



CIE–CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL HERITAGE ACTIVITIES

Report on activities, 2022-2023

Submitted by Robert Parthesius, Director

Mission and vision of CIE:

Our mission is to facilitate multidisciplinary cultural heritage projects, to encourage communities to develop skills and capacities for creating their own heritage narratives and to move beyond the Eurocentric origins of the heritage industry. We aim to serve as a catalyst for cultural heritage development worldwide.

CIE fosters co-creative heritage activities and research across the globe, with a focus on the Persian Gulf, South Asia and Eastern and Southern Africa. Its work is focused on creating platforms for discussing the multi-layered nature of heritage, and practical and academic approaches towards community involvement with their heritage.

As an NGO accredited to the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage, many of CIE's projects and programs focus on maritime cultural landscapes, incorporating local, regional and international perspectives that serve heritage management, protection, research, education and promotion. In addition, CIE's initiatives have aimed to promote and encourage ratification of the 2001 Convention and to develop structures for context specific implementation in instances where ratification has already occurred.

Outreach Community Heritage Activities / Capacity Building

The HeritageLab Methodology

- Since 2011, the HeritageLab has developed as a methodological framework that allows researchers, educators, and local communities, particularly from port cities, to work together on recording, analyzing and presenting various layers of heritage. Over the past four years, we have focused on implementing an online platform for HeritageLab, which we see as our future signature program. We expect to launch it in early 2024. (site under construction: <https://heritagelab.center/>). Initiated in 2011, we are proud to say several heritage management professionals and scholars began their

careers working with HeritageLab, and as we bring it online in 2024, we see this as a possibility for members of communities living in heritage sites in places such as Zanzibar, to also craft their heritage skills while empowering their communities to independently become custodians of their cultural memory, providing frameworks, tools, and an online platform.

- Current active heritage site projects include Tanzania (Zanzibar's Stone Town), Mozambique (Island of Mozambique), Israel/Palestine (Jaffa), Turkey (Ahmet Sultan Square), the UAE and India (Kerala) trade route. We also have a project related to shared heritage within the Mediterranean along the intangible heritage of olive oil (The Golden Harvest), project global, looking at the connectivity of heritage through trees and climate change (Tree Routed) and one on recovering the stories of forgotten religious shrines in the Gulf and Indian Ocean (Hubs and Spokes).
- On Delma Island (UAE), Um al Quwain (UAE), Zanzibar and Ilha de Moçambique we work on the maritime and underwater landscape of historic port cities positioned on significant trade routes. Through this platform, we hope communities preserve and promote shared maritime heritage and look towards a future where different communities can come together to consider the past as a means to a sustainable future per UNESCO Conventions.
- HeritageLab also serves as a pedagogical exercise, having most recently produced a book (under review at Routledge) in which emerging scholars personally connected to a WHS consider how UNESCO conventions have and have not benefited the community.

Training and Teaching: United Arab Emirates

In partnership with New York University Abu Dhabi's Shared Maritime Heritage on the Historic and Arabian Trade Routes Programme, which brings together students and experts from across the globe, CIE has supported training and research at community and academic levels. Through this partnership, as part of a broad maritime archaeology/heritage/survey programme, students are provided with heritage management training and archaeological expertise in line with the tenets of the 2001 Convention and UNESCO accredited training curricula.

The programme directly promotes the 2001 Convention as a framework for management and promotion of underwater cultural heritage in the home countries of students. In those instances where home states have already ratified the Convention, students are encouraged to lobby heritage management agencies, museums and academic institutions to further promote and implement the tenets of the Convention and to align national underwater cultural heritage strategies with the document. Where home states have not ratified, students are encouraged to lobby for ratification.

The programme creates capacity in underwater cultural heritage and management that is aligned with the 2001 Convention. On completion of the course, students will return to their home countries and are encouraged to conduct their research activities in line with the Convention and work with heritage management and government authorities to promote and implement practical programmes in line with the Rules in the Annex to the Convention.

As an accredited Nautical Archaeology Society (NAS) training partner, CIE has begun offered NAS training to a team of Emirati nationals and other key stakeholders with an interest in promoting UCH and the 2001 Convention and in developing local capacity.

Experimental Maritime Archaeological Project: The Bronze Age Boats (2018 to present)

The training and promotion of maritime and underwater cultural heritage activities has centred around the experimental construction of two Bronze Age Boats. The project is supported with funding from the Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism, and the expertise of CIE, Zayed University and the Dhakira Center for Heritage Studies at New York University Abu Dhabi. Its guiding purpose is to offer the public and the scholarly community an opportunity to study and become aware of the Gulf region during the Bronze Age, and in particular, the role that maritime technology played in expanding economic, cultural, and political networks from the Gulf to the Indian Ocean. The central goal of this effort is to design and build an 18-meter ship based on the available textual, iconographic, and archaeological evidence. Experimental archaeologists are working with a team of shipwrights from Kerala and relying on their extensive experience with traditional ship construction to build the vessel using natural materials such as native reeds, timber, cordage, palm leaves, and bitumen that were available to Bronze Age boatbuilders in the past. The ships have reconstructed, as closely as possible, the type of vessels that sailed the waters of the Gulf during the Umm an-Nar Period (2,600 – 2,000 BCE) and provides scholars with a clearer understanding of the appearance, structure, carrying capacity, and sailing characteristics of these ancient ships. The larger of the ships will become part of the permanent display at Zayed National Museum when it opens in 2024.

CIE Workshops, Seminars and Conferences:

Preparations for International One Ocean |One Heritage Expert Meeting

Hosted by CIE in partnership with UNESCO, NYU Abu Dhabi's Dhakira Center for Heritage Studies and the Asia Research Institute at National University of Singapore One Ocean |One Heritage Expert Meeting, will reflect and respond to the outcomes of COP 28 in Dubai, Ocean Decade Conference in Barcelona, and the passing of the High Seas Treaty last March. This gathering will bring together 25 ocean heritage scholars, policymakers and practitioners with the aim of fostering interdisciplinary collaboration to address pressing ocean heritage-related challenges. We look towards heritage futures through developing intersecting projects between academics, policy makers, and practitioners, with a focus on community engagement and empowerment.

The framework prioritizes inclusivity, practicality, and the exchange of ideas to address heritage, climate change, and sustainability and find shared paths forward. The workshop's objective is to amalgamate these reflections and thoughts into an overarching goal of finding common language and common ground in ocean heritage. This will serve to identify interdisciplinary projects that illustrate better practices, highlight effective methods, and demonstrate how professionals from multiple disciplines can collaborate. It will explore workable collaborations along the concept of the ocean as shared heritage and shared responsibility in the face of the threats the ocean is facing. Part of the discussion will focus on next steps after the workshop concludes.

Roundtable & Press Conference: The Ocean's Past Shapes Our Future: *Cultural Heritage in Climate Change, COP 28, December 2023.*

This event centered on leveraging insights from underwater cultural heritage to understand past environmental conditions and devising ways to shield humanity's treasures from the perils of climate change. It was a collaborative effort with UNESCO Paris and Cairo, Scripps Institute, and the Ocean Decade Heritage Network (ODHN), aligning with COP 28 goals and Sustainable Development Goals 6, 11.4, 13, and 14.

The panel included Robert Parthesius (CIE) Nuria Sanz (UNESCO Cairo Office), Athena Trakadas (Ocean Decade Heritage Network) and Ulrike Guerin (UNESCO).

Stone Town, Zanzibar Community Workshop January 2023

Three CIE team members, including the director Robert Parthesius, spent a week in Stone Town working with the Women Reclaim, a volunteer group gathering disappearing community stories as the town becomes more and more of a tourist attraction. CIE taught the group member how to develop a digital platform for heritage collection and guided them as they set one up. We also gave them guidance on how to collect and archive oral histories, photos and videos. We also met with local government and religious leaders to help them address their community heritage concerns, as well as concerns about threats to built heritage, as well as cultural heritage, in the face of climate change and tourism. The trip was funded in partnership with Dhakira Center for Heritage Studies at NYUAD.

UNESCO Meeting on Mobilizing Civil Society and the Community for the Cultural Heritage of the Oceans and UN SDG 14 in Kemer, Turkey (May 2022)

CIE participated in the UNESCO/ICOMOS meeting in Kemer. We proposed to organize a conference on the role of Maritime and Underwater Cultural Heritage in the UN–Ocean Decade Program. We agreed on the following theme and principal for both a roundtable at the COP 28 meeting in Dubai and a conference at New York University Abu Dhabi:
“United Nations SDG 14, focused on conservation and the sustainable use of oceans seas and marine resources, is a key element in the Decade of Ocean Science. Cultural Heritage plays a significant role in achieving this goal. As the process by which society interprets its past in the present and as an agent for community and identity formation, cultural heritage is, by definition, both forward facing and future-making. Cultural heritage programs by UNESCO accredited universities and NGOs have access to a unique set of inter- and intra-disciplinary scientific and humanistic data that provides extraordinary insights into past solutions applied to changing environments, the impacts of sea level change and the sustainable management of marine resources and ecosystems. A collaborative institutional interdisciplinary heritage studies methodology gives scientists and social and humanities scholars access to exceptional resources that allows them to tap from traditional knowledge systems and know-how solutions embedded in the world’s collective memory.”

Global Oceans: Mapping Maritime Connections (November 2021)

Ocean spaces and maritime pasts are increasingly relevant as a form of ‘shared heritage’ and are emerging into the mainstream heritage discourse. In recent years, however, this focus has shifted towards a broader perspective on maritime landscapes in which shipwrecks are often perceived as a colonial, dissonant features. In collaboration with Dhakira–Center for Heritage

Studies and NYUAD Institute, this workshop brought together archaeologists, heritage managers and designers from Africa Europe and Asia to open discussions for establishing a foundation for a web-based mapping platform for understanding and analyzing maritime connections through mapping *long duree* elements of historical, archaeological and social data associated with wrecks. The development of maritime archaeology, centered around ships and shipwreck sites, has driven both disciplinary research and heritage management decision-making.

Publications

(Re)Emerging Pasts. Alia Yunis, Robert Parthesius & Niccolò Cappalletto (Eds) (under review at Routledge). This anthology explores the heritage and memory of seven communities that find themselves in contact with the rest of the world when they become authorized heritage sites. The authors explore what happens to practices that are communal, rather than national and international, and to memories that contradict nationalistic agendas in the booming heritage and tourism industries?

Maritime and Underwater Cultural Heritage Management on the Historic and Arabian Trade Routes – Robert Parthesius and Jonathan Sharfman (Eds), Springer Publications, 2021.

This anthology brings together perspectives on maritime and underwater cultural heritage (MUCH) in selected countries around the Indian Ocean rim that are linked by the historic and Arabian maritime trade routes. The chapters explore how selected countries have adapted maritime archaeological and UCH management methodologies rooted in western contexts to their own situation. It assesses how new heritage management burdens have been placed on states by outsiders wishing to conserve their own heritage in foreign waters. To do this, the book gives the floor to some of the stakeholders involved in determining the *process* of developing UCH management and research strategies in non-western contexts. Each has taken a somewhat different approach to management and research and provides unique perspectives on the adaptation of the accepted practices of the disciplines. Authors were selected based on their ability to report on the various approaches that countries/regions have taken to manage and research maritime and underwater cultural heritage in the distinctive contexts within which they work. Authors have focused on questions that address the past, present and future of MUCH in the states and network on the historic and Arabian trade routes.