⁸Aalund, , “Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage,” 31-2.

²⁹<http://whc.unesco.org/archive/opguide13-en.pdf> (accessed on April 19, 2014).

³⁰“Although community involvement and stakeholder participation would seem to be a mainstream approach to heritage management today, it was not the case ten or twenty years ago.” Rössler, “Partners in Site Management,” 27.

were put forth, as in the Nara Document in 1994³¹ and the Australian Burra Charter in 1999. These statements recognized the right of those “people for whom the place has special *associations* and *meanings*, or who have social, spiritual or other cultural responsibilities for the place”³² have a role in its conservation. The right of ‘indigenous people’ and ‘local communities’ to share responsibilities for the site management³³ with other stakeholders is an important consideration in Rössler’s exploration of community participation that informs the analysis of heritage conservation activities at the Lalibela and Harar World Heritage sites in Chapters IV through VI.

During the commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the World Heritage Convention of 1972, the 2002 Budapest Declaration presented the ‘four Cs’, strategic objectives that UNESCO defined as the basis of effective heritage conservation:

[1] strengthen the *credibility* of the World Heritage List, as a representative and geographically-balanced testimony of cultural and natural properties of outstanding universal value; [2] ensure the effective *conservation* of World Heritage properties; [3] promote the development of effective *capacity-building* measures, including assistance for preparing the nomination of properties to the World Heritage List, for the understanding and implementation of the World Heritage Convention and related instruments and; [4] increase public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through *communication*.³⁴

³¹Nara Document on Authenticity, <http://www.international.icomos.org/charters/nara-e.pdf> (accessed on April 6, 2014).

³² Burra Charter. Rössler refers to the Burra Charter in “Partners in Site Management” (accessed on April 24, 2014), 29. Australia ICOMOS, Inc. *The Burra Charter. The Australia Icomos Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*. <http://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Burra-Charter-2013-Adopted-31.10.2013.pdf> (last accessed on July 12, 2014).

³³Rössler, “Partners in Site Management,” 29.

³⁴<http://whc.unesco.org/en/millennium> (accessed on April 19, 2014), 25.

It is striking that there was no strategic objective for ‘community’ at that time. Despite a growing appreciation of the value of local participation in heritage conservation, the ‘fifth C’ for ‘community’ was only added as a strategic objective to the World Heritage Programme’s Global Strategy in 2007,³⁵ less than a decade ago. Through this act, however, UNESCO affirmed its recognition of the community as a key partner in the successful implementation of long-term, sustainable, heritage conservation strategies. Four years later, the adoption of “World Heritage and Sustainable Development: The Role of the Local Community”³⁶ as the theme of the decade following the fortieth anniversary of the World Heritage Convention of 1972. The 2012 Kyoto Vision,³⁷ based on that theme, informs the discussion of recommendations for future heritage conservation programs in Ethiopia in the conclusion.

Approaches to World Heritage Site Conservation

According to UNESCO, World Heritage conservation strategies have utilized two main approaches, ‘conventional’ and ‘values-led’. Although the latter is “increasingly predominant, . . . [t]he two approaches are not mutually exclusive. Many management systems contain elements of both.”³⁸ In heritage conservation, the ‘conventional’ approach focused on the role of conservation experts in “the conservation of the materials or the fabric of the past, [including the identification of] monuments and sites to be

³⁵Labadi, *UNESCO, Cultural Heritage, and Outstanding Universal Value*, 50.

³⁶<http://whc.unesco.org/document123559> (last accessed on July 12, 2014), 1.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 11.

³⁸Labadi, *UNESCO, Cultural Heritage, and Outstanding Universal Value*, 24.

preserved for the sake of future generations . . . and [examination of] the fabric [which] led to various interventions for prolonging the life of the materials.”³⁹

The intervention that the International Monuments Fund, currently known as the World Monuments Fund, carried out at Lalibela in the mid-1960s is an example of the conventional approach. The rock-hewn churches were at risk of collapse, due to damage to their structural integrity, primarily from water damage and earlier misguided repairs⁴⁰ and possibly earthquakes.⁴¹ The project’s guiding principles were “to safeguard against further deterioration, remove unauthentic additions, and reestablish the monolithic forms that had been compromised. Initially, cracks and fissures were consolidated to prevent collapse.”⁴² Community involvement appears to have been limited to manual labor. The only mention of local participation in the project summary is that of “the slow and systematic job of removing thirty thousand square feet of painted surface, in one-square-inch segments . . . by the Ethiopian work force.”⁴³

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰World Monuments Fund, *The World Monuments Fund: The First Thirty Years* (New York: World Monuments Fund, 1996), www.wmf.org/sites/default/files/wfm_publication/world%20Monuments%20Fund_The%20First%20Thirty%20Years.pdf (last accessed on July 6, 2014), 11.

⁴¹http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/soc_2006 (accessed on February 13, 2014). In 2007, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee added ‘impact of earthquakes’ to the list of threats to the property. Based on an inspection of an early image of the Medhane Alem Church, showing fallen pillars, on display in the exhibition in the museum at the Lalibela Cultural Center, the author suggests that a tremor may have caused their collapse. See Chapter IV, footnote 16.

⁴²World Monuments Fund, *World Monuments Fund: The First Thirty Years*, 24.

⁴³Ibid.

A second example of the conventional approach to heritage conservation carried out in Ethiopia is the joint project, “Preservation and Presentation of Selected Sites and Monuments,” that UNESCO and the Ethiopian Government implemented between 1975 and 1982 with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funding. The project’s final report defined its mission as “enhancing the capabilities of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports in the administration of antiquities by the completion of an up-to-date inventory of sites and monuments and . . . providing and supervising a programme of works of restoration, conservation and presentation of sites and monuments.”⁴⁴ Since “the conservation and development of sites and monuments along the ‘Historic Route’ . . . to contribute to the overall economic growth of the country through tourism”⁴⁵ was a project objective, there was no reference to the participation of local communities in the vicinity of the heritage sites to the planning or implementation of the project strategy.

The ‘values-led’ approach represented a shift from a ‘top-down’ to a ‘bottom-up’ management strategy that coincided with the growing understanding of the community’s potential contributions to development projects in general and heritage conservation in particular that occurred in the late 1970s. Indications of that change are evident in the Master Plan, developed by heritage conservation expert and architect, Flemming Aalund. During a four-month-long consultancy in which he travelled the length and breadth of Ethiopia, Aalund examined conditions and gathered data at designated and proposed World Heritage sites, situated along the northern and eastern ‘Historic Routes.’ His

⁴⁴UNESCO, “Preservation and Presentation of Selected Sites and Monuments,” 1.

⁴⁵Ibid., 2.

findings informed an analysis of the opportunities and constraints on which he based subsequent recommendations for addressing the short- and long-term conservation needs of individual sites.

Throughout the Master Plan, Aalund described the relationship of the community to the World Heritage property, indicating how local inhabitants would benefit from the heritage conservation program as well as contribute to them. An example, related to a proposed strategy for the Harar Jugol, was the association of program activities “with efforts to upgrade living conditions and to revitalize economic life.”⁴⁶ In this way, Aalund suggested that ‘community participation’ meant not only local contribution to the restoration and protection of historic structures, but also improvement in local living conditions. This vision intimated at the current government’s effort to include the development of cultural heritage resources in the promotion of economic growth and as part of its strategy to alleviate poverty. This will be discussed in the next chapter on heritage conservation in Ethiopia.

The shift from a top-down to a bottom-up, or ‘grass-roots’, approach that is also values-led, rather than conventional, requires an understanding and an appreciation of local heritage as an asset to the community as well as the support of local community leaders to engage in heritage conservation efforts. “These elements, tangible and intangible, contribute every day to the quality of life of the African communities,” writes Noureini Tidjani-Serpos, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Africa. “Enhancing

⁴⁶Aalund, “Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage,” 96.

these cultural and heritage values within the municipalities . . . would undoubtedly upgrade the living conditions of the African populations.” However, he adds that “nevertheless, these cultural and heritage resources are facing today major challenges linked to human development . . . in reality little interest is given to these resources [and] they are underutilized in the fight against poverty, which remains the main concern for African countries.”⁴⁷

During the forty years since the ratification of the World Heritage Convention of 1972, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee has promoted change through successive revisions of the *Operational Guidelines* and the development of innovative heritage conservation practices. With the support of its Advisory Bodies, ICOMOS, IUCN and ICCROM, the Committee has provided training in the use of new management tools to the States Parties and implementing partners in order to bridge the gap between policy-making and program implementation. The manual, *Cultural Heritage and Local Development: A Guide for African Local Governments*, published in 2006, is an example of a resource material that captures lessons learned and best practices from an awareness raising and capacity strengthening program for local decision-makers in Africa.

Through a series of case studies, the guide provides information about heritage conservation and the value of local heritage to the community. It also provides municipal leaders with management tools to carry out an effective heritage conservation strategy.

⁴⁷Christian Barillet, Thierry Joffroy, and Isabelle Longuet, eds., *Cultural Heritage and Local Development: A Guide for African Local Governments* (Paris:CRA Terre-ENSAG/Convention France -UNESCO, 2006), <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activity-25-2.pdf> (accessed on November 20, 2013), 5. The guide was produced under a Cooperation Agreement between UNESCO and the French government for the protection and enhancement of the monumental, urban and natural heritage.

The aims of the initiative are (a) to increase the awareness of local decision-makers about the potential contribution of local cultural heritage resources, both tangible and intangible, to the community and (b) to develop their ability to plan and administer heritage preservation projects.⁴⁸ Its multi-tiered approach to outreach through training, materials, and promotional campaigns exemplifies what heritage conservation authority, John Stubbs, suggests as effective “ways to achieve culturally sensible and sensitive heritage conservation management.”⁴⁹

A second example of publications that support the work of States Parties and their implementing partners is the *World Heritage Resource Manual Series*.⁵⁰ *Managing Cultural World Heritage*, published in November 2013, “[provides] guidance on the specificity of managing cultural World Heritage properties [as well as] ... useful references to existing approaches and examples.”⁵¹ Its approach to community participation, along with elements from the module on local community involvement in the guide for African leaders, informs the case studies that follow. As Stubbs observes, “there is more to architectural heritage conservation than arresting or impeding the process of physical decay through technical intervention.” There is also the need to

⁴⁸Ibid., 6.

⁴⁹John H. Stubbs, *Time Honored: A Global View of Architectural Conservation* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2006), 15.

⁵⁰Wijesuriya Gamini, Jane Thompson and Christopher Young, eds., *Managing Cultural World Heritage* (Paris: UNESCO/ICCROM/ICOMOS/IUCN, 2013), <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activity-827-1.pdf> (accessed on November 20, 2013), 1. ICCROM developed the resource manuals in consultation with the UNESCO World Heritage Center and its other Advisory Bodies.

⁵¹Ibid., 3.

“[accommodate] both the past and present cultural values the objects...represent, understand the audience that is served by the conserved buildings and sites, [and] reflect these cultural sensibilities” in the interpretation of a heritage property.⁵²

The UNESCO World Heritage Paper, *Linking Universal and Local Values: Managing a Sustainable Future for World Heritage*, addresses the issue of safeguarding traditional knowledge, local values and intangible heritage in order to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage sites. However, in “Traditional and Customary Heritage Systems: Nostalgia or Reality? The Implications of Managing Cultural Heritage in Africa,” Webber Ndoro provides two examples of heritage management gone awry in Zimbabwe, when the exclusion of tradition bearers led to conflict and damage to the heritage site. The cases occurred at a traditional ‘rain-making’ place, situated in an area with historical rock paintings. Following its designation as a national park, the site had limited access and use. As a result of the restrictions, the tradition bearers were no longer able to perform ceremonial acts: in this case, light a fire on the ground below the rock paintings. Eventually, in frustration, they vandalized the site with “brown oil paint lavishly splashed on the rock-art panels.”⁵³ In the second case study, a retired policeman, affiliated with a site’s traditional users, judged that “the authorities were not doing a good job of looking after [the] sacred shrine. So together with other local people he organized the cleaning of the rock shelter floor down to

⁵²Stubbs, *Time Honored: A Global View of Architectural Conservation*, 13.

⁵³Webber Ndoro, “Traditional and Customary Heritage Systems,” 82.

bedrock, in the process removing all the archaeological deposits, causing a great loss to science and a grossly violating the national heritage regulations.⁵⁴

These two case studies illustrate the importance of adopting an approach that ensures the participation of local tradition-bearers in the design and implementation of heritage conservation strategies. As the sites traditional custodians, they are entitled to a say in how the site is managed as well as to a share of any economic benefit derived from its development as a tourist destination. By encouraging the recognition of the diverse interests of local, regional and national stakeholders in heritage conservation planning, the UNESCO World Heritage Programme supports the Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity, passed in 2001,⁵⁵ and works with the States Parties on the development of inclusive strategies for the management of their properties,⁵⁶ a theme that will be discussed in the following chapters on Ethiopian World Heritage sites.

Since the passage of the World Heritage Convention of 1972 over forty years ago, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee has fostered ongoing dialogue and exchange among its Advisory Bodies and the States Parties and numerous institutions that are its partners. This has led to an evolving understanding of the basic concepts that define the field of heritage conservation, such as the expanded meaning of authenticity in the Nara Document and the Burra Charter, mentioned earlier. In the 2003 *Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, UNESCO formally recognized the wide

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Wijesuriya Gamini, Jane Thompson and Christopher Young, *Managing Cultural World Heritage*, 11.

⁵⁶Ibid., 4.

array of contemporary expressions of cultural values; for example, through music, dance, and oral traditions.⁵⁷ ICOMOS deepened that understanding by associating “principles and recommendations to preserve the spirit of place through the safeguarding of tangible and intangible heritage . . . as an innovative and efficient manner of ensuring sustainable and social development throughout the world”⁵⁸ in the 2008 *Quebec Declaration on the Preservation of the Spirit of Place*.

Together, the convention and the *Quebec Declaration* laid the groundwork for the 2010 ‘Initiative on Heritage of Religious Interest,’ in which UNESCO affirmed that ‘living religious heritage’ “[c]ollectively . . . captures a range of cultural and natural diversity and . . . singularly demonstrates the spirit of a particular place.”⁵⁹ At living sites with strong religious significance, such as Lalibela and Harar, where the community associates the World Heritage property with enduring spiritual values, the notion of ‘spirit of place’ adds a new dimension to the heritage conservation strategy; for example, “religious communities, which can comprise believers, traditional and indigenous peoples,” are among the stakeholders “as well as State Party authorities, professionals

⁵⁷<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/01851-EN.pdf> (accessed on April 24, 2014).

⁵⁸ICOMOS. *Quebec Declaration on the Preservation of the Spirit of Place*. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activity-646-2/> (accessed on January 22, 2014).

⁵⁹“The term ‘Religious property,’ as used [by] ICOMOS . . . defines any form of property with religious or spiritual associations: churches, monasteries, shrines, sanctuaries, mosques, synagogues, temples, sacred landscapes, sacred groves, and other landscape features, etc.” “The term ‘Sacred site’ embraces areas of special spiritual significance to peoples and communities; and the term of ‘Sacred natural site’ corresponds to the areas of land or water having special spiritual significance to peoples and communities.” <http://whc.unesco.org/en/religious-sacred-heritage/> (accessed on March 31, 2014).

and experts in relevant fields, property owners, funding bodies and other interested partners.”⁶⁰

The *Kyiv Statement on the Protection of Religious Properties within the Framework of the World Heritage Convention* provides insight into the approach required to create mutual understanding among all stakeholders to ensure the protection of living religious World Heritage sites. First of all, “by [recognizing] the role played by religious communities in the creation, maintenance, and continuous shaping of sacred places, and the custodial role played by them in caring for these as living heritage,” the Declaration “[r]eaffirmed the vital further role of religious communities in conveying, expressing and sustaining spiritual identity, meaning and purpose to human life, considering that these offer significant opportunities in a fast developing and globalizing world, as well as presenting serious challenges;” and secondly, it “[s]tressed that culturally and environmentally sustainable management of such heritage should be the responsibility of all stakeholders concerned, and that mutual acceptance and respect will bring different and complementary perspectives to shared cultural and spiritual values.”⁶¹ These new concepts are relevant to heritage conservation at the Lalibela and Harar World Heritage sites and inform the discussion of their management in the following chapters.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹*Kyiv Statement on the Protection of Religious Properties within the Framework of the World Heritage Convention*. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/religious-sacred-heritage/#Kyiv> (accessed on March 31, 2014).

World Heritage, Community and Sustainable Development

The selection of the theme, *World Heritage and Sustainable Development: The Role of the Local Community*, signals the UNESCO World Heritage Programme's renewed commitment to promoting community participation in heritage conservation as it embarks on its fifth decade. The proclamation not only links heritage conservation to sustainable development, but also firmly places the local community at the center of that vision.⁶² At the same time that it connects heritage, development and community, the theme qualifies 'development' as 'sustainable development.' In this way UNESCO reaffirms the association of heritage conservation with 'sustainability,' the overarching principle that is guiding economic development in the twenty-first century, and reinforces the recognition of the contribution of World Heritage to community development.⁶³

From the inception of the World Heritage Programme, UNESCO emphasized the benefits of World Heritage listing for a site; for example, access to international financial and technical assistance for its conservation, which often leads to training and work opportunities in site restoration and maintenance for local as well as outside firms and workers, and affiliation with the World Heritage 'brand',⁶⁴ which brings recognition as an international heritage tourism destination. Among the numerous ways that heritage conservation supports local economic growth are job creation in the tourism industry and the related areas of handicraft production and sales and traditional cultural activities,

⁶²*Looking Forward: Report on the 40th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention*, 1.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 11.

⁶⁴Di Giovine, *The Heritage-scape*, 279.

which are generally community-based. However, Labadi notes that UNESCO recognized the pitfalls inherent in linking tourism development and heritage protection, citing the following report on a workshop in China in 2010 on the topic of ‘Advancing Sustainable Tourism at Natural and Cultural Heritage Sites’:

[Sustainable] tourism . . . has implications for all aspects of protection of World Heritage properties. The aim of the *Convention* is to **identify, protect, conserve, present and transmit** the cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal values . . . to future generations. Tourism, and the way in which the World Heritage community responds to the opportunities and threats it poses, can be a major factor in the success or otherwise of implementing the aims of the *Convention* at individual World Heritage sites.⁶⁵

UNESCO’s concern about giving priority to the protection of World Heritage sites during the design and implementation of national economic development strategies informs the discussion of tourism at Ethiopian World Heritage sites in the following chapters.

In its *2013 – 2015 Action Plan*, the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Program provides “an international framework for cooperation and coordinated achievement across sectors, from strategic planning to destination management, in order to safeguard heritage, and achieve sustainable tourism and economic development.”⁶⁶

The linkage of tourism to heritage conservation is a focus of the Ethiopian Government’s national strategy for economic growth that is discussed in the following chapter.

The UNESCO Cultural Heritage and Development Project, funded as part of the Millennium Development Initiative,⁶⁷ led to collaborations with other international

⁶⁵<http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2010/whc10-34com-INF.5F.1e.pdf>, cited in Labadi, *UNESCO, Cultural Heritage, and Outstanding Universal Value*, 95.

⁶⁶<http://whc.unesco.org/en/activity-669-6.pdf> (accessed on January 22, 2014).

⁶⁷MDG Achievement Fund. “Contributions of the Joint Programme to the

bodies, such as the World Bank and the World Tourism Organization, and nongovernmental and bi-lateral organizations, in support of activities at World Heritage sites around the world. In 2011, UNESCO and the World Bank formalized their collaboration in a Memorandum of Understanding in “an effort to pursue common objectives of the two organizations in the areas of culture and sustainable development.”⁶⁸ This signaled “UNESCO’s efforts to promote the culture and development agenda and . . . to support countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)” and the World Bank’s according “increasing importance to cultural values in its operations and [recognition of] the positive role of culture in development.”⁶⁹ The strategy focuses on the development of historic cities through preservation and rehabilitation projects, the economics of culture, the promotion of cultural diversity and social inclusion, and the conservation of natural heritage sites.⁷⁰ Since “the global community is preparing to evaluate in 2015 the attainment of the MDGs and draw lessons for the future of international development,”⁷¹ it is anticipated that as a result of their joint undertaking, UNESCO and the World Bank will provide new

Implementation of UNESCO’s Conventions on Culture. http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/Ethiopia_281112.pdf (accessed on February 17, 2014).

⁶⁸<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/778> (accessed on February 17, 2014).

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid; United Nations, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2013*. New York: United Nations. 2013. <http://www.un.org/mdg-report-2013-english.pdf>. (accessed on April 19, 2014).

knowledge about the impacts on sustainable development of programs that combine cultural heritage and development objectives.

By placing community front-and-center in its programmatic theme for the current decade, the UNESCO World Heritage Programme indicated that it considers the community to be the main pillar of its Global Strategy to achieve its goals. As the main ‘actor,’ designated to carry out the activities defined in a World Heritage site’s conservation strategy, it is the focal point of a combination of individual stakeholders whose actions will lead to the success or failure of the plan. The goals are clear: to preserve and protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage site while contributing to the sustainable development of the community. *The Kyoto Call to Action* reflects the goals of “The Future We Want,” the vision statement of the gathering of environmental partners at Rio + 20 in 2012.⁷² Encompassing a “broader picture” of human development, it presents a notion of “heritage [that] sustains and improves the quality of life of people.”⁷³ In the following chapters, I will discuss the evolution of heritage conservation in Ethiopia, including the development of its cultural heritage sites as tourist destinations. In light of the recognition that “the local community are [*sic*] in

⁷²United Nations, *The Future We Want. Outcome Document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 20-22 June 2-2012*. (New York: United Nations, 2012) <http://www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/733FutureWeWant.pdf> (last accessed on June 1, 2014). *The Future We Want* extends the goals defined in Agenda 21 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 that promoted local participation in sustainable community development in order to management of the earth’s limited natural resources effectively.

⁷³*Looking Forward: Report on the 40th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention*, 11.

fact the true bearers of heritage,”⁷⁴ my focus will be on community involvement, or lack thereof, in past conservation activities and the impact of those activities on the sites and the quality of life of the local inhabitants at Lalibela and Harar Jugol.

⁷⁴<http://whc.unesco.org/document/126984> (last accessed on July 12, 2014), 75.

CHAPTER III HERITAGE CONSERVATION IN ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia, known as Abyssinia from Biblical until Medieval times, is situated in the Horn of Africa. Due to its remoteness and its links to mythical figures, such as the Queen of Sheba and Prester John,⁷⁵ the region has always seemed mysterious to outsiders. The first European account of Ethiopia appears to be that of Father Francisco Alvares, a Portuguese cleric, who visited the country in the first decades of the fifteenth century.⁷⁶ Then it was not until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that other accounts of Ethiopia appeared “in the writings and drawings of European travelers [*sic*] such as the Scot James Bruce and ...Henry Salt.”⁷⁷ However, reports from French and British expeditions to the area followed in the mid-nineteenth century.⁷⁸ In 1868, Sir Robert Napier conducted a military intervention to free imprisoned British citizens held by Emperor Tewedros, which ended in the defeat of Ethiopian forces in the Battle of

⁷⁵Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1991, Second Edition* (Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press), 2013, 9. According to Zewde, “the quest for ‘Prester John’ . . . brought the Portuguese to Ethiopia” in the early sixteenth century. Henze, *Layers of Time*, 22. Harold G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1994), 14. Marcus affirms that the legend was “the source of a conception of Ethiopia that long dominated Europe’s imagination and stimulated its greediness for Ethiopia’s resources.”

⁷⁶Henze, *Layers of Time*, 22-3.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 23-4.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 24 and 129-131.

Magdala, the suicide of the emperor and the ransacking of his palace,⁷⁹ marking a disastrous beginning to British-Ethiopian relations.

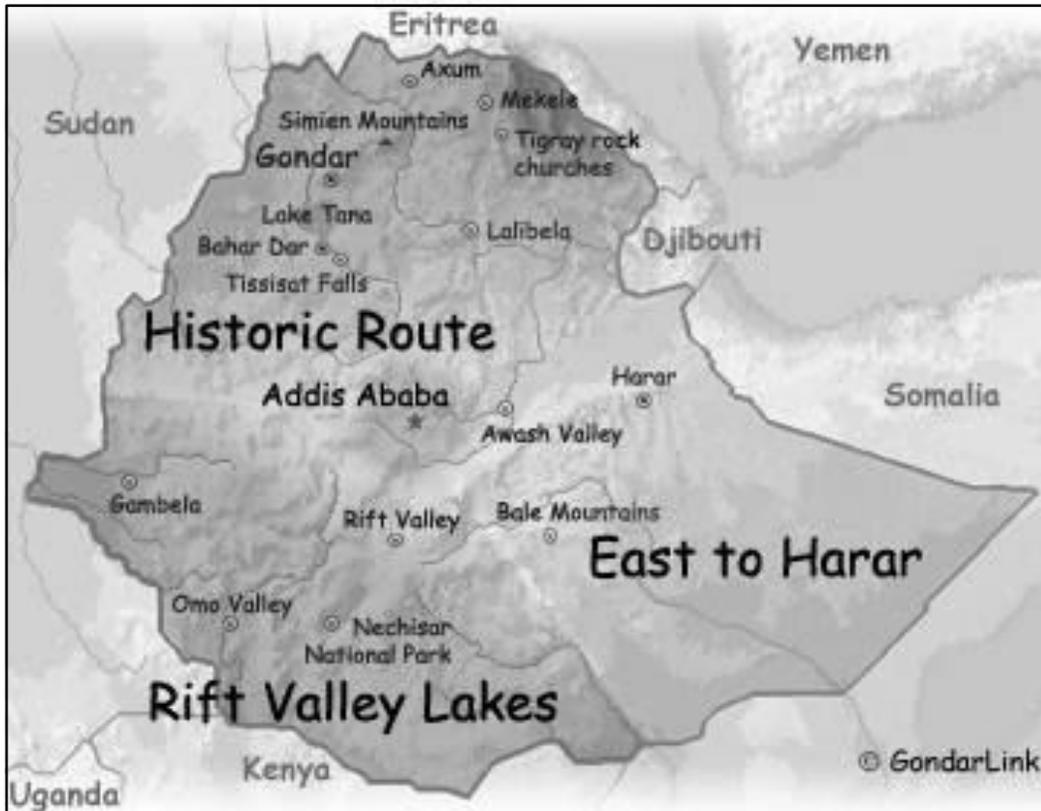


Figure 1: Ethiopia's 'Historic Route' [Source: GondarLink, n.d.]⁸⁰

Initial Archaeological Exploration in Ethiopia

Before the close of the nineteenth century, a major event sparked a surge in foreign interest in Ethiopia for political and business reasons: King Menelik II's defeat of

⁷⁹According to Henze, among "[t]he most important booty was the huge hoard of well over 1,000 Ge'ez and Amharic manuscripts Tewodros had assembled. Of these, 350 which were judged most valuable were selected by the expedition's archaeologist for the British Museum." Ibid.139-42.

⁸⁰<http://www.linkethiopia.org/images/guide/travellers/EthiopiaMapRegionFade.jpg> (accessed on May 19, 2014).

invading Italian forces in the Battle of Adwa outside a small town in the northern highlands near the Eritrean border on March 1, 1896. With this victory, Menelik II not only forestalled Italian ambition to occupy Ethiopia, but also attracted the attention of European rulers, expanding their spheres of influence in Africa. The following year, foreign emissaries began to arrive in the new Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa; among them, a French mission, a British official, and Russians, official and unofficial.⁸¹ Indian businessmen settled in Harar as well as Addis Ababa, with Americans “with no other interest in Ethiopia [than commercial ties]”⁸² arriving later. The accounts of individual European travelers and archaeological expeditions to Ethiopia at the time are sources of valuable information about the country and the condition of the sites that they explored.⁸³ These explorations and military incursions resulted in the loss of numerous artifacts from Ethiopian churches, monasteries, tombs and other archaeological sites, including manuscripts⁸⁴ that the Napier expedition transferred to the British Museum.

⁸¹“Menelik’s first business . . . was the peace treaty with Italy . . . that] recognized ‘absolutely and without reserve the independence of the Ethiopian Empire’ in the Treaty of Addis Ababa, signed on 26 October 1886.” Henze, *Layers of Time*, 172-74.

⁸²“During 1897-8, one-seventh of all textiles imported through Djibouti consisted of American cotton cloth . . . [and] in 1902 the US bought \$820,443 worth of Ethiopian coffee.” Ibid., 176-77.

⁸³Among the documentation is Englishman J. Theodore Bent’s 1893 illustrated account of a visit to northern Ethiopia and reports by Professor Enno Littman, a German philologist from Princeton University, on an excavation at Aksum in 1905-6 and Italian archaeological expeditions to northern Ethiopia and in Eritrea. Ibid., 24-25.

⁸⁴Among the manuscripts were two copies of the *Kebre Negast* (“The Glory of the Kings”), the history of the Ethiopian monarchy. “Emperor Yohannes IV wrote to Queen Victoria and the Foreign Secretary in 1872 requesting the return of these authoritative texts that formed the basis for the monarchy.” Ibid., 56.

The most brazen theft of Ethiopian art and cultural artifacts in the Imperial Era, however, was the removal of the largest standing obelisk from Aksum to Rome in 1937 by the Italian forces that occupied the country during the five-year period from 1936 to 1941. In order to move the twenty-four meter high, 160-tonne stele, considered the largest monument carved from a single stone block in the ancient world,⁸⁵ it was necessary to lower it from the position where it had stood for over a millennium and sever it into several blocks, a horrific act of vandalism and cultural terrorism, that was not rectified until the obelisk's return over seven decades later in 2008.⁸⁶

Economic Development and Heritage Conservation during the Imperial Era

Following Ethiopia's liberation from the Italian Occupation in 1941 and the end of World War II, the country received renewed attention from the West due to its strategic position in the Horn of Africa. Since Emperor Haile Selassie I was concerned with improving economic conditions in the country, he welcomed offers of technical support in agriculture, economics and public health. Foreign experts began to work with

⁸⁵Following the request of the Ethiopian Government, with UNESCO assistance, the Italian authorities returned the stele to Ethiopia in 2008 and restored it to its original place. UNESCO World Heritage Center, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/15> (accessed on January 18, 2014); <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/116> (accessed on April 14, 2014).

⁸⁶"Growing interests in the restitution of art removed to other countries is well exemplified of several obelisks at the ceremonial center of Aksum from the time of its erection during by the Italian government's recent return of the Aksum Obelisk to its original location in Aksum, Ethiopia . . . This 78-foot (24 meter) once-monolithic structure stood as the tallest the fourth century until its removal by Italian engineers in 1937 to be the centerpiece of a traffic circle in front of the Ministry of Italian Africa (later the building for the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization) in Rome. . . . Nearly half a century later, as a gesture of friendship, Italy organized the return of this icon of Ethiopia's cultural heritage to its home, where it was joyously celebrated on 4 September 2008." John H. Stubbs, *Time Honored: A Global View of Architectural Conservation* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2006), 315.

national counterparts throughout the country, including a number of British,⁸⁷ French and Italian archaeologists, who arrived after the establishment of the Ethiopian Institute of Archaeology with French support in 1952.”⁸⁸

As part of the Imperial Government’s economic agenda, the Emperor oversaw the transformation of Addis Ababa into the ‘capital of Africa’ as the headquarters of both the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in 1958, and the African Union, formerly known as the Organization of African Unity, in 1963.⁸⁹ This led to a significant increase in the number of international organizations and diplomatic missions in the Ethiopian capital, which attracted the attention of the Hilton chain that constructed the first international-class hotel in the country and afterwards assisted with the development of a national hotel chain affiliated with the Ghion Hotel in Addis Ababa.⁹⁰

During this period, the nascent Ethiopian Tourist and Hotel Commission created the idea of the ‘Historic Route’ in the northern part of the country, located in towns along an established road from Addis Ababa to Asmara, Eritrea: Bahir Dar, the starting point of a visit to religious sites on the islands and shores of Lake Tana, Gondar with its medieval

⁸⁷The work at Aksum by the British Institute in East Africa, although “extremely promising . . . had to be halted in 1974 because of the revolution which brought the Derg to power.” Henze, *Layers of Time*, 25.

⁸⁸Henze describes French activity in the 1920s in eastern and southern Ethiopia, and the work of the *Mission Archeologique Francaise en Ethiopie* at Stone Age sites in the 1960s. *Ibid.*, 8-10.

⁸⁹Panel, “From Palace to University: A Historical Perspective,” Exhibition of the Society of Friends of the Institute for Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa: Institute for Ethiopian Studies. Visited by the author on January 28, 2014.

⁹⁰Interview with a Lalibela hotel manager, February 8, 2014. All interviews were confidential and the names of interviewees withheld by mutual agreement, unless listed.

castles and Aksum with its ancient obelisks, seen above in figure 1.⁹¹ A visit to the monolithic, rock churches of Lalibela, however, required an arduous expedition into the mountainous Lasta region in the center of the country to the east of Bahir Dar.

The national government collaborated with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church on the protection of sites of religious as well as historical significance, such as the Lalibela churches. It also requested assistance from UNESCO with (a) establishing an inventory of Ethiopia's cultural heritage, particularly in relation to art objects, (b) defining priorities for the restoration of endangered monuments, and (c) developing a work plan for the restoration of monuments, and its cost.⁹² In response, UNESCO sent a technical team whose recommendations led to a second request for assistance 'to preserve the country's cultural heritage and, in this way, to develop tourism,'⁹³ a clear sign that the Emperor recognized the potential contribution of heritage tourism to national economic growth. The proposed project was delayed, however, because the Imperial Government was collapsing. Despite the external support for the country's economic development, the aging monarch was out of touch with the difficult conditions facing a rural population crippled by frequent droughts and out-moded farming methods.⁹⁴ An attempted coup in

⁹¹www.nto.com.et (accessed on April 19, 2014).

⁹²UNESCO, "Preservation and Presentation of Selected Sites and Monuments," 1.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1991*. 2nd ed. (Oxford, UK: James Curry Press Ltd; Addis Ababa: Addis Abba University Press, 2002) 209. "Peasants rebelled against increasing demands on their produce. . . . Even some members of the ruling class thought the removal of Hayla-Sellase necessary to avert the total collapse of the socio-economic order." Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, 180. 'Hayla-Sellase' is an alternative spelling for 'Haile Selassie.'

1960 during a state visit to Brazil had signaled the beginning of the final chapter of Emperor Haile Selassie I's reign, which ended with his deposition during a military coup in 1974, followed by the installation of the Derg regime.

Implementation of the World Heritage Convention in the Post-Imperial Era

At first, it was uncertain to what extent the newly-formed military government would respect the international treaties and agreements that the Imperial Government had ratified. However, in 1975, UNESCO acted on the prior government request for assistance and, with United Nations Develop Programme funding, undertook, as the executing agency, a five-year, joint project with the government to develop the institutions and human resources that the country required to manage its heritage and to restore selected sites.⁹⁵ The project's "immediate objective... was enhancing the capabilities of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports in the administration of antiquities by the completion of an inventory of sites and monuments and . . . providing and supervising a programme of works of restoration, conservation and presentation of sites and monuments."⁹⁶ A second goal was to connect the conservation program to the

⁹⁵UNESCO, "Preservation and Presentation of Selected Sites and Monuments: Project Findings and Recommendations," 1.

⁹⁶Ibid. Between the original government request to UNESCO in 1972 and project initiation in 1975, the Derg regime deposed Emperor Haile Selassie I. According to the report, "the Project Document was signed by the Government, Unesco [*sic*] and UNDP in August 1975, September 1975 and April 1976 respectively."

development objective of “[contributing] to the overall economic growth of the country through tourism.”⁹⁷

The activities undertaken during the project were “valuable precursors of the International Campaign to be conducted by Unesco [*sic*] and the Government for the conservation of Ethiopia’s sites and monuments.”⁹⁸ With the assistance of local and international experts in heritage management, the Ethiopian Government ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1977.⁹⁹ Despite numerous difficulties, ranging from funding and staffing delays to problems with site visits,¹⁰⁰ in its first year, the project established the Centre for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (CRCCH) with branch offices within the Ministry of Culture and set up a portable field laboratory.¹⁰¹ Among its other activities were making a photographic record of restoration work and measured drawings and plans of the monuments and sites; recruiting and training a surveyor;¹⁰² creating an Inventory Section within CRCCH as well as procuring support from the World Heritage Fund and ICCROM for work at Lalibela,

⁹⁷Ibid., 2; UNESCO World Heritage Center website, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/ET/> (accessed on January 14, 2014). The report and the website provide details about how the government carried out the ratification process, stating that “questions were referred to the Archaeological Section and the project, and these cooperated in advising on, and preparing for, action to be taken.”

⁹⁸Ibid., 2.

⁹⁹Ibid. The date of the ratification was July 6, 1977.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 3.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 4-5.

¹⁰²“At Harar, cooperation [was] given in the formulation of a complete master plan . . . for the restoration and development of the historic city centre. . . . [S]ome monuments have been selected, so as to prepare restoration work plans and one old traditional house was selected as a model technical restoration project.” Ibid., 5.

mentioned in Chapter II. Although the country was traversing a period of intense political and social turmoil, the Ethiopian Government nonetheless exercised its right as a State Party to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention to nominate several national natural and cultural heritage sites for consideration as World Heritage.

The first Ethiopian World Heritage sites were the Rock-hewn Churches at Lalibela¹⁰³ and the Simien National Park.¹⁰⁴ Other early listings were two additional sites, situated along the country's northern 'Historic Route': the Fasil *Ghebbi*, or 'Royal Enclosure,' at Gondar, inscribed in 1979,¹⁰⁵ and the monumental stone obelisks at Aksum, inscribed in 1980.¹⁰⁶ Three more sites followed in 1980: Tiya, representing ancient Ethiopian culture from the megalithic period,¹⁰⁷ the Lower Valley of the Awash, "one of the most important groupings of palaeontological [*sic*] sites on the African

¹⁰³UNESCO World Heritage Center, www.whc.unesco.org/en/list/18 (accessed on January 18, 2014).

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*, www.whc.unesco.org/en/list/9 (accessed on January 18, 2014).

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, www.whc.unesco.org/en/list/19 (accessed on January 18, 2014).

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, www.whc.unesco.org/en/list/15 (accessed on January 18, 2014); The Master Plan offers a 'note on spelling of proper names: "In standard English reference works on Ethiopia, proper names have been transcribed in a number of different ways. For names of sites included on the World Heritage List, the present report uses the spelling adopted by the Ethiopian Government in its nomination form. For other names, the most widely accepted spelling has been adopted. In all cases, variant spellings have been indicated in footnotes when the name first occurs in the text." This treatise follows that system. Aalund, , "Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage," 7-8 and viii.

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*, www.whc.unesco.org/en/list/12 (accessed on January 14, 2014).

continent,”¹⁰⁸ and the Lower Valley of the Omo, “a prehistoric site near Lake Turkana.”¹⁰⁹ After this activity, there were no further World Heritage inscriptions under the military government.

After the initial collaboration, UNESCO and the Ethiopian authorities embarked on the design of a master plan to guide the upcoming International Campaign. As the lead UNESCO consultant on the second project, Aalund assessed the conditions at each of the proposed Ethiopian heritage sites and recommended actions to restore and protect the sites, their historical settings and the buffer zones. In addition to preservation projects, Aalund also suggested activities that would benefit the site and local inhabitants, such as the production and sale of traditional handicrafts.¹¹⁰ In this way, he incorporated an economic benefit for the local community into the objectives of the Master Plan. As discussed in Chapter II, Aalund’s emphasis on the connection between heritage conservation and community development foreshadowed the shift from a conventional to a values-led approach to heritage conservation that the UNESCO World Heritage Centre began to recommend to States Parties and implementing partners in the 1990s.

¹⁰⁸This site is “[where] the most spectacular discovery came in 1974 when 53 fragments of a skeleton enabled the famous Lucy to be reconstructed.” Ibid., www.whc.unesco.org/en/list/10 (accessed on January 14, 2014).

¹⁰⁹This site is “[where] the discovery of many fossils...especially *Homo gracilis*, has been of fundamental importance in the study of human evolution.” Ibid., www.whc.unesco.org/en/list/17 (accessed on January 14, 2014).

¹¹⁰Aalund, “Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage,” 32.

The goal of the Master Plan was to prepare for the future International Campaign. In order to ensure its acceptance, the consultant employed the terminology specific to the highly-politicized environment, as follows:

While the bulk of the work involved in carrying out the Campaign will be the responsibility of the Government and people of Ethiopia, in accordance with the policy of self-reliance (*Ethiopia-Tikdem*), the Campaign is intended to inspire a movement of international solidarity and technical co-operation, to help finance facilities which are lacking in the country, to make available international experience and fellowships, and to make the unique history and culture of Ethiopia better known to the world at large.¹¹¹

In addition to showing how the heritage conservation campaign would fit into the regime's development strategy, he encouraged cooperation by praising the government for its willingness to "work for socio-cultural development and the strengthening of the country's cultural identity."¹¹²

In addition to situating the development of the Master Plan within the context of the Derg regime's political ideology, it is also important to understand it in relation to the events that occurred in the 1980s. Within that time-frame, the regime commemorated its tenth anniversary in 1984 and the centennial of the founding of Addis Ababa in 1986. It is likely that these two events influenced both the Master Plan and the government's interest in well-defined sectors of Ethiopian heritage. Although the regime was intent on destroying the symbols of Emperor Haile Selassie I's reign, it adopted those of earlier eras. For example, as part of the transformation of Meskel Square, renamed 'Abiot,' or Revolutionary Square, into a huge, amphitheater, it erected an imposing wall with a

¹¹¹Ibid., 9.

¹¹²Ibid.

monumental, double-arched gate of dressed stone that reflected Gonderine influence. These events may have also influenced the government's interest in cultural heritage for nation-building¹¹³ as well as economic growth. Its preparations for the upcoming International Campaign included coordination, finance and communication. It appointed a National Committee for the Preservation of Ethiopian Antiquities, organized a fundraising campaign to raise 10 million Birr¹¹⁴ over a ten-year period, and developed a media campaign to promote awareness about Ethiopian cultural and historical heritage.¹¹⁵

In retrospect, the Master Plan offers a revealing description of the prevalent socio-economic conditions in Ethiopia in the mid-1980s, a little over a decade after the regime came to power. Aalund also used it as a vehicle to inform the outside world about the dire situation facing the rural population in Eritrea, Tigray, Wollo and Gondar, by writing:

Ethiopia is listed among the 25 least developed countries of the world in terms of modern technology. Furthermore, for over a decade it has been stricken by droughts with resultant food shortages more particularly in the four northern provinces. . . . Little or no rain in 1984 has doomed many thousands to starvation,

¹¹³Labadi explains that governments often use cultural heritage sites for the purpose of nation-building as well as for economic development, a theme that Melanie Lytle addresses in "A Fundamental Transition: The Management of South Africa's Heritage for Nation-building in the Post-Apartheid Era" (master's thesis, Goucher College, 2011). Labadi, *UNESCO, Cultural Heritage, and Outstanding Value*, 8.

¹¹⁴The official exchange rate at the time was Ethiopian Birr (ETB) 2.055 to US\$1. Therefore, the goal was roughly \$5 million. Finance Management Service, Department of Treasury, United States Government, *Treasury Reporting Rates of Exchange as of March 31, 1985*, www.gpo.gov/fdsys/GOVPUBT63_1007eddaf4273a66e80b56d4909795a8e/pdf/GOVPUB-T63_100-7eddaf4273a66e80b56d4909795a8e.pdf (accessed on April 14, 2014).

¹¹⁵Aalund, "Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage," 10-11.

and the situation is exacerbated by soil erosion due to the combination of poor cultivation techniques and overgrazing on already steeply sloping land.¹¹⁶

In addition to designing an approach based on the actual situation in the areas along the ‘Historic Route,’ Aalund relayed information about the bleak situation in Ethiopia to UNESCO. He also notified the government that the International Campaign would only advance if it recognized “this serious socio-economic situation, [and adopted] a realistic and functional approach...for the conservation of the cultural heritage, which should in no way impede the struggle for better living conditions.”¹¹⁷ In this way, Aalund not only used the Master Plan to present a heritage conservation strategy, but also exposed the extreme suffering and loss that millions of Ethiopia’s rural poor had been experiencing for nearly forty years. With the advantage of hindsight, historians Zewde, Marcus and Herze confirm Aalund’s assessment of the critical conditions that were the result of years of inadequate government attention.¹¹⁸

World Heritage Site Management under the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

The overthrow of the Derg in 1991 led to the formation of a provisional government, followed by parliamentary approval of a new constitution in 1994, and the proclamation of The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in 1995.¹¹⁹ These changes fostered the development of civil society, including not-for-profit organizations with a preservation

¹¹⁶Ibid., 11.

¹¹⁷Ibid.

¹¹⁸Zewde, *A History of Ethiopia 1855-1991*, 196; Henze, *Layers of Time*, 307-8 and 315; Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, 181, 205-6, and 209-10.

¹¹⁹Henze, *Layers of Time*, 335.

mandate, such as the Ethiopian Heritage Trust and Addis Woubet, the former, focusing on the environment and Ethiopia's natural as well as cultural heritage, and the latter, on Addis Ababa's built heritage. New and former partners in heritage conservation and planning, including UNESCO, UNDP, the European Union, the development and cultural affairs agencies of a number of countries, and nongovernmental organizations, such as the World Monuments Fund, increased their collaboration with the government agencies and Ethiopian heritage organizations.

As a State Party to the World Heritage Convention, the Ethiopian Government enacted legislation to protect the country's cultural and natural heritage resources. In 2000, the "Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage Proclamation 209/2000" established the Authority for Research and Conservation on Cultural Heritage (ARCCH) with the mandate to achieve the following objectives: [1] inventory and registration, [2] protection, [3] development as part of the country's socio-economic development; and [4] research on Ethiopian cultural and historical heritage sites.¹²⁰ Through the ARCCH, in cooperation with international and national partners, the Ethiopian authorities continued to implement conservation programs at the country's World Heritage and national cultural and natural heritage sites, including the submission of additional cultural and natural heritage sites of national significance to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee for consideration as World Heritage properties. As a result, UNESCO inscribed the Harar Jugol, the Fortified Historical Town, and the Konso Cultural Landscape on the World Heritage List, in 2006 and 2011 respectively, bringing the total number of cultural and

¹²⁰Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture, "National Culture Policy", <http://www.mysc.gov.et/culture.html> (accessed on April 6, 2014).

natural World Heritage sites in Ethiopia to nine. In order to promote cultural tourism, in 2007, the government participated in the UNWTO-sponsored ST-EP program that provided training tourism management for local people residing in the Konso region.¹²¹

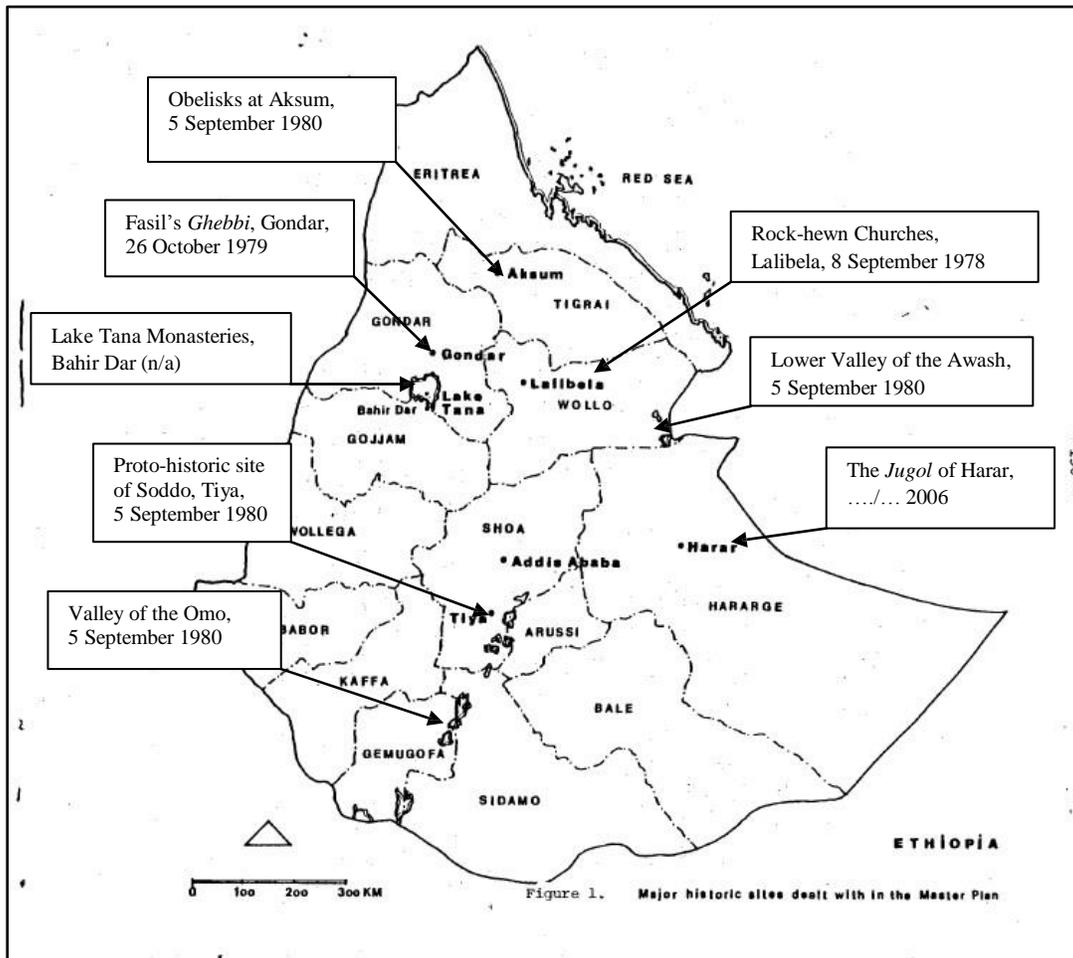


Figure 2: Major historic sites discussed in the Master Plan, with additional sites and the inscription dates of Ethiopian Cultural World Heritage Sites. [Source: Master Plan of 1985¹²² with additions by the author.]

¹²¹<http://www.unwto.org/tourism&mdgszine> (accessed on May 10, 2014), 16.

¹²²Aalund, “Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage,” 150.

As a member of the United Nations, following the Millennium Summit held in 2000, the Ethiopian Government committed to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by 2015. Among the goals are poverty eradication, access to facilities for clean water and sanitation, and environmental sustainability, which all intersect with challenges and opportunities related to the sustainable conservation of the country's World Heritage sites. In Ethiopia, for example, where the poverty rate attains nearly thirty percent,¹²³ there is both an opportunity to develop World Heritage sites as tourist destinations in order to provide employment opportunities in the towns and regions, where they are situated, and a challenge to ensure that the planning and implementation around the sites takes place in a participatory, sustainable manner that takes the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of the site and the cultural values of the community into consideration.¹²⁴

During the past decade, the Ethiopian Government has partnered with the World Bank on two programs to improve tourism infrastructure in cities and towns associated with important cultural heritage sites: the Ethiopian Cultural Heritage Program,

¹²³According to the 2010/11 baseline study, the “total poverty head count’ was 29.2%; the plan target for 2014/15, which corresponds with the endpoint of the current Millennium Development Goal program, is 22.2%.Federal Government of Ethiopia, “Growth and Transformation Plan,” [http://www.mofed.gov.et/English/Resources/Documents/GTP%20Policy%20Matrix%20\(English\)2.pdf](http://www.mofed.gov.et/English/Resources/Documents/GTP%20Policy%20Matrix%20(English)2.pdf) (accessed on April 19, 2014), 17.

¹²⁴Elene Negussie, “Conserving the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela as a World Heritage Site: A Case for International Support and Local Participation,” in *Changing World, Changing Views of Heritage: Heritage and Social Change, Proceedings of ICOMOS Scientific Symposium, October 30, 2010*, Elene Neguessie, ed. (Paris: ICOMOS, 2012), http://www.international.icomos.org/adcom/dublin2010/ICOMOS_Scientific_Symposium_DUBLIN_2010.pdf, (last accessed on July 12, 2014).

implemented at Aksum and Gondar from 2007-2009, and the Ethiopian Sustainable Tourism Development (ESTD) Project, currently underway in Aksum, Gondar, Lalibela, and Addis Ababa, that began in 2009. The ESTD Project aims “to contribute to enhancement of the quality and variety of tourism products and services in targeted destinations”¹²⁵ by building infrastructure for water and sanitation at the sites. Its anticipated outcomes are: “an increase of annual international visitors; increased average spending by visitors translating into higher foreign exchange earnings; and an increased number of direct and indirect tourism-related jobs.”¹²⁶

In addition to its alignment with the first Millennium Development Goal of poverty alleviation by promoting increased employment opportunities, the program also contributed to a target under seventh goal of environmental sustainability: improved access to clean water and sanitation facilities. At the same time that the promotion of Ethiopian World Heritage properties as tourist destinations represents an opportunity for economic growth and development,¹²⁷ however, it presents challenges for their sustainable development and use. In light of these concerns, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee asked to be informed of plans for infrastructure development at the Lalibela site, recommending a Heritage Impact Assessment, prior to the start of any

¹²⁵Ethiopia Sustainable Tourism Development Project, <http://www.worldbank.org/Ethiopia000Tou0Report000Sequenced010.pdf> (accessed on March 30, 2014).

¹²⁶*Ibid.*

¹²⁷According to the African World Heritage Fund, “[t]hrough effective and sustainable management, Africa’s world heritage sites will be catalysts in transforming Africa’s image and act as a vehicle to stimulate economic growth and infrastructure development.” http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/18/soc_2009 (accessed on February 13, 2014); <http://whc.unesco.org/en/awhf> (accessed on January 22, 2014).

activities.¹²⁸ This project and another joint project, the construction of the temporary shelters at Lalibela with the European Union assistance, are discussed further in Chapter IV.

In a separate program, funded through the Millennium Development Goal Attainment Fund, UNESCO and the Ethiopian Government supported the conservation of the country's tangible and intangible cultural heritage through the promotion of community activities related to the documentation and protection of the country's rich and diverse heritage.¹²⁹ With the review underway of the Millennium Development Goals to be achieved by 2015, UNESCO and the State Parties to the World Heritage Convention are looking ahead to post-2015 period and deliberating on new goals. Ethiopia, with its "wealth of cultural and natural heritage, which has the potential to attract both international and domestic tourists,"¹³⁰ has an opportunity to ensure that these assets have an expanded role in its economic growth agenda.¹³¹ As heritage expert, Elene Negussie observed, "[i]f correctly used and managed . . . Lalibela can be utilized as

¹²⁸http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/18/soc_2009 (accessed on February 13, 2014).

¹²⁹<http://www.mdg.org/harnessingdiversitysustainabledevelopmentandsocialchange/sites/default/files/Ethiopia%20Joint%20Programmes%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf> (accessed on May 18, 2014), 1-2.

¹³⁰Negussie, *Conserving the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela as a World Heritage Site*, Paris: ICOMOS, 2010.

¹³¹The Ethiopian Government's vision for national development is "to build an economy which has a modern and productive agricultural sector with enhanced technology and an industrial sector that plays a leading role in the economy; to sustain economic development and secure social justice; and, increase per capita income of citizens so that it reaches at the level of those in middle-income countries." Federal Government of Ethiopia, "Growth and Transformation Plan 2010/11-2014/15," http://www.mofed.gov.et/Ethiopia_GTP_2015 (accessed on April 19, 2014), 7.

a significant resource for economic development”¹³² and, together with the country’s other cultural and natural World Heritages, help propel Ethiopia toward its goal of becoming one of Africa’s top ten tourist destinations by 2020.¹³³

The national “Growth and Transformation Plan, 2010-11 – 2014/15” specifically mentions the role of Ethiopian culture and the promotion of tourism in its strategy and addresses the protection of the country’s natural and cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, including: “languages, cultural, historical and natural heritage, fine arts, handicrafts, oral literature, customs and other cultural elements of the nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia.”¹³⁴ It also acknowledges the importance of community involvement in the implementation of “the Ethiopian Tourism policy [that] focuses on identifying the country’s historical, cultural, wildlife and natural resources to develop responsible and sustainable tourism *through the participation of the private sector, local community* (my italics).”¹³⁵ The case studies that follow in Chapters IV and V also discuss the issues arising from the management of two of the country’s ‘living’ World Heritage sites, Lalibela and Harar, and their development as international tourist destinations. In Chapter VI, there will be further discussion of the use of Ethiopian cultural World Heritage sites as the centerpiece of the country’s tourism strategy, a

¹³²Ibid.

¹³³Shaun Mann, “In Makeda’s Footsteps: Ethiopia Toward a Strategy for Pro-poor Tourism Development” (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2006) <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/8181> (accessed on February 22, 2014), 11.

¹³⁴Federal Democratic Government of Ethiopia, “Growth and Transformation Plan, 2010/11-2014/15,” 74.

¹³⁵Ibid.

pressing concern for all partners in heritage conservation as tourism plays an increasingly important part in the national economic growth plan.

CHAPTER IV CONSERVATION OF THE ROCK-HEWN CHURCHES AT LALIBELA

The town of Lalibela spreads across the face of a steep, rocky slope in Lasta, a region with a temperate climate in the northern central highlands of Ethiopia, characterized by high peaks and tablelands, wide, deep valleys, and extensive river systems.¹³⁶ The area in figure 3, characterized by Milena Batistoni as “quite separate and of difficult accessibility in a country already well protected by natural barriers,” became the capital of the Zagwe Dynasty in the eleventh century.



Figure 3. View of the Lasta landscape from the road to Lalibela. [Source: The author, 2014]

¹³⁶Milena Batistoni, *A Guide to Lalibela* (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Arada Books, 2012), 16.

The Origin of the Monolithic Churches of Lalibela

Lalibela's monolithic rock churches, hewn from broad, rounded outcroppings of volcanic red tuff or gray sandstone,¹³⁷ date from the reign of King Lalibela (1185-1225).¹³⁸ As long ago as the early sixteenth century, Portuguese Father Francisco Alvarez (b. 1465 – d. 1540) recorded that “I weary of writing more about these buildings, because it seems to me that I shall not be believed if I write more”¹³⁹ when he visited the Ethiopian Orthodox pilgrimage site that UNESCO inscribed as one of the first World Heritage properties in 1978.¹⁴⁰ Throughout the region around Lalibela, there are numerous excavated churches and monasteries on hillsides, in caves and on mountain tops. Some consider the rock-hewn churches, such as Bilbala Qirqos, with its Aksumite-style door frames, niches and windows,¹⁴¹ evidence that the region was settled during the Aksumite era¹⁴² as seen in figure 4-2 below. “Monti Della Corte reported a common local

¹³⁷Ibid. 62.

¹³⁸ According to Ethiopian legend, King Lalibela, “back in his homeland after a long period of exile, reconquered the throne usurped by his brother Harbay...[and] became king of the region of Lasta and started his great work. It is also said that the complex is his grave...[since] the research is fragmentary and incomplete, the history and significance of these splendid rock-hewn churches are in part unknown.” Ibid., 17.

¹³⁹<http://www.nto.com.et> (accessed on April 19, 2014).

¹⁴⁰<http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4691> (accessed on January 22, 2014).

¹⁴¹“The niches are similar to those observed in Biet Raphael in Lalibela... There are also Aksumite doors and cross-shaped windows on the side walls,” that archaeologist, architect, and art historian, Alessandro Augusto Monti Della Corte used to support his hypothesis that the Bilbala churches post-date Lalibela. Batistoni, *Lalibela*, 155.

¹⁴²Monti Della Corte's work “[d]uring the Italian occupation . . . is seminal as a first systematic description of the churches, . . . their condition at the time,. . . [and] . . .

belief that the sanctuaries were built by King Kaleb or members of his family [in the fifth to sixth century A.D.]” before the Lalibela churches; however, in a later study, he concluded that “they were excavated after the Lalibela churches of which they copied the features.”¹⁴³ Nonetheless, as Batistoni notes, “the research is still fragmentary and incomplete” and “the history and significance of these splendid rock-hewn churches are in part unknown.”¹⁴⁴

Early Accounts and Restorations of the Rock-hewn Churches at Lalibela

Prior to the sixteenth century, the remarkable churches at Lalibela were virtually unknown in Europe; however, early accounts by an Armenian and the Patriarchs of Alexandria, Egypt mention them.¹⁴⁵ In addition to the Alvares account, in 1564, fellow Portuguese, Miguel De Castanoso, chronicled of “his journey in the land of Prester

for including Lino Bianchi Barriviera’s drawings [that serve as a reference] . . .when trying to understand the labyrinth and the intricate tangle of paths, rocks and caves, of empty and full spaces.” Jacques Mercier and Claude Lepage, *Lalibela. Wonder of Ethiopia. The Monolithic Churches and their Treasures* (Addis Ababa: Shama Books, 2012), 15. “Bianchi-Barriviera not only produced vertical, horizontal and axonometric plans which are today an obligatory reference for all studies, but also, being artistically gifted, he engraved beautiful etchings of the churches and their human environment.” Ibid., 150.

¹⁴³Ibid.

¹⁴⁴Ibid.,17.

¹⁴⁵Batistoni refers to Alessandro Baussi’s discussion of early travelers’ accounts about Lalibela, in which he notes that in the thirteenth century “Armenian Abu Salih told of two churches – dedicated to Saint Georges and the Angel Michael – where the Ethiopian kings were crowned. . . ” and that “other sources such as the history of the Patriarchs of Alexandria mentioned the existence of ‘large and wonderful buildings in Roha.’” Roha is a previous name of the town of Lalibela. Ibid., 19-20.

John,¹⁴⁶ where he saw, on top of a mountain, extraordinary churches that were hewn out of single pieces of rock,”¹⁴⁷ such as St. Giorghis, in figure 4.



Figure 4. St. Giorghis. [Source: World Heritage Centre/Francesco Bandarin, n.d.]

¹⁴⁶Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, 14. The legend of Prester John is discussed in Chapter III.

¹⁴⁷Miguel De Castanhoso “also tells how the Muslim conqueror Mohamed Ahmad Ibn Ibrahim nicknamed Al-Ghazi (the Conqueror) by the Muslims, and Gagn (The Left-Handed), by the Christians, gave up his plan to destroy Lalibela and proposed to transform the churches into mosques but he later forgot his design, as he was overtaken by greater problems.” Batistoni, *Lalibela*, 20.

In the nineteenth century, there were further accounts by a German, Gehrard Rohlf, who accompanied General Napier of Britain, and two French travelers, Simon and Raffray, who visited the churches in 1881,¹⁴⁸ which provide valuable information to architectural historians and restorers trying to understand the design of the churches and their setting in order to decipher the full meaning of the lay-out and the iconography of the complex.

When Empress Zawditu (r. 1916-1930) became aware of the deteriorated condition of the Lalibela churches, she engaged a Greek craftsman to affect repairs in order “to prevent the total collapse of the church (Madhane Alam).”¹⁴⁹ Among the misguided repairs, left unfinished at that time, were the reconstruction of the church’s external colonnade, . . . [repair work] on the southern porch of Maryam, and [the repair of] its roof . . . and [its adornment] with two crosses standing on the gables.”¹⁵⁰ Then, it was not until the 1950s that “the Ministry of Civil Engineering resumed the restorations on the site, especially the churches of Madhem Alam and Amanuel,” enlisting the Italian firm of Bastiano, Rosetta & Cambusi to carry out repairs the following year.¹⁵¹ During

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. According to Batistoni, “Raffray’s work [*Les Eglises Monolithes de Lalibela*, Paris, 1882] included plans and drawings.”

¹⁴⁹ Panel, permanent exhibition on the rock-hewn churches, Lalibela Museum and Cultural Center, Lalibela, Ethiopia, viewed on February 5, 2014. An alternate spelling of ‘Madhane Alam’ is ‘Medhane Alem.’

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.; Aalund, *Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage*, 52. According to Aalund, “the outer walls [of two churches] were coated with a bituminous layer and . . . an incongruous wash of red paint.”

¹⁵¹ Panel, permanent exhibition on the rock-hewn churches, Lalibela Museum and Cultural Center, Lalibela, Ethiopia, viewed on February 5, 2014.

the same period, Lino Bianchi-Barriviera returned to Lalibela and “[completed] his etchings of the churches . . . [and executed] drawings, landscapes, plans and elevations.”¹⁵²

A decade later, Emperor Haile Selassie I and his government partnered with UNESCO and the International Fund for Monuments, now the World Monuments Fund, to provide technical assistance to restore the monolithic churches of Lalibela.¹⁵³ At that time, the goal was not only to repair the monuments for continued use as a pilgrimage site, but also as an international tourist destination on the ‘Historic Route,’ described in Chapter III. As the National Tourist Office notes on its website, Lalibela is “in a region

¹⁵²“Rassegna di Studi Etiopici” published Barriviera’s paper on his work at Lalibela in the early 1960s. As mentioned in footnote 7, these etching and drawings provide invaluable information on the design of the churches. Batistoni, *Lalibela*, 22.

¹⁵³“The International Fund’s concern about the churches dates back to 1965 and a letter written by His Imperial Highness Merid Asfa Wossen, Crown Prince of this ancient Christian kingdom, Ethiopia, to Professor John O. Brew, Chairman of UNESCO’s Committee on Monuments (and Trustee of the Fund) asking for financial and technical assistance for [the churches] restoration and preservation.” This appeal was made approximately thirty years after Emperor Haile Selassie I’s withdrawal to the Lasta Mountains, after defeat by the invading Italian army in April 1936. World Monuments Fund, *World Monuments Fund: The First Thirty Years*. (New York: World Monuments Fund, 1996), 11; International Fund for Monuments (now called the World Monuments Fund), *Lalibela-Phase I. Adventure in Restoration*, (New York: World Monuments Fund, 1967), http://www.wmf.org/sites/default/files/wmf_publication/pubs_IFMLalibelaPhaseI1967.pdf (accessed on May 19, 2014), 7. According to Paul Henze, “the [Emperor] decided to make a pilgrimage to Lalibela . . . and remained, praying without food or drink, for two full days” before his return to Addis Ababa and eventual escape via Djibouti to Europe where he argued the case of his beleaguered country before the League of Nations to no avail. Henze, *Layers of Time*, 219-20. The author suggests that this association may have contributed, along with the site’s religious significance, to official interest in its restoration in the 1960s.

where the rugged landscape still protects the churches from mass tourism.”¹⁵⁴ By developing basic transportation infrastructure, including an airport and improved roads, the Imperial Government made the area more accessible to tourists than it was in the past.

“While restorations during the first half of the twentieth century aimed at recreating the monuments according to ideal forms, the idea became completely different in the 1960s.”¹⁵⁵ In his report on the first phase of the Lalibela project, Sandro Angelini, an Italian restoration architect and WMF project manager, provided an overview of the condition of the Lalibela monuments at that time as well as of the project’s work to preserve and protect them.¹⁵⁶ In collaboration with the Imperial Government through its representative Princess Ruth Desta, the grand-daughter of Emperor Haile Selassie I, who served as head of the Ethiopian Coordinating Committee, UNESCO, the Imperial Government and WMF, with support from the American ambassador to Ethiopia, undertook extensive research on the design and materials of the monolithic churches and the surrounding network of walls, trenches, pools, underground reservoirs, and the man-made course of the Jordan River.

¹⁵⁴<http://www.nto.com.et>

¹⁵⁵Panel, permanent exhibition on the rock-hewn churches, Lalibela Museum and Cultural Center, Lalibela, Ethiopia, viewed on February 5, 2014.

¹⁵⁶International Fund for Monuments, now the World Monuments Fund. (New York: International Fund for Monuments, 1967) *Lalibela-Phase I. Adventure in Restoration*, http://www.wmf.org/sites/default/files/wmf_publication/pubs_IFMLalibelaPhaseI1967.pdf (accessed on May 19, 2014),

The three campaigns that “Sandro Angelini led . . . from December 1966 to April 1970 . . . succeeded in removing the previous restoration/renovation work that had disfigured the site, and between reconstitution and conservation he was able to find an apparently good compromise. He cleared out trenches that had been obstructed for centuries, thus revealing aspects of the site that had been forgotten by the keepers of its tradition.”¹⁵⁷ In the estimation of Mercier and Lepage, from “the clearance of the site . . . there emerged elements that had been hidden or ignored for centuries,”¹⁵⁸ including steps and passageways, such as those seen below in figure 5, and “insured the future of these extraordinary shrines.”¹⁵⁹

Management of the Rock-Hewn Churches at Lalibela as a World Heritage Site

As mentioned in Chapters II and III, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee inscribed the Rock-Hewn Churches at Lalibela on the World Heritage List in 1978, among the first group of twelve sites in the world. The justification of the World Heritage designation was based on criteria (i), (ii) and (iii)¹⁶⁰ as follows:

¹⁵⁷According to Mercier and Lepage, Angelini’s work “earned him some strong animosity on the part of the clergy,.” According to the author, perhaps this was due to the removal of the traditional housing, or *tukuls*, to clear the trenches. Mercier and Lepage, *Lalibela. Wonder of Ethiopia. The Monolithic Churches and their Treasures*, 15.

¹⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 57.

¹⁵⁹The project halted in 1972, “just before the revolution overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie and his government, which had sponsored the work.” World Monuments Fund, *The World Monuments Fund: The First Thirty Years*, 24.

¹⁶⁰The criteria are defined as follows: “(i) to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius; (ii) to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design; (iii) to bear a unique or

(i) All the eleven churches represent a unique artistic achievement, in their execution, size and the variety and boldness of their form; (ii) The King of Lalibela set out to build a symbol of the holy land, when pilgrimages to it were rendered impossible by the historical situation. In the Church of Biet Golgotha, are replicas of the tomb of Christ, and of Adam, and the crib of the Nativity. The holy city of Lalibela became a substitute for the holy places of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and as such has had considerable influence on Ethiopian Christianity. (iii) The whole of Lalibela offers an exceptional testimony to the medieval and post-medieval civilization of Ethiopia, including, next to the eleven churches, the extensive remains of traditional, two storey circular village houses with interior staircases and thatched roofs.¹⁶¹

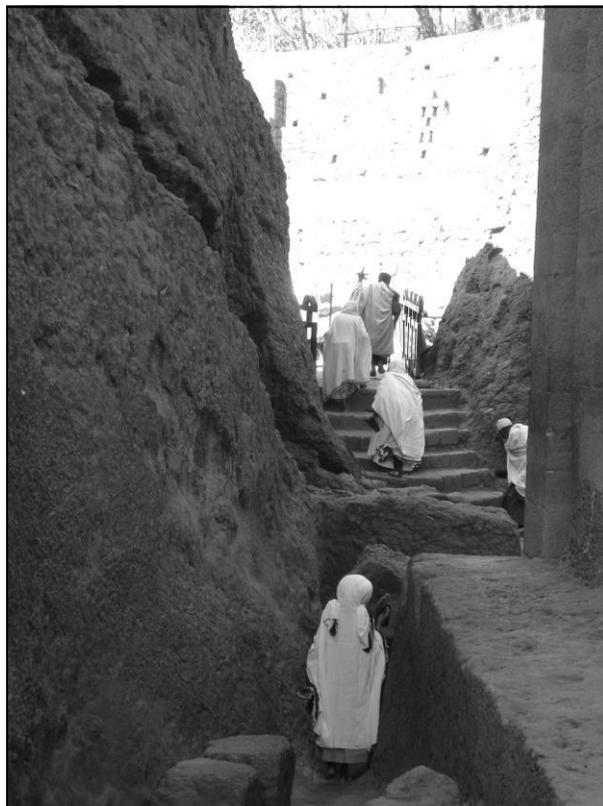


Figure 5: Worshippers at Lalibela.
[Source: The author, 2014.]

at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared.” <http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria> (accessed on May 4, 2014).

¹⁶¹<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/18> (accessed on May 4, 2014).

The 1982 report on the joint UNESCO-Ethiopian Government collaboration, ‘Preservation and Presentation of Selected Sites and Monuments’, outlines steps that UNESCO experts undertook with Ethiopian heritage professionals during the period of the property’s nomination and inscription on the World Heritage List. Since water infiltration was leading to stone deterioration, remedial action included covering church roofs and clearing trenches.¹⁶² The report mentioned a proposal for “a town-planning survey with a view to displacing the main road to the village, so as to avoid the area of the monuments.”¹⁶³ Among its successful outcomes were: “a significant positive impact in preserving the nation’s cultural treasures and [in stimulating] tourism by creating interest in the famous ‘Historic Route.’ . . . The Government is anxious to develop and improve its activities in the field of preservation of its archaeological and historical heritage and, at the same time, continue the work that has already been started.”¹⁶⁴

Besides Ethiopia’s ratification of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention in 1977 and the subsequent nomination and listing of the Rock-Hewn Churches at Lalibela as a UNESCO Cultural World Heritage site and the Simien Mountains National Park as a UNESCO Natural World Heritage site in 1978, among the project outcomes were: “a photogrammetric survey of the Lalibela monuments”¹⁶⁵ and an ICCROM symposium on stone conservation held at Lalibela in 1979.¹⁶⁶ As discussed in Chapter III, a follow-on

¹⁶²UNESCO, “Preservation and Presentation of Selected Sites and Monuments,” 11.

¹⁶³Ibid.

¹⁶⁴Ibid. 12.

¹⁶⁵Ibid. 5.

collaboration produced the Master Plan of 1985 to address the conservation needs of the national heritage sites along northern and eastern historical routes. This plan reflected the shift in heritage conservation practice from a conventional to a values-led approach. It recognized the community's role in the preservation of nearby heritage sites, especially at living monuments, such as the Lalibela churches, where priests and worshippers continued to perform daily rituals and celebrate major festivals.

The 1978 ICOMOS evaluation included the *tukuls*, or vernacular domestic architecture, in figure 6, found in the historical setting of the churches as a significant contributing feature to the site and its integrity.¹⁶⁷ Aalund also referred to “the setting of the churches within the village of Lalibela [as] a key element in the general atmosphere of the place” and, in the Master Plan, he stressed the importance of “maintaining the integrity of both the landscape and the architectural heritage within the site.”¹⁶⁸ He also proposed that “a protective development plan should be drawn up by the Ministry of Culture with a view to (i) formulating a policy for new village development, and to (ii) preserving the historic setting of the church complexes and the traditional housing in the vicinity of the monuments.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶Ibid. 24; Aalund “Master Plan of for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage,” 54. Aalund provided a summary of the symposium as an annex to the Master Plan. The goal of the symposium was to train local personnel in the science of stone conservation within the context of Lalibela.

¹⁶⁷<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/18>.

¹⁶⁸Aalund, “Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage,” 58.

¹⁶⁹Ibid.



Figure 6. *Tukuls* in the historical setting of the Lalibela site. [Source: The author, 2014.]

In his description of the Lalibela area, Aalund also emphasized the drought and famine conditions afflicting the Lasta region, pointing out that “the tableland is semi-arid due to extensive deforestation and consequent rapid run-off of the scanty rainfall. The whole Lasta district is one of the areas most severely affected by drought in the last ten years, causing failure of pastures and crops and extremely critical conditions for both human beings and livestock.”¹⁷⁰ The humanitarian and ecological disaster, together with the armed rebellion against the Derg regime, particularly in the northern and central highlands, were constraints that Aalund considered in the proposed heritage conservation program so that the activities would provide tangible benefits for the local community;

¹⁷⁰Ibid., 51.

for example, preventive maintenance activities at the site, that would employ local inhabitants.¹⁷¹

The Master Plan included recommendations that the municipality support Ministry of Culture-led initiatives by: (a) implementing zoning regulations and by-laws to preserve the vernacular architecture through the use of traditional materials in the vicinity of the church complexes and (b) designing and implementing a general plan of action for preserving Lalibela's cultural heritage [with] . . . [i]ncentives, such as subsidized building materials and technical assistance,¹⁷² with the caveat that "these simple measures should be introduced only after thorough discussions with the villagers to make them understand the intentions of the scheme."¹⁷³

In the section of the plan, entitled 'social up-grading,' Aalund astutely placed heritage conservation within the context of daily life of the local inhabitants during the extended period of drought when he concluded that "restoration of the monolithic churches should be linked with a programme for up-grading living conditions generally, if the preservation of the cultural heritage is to have any meaning in the famine-stricken area." After identifying the Ministry of Culture "as a catalyst in these endeavors,"¹⁷⁴ he closed the section on Lalibela with suggestions for income-generation, such as the

¹⁷¹Ibid., 55-6.

¹⁷²Ibid., 60.

¹⁷³Aalund also specified in this recommendation that "the repair and maintenance of residential houses would still be the responsibility of the owners themselves." Ibid.

¹⁷⁴Ibid.

organization of cooperatives for handicraft production and sales, that he suggested was important to discourage theft and protect the churches and their historical contents.¹⁷⁵

Following the establishment of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in 1995,¹⁷⁶ UNESCO and the Ethiopian Government strengthened their joint effort to address the needs of the country's World Heritage sites. From nearly two decades of State of Conservation (SOC) reports on the World Heritage Center website, compiled from information submitted by the Ethiopian authorities and ICOMOS, ICCROM and UNESCO missions, it is possible to trace the evolution of the conservation process carried out at the Lalibela World Heritage site by the State Party, UNESCO and implementing partners, such as the World Monuments Fund and the World Bank. The first SOC report, dating from 1995, explains the genesis of the ongoing partnership of the Ethiopian Government, UNESCO's Division of Cultural Heritage and European partners during the 'International Campaign for the Conservation and Preservation of the Monuments of Ethiopia' that began in 1981.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵Aalund observed that "everyone in the street offers personal belongings for sale because of the critical situation in Lalibela generally. There is also the ever-present – and understandable – temptation to sell artefacts [*sic*] and treasures from the churches." Ibid.

¹⁷⁶Henze, *Layers of Time*, 335.

¹⁷⁷"The project for the 'Restoration and Preservation of the Churches of Lalibela' was conceived and formulated in the framework of the International campaign. . . . It illustrates the complementarity [*sic*] and the dynamism of the activities carried out for heritage by the UNESCO Secretariat as a whole." '9COMVII.C.2.36/38 VII.36 Churches of Lalibela (Ethiopia),' http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/soc_1995 (accessed on February 13, 2014).

As a composite, the nine available SOC reports, compiled between 1995 and 2012, document changes over nearly two decades of conservation activities. They also provide valuable snapshots of the conditions at the Lalibela site at various intervals. In addition to documenting how the various implementing partners restored and protected the monuments over the past twenty years, the reports illustrate how changing perceptions of those conditions, along with an evolving understanding about how to respond to them, influenced conservation decisions. For example, the 1995 SOC report notes “years of political instability, drought and famine, followed by civil war and regime change” under the heading, ‘Factors affecting the property’ and “need for restoration and rehabilitation” under the heading, ‘threats’ to the property. According to the report, the European Union and Finland provided technical assistance and funding to the Ethiopian Government for Lalibela under the auspices of the International Campaign.¹⁷⁸

Over the years, the SOC reports identify other threats, some of which relate to management capacity, i.e. lack of management activities, system or plan, and lack of legal framework, while others have to do with the physical nature of the site, i.e. water (rain and the water table), relative humidity, and risk of earthquake. They also describe measures to protect the churches from the threats; for example, in 1996, under the FINNIDA project, Beta Medhane Alem was the latest of “several churches ... protected by zinc roofing mounted on wooden scaffolding...as temporary stopgap measures whilst

¹⁷⁸“This project, which receives support from the European Union and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment, will establish on the basis of extremely precise diagnostics, a conservation and maintenance programme for each of the churches and will propose a plan for the rehabilitation and preservation of the entire site. This project will also define an action programme which will take into account its environmental dimension.” Ibid.

awaiting a veritable restoration.”¹⁷⁹ The decision to erect scaffolding to protect several of the churches from rain and sun appears to have been a source of tension between the implementing partners engaged in the protection of the World Heritage site, with the SOC report mentioning World Heritage Center criticism of the covering from an aesthetic perspective as “considerably [disfiguring] the monuments.”¹⁸⁰

The next SOC report indicated that the Ethiopian Government decided to move forward with an international competition on the design of new shelters, notwithstanding a World Heritage Center recommendation to redirect the allocated funding to “the development and implementation of ‘an overall approach to the preservation of the site.’”¹⁸¹ In response to the decision, the World Heritage Committee “proposed a mission to Lalibela ... to review the situation with the Ethiopian authorities and the European Union in order to: (a) ensure a long-term protection of the monuments within the context of the eco-system; (b) integrate the problems of the growth of Lalibela and (c) draw up a plan of action of the approved conservation programme.”¹⁸² It is uncertain what the outcome was of the proposal for a UNESCO mission, due to the gap in reporting between 1997 and 2006. However, when the reporting process resumed, ‘rainfall, water

¹⁷⁹http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/soc_1996 (accessed on February 13, 2014).

¹⁸⁰Ibid.

¹⁸¹Ibid.

¹⁸²Ibid.

infiltration and water runoff,’ was added to ‘lack of conservation and management plans’ in the section on ‘factors affecting the property identified in previous reports.’¹⁸³

In response to the above-mentioned issues, the World Heritage Committee reaffirmed that “only a recourse to the appropriate restoration techniques, . . . recommending the use of suitable techniques of restoration using local workforce and materials; [on-site evaluation of] the need for technologically more advanced procedures and training for their use; and a long-term management of the site which takes the territorial problems into account.”¹⁸⁴ In addition to those recommendations, new technical considerations arose about the decision to erect the shelters, based on data from July 2004 and March 2005 assessment missions: “That humidity was an important factor in the decay of the structures, due to the presence of *Montmorillonite* . . . in the volcanic rock out of which the churches are hewn . . . Therefore, since these large shelters would not fully protect the churches from humidity and would prevent the rock from drying naturally, it was concluded that they were not an adequate answer to the current risks.”¹⁸⁵ Due to this new information, along with the lack of a heritage impact assessment and concern about the feasibility of dismantling the structures, the World Heritage Committee

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ In the report, it is noted that “in 1999, the European Union organised an international architectural competition for the construction of the shelters in Lalibela. A design was chosen by a jury, on which UNESCO was represented, following which the tender entitled “Temporary shelters for five rock hewn churches in Lalibela” was launched in 2005; the bids are currently under evaluation since their submission date was the 27th of April 2006.” http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/soc_2006 (accessed on February 13, 2014).

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

proposed a reevaluation of the project, prior to its implementation. However, the Ethiopian Government decided to proceed without delay. This prompted UNESCO to reiterate “its request to the State Party to prepare a conservation project that ensures an integrated and reversible approach”¹⁸⁶ and to undertake the following preliminary steps: “[1] an Impact Assessment Study for the European Union-funded Project in Lalibela is prepared; [2] the integrity of the property during the construction and dismantling works of the planned temporary shelters is maintained, taking into considerations the recommendations expressed by the above-mentioned World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS, and ICCROM mission; and [3] an Action Plan is prepared.”¹⁸⁷

UNESCO and its partner organizations, ICOMOS and ICCROM, seized the opportunity to spell out the main elements of the Action Plan, as follows: project description, resources, and timetable; detailed description of the causes of deterioration; monitoring system; system for the maintenance and dismantling of the shelters; and development of a management plan through a participatory process including the local community.¹⁸⁸ The reference to a ‘participatory process’ with the local community was the first mention of community involvement, besides as laborers in site projects. That recognition corresponded with UNESCO’s evolving understanding of the community’s role as a stakeholder in the development of long-term, sustainable conservation strategies for World Heritage sites during that period, as mentioned in Chapter II.

¹⁸⁶Ibid.

¹⁸⁷Ibid.

¹⁸⁸Ibid.

In the 2007 SOC report, among the ‘factors affecting the property identified in previous reports,’ the World Heritage Center added “inappropriate design and construction details of large shelters for churches,”¹⁸⁹ clearly signaling its concern about the implementation of the shelter project. However, the account of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS mission to Ethiopia to assess the impact of the shelter project described a successful collaboration with the Ethiopian Government and the European Commission that resulted in “changing the design of the shelters,” one of which is in figure 7, “making them both smaller and reversible ... [and presenting] no physical threat to the World Heritage site. In addition, the project has been designed to mitigate risks and minimize environmental damage to the site and its surroundings during the construction period and the Ethiopian Government negotiated a maintenance contract with the construction company.”¹⁹⁰ The project summary refers to the development of a conservation action plan for the churches by the Ethiopian Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH), following a study of the wider setting of the churches and their technical aspects, including structural analysis of the churches and an analysis of mortars and rock excavation and carving techniques.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/soc_2007 (accessed on February 13, 2014).

¹⁹⁰Ibid.

¹⁹¹Ibid.



Figure 7. The shelter over Medhane Alem Church. [Source: The author, 2014.]

Regarding the conservation plan, the World Heritage Committee suggested that “[it] should create a mechanism to address the long-term sustainable development of the churches and their surrounding landscape and villages ... [and] could also address options for improving services to the traditional village in the site,” also observing that “[i]n advance of the Management Plan, there is a need for better mapping and documentation of the site, and definition of the boundaries and the buffer zone as these were not included in the initial nomination file.”¹⁹² The mention of ‘surrounding landscape and villages’ is significant because it signals the adoption of a holistic approach to conceptualizing the entire area as a ‘cultural landscape’ that includes the villages in the historical setting. While there was no specific mention of the *tukuls* at this time, the statement implies the continuity of life in the village in the historical setting of

¹⁹²Ibid.

the churches, where the *tukuls* are found, when it suggests ‘improving services’, i.e., furnishing infrastructure for water and sanitation, the objective of the future World Bank-funded Sustainable Tourism Development Project, discussed in Chapters II and III.

In its draft decision 31COM7B.46, the World Heritage Committee addressed the preparation of “an integrated management plan followed by a conservation plan for the sustainable development of the site and its setting, as a framework for assessing long-term solutions to the protection and conservation of the churches, their surface finishes, their rock hewn surroundings and their associated landscapes and settlements.”¹⁹³

At this time, the reference to ‘associated landscapes and settlements’ was less specific than the previous reference to ‘villages’ in the above-mentioned SOC report and there is no further information on World Heritage Center’s earlier suggestion to improve services to the traditional villages in the site. It is suggested that this change affected the direction of the infrastructure development project with regard to the residents living in the historic setting of the Lalibela site and the conservation of the vernacular houses, or *tukuls*. I will discuss this aspect of the management plan as part of a discussion of the downstream effects of the site conservation strategy at the end of this chapter.

In the 2008 and 2009 SOC reports, the World Heritage Center added ‘housing’ to the list of ‘factors affecting the property identified in previous reports.’¹⁹⁴ The identification of this new ‘threat’ conformed with accepted thinking that human activity

¹⁹³<http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1427> (last accessed on July 12, 2014).

¹⁹⁴http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/soc_2008 and 2009 (accessed on February 13, 2014).

ranks among the primary causes of the damage to, and destruction of, historic structures throughout the world.¹⁹⁵ The inclusion of ‘housing’ as a detrimental factor, aligned with the decision to resettle additional families from the village of *tukuls* in the historical setting to new housing in another part of town.

In the two most recent SOC reports from 2010 and 2012, there are details about activity underway at the World Heritage site, including monitoring of the effects of the shelters and the implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Infrastructure Development Project on the monuments and the historical setting. According to those reports, while encroachment and resettlement were causes of concern about the integrity of the site,¹⁹⁶ the installation of the shelters over five of the churches raised a number of questions about the long-term impact; for example, (1) the anticipated change in the micro-climate and (2) the stress from the shelter supports on the terrain adjacent to the churches: the former, causing deterioration from increased relative humidity, favoring the growth of lichen and mold on the church surfaces, and the latter, producing cracks in the church walls.¹⁹⁷ These outcomes inform the discussion of down-stream effects and unintended consequences at the end of the chapter.

The 2010 SOC report also noted the State Party’s affirmation that “the development plan for the historic town of Lalibela has been prepared in consultation with

¹⁹⁵John H. Stubbs, *Time-Honored: A Global View of Architectural Conservation*, (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 5.

¹⁹⁶http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/soc_2010 and 2012 (accessed on February 13, 2014).

¹⁹⁷*Ibid.*

the community and other stakeholders and will be implemented under relevant Government bodies.”¹⁹⁸ At the same time, according to the World Heritage Committee, the Conservation Action Plan for the site was in the drafting stage, with a Site Management Committee established and a future workshop planned to complete the plan.¹⁹⁹ The ARCCCH, whose role was discussed in Chapter III, was responsible for coordinating the interventions by a number of national and foreign entities providing technical assistance and funding for the site.²⁰⁰ Although the World Heritage Committee noted that there was no discussion in the State Party’s report of projects being planned with the World Monuments Fund and the World Bank, it mentioned that there was a plan to undertake a conservation project funded by Italy in the traditional village of Lalibela, which forms part of the property, under the World Heritage Earthen Architecture Programme.²⁰¹

The World Heritage Committee signaled its concern about the potential impact of the proposed World Bank-funded sustainable tourism project on the heritage site;

¹⁹⁸http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/soc_2010.

¹⁹⁹Ibid.

²⁰⁰http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/soc_1997 (accessed on February 13, 2014) and <http://www.mysc.gov.et/culture.html> (accessed on February 17, 2014). Since the 1960s, the national government institution charged with the safeguarding of Ethiopia’s national heritage sites, including the country’s cultural and natural World Heritage properties, has evolved from the Ethiopian Antiquities Administration (EAA) under the Imperial Government, to the Center for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (CRCCH) under the Derg Government, to the present-day Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCCH), the lead agency under the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

²⁰¹http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/soc_2010.

however, when it expressed its intention “to mitigate any adverse effects...on the property’s integrity.”²⁰² Earlier, in response to the government’s announcement of its plan to include Lalibela in the above-mentioned project, the Committee had restated the requirement for a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), prior to initiating the project.²⁰³ As of 2010, while there was no indication of the completion of an HIA, the World Heritage Committee requested the opportunity to participate in decisions concerning the tourism project. In 2012, the World Heritage Committee summarized the situation prevailing in Lalibela as follows: “In the light of the growing urban development that is threatening the Outstanding Universal Value and Integrity of the property, there remains an urgent need to accelerate the creation and implementation of the management plan. Such a plan should link the management of the churches to the sustainable development of the wider setting of the property.”²⁰⁴

After addressing the threats to the World Heritage site of “uncontrolled urban encroachment,”²⁰⁵ lack of a site management plan, and the unknown impact of the activities of the World Bank-funded tourism development project underway at the property, the World Heritage Committee urged the State Party to proceed with the completion of and provide the Lalibela development plan and the site management plan as soon as possible. It also requested that the State Party “submit all related planned conservation and enhancement projects for review by the Advisory Bodies and by the

²⁰²Ibid.

²⁰³http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/soc_2009.

²⁰⁴http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/soc_2012.

²⁰⁵Ibid.

World Heritage Center prior to any commitment being made, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*.²⁰⁶

In 2012, the State Party submitted a report on Lalibela to the World Heritage Committee, which provided comments on the four following areas: monitoring arrangements for the temporary shelters; urban encroachment and site management; the pilot project with training activities undertaken at Gabriel Rufael Church with the World Monuments Fund; and the World Bank Tourism Development Project.²⁰⁷ In response, the World Heritage Committee reiterated its earlier positions about site management and the pressing need to complete both a management plan and a town development plan because, “following the State Party’s report, ‘urban encroachment’ was identified as the key problem in the management of the property.”²⁰⁸ In order to solve this problem, the authorities held a series of stakeholder workshops that led to the development of a plan to relocate “some households... from the property to a newly designated settlement zone. The emptied traditional Tukuls (vernacular round houses) [were to be] refurbished to develop them as additional tourist attractions.”²⁰⁹ In light of this information,

the World Heritage Committee and the Advisory Bodies... [noted] the reported resettlement of inhabitants of traditional Tukul structure in the property, and consider that the development of the emptied historic Tukuls as tourism attractions has the potential to impact on the association between the churches and

²⁰⁶Ibid.

²⁰⁷http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/soc_2012.

²⁰⁸Ibid.

²⁰⁹Odiaua, Ishanlosen, “Mission Report on Earthen Architecture of the Lalibela World Heritage Site, 4-11 July 2010.” <http://whc.unesco.org/document/107197> (accessed on April 1, 2014).

the traditional community. Resettlement should therefore be preceded by a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), in conformity with the ICOMOS Guidelines on Heritage Impact Assessments for World Heritage cultural properties... The World Heritage Center and the Advisory Bodies further recommend that ... any planned demographic or other changes meant to strengthen tourist-targeted services in the property or its immediate surroundings should be preceded by a HIA... to evaluate the potential impact of any planned demographic or other changes... on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.²¹⁰

From the discussion of the resettlement process in the 2012 SOC report, it appears that the World Heritage Committee considered the preservation of the traditional practices of the inhabitants of the village of *tukuls* in the historic setting as ‘intangible cultural heritage’ that formed an inextricable part of the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage site. Although previous SOC reports had not mentioned this association, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, the 1978 ICOMOS evaluation clearly referred to *tukuls* as an important feature of the historical setting. The association of the ‘intangible cultural heritage’ with the ‘tangible’ was a new aspect of the site’s ‘authenticity.’ Whereas the State Party was equally committed to the protection of the monuments and the site’s Outstanding Universal Value through the physical conservation of the monuments to prevent their deterioration from natural and man-made forces, the overarching goal was to develop the World Heritage site in a way that would bring out its economic potential as an international tourist destination so that it would provide benefits to the community and the nation as well as the world.²¹¹ The development of the site as a tourist destination required basic infrastructure to accommodate the needs of visitors to

²¹⁰http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/soc_2012.

²¹¹Interviews with Berhanu Yohannes, Sustainable Tourism Infrastructure Project, and Habtamu Tesfaw, Office of Culture and Tourism, Lalibela, on February 6, 2014.

the site and the resettlement of residents in the villages in the historical setting, who were putting the site at risk, due to overcrowding and water, sanitation, and waste management issues.

Linking Community to the Long-term, Sustainable Conservation of Lalibela

Throughout the world, the affiliation of certain sites with the World Heritage ‘brand,’ as discussed in Chapter II, accelerated their recognition as international tourist destinations and led to special attention from UNESCO, the national government and interested partners for their promotion and development. In Lalibela, the development of the World Heritage site spurred its growth. During the twenty-year period, from 1994 to 2005, the population nearly doubled from approximately 8,500 to approximately 15,000 inhabitants.²¹² There are several new hotels and the Lalibela Cultural Center and ethnographic museum, built in 2008 with European Union support, in the vicinity of the Roha, the area’s first government-built hotel, dating from the 1960s. A second grouping of hotels in a newly-opened area is situated on a ridge to the north-west of town.

Among the signs of the impact of the development of the cultural heritage tourism industry in Lalibela over the past twenty years are numerous handicraft shops, restaurants and snack bars that line the roads radiating from the center of town in all directions. Ethiopian Airlines provides several flights per week into Lalibela Airport to and from Addis Ababa and other regional airports, such as Gondar and Aksum. Privately-owned mini-vans circulate around town, providing transportation for local inhabitants and visitors within Lalibela and to outlying villages and tourist destinations in the region.

²¹²<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lalibela> (accessed on February 23, 2014).

Public and private buses serve regional transportation needs. A weekly market attracts farmers with local produce (grains, pulses, and local honey), handicrafts (clay coffee pots, woven, cotton shawls and blankets, and wood-and-leather stools) and livestock (cattle, sheep, goats and donkeys).²¹³

The growth of the tourism industry as a result of the World Heritage designation is especially valued in Lalibela, since there is no other industry in the area and agricultural production is limited, due to a decline in the fertility of the farmland.²¹⁴ As a result of the town's rapid development, however, the Ethiopia Government is concerned with the security of the World Heritage site, in terms of the protection of the monuments and the safety of visitors, which extends to the inhabitants of the historical setting. In this case of local residents, 'safety' connotes not only their personal security, but also their economic and physical condition.²¹⁵

An important aspect of site management is identifying the interests of multiple stakeholders and how their activities impact the site and how its conservation affects them. Among the stakeholders are: community members (local residents), business leaders (hotel and restaurant owners, and transportation and tour operators), civil society groups (the clergy, the tour guides' association, and handicraft cooperatives), and heritage and affiliated entities (national and international, governmental and

²¹³Interviews with an eco-tourism organization manager/guide and van owner/guide on February 7 and 8, 2014. Observations by the author during a site visit to Lalibela from February 3 to 9, 2014.

²¹⁴Interview with a hotel manager.

²¹⁵ Interview with Habtamu Tesfaw, Office of Culture and Tourism, Lalibela.

nongovernmental, i.e. Ministry of Culture and Youth, ARCCH and its regional and local affiliates, UNESCO World Heritage Center and its representatives, the World Bank, the World Monuments Fund, other bi-lateral donors, and consultants) that have a potential role to play in shaping the heritage conservation strategy of the site.²¹⁶

In 2009, the Ethiopian Government entered into a partnership with the World Bank to improve basic road, water and sanitation infrastructure in Aksum, Gondar and Lalibela. The major objectives of the joint Sustainable Tourism Development Project are to improve the water and sanitation facilities available for visitors to the World Heritage site as well as to provide access to the same infrastructure to residents in the surrounding community.²¹⁷ The effort represents the linkage of economic development and cultural heritage conservation that is part of a new strategy, discussed in Chapter II, in which UNESCO and the World Bank “[joined] forces . . . for the improvement of aid effectiveness, and [to] make the most of culture as a motor for social development and

²¹⁶Christian Barillet, Thierry Joffroy, and Isabelle Longuet, eds., *Cultural Heritage and Local Development: A Guide for African Local Governments*. The importance of the municipality’s role in the coordination of multiple stakeholders with an interest in the conservation of local heritage sites is a main theme of the guide.

²¹⁷The press release, dated June 30, 2009, stated that: “The objective of the Sustainable Tourism Development Project in Ethiopia is to contribute to *the enhancement of the quality and variety of tourism products and services in targeted destinations so as to increase tourist visitation, foreign exchange earnings, and jobs* (my italics). The implementation of the project will cause an increase of annual international visitors, . . . higher foreign exchange earnings, and [an increased] . . . number of direct and indirect tourism-related jobs.”<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/loan-credits/2009/06/30/ethiopia-sustainable-tourism-development-project> (accessed on March 30, 2014).

poverty alleviation, through employment in the tourist industry and associated areas, such as handicraft production, construction, and transportation.”²¹⁸

In Lalibela, project coordinators engaged in extensive consultations with local stakeholders in order to share information and receive feedback from the community. The outcome was an agreement with those living in the villages adjacent to the churches to resettle to a new neighborhood outside the historical setting of the World Heritage site. Residents concurred with the proposal because they agreed that it was important to ensure the protection of the churches from damage, due to overcrowding and inadequate waste management in the village. As compensation, the displaced families received a plot of land and monetary compensation to build a house in an area, where basic infrastructure (roads, water and sanitation) was being provided. The development plan also included a school and other amenities.²¹⁹

The results of a SWOT analysis on the impact of heritage conservation activities on the property and the local community since the World Heritage listing are presented in table 1. The objective of the analysis was to determine the downstream effects of the heritage conservation strategy, including local participation, or lack thereof, in its planning and implementation, on the Outstanding Universal Value of the site and the

²¹⁸The press release, dated June 30, 2009, stated that: “The objective of the Sustainable Tourism Development Project in Ethiopia is to contribute to *the enhancement of the quality and variety of tourism products and services in targeted destinations so as to increase tourist visitation, foreign exchange earnings, and jobs* (my italics). The implementation of the project will cause an increase of annual international visitors, . . . higher foreign exchange earnings, and [an increased] . . . number of direct and indirect tourism-related jobs.”<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/loan-credits/2009/06/30/ethiopia-sustainable-tourism-development-project> (accessed on March 30, 2014).

²¹⁹Interview with Berhanu Yohannes, Sustainable Tourism Infrastructure Project.

quality of life of the community. The analysis identified a number of impacts on the local community, both positive and negative. The positive impacts include: (a) the continued use of the churches for worship as a result of the support of UNESCO and its partners (international donors and heritage organizations, such as the World Monuments Fund), who carried out critical restoration work, and (b) the protection of its Outstanding Universal Value and local cultural values for the benefit of future generations as a result of the continuation of traditional religious practices that contribute to the site's 'feeling' and 'spirit of place.'

While the conservation of the tangible and intangible heritage enhanced the site's attractiveness as a heritage tourist destination, it also produced negative impacts, such as a diminished sense of place, authenticity and integrity. In the case of Lalibela, the need to resettle residents to an area outside the historical setting of the Rock-hewn churches in order to protect the site. However, this led to the deterioration of a number of the *tukuls* within the historical setting. As a result of the resettlement process, there was a decrease in the domestic activity, a form of intangible cultural heritage, associated with the former residents' daily life.²²⁰ The increase in tourism also threatened to lessen the 'quality of experience' of the site of local worshippers and pilgrims as a result of disturbances

²²⁰Interview with Mengistu Gobezie, lecturer, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, April 2, 2014. According Mr. Gobezie, in the past, there was a separation of the secular and spiritual spheres of life in order to maintain the spiritual values of the site. This justified the resettlement process as the displacement of the residents from the *tukuls* within the historic setting to another area outside the buffer zone secured the spiritual value of the site by respecting traditional norms that relegated daily activities to an area at a distance from the churches.

Impact of Conservation Activities at Lalibela on the Property and the Community			
CATEGORY	INPUT	OUTCOME	COMMUNITY IMPACT
Strength	Use of 'conventional approach' with multi-level financial and technical assistance for the conservation of the World Heritage site.	Little community involvement; however, safeguarding of churches for worship and development as support as tourist destination.	Churches preserved for continued use by local worshippers and pilgrims; church leadership involved in planning process as site 'owner.' Job creation through site projects and tourism development.
Weakness	Lack of a Heritage Impact Assessment as part of the planning for the development of tourist infrastructure at the World Heritage site.	Inadequate protection of the <i>tukuls</i> as contributing features to the World Heritage site, leading to potential deterioration and loss, due to lack of regular maintenance.	Loss of housing options; lessening of the site's 'spirit' and sense of place, due to loss of (a) architectural values, associated with the <i>tukuls</i> and (b) intangible cultural heritage values, associated with domestic activities in the historical setting.
Opportunity	Adoption of a values-led approach and engagement of traditional site users (local worshippers and pilgrims as well as clergy) in design and implementation of a site management plan.	Increased participation of 'tradition-bearers,' leading to the sharing of knowledge about practices associated with the traditional care and use of the site.	Valorization of cultural values, reinforced community engagement in the site's care and protection, and increased sense of pride as well as possible income-generating opportunities for 'tradition-bearers,' a specialized segment of the community.
Threat	Over-estimation of the site's carrying capacity in terms of numbers and types of visitors and inadequate planning to accommodate the needs of traditional site uses and tourists.	Excessive number of visitors leading to crowding and wear-and-tear on the historic fabric of the site and a diminished experience of the site by local worshippers as well as tourists.	Lessening of the 'quality of experience' of the site by local worshippers and pilgrims as well as on the 'spirit,' 'feel' and 'sense of place' that contribute to its 'authenticity' and 'integrity,' and its 'outstanding universal value.'

Table 1. Impact of Conservation Activities at Lalibela on the Property and the Community [Source: Data adapted from UNECSO World Heritage Centre State of Conservation Reports on Lalibela, 1997 to 2013]

during religious services or personal worship²²¹ and wear-and-tear on the historical fabric from the increased number of visitors to the site.²²²

In Lalibela, when the residents of the vernacular buildings, or *tukuls*, on the site moved away, the municipal and church authorities developed a compatible use for the site that replaced the original plan to create handicraft production workshops and craft shops on the sites in place of the residence. A number of the *tukuls* were rehabilitated to provide housing and classrooms for deacons and priests, studying and teaching at the local theology school, while others are workshops for priests, creating traditional paintings,²²³ which may compensate for the loss of the domestic activity mentioned above by bringing new life to the historical setting in the form of religious and artistic practices. However, a separate downstream effect of the site's designation as World Heritage and development as a tourist destination that did not come out of the SWOT analysis is the decline in the number of theology students in Lalibela, which may result in fewer priests to serve as spiritual guides as well as custodians of the church site.²²⁴ This unintended consequence of the site's development will be considered in chapter 7 as part of the conclusions concerning the relationship of intangible cultural heritage between Outstanding Universal Value at living, religious World Heritage sites. The impact of

²²¹Ibid.

²²²<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/18/soc/2012>.

²²³Ibid.

²²⁴Interviews with an eco-tourism organization manager and van owner/guide.

World Heritage designation on the Harar Jugol and its community is the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER V CONSERVATION OF HARAR JUGOL, THE FORTIFIED HISTORICAL TOWN

The fortified, walled area of Harar, called the *Jugol*, whose history stretches back over a thousand years, is known for its early links to Islam as well as to trade. Situated in the eastern highlands of Ethiopia, Harar sits on a high plateau in a fertile agricultural area, crisscrossed by streams and rivers,²²⁵ shown on the maps in figures 8 and 9.



Figure 8. Harar Jugol, Ethiopia. [Source: <http://www.africanworldheritagesites.org>, 2011.]

²²⁵<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/Ethiopia/1189rev> (last accessed on July 9, 2014).

The term, *Jugol*, refers to the medieval fortification wall as well as to the area that it surrounds. Built in the sixteenth century by Ibn Nur al-Wazir Mujahid, also known as Amir Nur, the wall stands approximately five-meters high and 3,500 meters long. There are five historical gates and one modern gate that correspond to the main roads into the town.²²⁶ The aerial view of the area in figure 9 shows the dense concentration of

ANNEX 4

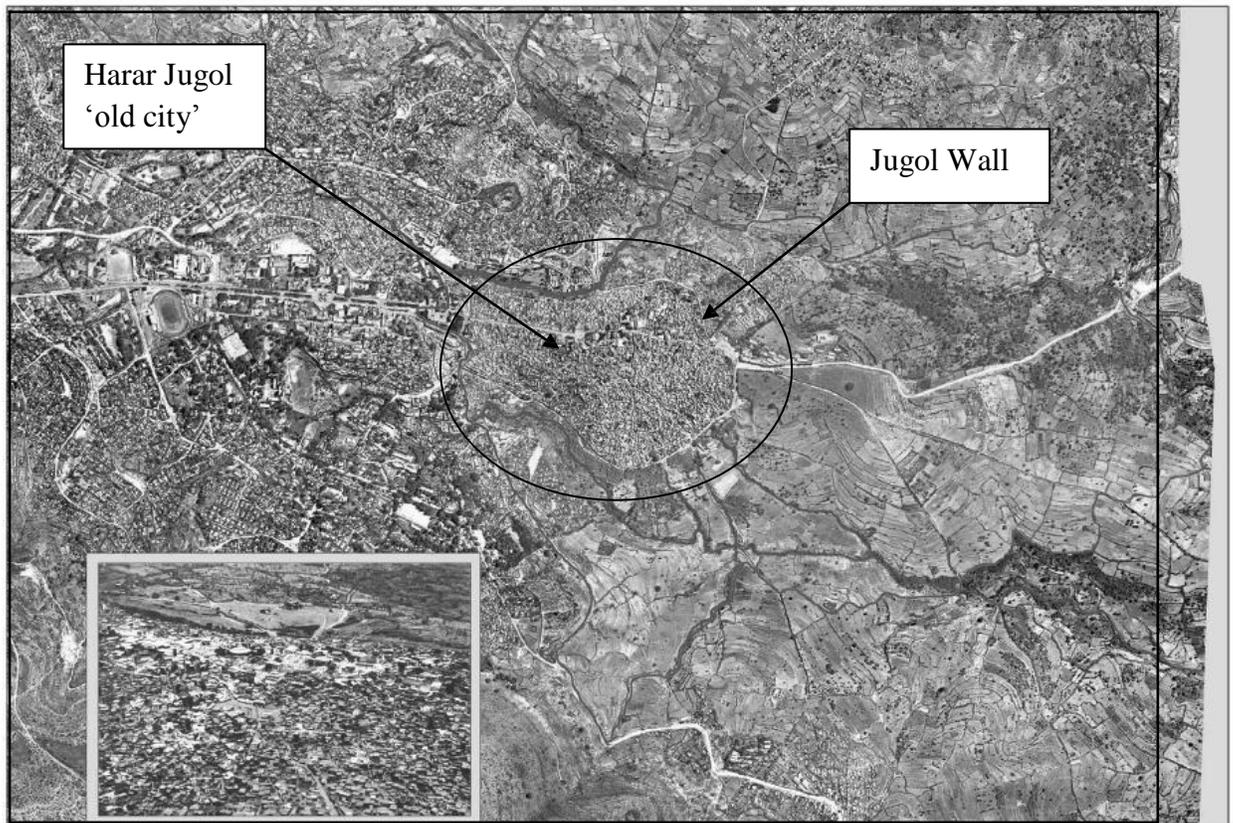
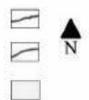


Figure 9. Aerial view of Harar Jugol area with inset of the town center. [Source: UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2006. Labels by the author.]
 Harar Buffer Zone Scale 1:14000
 January 2006



²²⁶Philip Briggs, *Ethiopia* (Guilford, CT: The Globe Pequot Press, 2009), 420.

There are over one hundred mosques and shrines to local saints within the Jugol. Many shrines, such as the one in figure 10, are located in residential compounds, whose occupants serve as caretakers. The traditional Hariri residence is a ‘courtyard house,’ composed of several buildings arranged around a central courtyard with a single gate onto a narrow lane.



Figure 10. Shrine of Amir Nur in Harar.
[Source: The author, 2014.]

These religious and domestic buildings, along with the wall and its historic gates, one of which appears in figure 11, contribute to the architectural and historical significance of the Harar Jugol, which UNESCO inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2006. Because of its association with contemporary Harari life, the Jugol is considered a

‘living’ site. Ancient mosques, dating from the tenth century,²²⁷ correspond to the period when Shaik Abadir, who gave Harar its name, arrived from Arabia.²²⁸ One theory about the origin of the Harari people is that they migrated to the region from Tigray in the



Figure 11. Buda Gate in the Harar Jugol. [Source: The author, 2014]

fourteenth century, nearly four centuries after the establishment of the early Muslim outpost.²²⁹ “Harer came into formal existence in 1520 when a local Amir, [or Emir] Abu

²²⁷<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1189rev>.

²²⁸Mengistu Gobezie, *Heritage Tourism in Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa: Author, August, 2008), 225. An alternate spelling of ‘Shaik’ is ‘Sheikh.’

Baker Mohammed, shifted his capital from Dakar (an old nearby settlement) to the present town [and] ... it became the capital of the Harari kingdom from [then until] 1568.²³⁰

Due to its strategic location at the intersection of two important caravan routes from the Gulf of Aden ports of Zeila and Berbera, “from the late 16th century to the 19th century, Harar was an important trade centre between the coast and the interior highlands [of Ethiopia] and a location of Islamic learning.”²³¹ Mengistu Gobezie and Paul Henze describe Harar as “a center of Islamic religious study and training with influence radiating far into southern Ethiopia [, whose] . . . principal buildings within the city were the Grand Mosque and the emir’s palace . . . [and] several religious shrines, [including] . . . the impressive compound around the tomb of Sheikh Abadir”²³² and its claim to be is the fourth holiest city of Islam after Mecca, Median and Jerusalem.²³³ The city-state went through a period of independence in the seventeenth century, Egyptian occupation in the

²²⁹Paul Henze, *Layers of Time*, (London, UK: C. Hurst, 2000), 114, footnote 63.

²³⁰Gobezie, *Heritage Tourism*, 225. ‘Harer’ is an alternate spelling of ‘Harar.’

²³¹<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1189> (accessed on February 26, 2014); According to Henze, “the rulers of Harar . . . maintained close relations with regional rulers to the east and south. Both traders and rulers had regular contact with Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula through Zeila and Berbera. Harar developed its own currency, The agriculturally rich area . . . produced grain, . . . fruit and vegetables, spices, coffee, and chat. The last two items became major exports along with dyes and ostrich feathers. Harar was a major market for slaves from the Ethiopian southwest.” Henze, *Layers of Time*, 115.

²³²Henze, *Layers of Time*, 115.

²³³Gobezie, *Heritage Tourism*, 227.

late nineteenth century,²³⁴ and then incorporation into the Ethiopian empire, following Emir Abdullahi's defeat by Menelik II at the Battle of Chelenko²³⁵ in 1887.

By annexing Harar, the Ethiopian ruler controlled trade with the French and Italians, establishing concessions within his territory along the Red Sea in the late-nineteenth century. The town attracted foreign merchants.²³⁶ This led to the development of new housing within the Jugol. The Indian businessmen, for example, built two-story residences of stone, wood and stucco that rose above the traditional Harari courtyard houses. Their design and decoration, which reflected the skills of the Indian builders and woodworkers, led to the creation of the hybrid Indo-Harari style in figure 12.

²³⁴Ibid. 225.

²³⁵'Chelenko' is also spelled 'Chelenqo.'

²³⁶The merchants were mostly "Arabs, Persians, Turks, Armenians and Greeks who accepted Islam [and] Argobba traders from the Shoan highlands." Henze, *Layers of Time*, 152.

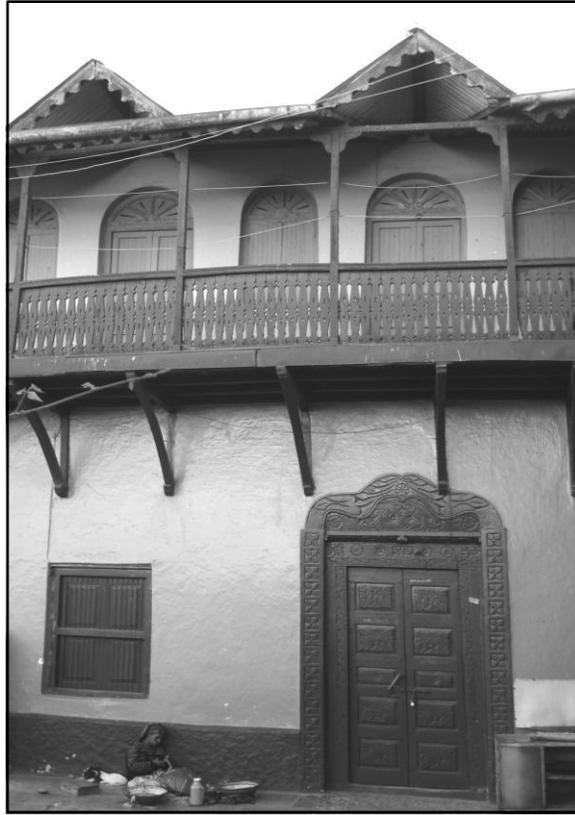


Figure 12. Indo-Harari House. [Source: The author, 2014.]

Early Foreign Accounts of the Harar Jugol

There are few readily-accessible, written accounts of Harar by outsiders, who visited the remote city-state, although, for centuries, it was the access point for trade between two key ports and southeastern Ethiopia and Sudan. According to Geoffrey Last and Richard Pankhurst, “one of the first to describe the Gulf of Aden was the Moroccan explorer, Ibn Battuta, who visited the port of Zeila in 1330. . . . [Then] a century later in 1450, an Italian, Pietro Rombulo, visited Ethiopia.”²³⁷ Although there appears to be no mention of Harar in those accounts, later contact with early Portuguese explorers, such as

²³⁷Geoffrey Last and Richard Pankhurst, *A History of Ethiopia in Pictures from Ancient to Modern Times*, 2nd ed. (Addis Ababa: Arada Books, 2008), 31.

Christavo da Gama, son of Vasco da Gama, in the sixteenth century, brought both firearms and conflict to Ethiopian and Harari rulers.²³⁸

Although the Hararis, “living nearer to the Gulf of Aden ports of Zeila and Berbera... were in a better position than the highlanders to import firearms,”²³⁹ the Ethiopian rulers valued the Portuguese alliance to protect their realm against the Ottoman Empire expanding into the Red Sea area during that period.²⁴⁰ That alliance failed, however, and the Portuguese withdrew around 1525. In retrospect, this was a fateful turning point for Ethiopia because “[a]s soon as the Portuguese embassy left, the Harari leader, Emir Ahmed Gragn, who had acquired firearms, invaded the Ethiopian highlands. Intending to spread Islam, he overran most of the country.”²⁴¹ Along with impoverishing the country, these military campaigns ‘opened the way for the great [northern] migrations of the Oromo’ from the south into the central and northern Ethiopia, whose expansion into Harari territory led to Amir Nur’s decision to build the Jugol fortification wall to protect his capital.²⁴²

The European pursuit of colonies in Africa, particularly in the Horn of Africa, that followed the 1855 General Act of Berlin, led to their interest in the control of the Red Sea

²³⁸Ibid. 33.

²³⁹Ibid. 32.

²⁴⁰Ibid.

²⁴¹Ibid. 33.

²⁴²Ibid., 35. According to Henze, “the walls kept out the Oromo and Somalis, except for trading purposes when they had to surrender their weapons on passing through the city gates.” Henze, *Layers of Time*, 115.

and the Nile.²⁴³ As a result, Italy, France, Britain and Germany sent exploratory expeditions from the Indian Ocean through the Harari region to Sudan and to Addis Ababa and north to the source of the Blue Nile.²⁴⁴ However, commercial interests were another main reason that foreigners wanted to establish links with the emirate; for example, the motive behind an Italian Geographic Society expedition in the late 1800s was trade.²⁴⁵ As a result of the annexation of Harar in 1886 and the defeat of Italian forces in the Battle of Adwa a decade later, Menelik II was prepared to receive foreign emissaries from Italy, France, Britain and Russia,²⁴⁶ as he had accommodated “French and Italian offers to expand trade through the Red Sea ports they had acquired”²⁴⁷ and welcomed Indian entrepreneurs.

During that period, the United States also began to explore and then expand its trade and diplomatic relations with Ethiopia. Since the main export from Ethiopia to the

²⁴³“Menelik signed a treaty with Britain in 1902 in which he gave up all claims to the east bank of the White Nile and in return gave the British a veto over any plan to dam or divert Nile headwaters in Ethiopian territory.” Ibid., 175

²⁴⁴Panel, Photographic Exhibition, Rimbaud House, Harar, viewed on January 31, 2014; Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, 78.

²⁴⁵The expedition leader was “eager to negotiate a treaty of amity and commerce with Menilek.” ‘Menilek’ is an alternative spelling for ‘Menelik.’ Ibid., 78.

²⁴⁶Henze, *Layers of Time*, 154; Last and Pankhurst, *A History of Ethiopia in Pictures from Ancient to Modern Times*, 47.

²⁴⁷“In early 1884 a French warship brought a new French Resident to Obcok, Leonce Lagard, [who, together with] Leon Chefneux, became major players in the trade and politics of the Horn of Africa during the next two decades.” These trade concessions also led to the influx of traders to Harar from India and Pakistan mentioned earlier. Henze, *Layers of Time*, 152-3.

United States in 1902 was coffee²⁴⁸ and Harar was a major producer of a top-grade of *Arabica*, it is likely that before the construction of the rail line between Dire Dawa Djibouti, a considerable amount of the coffee trade went through Harar to Berbera and Zeila. However, after the completion of the first portion of the Franco-Ethiopian railroad in 1903,²⁴⁹ shipments generally went from Harar to Dire Dawa and then by rail to Djibouti, a shift that hastened Harar's eventual decline as a regional commercial center.

Restoration of the Jugol of Harar

Early efforts to restore the Jugol reflected the concerns of foreign invaders, such as the Egyptians, who controlled the emirate from 1875 to 1884, and the Italian Fascists, who occupied Ethiopia from 1936 to 1941. "Deeply concerned with questions of security," the Egyptians, "repaired the walls and parapets, and constructed an entirely new fort on an isolated hill to the north-west."²⁵⁰ During the Italian Occupation, "the western part of the wall was reconstructed and . . . reconstruction of the Buda Gate was also initiated but the work was never completed."²⁵¹ The Italians also added an arcade in one section of the traditional market area and, according to Aalund, built the Harar, or

²⁴⁸Ibid., 176.

²⁴⁹Ibid., 177. Henze also notes that "Djibouti quickly became Ethiopia's main outlet to the sea, eclipsing Berbera, Zeila and Assab after the completion of the railway [from Djibouti to Addis Ababa] in 1917." Ibid., 209.

²⁵⁰Aalund, "Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage," 89.

²⁵¹Ibid.

Duke, Gate as the new main entrance to town.²⁵² In *Harar, A Cultural Guide*, David Vo Van and Mohammed Jami Guleid attribute its construction to Emperor Haile Selassie I in 1933.²⁵³ They are correct since the gate that the Emperor built was enlarged in order to accommodate vehicles during the Italian Occupation.²⁵⁴

For the next twenty years, there appears to have been little restoration work carried out in Harar, only emergency repairs to the fortifications and streets by the municipality and general maintenance and repairs to private homes by their owners. However, when Emperor Haile Selassie I turned his attention to the development of tourism and the creation of the ‘Historic Route’ in the 1960s, he included Harar. Although situated in the east, far from the northern ‘Historic Route’, it is suggested that Harar was of special significance to Emperor Haile Selassie I as his birthplace and the reason that Harar was among the first national heritage sites identified for “preservation ... for their historic, aesthetic and cultural value.”²⁵⁵

As discussed in Chapter III, UNESCO and the Ethiopian Government undertook a joint project between 1975 and 1982 to preserve Ethiopia’s national heritage. The final report of the project cited the following accomplishments, pertaining to the conservation

²⁵²Ibid.

²⁵³“Known initially as the ‘Duke’s portal’ (Emperor Haile Selassie I having made one of his sons Duke of Harar), they called it henceforth the ‘Harar portal,’” David Vo Van and Mohammed Jami Guleid in collaboration with Berhanu Abebe, *Harar, A Cultural Guide* (Addis Ababa: Shama Books, 2007), 10.

²⁵⁴Interview with an expert on Harari culture on April 12, 2014.

²⁵⁵UNESCO, “Preservation and Presentation of Selected Sites and Monuments,” 1.

of the Harar *Jugol*: two surveys of the old town and traditional houses²⁵⁶ and “a report on the technical and historical aspects of Harar architecture . . . and selected monuments . . . so as to prepare restoration work plans.”²⁵⁷ The survey of the traditional houses indicates the project’s recognition of the architectural significance of the town’s vernacular domestic architecture as contributing elements to the Jugol, along with its religious structures. Following the survey, the team assisted with: [1] the design of “a complete master plan . . . for the restoration and development of the historic city centre; . . . , [2] [the selection of] one old traditional house . . . as a model technical restoration project;”²⁵⁸ [3] [the formation of] a committee for the preservation of the city of Harar; and [4] the conversion of a traditional house into a museum.²⁵⁹ It also suggested the collection of “necessary documents on the kinds of houses, their use, state of preservation and social aspects.”²⁶⁰

These activities laid a foundation for the Master Plan, which continues to inform heritage conservation efforts in Harar. Throughout the Master Plan, Aalund clearly described the conditions he observed and made recommendations for immediate action that he considered essential to prevent further damage to the town’s historic plan and its built heritage resources, including the fortification wall and its gates, the sacred structures, traditional Harari houses, and marketplaces. According to Aalund, “the over-

²⁵⁶Ibid. 18.

²⁵⁷Ibid. 5.

²⁵⁸Ibid.

²⁵⁹Ibid. 12.

²⁶⁰Ibid. 28.

all historic importance of Harar town and the architectural merits of traditional housing would justify... rehabilitation as part of Ethiopia's cultural heritage programme."²⁶¹

The Master Plan emphasized the importance of legal protection for the entire area through national legislation on heritage preservation, noting that "it would be desirable to designate the whole of the walled town and the immediate surroundings as a 'conservation area', and to draw up regulations designed to give the historic area a better chance of surviving as an entity, instead of being gradually eroded in the process [of] development."²⁶² Aalund recommended a values-led, holistic and integrated approach to the entire area's preservation, similar to that of cultural landscape and historic district preservation.

By defining the Harar Jugol as a living 'historic district', rather than a collection of historic buildings, the Master Plan acknowledged the basic needs of its residents and included those needs in the overall conservation strategy as well as the protection of the defining characteristics of the historical plan and fabric within the area. In terms of the town's infrastructure, since there appeared to be a safe, adequate supply of water piped in from outside the city wall, he deemed the use of pit latrines suitable for the traditional houses. However, Aalund recognized the need to improve sanitary conditions within the old city and recommended the engagement of a sanitary engineer "to assist in drawing up

²⁶¹Aalund, "Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage," 92.

²⁶²Ibid.

plans for storm-water drainage and to plan the construction of public toilets and septic tanks for renovating the central market buildings.”²⁶³

Overall, the plan sheds light on the dire conditions of the *Jugol*'s traditional vernacular architecture at the time, noting that:

[t]he houses of the old town are extremely vulnerable to deterioration caused by water, either in the form of rising damp or of rainwater penetrating into the wall structures. During the heavy rains of 1983, 68 houses collapsed completely, and 300 houses are now considered unsuitable for habitation, affecting about 1700 people in the old town (50 of those houses are privately owned, while 250 are under public administration.”²⁶⁴

The situation, however, was primarily the result of a specific policy of the regime that had a detrimental effect on Harar's historical fabric as well as on much of Ethiopia's historical urban vernacular architecture: the nationalization of all urban land and 'extra' houses, under which "owners [were] allowed to retain only one house of their choice.”²⁶⁵ The implementation of this policy led to the transfer of nearly seventy percent of the houses within the *Jugol* to the authorities, where they were "administered by the public sector which [charged] very low rents...in accordance with the policy of providing the widest possible range of social benefits to the people.”²⁶⁶ The upkeep of these historical structures suffered, as seen in figure 13, when it became a public responsibility for which "the return [was] barely sufficient to cover the regular needs of maintenance and repair...[and] for which tenants themselves [invested] very little...as they [perceived] no

²⁶³Ibid. 92-3.

²⁶⁴Ibid. 91.

²⁶⁵Ibid. 90; Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855 to 1991*, 243.

²⁶⁶Ibid. 90.



Figure 13. Deteriorated, historical Indian-style house. [Source: The author, 2014.]

long-term advantage in upgrading their accommodation.”²⁶⁷ Nonetheless, the Harar Jugol remains “one of the rare examples of a still intact pre-industrial town,” according to Jara Haile Mariam of the Ethiopian Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage.²⁶⁸ While the deterioration of its historical vernacular architecture is a persistent threat nearly a decade after the town’s inscription on the World Heritage List, municipal

²⁶⁷“No reliable records of the state of housing in Harar are . . . available, but the situation has undoubtedly reached a critical stage, calling for urgent action.” Ibid.

²⁶⁸Agnes Bardon in collaboration with Francis Anfray, “Harar: Behind Closed Doors,” UNESCO Courier, July-August 2006 (Paris: UNESCO, 2006), <http://whc.unesco.org/en/publications/1915801e1-15.pdf> (accessed on March 1, 2014), 8.

authorities and their partners strive to find and implement solutions for restoring its many publicly- and privately-owned residential properties. The results of these efforts are discussed in the following section on the management of the property since its designation as a World Heritage site.

Management of the Harar Jugol as a World Heritage Site

In the justification of its inscription as a cultural World Heritage site, the evaluation of the Harar Jugol nomination identified criteria ii, iii, iv, and v²⁶⁹ that it defined as follows:

Criterion (ii) states that the historic town of Harar Jugol exhibits an important interchange of values of original Islamic culture, expressed in the social and cultural development of the city enclosed within the otherwise Christian region. Such influences have been merged with traditions that relate to the inland of Africa and particularly to southern Ethiopia, giving a particular characteristic form to its architecture and urban plan.

Criterion (iii) states that the Harar Jugol bears exceptional testimony to cultural traditions related to Islamic and African roots. It is considered “the fourth holy city” of Islam, having been developed by a holy missionary from the Arabic Peninsula. Though a trading place and thus a melting pot of various influences, Harar has been in relative isolation in its region, contributing to a cultural specificity, expressed in its characteristic community structure and traditions, which are still alive.

Criterion (iv) states that Harar Jugol is an outstanding example of a type of architectural and urban ensemble which illustrates the impact of African and Islamic traditions on the development of specific building types. The building

²⁶⁹The definitions of the criteria are: (iii) to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared; (iv) to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history; and (v) to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change.” <http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/> (last accessed on May 4, 2014).

types and the entire urban layout reflect these traditions, which give a particular character and even uniqueness to Harar Jugol; and

Criterion (v) states that Harar Jugol with its surrounding landscape is an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, representative of cultural interaction with the environment. The social and spatial structure (afocha) and the language of the people all reflect a particular and even unique relationship that there developed with the environment. The cultural and physical relationships with the territory have survived till today, but they are also vulnerable to irreversible change under the impact of the modern globalizing world.²⁷⁰

The Harar Jugol is a compact area of approximately forty-eight hectares.²⁷¹ According to the UNESCO World Heritage Center, it is Harar's courtyard houses, as seen in figure 12, and their interior decoration, as seen in figure 14, that give the town its special quality:

*Harar Jugol, said to be the fourth holiest city of Islam, numbers eighty-two mosques, three of which date from the tenth century, and one hundred and two shrines, but the townhouses with their exceptional interior design constitute the most spectacular part of Harar's cultural heritage. The impact of African and Islamic traditions on the development of the town's building types and urban layout make for its particular character and uniqueness (my italics).*²⁷²

Although as a historical city, Harar was famous as a center of Islamic learning and of trade, first UNESCO-Ethiopian Government project in 1982 recognized the cultural and architectural values expressed in the urban plan and the traditional courtyard houses that was reiterated in the Master Plan of 1985 and the evaluation of the World Heritage

²⁷⁰<http://whc.unesco.org/en/Ethiopia/1148rev>.

²⁷¹Ibid.; According to the 1994 census, the urban population of the Harari People's State was 76,378; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harar (accessed on May 6, 2014). In 2005, the Central Statistical Agency estimated the population to be approximately 122,000. www.ethiopia.gov.et/stateharari (accessed on May 6, 2014).

²⁷²<http://whc.unesco.org/en/Ethiopia/1148rev>.

nomination. As a complex ensemble of defining features, the site's conservation requires the support of multiple stakeholders. These include the local and regional authorities, affiliates of national government institutions, such as ARCCH and the regional tourism bureau, religious leaders, associations of the elders, or *afotcha*,²⁷³ and property and business owners, whose diverse needs and interests require recognition, understanding and consideration during the development and implementation of the site's conservation strategy.

In order to grasp the manner in which important decisions are made, diffused and implemented, it is important to understand the basis of social relationships in Harari culture. "The historic town has a traditionally functioning community, forming a complex social environmental whole where each element has its symbolic and practical significance."²⁷⁴ These elements, or relationships, are the underpinning of a society in which individuals belong to several types of groupings that are fundamental to his or her identity as well as to the overall identity of the town.²⁷⁵ The neighborhoods within the town play an important role in its social organization. They correspond to the five historic gates associated with the main roads to the town that divided the city in the past."²⁷⁶

²⁷³With separate institutions for men and women, the *afotcha* is "a self-help network...with its rules, its penalties" and elected management. An alternative spelling of *afotcha* is *afocha*. Vo Van and Guleid with Abebe, *Harar, A Cultural Guide*, 75.

²⁷⁴<http://whc.unesco.org/en/Ethiopia/1148rev>.

²⁷⁵Vo Van and Guleid with Abebe, *Harar, A Cultural Guide*, 74.

²⁷⁶According to UNESCO, "this division is not functional anymore;" however, Vo Van and Guleid with Abebe refer to "the five big districts...[which], in turn, make up a sum of *tayatch* (blocks of houses), which ...contain a number of *abatatch*." <http://whc.unesco.org/en/Ethiopia/1148> (accessed on February 24, 2014).

The smallest unit within the neighborhood is the *abat*, or group of *gar*, or houses around a common courtyard.²⁷⁷ According to Vo Van and Guleid, within that housing arrangement, a distinct type of *afotcha* developed, called the *gar afotcha*, that imparts certain rights and responsibilities to those living within that shared domestic space.²⁷⁸ The complexity of these social relationships is reflected in the way that decisions are taken about the management of the Harar Jugol and diffused to the general community. In describing the role of the different social groupings in the decision-making process, the curator of the Rimbaud House, Abdulnasr Garad, explained that the mayor and local council consult the *afotcha* leadership during the decision making process about actions affecting Jugol inhabitants. Information about these decisions is then exchanged every Friday at the main mosque and relayed to those who attend services at the smaller mosques by their *imam*, or clergy. In this way all members of the community are well informed about developments within the walled-town.²⁷⁹ It is a hierarchal system in which community members engage in consultation at different levels and pass their concerns about community matters upward through the imam and *afotcha* leadership to the local council.

²⁷⁷Vo Van and Guleid with Abebe, *Harar, A Cultural Guide*, 75. The *gey gar* is a term referring to a house in the Harar *Jugol*. 16.

²⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 75.

²⁷⁹Interview with Abdulnasir Garad on February 1, 2014.



Figure 14. Traditional Harari living room. [Source: The author, 2014.]

Linking Community to the Long-term, Sustainable Conservation of the Jugol

Although there are no State of Conservation reports available on the UNESCO World Heritage Center website for the Harar Jugol, it was possible to obtain a sense of the issues related to the conservation of the site through meetings with local and regional officials and others involved in the management of heritage sites, such as museum directors. According to the ARCCH Regional Office in Harar, Abdulnasir Edris, it is important to involve the Harar community in the heritage conservation program because its focus is on the restoration of the traditional houses that are, for the most part, privately

owned and public funds are insufficient to cover the cost of all the required restoration work.²⁸⁰ The historical mosques are maintained by their congregations and the shrines by the families, who act as their custodians.

Increasing community awareness about heritage principles and practices in order to gain support for preservation activities is an important factor in the heritage conservation program. Since the cost of preservation is a burden on the community, awareness raising has to be combined with demonstrating the benefit of repairing and maintaining a home using traditional methods and materials; for example, rebuilding a flat roof with wood and mud, rather than covering it with iron sheeting, a less expensive means of repair. Private investment is considered critical to the success of the official heritage conservation strategy because, over the long term, providing subsidies for restoration work is unsustainable. Therefore, the best approach is deemed to be showing property owners how they might benefit from restoring and maintaining their homes through demonstrations of successful restoration and adaptive use, such as the creation of guest-rooms for tourist home-stays in traditional Harari-style houses.²⁸¹

Prior to its official recognition by UNESCO, Harar had maintained its historical configuration and fabric and thereby protected its cultural authenticity. However, since its designation as a World Heritage site, the community living within the *Jugol* has benefitted in many ways and local inhabitants are increasingly supportive of official undertakings with regard to the preservation of various historical sites under public

²⁸⁰ Interview with Abdulnasir Edris, ARCCCH Regional Office, Harar, on January 30, 2014.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

control, such as the wall, its gates and certain houses. The goal is to ensure that all of the houses, restored through bi-lateral agreements between the Ethiopian authorities and donor nations, such as Menen House in figure 15, serve the Harari community and visitors equally.²⁸²



Figure 15. The recently-rehabilitated Menen House. [Source: The author, 2014.]

²⁸²Ibid. Among the donors actively supporting Harar's heritage conservation program are the French, Spanish and American diplomatic missions to Ethiopia.

Throughout the Jugol, in addition to the traditional Harari courtyard houses, there are many Indian- or mixed Indo-Harari-style houses. These buildings generally have two stories with enclosed balconies protruding over the street and open balconies over the interior courtyard. The door and window frames and balcony railings are made of carved wood. They also have a grouping of individual structures around the central courtyard that is typical of traditional Harari residences. The Ras Tafari House and Rimbaud House, in figures 17 and 18, are examples of the Indo-Harari and Indian styles respectively. These buildings, together with Menen House, currently serve as museums, libraries, exhibition spaces, tourist information centers and/or offices. They also have handicraft workshops, demonstration space and shops in auxiliary buildings in their courtyards, over the street and open balconies over the interior courtyard, as indicated in table 2.

The findings in table 3 are the results of a SWOT analysis, assessing the impact of heritage conservation activities on the property and the community since the listing of the Harar *Jugol* as a World Heritage site in 2006. The objective of the analysis is to determine the downstream effects of the heritage conservation strategy, including local participation, or lack thereof, in its planning and implementation, on the Outstanding Universal Value of the site and the quality of life of the community. The analysis identified a number of impacts on the local community, both positive and negative. In addition to the increased respect for the architecture of the Harar Jugol and a renewed sense of pride among local inhabitants, the positive impacts of the World Heritage listing include: (a) the continued use of the historical properties for the benefit of the local community, following their rehabilitation and adaptive use to serve as administrative

offices and tourist venues (museums, a welcome center, handicraft workshops and shops), with financial support from UNESCO and bi-lateral donors; and b) the protection of the site’s Outstanding Universal Value and the transmission of local cultural values to future generations as a result of the continuation of traditional practices,

Rehabilitation Projects at Historical Buildings in Harar Jugol			
Date of origin/ Date of Restoration	Name of House/Type	Institutional Assistance	Current Use
Early 20 th Century/completed in 1999 ²⁸³	Rimbaud House/ Indian-style	French Government	Museum/library/ exhibition and research center/handicraft production and sales
Late 19 th -early 20 th Century/ Begun ca. 2008; not completed ²⁸⁴	Ras Tafari Makonnen House/ Eclectic Harari-Indian- style	American Government (Ambassador’s Fund for Cultural Programs); private donations	Private museum/ archive/book binding workshop/Harari music preservation studio
During Egyptian Occupation (1875- 84)/ completed in 2014	Menen House/ Eclectic colonial/Indian style	Spanish Government	Regional Tourist Office/Handicraft Demonstration Center and Sales ²⁸⁵

Table 2. Rehabilitation Projects at Historical Buildings in Harar Jugol.
[Source: UNESCO World Heritage Centre and the Regional ARCCH Office.]

²⁸³Vo Van and Guleid with Abebe, *Harar, A Cultural Guide*, 26.

²⁸⁴Interview with Abdullah Sharif, Private Museum Owner/Director, at Sharif Museum/Ras Tafari Makonnen House, on January 31, 2014.

²⁸⁵Guided visit to Menen House by the author, January 31, 2014. According to UNESCO, the Harari people are distinguished by the continued cultural traditions and the quality of their handicrafts, including weaving, basket making and book binding. Its traditional systems of social organization have contributed to the preservation of its social and physical inheritance, including, significantly, the Harari language.
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/Ethiopia/1148> (accessed on February 25, 2014).

associated with domestic activities, such as the interior decoration of Harari homes, and spiritual activities, related to the regular upkeep and use of the mosques and shrines; and c) job creation, related to the development of the tourism industry and training in traditional building skills.



Figure 16. Restoration of the Muhammadally House. [Source: The author, 2014.]

In addition to the loss of housing within the Jugol for local residents, the negative impacts include (a) a diminished sense of place, authenticity, and integrity as a result of the deterioration or loss of the vernacular architecture within the historical setting. The displacement of local residents, due to the loss of housing options, in turn leads to the loss of the intangible cultural heritage related to Harari daily life, which diminishes the feeling of the site and its Outstanding Universal Value; and (b) a lessening of the ‘quality

Impact of Heritage Conservation Activities at the Harar Jugol on the Site and the Local Community			
Category	Input	Outcome	Impact
Strength	Multi-level and multi-sector engagement in decision-making process to protect site's historical contributing features (wall, lanes, buildings).	Community-wide awareness-raising about the World Heritage program and its requirements through traditional communication channels, i.e. the <i>afotcha</i> .	Increased community respect for regulations to protect site's historical fabric. Renewed sense of pride in the historic town setting and its history and culture.
Weakness	Insufficient public funding to subsidize private restoration activities of historical buildings and other structures that are contributing elements of the site.	Property owners' use of non-historic materials -metal roofing and cement- to repair private homes that are less costly than traditional materials and methods. Loss of historic fabric within the site.	Erosion of the site's integrity, authenticity and sense of place.
Opportunity	Increased funding for public restoration and rehabilitation activities.	Donor (international, bi-lateral, and private) aid with rehabilitation of publicly-owned properties for adaptive use and creation of demonstration sites.	Increased awareness of (1) importance of using appropriate methods and materials and (2) opportunities for income-generation through suitable, adaptive use.
Threat	Demolition-by-neglect, damage to historical fabric of vernacular architecture from inappropriate repairs.	Loss of historical residential component.	Loss of local housing options. Lessening of sense of place from loss of architectural value and loss of intangible cultural heritage associated with domestic life in the Jugol.

Table 3. Impact of Heritage Conservation Activities at the Harar Jugol on the Site and the Community. [Source: UNESCO World Heritage Programme documents and interviews.]

of experience’ of local inhabitants. Known for their warm hospitality and friendliness, the Harari people welcome visitors interested in their culture. The comparison of the outcomes of heritage conservation activities in Harar with those in Lalibela will inform the recommendations in the conclusion in the following chapter.



Figure 17. Adaptive Use of the Restored Ras Tafari House as a Private Museum. [Source: The author, 2014.]



Figure 18. Rimbaud House Museum. [Source: The author, 2014.]

CHAPTER VI INTEGRATED ACTION FOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN ETHIOPIA

The 2013 edition of the *Operational Guidelines for the Management of UNESCO World Heritage Sites* provides a lens with which to examine the role of the community in the management of the World Heritage sites at Lalibela and Harar. As explained in Chapter II, in addition to “[ensuring] the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value [and supporting] the wider conservation of natural and cultural heritage,” the *Operational Guidelines* recommend that “legislation, policies and strategies affecting the World Heritage properties should . . . *promote and encourage the active participation of the communities and stakeholders concerned with the property as necessary conditions to its sustainable protection, conservation, management and presentation* (my italics).”²⁸⁶ This guidance acknowledges “the shift in the heritage sector from simple physical protection to a more layered approach to management that takes into account social, economic and environmental concerns . . . [and] provides a basis for giving heritage a function in the life of the community.”²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶<http://whc.unesco.org/en/op-guide13-en.pdf> (last accessed on December 12, 2013), 29.

²⁸⁷Wijesuriya Gamini, Jane Thompson and Christopher Young, *Managing Cultural World Heritage* (Paris: UNESCO/ICCROM/ICOMOS/IUCN, 2013), 4.

At living heritage properties that occupy a significant place in community life, there is an additional concern about the continuity of customary activities linked to the site. This treatise acknowledges that as the importance of recognizing the relationship between the site and the tradition bearers by according them a place among community stakeholders involved in the decision making process about the property's conservation. Their inclusion will often lead to important knowledge about past practices regarding the site's conservation.

The case studies on Lalibela and Harar demonstrated how the need to raise awareness about and engage the community in the protection and presentation of the site is different than it would be at an ancient site or a ruin no longer serving a purpose in contemporary life. Whereas each property has distinctive architectural features, their significance is attributed to their manifestation of centuries-old human values and cultural traditions, rather than to a refined architectural design. As described in Chapters IV and V, the vernacular domestic structures associated with the historical religious architecture are important contributing features to their Outstanding Universal Value. On the one hand, at Lalibela, while the monolithic churches are the primary feature of the historic site, in its evaluation, ICCROM designated the *tukuls*, or traditional houses within the historical setting, as highly significant contributing elements. On the other hand, at Harar, the evaluation describes the traditional Harari houses, along with the fortification wall, as the site's primary feature, with the religious structures of secondary importance.

Although there is no mention of 'spiritual meanings' in the criteria justifying the Lalibela and Harar nominations, the two sites figure among the "historic cities [and towns] on the List [that] possess components of religious significance and are recognized as holy cities

by different communities.”²⁸⁸ As living religious heritage, each has “characteristics, grounded in the spiritual and cultural practices of local ‘tradition-bearers’ or ‘custodians,’ that distinguish it from other forms of heritage.”²⁸⁹

Living Cultural World Heritage Sites as Tourist Destinations

The discussion about the linkage between Ethiopian cultural heritage sites and tourism in Chapter III indicated that, as early as the 1960s, UNESCO and the Ethiopian Government recognized the significant contribution that cultural, or heritage, tourism could make to the country’s economic growth. The initial period of activity to create heritage-centered tourist destinations reflected a top-down approach to economic development that required professional support for the design and management of airports, hotels, restaurants, and other facilities as well as for the conservation of historical sites and monuments. Following the designation of its first sites as World Heritage, Ethiopia was poised to assume its place in the ‘heritage-scape’.

Through their linkage to the World Heritage ‘brand’, Ethiopian heritage sites had a greater exposure than they did as national cultural heritage sites and, as a result, they began to attract a greater number of international tourists, which in turn bolstered the national economy by bringing in foreign currency.²⁹⁰ Tourism “contributes towards a regional redistribution of economic activities in a country; assists regional development

²⁸⁸“Sacred sites . . . are indeed the oldest protected areas of the planet.”
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/religious-heritage-initiative> (accessed on March 31, 2014).

²⁸⁹Ibid.

²⁹⁰This benefit of tourism is important because it “contributes to the improvement of [the country’s] balance of payments.”Gobezie, *Heritage Tourism*, 31.

and is used to foster local crafts, traditions and customs; and helps to diversify the economy and also creates investment opportunities.”²⁹¹ World Heritage properties become internationally-recognized tourist destinations, however, they have different management requirements than they had as national cultural heritage sites. Those in charge of the sites may or may not be prepared to meet the new challenges in ways that respond to the interests of various stakeholders as well as protect the site.

According to the World Bank, Ethiopia ranks among the poorest nations of the world in terms of per capita income, gross national product and other indicators, such as life expectancy and infant mortality.²⁹² As discussed in Chapter III, the Ethiopian Government is working diligently to improve the national economy and make progress towards the attainment of the United Nations Millennium Development Goal of poverty reduction by 2015. For nearly fifty years, UNESCO and Ethiopia have had a shared vision of the potential of the country’s rich cultural heritage to stimulate tourism that would in turn contribute to national economic growth. Having set a goal to become one of Africa’s top ten international tourist destinations by the end of the decade, the national government is encouraging the development of tourism infrastructure in localities associated with World Heritage sites, including Lalibela and Harar.

²⁹¹Gobezie describes potential social impacts, such as “modernization; . . . pride in . . . national heritage; [and] . . . interest in [conserving] aspects of . . . cultural and natural attractions.” Ibid. 31-32.

²⁹²<http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ethiopia> (accessed on March 30, 2014).

Comparative Analysis of Management Outcomes at Lalibela and Harar

A separate SWOT exercise yielded the results presented in table 4 that inform the following comparative analysis of the outcomes of heritage conservation activities at Lalibela and Harar. In terms of strengths, both World Heritage sites benefitted from external funding and technical support. As a result of the restoration of important elements, including secular as well as religious architecture, local inhabitants were able to continue to use them, which supported both the conservation of the sites' Outstanding Universal Value and the transmission of local cultural values to rising generations. Their development as international tourist destinations resulted in increased employment, both in the tourist industry and in related areas, such as handicraft production and sales.

The analysis also revealed that the heritage conservation activities at Lalibela and Harar produced notable downstream effects on each World Heritage property and community. In order to protect historic structures, the site management plan included a resettlement component: in Lalibela, because of overcrowding and inadequate waste management in the village within the historical setting, and in Harar, because of the risk of collapse of historical houses due to overcrowding and lack of maintenance. In addition to the impact of the inhabitants of each site, the process resulted in a loss of daily domestic activity that diminished the feel and sense of place associated with the site. Although the resettlement caused some dissatisfaction, in general, there were an acceptance that it was necessary in order to protect the World Heritage site and recognition that the overall quality of life was better at the new location, due to access to public infrastructure for water, sanitation, waste management, and roads. In Lalibela, following the resettlement of the inhabitants, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church decided to

Comparative Analysis of Impacts of Heritage Conservation Activities at Lalibela and Harar <i>Jugol</i> World Heritage Sites	
Category	Results
<p>Strengths</p> <p>In Lalibela and Harar, external funding and/or technical support for restoration activities.</p>	<p>In Lalibela: ongoing use of the churches for religious services and pilgrimage and of the <i>tukuls</i>, as theology school and religious painting workshop.</p> <p>In Harar: restoration of the <i>Jugol</i> wall; regular upkeep/use of the shrines and mosques; restoration and use of the traditional Harari courtyard houses, Indo- and Indo-Harari-style houses as private homes and for home-stays, and as museums and for handicraft production and sales.</p>
<p>Weaknesses</p> <p>In Lalibela and Harar, funding constraints.</p>	<p>In Lalibela: Dissatisfaction among residents displaced from living within the site to new housing in another area, due to inadequate monetary compensation.</p> <p>In Harar: Inadequate funding to continue work on demonstration sites or provide subsidies for work on privately-owned buildings). Lack of progress on restorations leading to deterioration of historical vernacular structures listed as contributing features to the World Heritage site. Repairs on private houses using inappropriate materials and methods due to cost difference.</p>
<p>Opportunities</p> <p>In Lalibela and Harar, increased awareness of World Heritage site designation and adoption of a more participatory approach to site management.</p>	<p>In Lalibela and Harar: Sharing of knowledge about the site and its traditional use and maintenance by traditional custodians and in addition to fostering local sense of pride, it will new ways of caring for the site and provide employment opportunities for local people with the skills and interest.</p>
<p>Threats</p> <p>In Lalibela, over-development for tourism and over-estimated carrying capacity.</p> <p>In Harar, lack of compliance with regulations on use of traditional materials/methods to repair vernacular structures</p>	<p>In Lalibela: wear-and-tear on historic fabric and diminished ‘authenticity’ or ‘feel’ for pilgrims/local worshippers and foreign visitors/tourists.</p> <p>In Harar: loss of historic fabric and diminished ‘authenticity’ or ‘sense of place’ of the <i>Jugol</i> area for local inhabitants and foreign visitors/tourists.</p>

Table 4. Comparative Analysis of Impacts of Heritage Conservation Activities at Lalibela and Harar *Jugol* World Heritage Sites [Source: Data from UNESCO World Heritage Centre documents and interviews, 2014.]

use the *tukuls* as classrooms for the theology school and workshops for priests creating religious paintings,²⁹³ activities compatible with their original use as residences.

In Harar, the goal of rehabilitating the traditional houses was to provide a model for private restoration of traditional houses as guest-houses, also a compatible use of those historical structures. Therefore, the overall effect of conservation activities on the Outstanding Universal Value of the sites and the community in both places has been positive in terms of improving the standard of living of certain community residents and improving the overall condition of the sites.

The investment in new infrastructure, such as visitor centers, signals the support of government, religious, and community leaders for the development of the sites as tourist destinations. It is important that national, regional and local leadership seize the opportunity to provide the local population with a thorough understanding of the potential benefits and drawbacks of becoming an international tourist destination. This is especially critical at ‘living’ World Heritage sites, such as Lalibela and Harar, where the presence of foreign visitors may have a detrimental effect on the way local people experience the sites in the course of their spiritual and domestic activities. At this stage, the authorities must work with heritage practitioners and representatives from the religious community and civil society, to assess the carrying capacity of the sites and identify areas where guidelines are needed for tourists that will enhance their experience and protect the site from wear-and-tear from overuse and its traditional users from

²⁹³Interview with Mengistu Gobezie.

frustration and anger, due to crowding during festivals and ceremonies and intrusive practices, such as photography, during religious services.

At both sites, there are ongoing projects to maintain and restore monumental features. According to its May 2014 bulletin, the World Monuments Fund recently signed an agreement with the Ethiopian Government to commence work on the restoration of Gabriel Rufael Church within the World Heritage site at Lalibela with support from the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Affairs provided by the American Embassy in Ethiopia.²⁹⁴ In Harar, within the Jugol area, a number of historical buildings that the municipality rehabilitated through partnerships with international donors currently serve as museums, government offices and a tourist center/handicraft production workshops/gift shops and plans are underway to rehabilitate other historical structures with bi-lateral assistance. In both towns, the development of new hotels and restaurants outside the historical setting of the World Heritage site is the result of private investment.

The findings of the analysis raise questions about the community's role in the management of the Lalibela and Harar World Heritage sites, its right to participate in the decision-making process about the sites' use and the effect of its involvement, or lack thereof, on the conservation of the properties and the continuation of traditional cultural practices at the sites. In Lalibela, as discussed in Chapter IV, local inhabitants not only worship in the rock-hewn churches, but a specific group, composed of the priests, family members, monks and nuns, until recently lived in the *tukuls* in a village in close

²⁹⁴World Monuments Fund, "Signing Ceremony Marks Next Phase at Lalibela," in the World Monuments Fund e-newsletter, dated May 7, 2014, <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs112/1101578329274/archive/1117208327272.html> (accessed on May 4, 2014).

proximity to them, many for generations. In Harar, residents continue to live in *gar get*, or ‘city houses,’ some of which share courtyard space with a shrine, and frequent the numerous mosques in the Jugol. Both communities value their places of worship and their homes. The proximity of these spheres of religious and domestic activity to one another not only influences community interaction with the site, but also contributes to its ‘spirit.’²⁹⁵ Since the adoption of the Nara Document on Authenticity and the Quebec Declaration on the Preservation of the Spirit of the Place, discussed in Chapter II, UNESCO has increasingly emphasized the importance of “safeguarding of the spirit of place, namely [a site’s] living, social and spiritual nature,”²⁹⁶ by recognizing its close association with authenticity. This new understanding of World Heritage sites with religious significance informs the following discussion of the challenges facing the conservation of living World Heritage properties, such as Lalibela and Harar, as they become popular tourist destinations.

Conservation of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage

The 2012 ‘Kyoto Vision: A Call to Action’ addressed “the need for a transformative change to be reflected in the post-2015 development agenda, which would take into consideration the broader picture of human progress beyond GDP.”²⁹⁷ As living cultural heritage sites, rather than ancient ruins of past civilizations, Lalibela and Harar stand to benefit from an increase in community interest in their conservation. The

²⁹⁵<http://whc.unesco.org/en/initiative-religious-heritage>.

²⁹⁶Ibid.

²⁹⁷<http://whc.unesco.org/document/123559>, 11.

continued interaction by local custodians and tradition bearers with the sites would not only enhance their authenticity, but also support their attractiveness to tourists, which in turn would produce cultural as well as material benefits for the community.

As architectural historian Barbara Anderson observes, “[t]raditional cultural properties . . . are deemed significant for their . . . association with cultural practices and beliefs that are (1) rooted in the history of a community,” rather than for their economic benefit to the community, “and (2) are important to maintaining continuity of that community’s traditional beliefs and practices.”²⁹⁸ This perspective resonates within the context of living World Heritage sites, such as Lalibela and Harar, where “attitudes, beliefs, and memories influence personal and group decisions about the way [people] treat places and are often at the root of public debate regarding change within a community.”²⁹⁹ “For this reason,” she asserts, “. . . successful efforts to protect the environs of historic properties must incorporate an appreciation of the cultural meaning of the place”³⁰⁰ and not just their “visual character [which] is only one aspect of sense of place.”³⁰¹

In light of Anderson’s assertions, this treatise recognizes the importance of local tradition bearers and their cultural practices to the long-term conservation of living heritage sites and the need to include them in decisions about site management as well as

²⁹⁸Barbara Anderson, “The Importance of Cultural Meaning in Defining and Preserving Sense of Place,” in *Preservation of What, For Whom?* Michael A Tomlan, editor (Ithaca, NY: The National Council for Preservation Education, 1998), 133.

²⁹⁹Ibid. 133.

³⁰⁰Ibid.

³⁰¹Ibid. 129.

community development. This is especially critical at a time when economic considerations may overshadow heritage conservation concerns and influence planning outcomes so that they favor the development of tourist infrastructure over the adoption of regulations to extend protection of the historical setting to include the broader cultural landscape and view-shed. However, if a recent article by a young British journalist of Ethiopian descent about her pilgrimage to Lalibela³⁰² is indicative of the growing effort by members of the Ethiopian Diaspora to discover the cultural and spiritual values of their ancestral homeland, then it is in the best interest of the country to do everything possible to conserve its cultural heritage sites.

The specialized field of religious or spiritual tourism merits attention as it offers a new area of interest for international and national visitors to Ethiopian national heritage sites, such as the Lake Tana monasteries and the churches of Aksum and Gondar, as well as the cultural World Heritage sites of Lalibela and Harar. Additional areas that merit study are the possibility of combining eco-tourism, adventure travel (trekking in remote areas, village home-stays), and volunteerism and service projects with visits to World Heritage sites. The latter could support heritage conservation goals by enabling tourists with different types and levels of skill to use them to contribute to site conservation.

³⁰²Hewete Haileselassie, "On Pilgrimage: Seeking Refreshment among Ethiopia's Rock-hewn History," *Selamta*, January-February 2014. Volume 31, Number 1. (Charlottesville, VA and Addis Ababa: Published on behalf of Ethiopian Airlines by JourneyGroup+C62, LLC), 44-51.

Heritage Conservation and Public Policy

The ‘Kyoto Vision: A Call for Action,’ stresses the need for community empowerment in order “to address the challenges currently facing all regions of the world, through increasing demographic and development pressures, global financial crises and climate change.” In this statement, UNESCO summons the community to action on its own behalf to meet the requirements of an uncertain future. The emphasis on ‘self-sufficiency’ aligns with an appreciation of the fact that throughout generations, tradition bearers cared for World Heritage sites, using the knowledge and practices they possessed to ensure their conservation.³⁰³ It also coincides with an awareness of the need for increased local autonomy in the management of World Heritage sites. The ‘Kyoto Vision’ broadens the heritage conservation mandate not only to embrace “a holistic approach . . . to save exceptional sites from destruction or neglect, but also *to demonstrate, through appropriate conservation and management, strategies and a development model based on the values of continuity* (my italics)”³⁰⁴ that it can share with the world community to inform other development programs.

In this treatise, I argue that a top-down and/or conventional approach to heritage conservation is no longer adequate. Instead, long-term strategies for the sustainable and equitable management of the historical built environment require a grassroots, values-led approach that enables community participation to the fullest extent possible. In order to succeed, this type of process requires giving people the opportunity to “to influence their

³⁰³<http://whc.unesco.org/en/document/123559>, 11.

³⁰⁴Ibid.

lives and future, participate in decision making and voice their concerns.”³⁰⁵ However, the listing of a cultural heritage site or landscape as a World Heritage property often produces differing visions for its conservation and use: one, aesthetic, focused on the protection of its Outstanding Universal Value for the enjoyment of future generations; the other, practical, concerned with the site’s development as an international tourist destination with the dual purpose of promoting economic growth and improving the country’s image abroad.

The use of heritage in national development strategies is not a new concept. With tourism recognized as a major growth industry in the twenty-first century and cultural tourism representing a significant share of its growth, World Heritage sites around the world are attracting ever-increasing numbers of visitors, thereby becoming important ‘assets’ in the tourism development strategies of developing countries, particularly in Africa, where they are often a major source of foreign exchange. The Ethiopian Government incorporated tourism into its five-year “Growth and Transformation Plan” ending in 2015, partnering with the World Bank on a Pro-poor Tourism Development Strategy. This aligned with the United Nations’ poverty reduction strategy for that period reflected in its Millennium Development Goals. Since these initiatives create a policy environment that affects decisions about the management of Ethiopian cultural World Heritage and other heritage sites, it is crucial that heritage practitioners understand the government’s vision in order to advocate effectively on behalf of the country’s cultural heritage sites and the communities associated with them.

³⁰⁵United Nations, *The Future We Want*, 3.

Strategies for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Ethiopia and around the World

Public Policy Advocacy

Living cultural World Heritage sites, such as Lalibela and Harar, require those involved their management to think strategically and include public policy advocacy in their action plan. An important aspect of policy advocacy on behalf of heritage sites is demonstrating how their conservation contributes to the advancement of government goals for community development and economic growth. As a result, heritage practitioners would benefit from training in economics and public policy advocacy as well as in community mobilization, partnership building and conflict resolution to complement their studies in the heritage conservation field.

Heritage practitioners serve as the site's voice when they advocate for its interests and needs. Together with partners from other sectors such as the environment, agriculture, and tourism, they must communicate information about critical issues facing the heritage site and the local community, especially the tradition bearers, in a timely manner, to public policy-makers and local stakeholders in order to build public awareness. Since they know site boundaries, they are responsible for ensuring the implementation of Heritage Impact Assessments as part of the planning for infrastructure development that would affect the site or its setting. They also understand intergenerational equity and how a site's Outstanding Universal Value and the community's cultural values reinforce one another. They possess a vision of the future of the heritage site and its place in the community that they must share with the multiple stakeholders in order to foster the design and implementation of an effective, long-term, sustainable heritage conservation strategy – one that coordinates with other plans for

local economic development and urban growth. However, to do this, they must build trust with and among their partners and stay informed about current issues. In that way, their heritage conservation efforts will produce a ‘win-win’ outcome for the site and its stakeholders.

Community Involvement

This treatise considers community involvement in terms of the importance of the traditions associated with the World Heritage site and the community’s right to sustain them as well as to participate in decisions about the property’s management and its impact on the local quality of life as well as the potential economic benefit from its development as a tourist destination. This is particularly relevant to living monuments, since the traditions represent contemporary manifestations of cultural values associated past generations that are threatened with loss as modern life disrupts patterns of communal life. Living sites represent a category of World Heritage properties that possess a quality that distinguishes them from others that no longer serve a purpose in contemporary life. This type of site requires a different approach to its conservation than sites of an archaeological nature. It is vital to understand the interconnection between the present-day community and the site. Those sites, where local inhabitants are intimately engaged in carrying out practices traditionally associated with them, require a conservation strategy that places the local community at the center.

Community Development

By adding a layer of meaning to a property, World Heritage listing endows it with a special status. Through its affiliation with the World Heritage brand, the perception of the site’s value changes as a result of its increased recognition as an economic asset.

Suddenly, it is not only a place of local and national significance, but also an international tourist destination. The appreciation of this new dimension leads to changes in the vision of the site's potential contribution to the nation. No longer viewed as a mere repository of traditional cultural values of local, regional and national importance, the site becomes an object of interest to cultural tourists and, as such, a relatively untapped economic resource. Therefore, it is essential that those caring for heritage sites, such as Lalibela and Harar as well as others of lesser renown, step away from their daily endeavors and become actively engaged in identifying the interests of the sites in their charge and the communities associated with them and advocate for public policy that takes into account the sites' needs. In Ethiopia, that means 'walking the walk' of tradition bearers as well as heritage practitioners, while 'talking the talk' of tourism professionals and economists in order to protect the values of the heritage sites and the local community.

When the Ethiopian Government joined together the country's culture and tourism programs under a single ministry, it signaled recognition of the complementarity of the two fields and their contributions to the national development. As the World Bank indicated in "Tourism in Africa: Harnessing Tourism for Growth and Improved Livelihoods," there is a 'flow-through' from tourism development to local economic development that has a 'catalytic effect' on the economy in terms of job creation and other income-generating activity, especially at destinations where World Heritage sites are the focal point.³⁰⁶ According to the study, Ethiopia is considered an emerging country

³⁰⁶Ian Christie, Eneida Fernandes, Hannah Messerli, and Louise Twining-Ward, "Tourism in Africa: Harnessing Tourism for Growth and Improved Livelihoods,"

with potential for growth in the tourism industry.³⁰⁷ The creation of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, demonstrated national-level political will to promote tourism, of which cultural heritage tourism is an important specialized area, to advance its economic growth agenda.

As the United Nations and member-governments assess the achievements of the Millennium Development Goal Challenge laid out in 2000 and deliberate about the requirements of the post-2015 world, there is an important opportunity for those involved in heritage conservation to review their own programs and discuss strategies to move them forward. Now it is time for heritage partners in Ethiopia to work with the national government and its implementing agencies, university architecture, heritage and archaeology departments, and international organizations and other multi- and bi-lateral partners, and international, national and local non-governmental organizations to assess the challenges that they face in their efforts to protect the country's fragile heritage resources at the same time that they are seen as assets in the national effort to alleviate poverty. In order to allow the community to benefit from the synergy that exists between its built heritage and local traditional practices, heritage managers need to recognize natural alliances within the community and encourage stakeholder collaboration to carry out the site's conservation strategy as well as local economic development.

(Washington, DC: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 2014), <http://www.worldbank.org/africa-tourism-report-2013-overview.pdf> (accessed on April 5, 2014); <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/18688> (last accessed on July 6 2014), 95.

³⁰⁷Ibid., 68.

Following the model put forth by the UNESCO World Heritage Programme, those involved in heritage conservation in Ethiopia to celebrate Ethiopian heritage and their achievements over the past fifty years to cultivate political will to protect the country's existing cultural heritage sites, both World Heritage and national properties, and identify new places that merit recognition and conservation. They can use the present four-year period, leading up to the fortieth anniversary of the listing of Ethiopia's first cultural and natural World Heritage sites, the Rock-Hewn Churches at Lalibela and the Simien Mountains National Park, in 2018, to review past activities at the World Heritage sites and identify lessons learned and best practices to inform future strategies. Among major opportunities are the following: the availability of increasing numbers of trained Ethiopian heritage practitioners to work in the field in partnership with outside experts and assume a wide variety roles in site management; the ability to work cross-sectorally in collaboration with environmental and agricultural programs to promote sound environmental practices and local sourcing of agricultural products by hotels and restaurants related to the tourism industry; and the possibility of using new community resources, such as the Lalibela cultural center and Menen House in Harar, to serve the interests of a wide range of inhabitants as well as tourists.

Recommendations for Further Study

Among recommended areas for future research are the impacts of international tourism on Ethiopia's cultural World Heritage sites. This will require the monitoring of programs at Lalibela and Harar and the analysis of data from those areas in order to evaluate outcomes in terms of the downstream effects on the integrity of the heritage sites

and the quality of life of local residents as well as on the local economy. This information will be useful to inform future decisions about tourism and related infrastructure development at the sites and in the surrounding area. In addition, research on community participation and its influence on the effectiveness of a heritage conservation strategy is needed to inform future project design. Finally, the development of the urban core associated with the Lalibela and Harar World Heritage sites in a manner that meets the needs for basic water and sanitation for the population, tourists and other visitors requires further research in order to identify the potential effects of new infrastructure on the historical fabric of the heritage sites, their historical setting and the surrounding area and determine appropriate ways to mitigate them.

Conclusion

Through its support of the transmission of local cultural values as well as the protection of irreplaceable historical built resources, a well-conceived heritage conservation strategy contributes to a virtuous cycle whereby traditional practices associated with the site's integrity and authenticity contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage site. The accomplishment of this objective requires a participatory process that is inclusive and integrated with local development planning. The challenge is to reach out to decision-makers on the one hand and the various groups within the community on the other using a broad-based communication and awareness raising strategy that demonstrates a sensitivity to the concerns and constraints of potential partners, from public policymakers to historically under-represented groups, such as women and youth.

Now is the time to celebrate Ethiopia's living cultural World Heritage sites, to explore new areas of collaboration with national and regional government entities and local stakeholders and to define a heritage conservation agenda that benefits the site and the community. Those committed to heritage conservation in Ethiopia need to enlist international as well as national and local partners in their effort to share their vision with decision-makers in the public and private sectors. Together they must demonstrate how heritage conservation supports the national economic growth strategy as part of the tourism sector and contributes to community development through the valorization of cultural traditions at the same time that it serves the interests of the World Heritage sites in order to ensure their continued existence for the enjoyment of future generations of Ethiopians and those from abroad who have the good fortune to visit them.

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