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# World Heritage Classification and Related Issues—A Case Study of the “Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage”

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## Abstract

In some international organizations and in many countries there have been obvious problems such as an unclear goal, ambiguous concepts, lack of theoretical framework and overlapping extensions in the classification of heritage, particularly in the classification of cultural heritage, and newly proposed typological classifications have even worsened the existing contradictions. This phenomenon shows that the science of heritage studies did not pay attention to its own theoretical framework and failed to build its methodology, bringing about much confusion in research, application and management of the heritages themselves. It is therefore necessary to re-categorize heritages according to their nature and functions, protection methods, management and exhibition requirements dictated by their different nature. In this paper, taking the authoritative “Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage” as example, we analyze the classification issues currently prevailing in heritage circles, state four principles which heritage classification should follow and put forward preliminary thoughts for the classification of heritages. At the same time, by an analysis of currently popular classifications, such as “cultural landscape”, we put forward new definitions of World Heritage categories, and the position it is proposed they take in the overall classification system.

*Keywords:* Heritage, Classification of Heritage, Protection of Heritage

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With the growth of China’s economy, the increase of national financial investment in heritage protection and the promotion of public awareness of heritage protection, heritage and heritage protection have become a major concern for people of all walks of life. Following the intensification of urbanization and industrialization, the contradictions between urban construction and heritage protection are becoming more acute. This has also caused scholars from different disciplines, such as archaeology, museology, geology, geography, environmental studies, architecture, urban planning and landscape to readjust their research orientation towards heritage studies and to respond together to new problems and new challenges. In China, since heritage protection and management as a scientific discipline have had a late start, our researchers hope to utilize the existing experience of international scientific innovations in order to build up our own discipline of heritage studies. The international community emphasizes the elaboration of protection ideas, research and utilization of protection techniques, the formulation of protection laws and regulations, but it still lacks systematic and mature theories and methods which could be used as a common reference, consequently China’s heritage research community not only takes laws and regulations of international organizations and developed countries as its own standards, but also uses terms, concepts and definitions in the documents as terminology and principles for our heritage studies. In fact, these terms, concepts and definitions

present in international laws and regulations, if measured by academic standards, are far from being correct or accurate. Taking the authoritative UNESCO document “Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage” (hereinafter referred to as “World Heritage Convention”) as an example, obvious problems can be found concerning heritage classification and description of different categories. The subsequent “Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention” (hereinafter referred to as “Operational Guidelines”), revised several times, put forward a new heritage category, ‘cultural landscape’. However it did not correct, but has in fact worsened these problems. Last year, while composing an assessment of and recommendations for of an industrial heritage site, I was troubled because this type of site was not covered in the “World Heritage Convention” and “Operational Guidelines”. Recently, while reading post-graduate student dissertations concerning cultural heritage, I have been deeply aware that the current inappropriate classification of heritage constitutes a restriction to research. Thus, we are obliged to classify heritages from the very beginning.

I shall endeavor to analyze the situation, taking “World Heritage Convention” and its “Operational Guidelines” as a case-study.

### **A. The existing problems in heritage classification**

In 1972, at the General Assembly of UNESCO in Paris, representatives of the participating countries pointed out that certain weaknesses still existed at the national level in the protection of cultural and natural heritage. “Considering that parts of cultural or natural heritage are of outstanding interest and therefore need to be preserved as part of world heritage of mankind as a whole”, the concept of ‘world heritage’ was put forward, and the “Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage” came into being. The standard for classification of ‘World Heritage’ is therefore the heritage’s own value; therefore all the heritage around the world with ‘outstanding interest’ or ‘outstanding universal value’ would be eligible to be listed, thus facilitating conservation in the country where the heritage is located. ‘World Heritage’ is a category which uses heritage value as the most important evaluation standard and is the highest level of human heritages; along with national heritage and regional heritage, it is one of the three categories that constitute all human heritages. Whether they are ‘World Heritage’, ‘National Heritage’ or ‘Local Heritage’, they are all the legacy of the earth’s evolution and human activity; the category rating standard is based upon their relative value, not upon their characteristics or nature. Heritages with the same characteristics may be distributed at three different levels, in other words, heritages at different levels may have the same characteristics. To some extent, the classification made in the “World Heritage Convention” actually reflects the common understanding of the heritage officials of the States Parties.

The “World Heritage Convention” classifies the world heritage of humankind into two categories, ‘cultural heritage’ and ‘natural heritage’, clearly indicated in the title of the convention. It is correct that two categories are designated, based upon the legacy of natural evolution of the earth or the result of human activity. Although humankind is part of the earth’s evolution and may be classified under the biological world of natural heritage, compared with other life forms humanity is capable of invention and increase of knowledge; the cultural heritage to be protected is not humankind per se but human activity and creations, thus discriminating between the legacy of natural heritage and the cultural heritage.

However, the classification at the second level of the “World Heritage Convention” is not so precise. Below are the classification and the definition of each category of ‘cultural heritage’:

- Monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- Groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- Sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.

In the above three categories of cultural heritage, the first two categories are justified ‘from the point of view of history, art or science’, whereas the last one from an ‘aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view’ besides the ‘historic’ point of view. Unless there is agreement on the criteria defining these perspectives, confusion

in the classification is likely to arise. Also, the application of aesthetic and anthropological dimensions only on ‘sites’ is quite inappropriate, because the evaluation of ‘monuments’ and ‘groups of buildings’ requires aesthetic discernment and anthropological consideration. The classification standards (if we take the examination viewpoint as classification standard) described in the convention for differentiate cultural heritage categories are ambiguous.

When the world heritage subcategories ‘monuments’, ‘groups of buildings’, and ‘sites’ are set beside one another, two problems emerge: on the one hand it is impossible to further classify the three subcategories using the same classification standard at the same rank, and, on the other hand, the naming and the description of the characteristics of these subtypes is ambiguous. The concept of ‘monument’ does not only include commemorative inscribed stele, monumental sculpture and architectural works, but also their related remains, relics and site; the concept of ‘monument’ must be restricted and clarified. The explanation of ‘monument’ in the convention excludes ‘site’ from its meaning (this is, of course, accurate); nevertheless it adds to it ‘buildings’ which can generate confusion with ‘group of buildings’. The characterization of ‘elements or structures of an archaeological nature’ is more inappropriate: could it be that the other two types of cultural heritage do not have ‘archaeological nature’? ‘Groups of buildings’—such as houses, tombs, temples, bridges, workshops, gardens and so on—are structures consciously designed by humans and constructed with bricks, stones, cement, etc. to meet some specific need. Buildings of different function combined together form settlements or cities. The utilization and state of preservation of buildings determine their different nature and status: spoliated buildings or buildings which have lost their original function have become another sub-category of cultural heritage in the convention—‘sites’. ‘site’ indicates a state of preservation of cultural heritage, it is the product of past human activity already spoliated which, of course, comprises buildings. The description of ‘sites’ in the convention is set at the same level works of human engineering, works of combined human and natural activity and archaeological areas, giving the impression that the first two types of cultural heritage cannot be covered by the nature of the site. From this point of view the definition of site given by archaeology is more accurate than that in the ‘World Heritage Convention’.

Among the types of cultural heritage, if ‘site’ is used to denominate a specific type of cultural heritage, the type of heritage to rank at the same level should not be ‘groups of buildings’, since the main part of a site is usually constituted of ‘groups of buildings’ (furthermore in a site are also buried many other monuments, some of which possess commemorative nature) which for the most part are abandoned or destroyed. To parallel ‘sites’ as a cultural heritage type, they should possess two features: first, they should still be standing relatively intact on the ground and still be in use; their materials, layout, structure and decoration should still maintain, or fundamentally maintain, the original appearance, although their usage and tradition may have changed; second, they should have been used by the same community from the beginning to now, and in spite of the fact that with the passing of time the building itself may have undergone changes, cultural traits and traditions should have developed smoothly and continuously. Any type of cultural heritage which satisfies these two criteria needs further designation and a new definition, and cannot be labeled ‘groups of buildings’ or ‘monument’ as defined in the convention.

In the same way the “World Heritage Convention” divides natural heritage into three categories, but it fails to name them, defining them only from the classificatory point of view and the typological characteristics:

- natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view;
- geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation;
- natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.

From the observation point of view adopted in the convention for the categorization of natural heritage, all three categories must have ‘scientific’ value (this being one of the common characteristics of all natural heritages); the first and the third categories have ‘aesthetic’ value while the last two are further restricted from the point of view of ‘conservation’. The description does not offer much help for the classification and description of the three categories of natural heritage. However, once superfluous words are eliminated, the classification and the description of each category of natural heritage are clearer than those of culture heritage. From it we know that the first category deals with geological heritage, comprising strata with ancient biological fossils; the second deals with biological heritage, including the habitat of ‘animals and plants’ (but still including geologic and physiographical formations); the

third category is clearer and deals with topographical heritage, including famous natural scenic spots. Even among these three categories overlapping can be noted, for example, ‘physical and biological formations or groups of such formations’ in the first category overlap with ‘geological and physiographical formations’ in the second; ‘aesthetic point of view’ as described in the first category may also be easily confused with ‘natural beauty’ and ‘natural sites’ within the third category. Therefore, even the classification and description of natural heritages is neither rigorous nor logical.

In the “*Systema naturae*” by the Swedish scholar Linnaean, as early as the 18th century the natural world was divided into minerals, plants and animals, a ready-made classificatory model which, although not fully meeting the requirements of conservation, could be consulted in heritage classification. If we examine the problem from the viewpoint of the various disciplines and methodologies involved in protection and management of natural heritage, it would be more sensible to divide natural heritage in two classes, taking living and inanimate heritage as standard at the first level, and then proceed to more detailed sub-categorization.

It should be emphasized that after the creation of the “World Heritage Convention”, the 16th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee convened in Santa Fe, USA, in 1992, brought into the ‘World Heritage List’ ‘cultural landscapes’ of outstanding universal value, thence ‘cultural landscapes’ become a special category of World Heritage. There are inconsistencies between the newly proposed class of heritage with the threefold classification of cultural heritage and natural heritage in the “World Heritage Convention” and the ‘Operational Guidelines’. From Article 47 in the ‘Operational Guidelines’ (2005) and the formulation in World Heritage ‘cultural landscapes’ assessment and recommendation report, ‘cultural landscapes’ seems to fall into the ‘cultural heritage’, as a type of ‘site’. However, in chapter II “The World Heritage List” of the “Operational Guidelines” (2005), ‘cultural landscapes’ were listed along with ‘cultural heritage’, ‘natural heritage’ and ‘mixed cultural and natural heritage’: cultural landscape has become an independent category of heritage with the same rank as the others. From a taxonomic viewpoint, to position at the same level ‘mixed cultural and natural heritage’ with ‘cultural heritage’ and ‘natural heritage’ responds to its principles and logic, and therefore can be accepted; but to rank at the same level ‘cultural landscapes’ with ‘cultural heritage’ and ‘natural heritage’ is inappropriate, since it not only distorts the boundaries between cultural and natural heritage, but also confuses the boundaries between different types of cultural heritage. Since ‘cultural landscapes’ in China has presently become a common concept and class in heritage circles, there is the need to carry out ad hoc investigation on the background, the meaning and the extension of this concept. In this context there is no need to say more than is necessary.

## **B. Principles to be followed in the classification of heritage**

Considering that presently in international organizations and in China there still exist problems at different levels in the classification system of heritage which cannot be solved by government or non-government institutions; considering that the establishment of the science of Heritage Studies needs preliminary research, related disciplines in higher educational institutions should effectively participate in the basic research with relevant investigations. Considering that the setting up of a classification system of heritages forms the base of research, protection and management (this is clearly seen in the “World Heritage Convention” and other documents which start with definition and classification of heritage), the fundamental research of heritage studies should necessarily be classification.

In all academic research it is necessary first of all to define the subject investigated and the research field; then classification on the subject investigated is carried out in order to clarify the basic concepts and definitions, and its position and relative worth in the field of research. Because of the extent of heritage studies and the numerous objects of study, heritage classification is an indispensable basic work. Since classification is a tool for research and not its purpose, research works with different objectives could make use of different classification systems. Nevertheless, although disciplines, subject investigated and research field are different and require different classification standards and systems, the basic methodology and principles for classification should not change. Which, then, are the principles and methods that heritage study should follow?

In the area of heritage studies, geology and biology are the sciences closest to natural heritage, while archaeology and anthropology are the sciences closest to cultural heritage. Moreover, since archaeological methodology is built upon biological classification and geological stratigraphy, it would be right and proper if the classification of these subjects were to be the utilized as best reference for the classification of cultural heritage.

Following the classification method of the sciences mentioned above, especially biological classification, we suggest that the classification of heritage should master the following four main principles:

First, the classification of heritage must have a clear objective, not classify for the sake of classifying. During their developmental process, nature and humankind have left behind different types of heritage, belonging to different ages, different in form and in inner characteristics, having different functions and presenting different states of conservation. Which standards are to be followed for the classification of these numerous types of heritage at a first level, and which for a further subdivision at the second level? This brings us to the rationale of classification. The objective of classification is to better understand and research these heritages at a macro level, in order to better protect and manage them. Among all types of heritage, those left by the earth's evolution and those left by human activity not only belong to different realms, but also require different methods of conservation and management: natural erosion is quite insignificant to geological structures and geologic physiognomy, which have experienced evolution in terms of geological eras, and prevention of large-scale man-made destruction will effectively guarantee continuation of their natural properties; whereas human remains, regardless of whether in surface structures or buried sites, are comparatively more fragile than natural remains and need to be protected from both man-made destruction and natural erosion, as well as requiring more complex protection. Therefore, the division of the "World Heritage Convention" into natural and cultural heritage from the point of view of protection (although in the convention this is not clearly stated) is quite correct.

The second principle is that heritage classification needs to be established on the basis of inter-relationships and a multilevel system of categories, in order to avoid simplistic, single-class and unsystematic classificatory types. In this regard the classificatory methods used in biology, geology, archaeology (and anthropology)—especially the almost faultless system used in biology—provide a helpful reference. The classification used in biology goes from general to the particular, and its main levels have clear boundaries (phylum, class, order, family, genus, and species), and because of the large number of types of plants between family and species there are three other levels: tribe, section, and series. Furthermore, besides the main levels, super-, sub-, infra- are also used to denote secondary-level categories. Especially because of the development of cytobiology, new classificatory methods and new types were put forward, which not only did not have a damaging impact on the former system, but refined and improved it. Heritage types are not as complex as biology, therefore to establish a classification system which is logical, accepted by academic cycles and straightforward should not be so difficult.

The third principle is that each level of classification should respond to one and the same standard, while different standards should occur at different levels, otherwise confusion will arise in the classification. As early as the fourth century BCE, in ancient Greece, Aristotle divided all animals into three categories: animals on ground, in the water and in the air, taking as standard the medium of movement. Although this classification is quite coarse, it uses the same classificatory principle at the same level, which made it systematic and sensible. On the contrary, the classification offered by heritage studies in the "World Heritage Convention" divides heritage into two units: natural and cultural heritage, while at the following level divides them into three types. Since a common standard for dividing heritages into these two units was not established, it is easy for crossing over and overlapping to occur between the two units. With the introduction of the category 'cultural landscape', proposed later, on the same level with 'natural heritage' and 'cultural heritage', as it is in "Operational Guidelines" (The World Heritage List, 2005), the original unified standard which clearly divided the two classes has begun to become blurred.

The fourth principle states that each level of classification and each class should have a unified nomenclature standard; the name of each type should accurately express its characteristics, while at the same time it should be entirely different from the name of other types at the same level. The concept indicated by each type should be clearly reflected in the name and defined with scholarly accuracy; only after having been accepted in academic circles should it be adopted at professional and legal levels. Names which may cause misunderstanding should be avoided; in 'cultural landscape', for example, a term widely used in landscape studies, the determinative 'cultural' is the same as that used in the definition of 'cultural heritage': if the term is used at the first level of the classification system it will certainly partly overlap with 'cultural heritage', with the result that it will not be possible to accurately classify some cultural heritage, which will disconnect from 'cultural heritage' and 'cultural landscape'. The explanation of the name (definition) should be consistent with related disciplines. For instance, the class 'site' in cultural heritage classification is a basic concept in archaeology and anthropology, disciplines in which the term has a precise and standard definition with consistent explanation which can be consulted in all encyclopedias: such

groundwork could be utilized. The use of inaccurate typological concepts, such as ‘archaeological sites’ should be absolutely avoided in academic research and laws and regulations.

Concerning the naming of heritages, among the conventions applied in other disciplines which could be consulted by heritage studies, there is in biology the ‘law of priority’, which indicates that a scientific name can refer to only one object; if a scientific name refers to two or more objects there is the need to confirm the earliest object thus named, while the others must be named differently. The law of priority is a measure ensuring stability in biological nomenclature, whose basic concepts and rules may be used as a reference in heritage studies. Once a type of heritage is reasonably classified with a clear name and concept, and after having been accepted in heritage circles, the nomenclature of emerging types should respect the already existing names and not create confusion in categories that have already reached a certain stability.

### **C. Preliminary thoughts on heritage classification**

To overcome existing problems in the current classification of heritages, based on the principles for the classification of heritage, we contemplated the possibility of carrying out a new comprehensive classification. Considering the many classes of heritage, the vast area they touch upon and the different classification standards they use according to different research objectives, it is possible to set up different classification proposals. Here we need to emphasize once more the basic objective of categorization of heritages, on which our preliminary suggestions are based.

As pointed out above, the categorization of heritages aims at better protecting, managing, and using the heritages; among these three objectives, protection is basic and the most essential, since only once heritages are well protected can we consider their rational utilization, while management is instrumental to heritage protection and utilization. Starting from the essential purpose of protection, we see that among all types of heritages, the natural heritages which have developed through a long time-span are those endowed with the prospect of a long natural lifetime; providing here is no human interference or destruction these natural heritages could remain for a very long period, since the effect of nature on them is itself one of the factors of their evolution, which should be safeguarded, and human intervention kept to a minimum. On the contrary, the lifespan of the heritage left by human activity compared with natural heritage is very short and vulnerable to both the effect of subsequent human activity and natural influence. Besides, although natural evolution is very slow, it never pauses. Among the heritages produced by human activity some have already lost their original function, becoming purely ‘sites’; others have continued to develop and are still in the process of transformation. Different methods therefore need to be put into action to protect natural and human-made heritages. For the protection of natural heritages it is sufficient to eliminate human intervention and let nature continue its slow evolutionary process, while for the protection of human-made heritages there is the need to eliminate human destructive intervention as well as natural causes of deterioration, and to apply adequate measures aimed at prolonging their lifespan. With ‘living’ heritages, special measures should be adopted to protect them from or to limit the impact of globalization, urbanization, and industrialization in order to preserve their cultural uniqueness. On the basis of this understanding, the criterion for a first-level classification of heritage should be the differentiation between natural formation and the product of human activity, and since all human activity and its products are endowed with ‘culture’, the term ‘cultural heritage’ in the “World Heritage Convention” properly distinguishes such heritage from the ‘natural heritages’ which in a certain sense also belong to all humanity. ‘Natural heritage’ and ‘cultural heritage’ therefore constitute the first level of heritage classification.

In the category of natural heritages the most noticeable difference is between living and inanimate heritage. The characteristics of living natural heritage are mobility and continuation over time, with an appearance that presents visible periodical variation; while inanimate heritages are still, relative to the earth, and their slow changes are difficult to monitor. With regard to these two types of heritage, protection methods and conditions are also different: the former is more susceptible to environmental changes and natural factors (e.g. forest fire triggered by lightning); the latter is relatively more stable and less affected by environmental changes. Therefore, we could take living and inanimate as standard for the second-level classification of natural heritages, dividing it into two categories: ‘biological heritage’ and ‘geological heritage’.

Within the category of ‘cultural heritage’ the most distinctive difference among different types of heritage is their state of conservation, the difference being mostly appreciated between movable and immovable forms: the former are often referred to as ‘intangible cultural heritage’, the latter as ‘tangible cultural heritage’. Intangible cultural

heritage is human activity in the process of creating tangible culture, as well as any social, continuing and representative activity aiming at satisfying the spiritual needs of a given human community, which in that particular region and community is understood as a manifestation of traditional culture, learning and techniques, and comprises legends, performances, social customs, ceremonies and festivals, traditional arts. Tangible heritage comprises the material remains of human activity, including cities and towns, villages, palaces, mausoleums, temples, manufacturing plants, instruments etc. These remains manifest different states of preservation: those which have been discarded in the course of history and have become remnants of the past, called in archaeology ‘sites’ (including vestiges and relics in the site), should be categorized under this heritage type.

Other tangible heritage types, although they have lost their original historical functions in the course of history, are actually still standing; they are dedicated to other functions or continue as historical places of interest for example, temples that have suspended their religious activities, fortresses abandoned or reutilized for other purposes, abandoned manufacturing plants. Some tangible heritage sites have kept their original function and tradition, although they have changed to adapt to new situations, for example: towns and villages in which new and old overlap and the traditional culture has continued uninterrupted; workshops, farms and pasturage producing artifacts according to traditional techniques, religious groups which have preserved their temples from ancient times. To these differently preserved heritages, different means of conservation and management should be applied. The best way to protect underground sites, besides preventing human destruction and if the site is not under threat of natural calamity, is to avoid or limit conservation and management interventions. For surface and relatively better preserved heritages, protection necessitates periodic maintenance and renovation, and while from the point of view of management there is the problem of how to better utilize them, from the point of view of protection the objectives are clearly definable: to ensure that in the process of conservation the original materials and features of the structure will be preserved. Heritages which adhere to tradition and are still in use, whose exterior appearance is still in a slow process of transformation, conservation and management are the most complicated; it is difficult to decide exactly which object is to be protected, it is complex to ascertain the extent to which restoration needs to be carried out and there are sharp conflicts between heritage conservation and social development.

These phenomena indicate that from the point of view of the state of conservation, tangible cultural heritage can be divided into three categories. Apart from ‘site’, a clear-cut designation for the other two categories is not easy. We could continue to use the denominations contained in the “World Heritage Convention”, naming the second category of heritage ‘monuments’ and extending its meaning to encompass another category in the convention, ‘groups of buildings’. The third category of heritage could be called ‘tradition’ or ‘traditional culture’; if we qualify the boundary of the concept ‘cultural landscape’, it could also be included under ‘cultural landscape’. ‘Cultural landscape’ comprises both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, movable and immovable and would be better considered as an intermediary type between tangible and intangible heritage, ranking at the same level with them.

The second level of classification comprises biological and geographical heritage in natural heritage; and tangible and intangible heritages in cultural heritage. The third level of classification comprises botanical, zoological and zoobotanical landscape in biological heritage; geochronological (including paleontological), geological and geomorphic heritage in geological heritage; and various types of intangible cultural heritage and sites, relics and traditional or cultural landscape. Of course, the designations of these categories need further consideration.

Since the fourth level of classification comprise many categories it will not be commented on here.

#### **D. Summary**

In the above analysis we have noted that in the “World Heritage Convention” and in the “Operational Guidelines” adopted by each State Party there are greater or smaller problems in the classification, denomination and description of the characteristics of specific types of heritage. The reason for the appearance of these problems and their persistence to date is a lack of fundamental research by heritage studies scholars before the “World Heritage Convention” and “Operational Guidelines” were put forward. After publication and the subsequent adoption of these conventions by many countries, the two official documents have held back the thinking of researchers, as most consider the articles in the “World Heritage Convention” the bible of heritage studies, to be unconditionally believed in. In order to keep pace with the times and scientific development, even international laws should be amended, complemented and improved by new research. I hope that more scholars will join in this discussion from a purely scientific point of view and that foundational research in the area of heritage studies will

receive more attention; I also hope that the government departments in charge of the protection and management of heritages will promptly assimilate the results of new research, and that when the time is ripe, documents such as “World Heritage Convention” and “Operational Guidelines” will be amended, so that their formulation will be more accurate, their logic more rigorous, and they will become more functional for scholars and for those involved in the protection and management of heritages.

## Appendix

Heritage taxonomic categories (for simplicity only the top three levels are listed)

### 1. Natural Heritage:

#### (1) Geological Heritage

① geochronological heritage

② geological heritage

③ geomorphic heritage

#### (2) Biological Heritage

① zoological heritage

② botanical heritage

#### (3) Natural Landscape

### 2. Cultural Heritage:

#### (1) Tangible Cultural Heritage

① sites heritage

② remains heritage

#### (2) Intangible Heritage

#### (3) Cultural Landscape Heritage

The above classification system is a rough outline; it requires additions, amendments and refinement.

Postscript: to reduce the printing burden, before submitting this paper to the “Beijing Forum”, all notes have been removed