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European Heritage Days (EHD): An example of heritage interpretation for migrant communities in Biscay

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Abstract

The choice of the theme of Migration and Cultural Heritage for European Heritage Days (EHD) 2016 in Biscay (Spain) helped to give visibility to the heritage of migrant communities. We presented the cultural heritage of the historical territory of Biscay to the public of Biscay (locals and migrants) from a different perspective, to make it more readily accessible to them. For the 2016 edition, the focus was moved from heritage objects to people: associations and groups from Biscay, independently of their origin, nationality, social background, etc., played a fundamental role in working from different perspectives for the promotion and dissemination of cultural heritage. The Diputación Foral de Bizkaia (a provincial government with extensive powers for the dissemination of cultural heritage) has launched a campaign that can serve as an example of heritage interpretation as an element for cohesion and coexistence.

Keywords

heritage interpretation, European Heritage Days (EHD), migration, cultural heritage, interculturality, heritage communities, Biscay

Introduction

This document derives from a paper written last year at the request of the Council of Europe as a report on the work accomplished by the coordination team of the 2016 edition of the European Heritage Days (EHD) in Biscay, which addressed the theme of Migrations and Cultural Heritage. The choice of such a hot topic helped to give visibility to migrant communities in Biscay by presenting the local cultural heritage from a different perspective that was more inviting and easily accessible to both locals and migrants.

EHD in Biscay are the most important programme for the dissemination of cultural heritage in the territory. Biscay is the second smallest province in Spain, and one of the three Historical Territories that make up the Comunidad Autónoma del País Vasco – Euskadi (Autonomous

Community of the Basque Country), one of the 17 autonomous communities in the Spanish State. The other two are Araba and Gipuzkoa. It is located in the north of the Iberian Peninsula, on the bay that bears its name (Figure 1), and has a population of 1.15 million spread over 112 municipalities. The capital, Bilbao, is a city with a long tradition of industry related to iron ore mining, the steel industry and shipbuilding, though in the last 20 years it has also become well-known for its far-reaching urban transformation, partly due to investment in culture.

Although it is a provincial government, the Diputación Foral de Bizkaia (Biscay Provincial Council) has extensive powers. It is an unusual case in the European context in that it has more influence than any other institution on the everyday lives of the citizens of Biscay. It collects and manages taxes from the citizens of Biscay, and has full autonomy from the central government in Madrid. Thus, Biscay is a small, decentralised province with extensive powers and fiscal autonomy, which brings the coordinating institution closer to the citizens.

Figure 1: Biscay

Cultural Heritage Interpretation as a catalyst for local participation in Biscay

The EHD constitute a campaign to raise awareness about cultural heritage interpretation with the broad participation of all kinds of local actors, all of them coordinated by the Diputación Foral de Bizkaia, the entity which has organised the EHD since the Biscay joined this European initiative 16 years ago. In the last edition, almost 100 entities organised a total of 300 activities in 65 municipalities around Biscay and 15,000 people took part.

The EHD are organised using a precise, rigorous methodology that has taken shape gradually over 16 years of work and is improved with each edition. The choice of a common theme for all the activities gives cohesion to the programme, which takes place throughout the territory in October. An extensive network of collaborators coordinated by a team in constant communication and committed to strict compliance of the set work schedule ensures the technical quality of this programme. Furthermore, every year a final assessment of the events is drawn up, which enables successes and possible areas for improvement to be identified for the organisation and management of future editions. This methodology is continually reviewed and enables all aspects of the work to be defined, improved and corrected on the basis of practical experience: an essential management tool in performing a task of these characteristics.

In short, the success of the EHD programme in Biscay is characterised by the following aspects, which make up an organisational model, which fosters collaboration between members of the coordination team and collaborators:

- Closeness to citizens
- Common theme
- Networking
- Strict time management
- Self-assessment

EHD 2016: Interpreting Migrations and Cultural Heritage

For the 2016 edition, the generic theme proposed by the Council of Europe for the EHD Programme was *Heritage and Communities*. For the first time, the mandate from the Council of Europe and the European Commission did not suggest devoting EHD to the interpretation of a particular heritage or historic event, but rather casting light on the *Heritage Communities* committed to preserving heritage and passing it on to future generations. This pan-European theme posed a particular challenge for the coordination of the EHD, since it implied a particularly complicated paradigm shift: it was necessary not only to identify and define the “what” - i.e. the object to be interpreted - but also, crucially, the “who - the heritage communities of Biscay that had the possibility and duty to take part in the programme.

Based on this generic proposal, Biscay defined a more specific theme: *Migrations and Cultural Heritage* (Image 1). This provided an opportunity to look in more depth at all the migratory movements throughout history that have had Biscay as their point of origin or destination.

Image 1: EHD 2016 poster

It also shifted the focus from heritage objects to subjects, i.e. to the people with rights, responsibilities, a voice and decision-making power in defining priority actions for heritage protection. In this new way of understanding heritage as an actual project for society, all associations and groups in Biscay, independently of their origin, nationality, social background, etc., played a fundamental role in working from different perspectives for the promotion, interpretation and dissemination of cultural heritage. It was, therefore, a vision of heritage as an element for cohesion and coexistence and of heritage interpretation as a useful tool for achieving these goals.

Migrations are widely present in Biscay, which has always been a land that welcomes strangers but also a starting point for the transmission of ideas, models and knowledge. Historically, it has been a territory of emigrants: people from Biscay often had to leave their land in search of prosperity far from their place of origin. In previous centuries, emigration was to other continents, mainly to the Americas, but the pattern has shifted in recent times. The 1970s saw a major influx of immigrants from the rest of Spain due to the boom and development of industry in Biscay, especially the steel industry, mining and shipbuilding. Industry in the Basque Country began to take off in 1841 and ever since then, Biscay has attracted large numbers of people, mostly from other parts of Spain, who did not share distinctive Basque features (language, customs, etc.).

However, in recent years, the proportion of internal immigrants has declined, while the number of foreign immigrants has increased considerably. It is true that the number of foreigners residing in the Basque Country still account for only a small proportion of the total population, but the trend has been increasing in both qualitative and quantitative terms in recent years. Only recently has the region begun to receive migrants from South America, Africa, and Eastern Europe, following a process parallel to that found in other Mediterranean countries.

As of January 1st, 2016, 8.6% of the people registered as resident in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country (ACBC) were born abroad (188,596 people). By provinces, Biscay has the largest registered foreign-born population with 91,685 out of a total of 1,147,576, a proportion of 8.0%. The geographical provenance of the foreign-born population is as follows: 50.4% are from the Americas (mainly Latin America), 23% are from elsewhere in Europe, 19.7% are from Africa and 6.6% are from Asia, with a significant percentage of this last group being of Chinese origin (3.3%). In year-on-year terms, from 2015 to 2016, the number of foreign-born individuals in the population has increased more in the ACBC (2.4%) than in any other region of Spain (Ikuspegi - Basque Immigration Observatory 2016).

These migratory flows have shaped a vast cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, which is the reflection of the communities and people that created it and keep it alive; a heritage forged from cultural manifestations related to objects, architecture, visual arts and urban planning, but also from intangible expressions, such as dance, sports, literature, music, language, etc. Even today, these diverse forms express, enrich and convey the cultural heritage of Biscay. Thus, this year's activities were aimed at showing how human mobility, i.e. migrations within, from and to Biscay, constitutes a bridge; an exchange and communication channel between communities in which cultural wealth is built up thanks to the efforts of the men and women who have opened and continue to open new channels for the transmission of our own heritage, thus becoming the most efficient tool for the development of a peaceful and stable society, founded on respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law (Council of Europe 2005: art. 3b).

For this reason, in 2016, the European Heritage Days set out to highlight the creations of men and women who were *away from home*. Hence the slogan chosen to guide the activities in the programme: *Etxetik kanpo*, a simple phrase in Basque, the language that is one of the elements of common heritage of which we feel proudest. It contains multiple, very diverse meanings: away from land, away from home, away from family. It is an expression that makes for multi-faceted views of culture focused on the people who live Biscay's heritage day-to-day, who enjoy it, who make it their own and who, whilst respecting the rights and freedoms of others, establish bonds with it as an aspect of the right to participate freely in cultural life. It represents a more human dimension, centred on the manifestations that the social groups in municipalities, towns and neighbourhoods have generated and continue to generate, since Biscay recognises the value of cultural heritage located in territories under its jurisdiction, regardless of its origin (Council of Europe 2005: art. 5f): a comprehensive, multidimensional heritage which today faces the challenge of overcoming conventional thinking and finding solutions for a more complex, wealthier society which needs to express itself on a global level. Cultural heritage thus becomes an element for integration that can help build a peaceful, democratic society and contribute to processes of sustainable development and promotion of cultural diversity (Council of Europe 2005: art. 1d).

Hence, efforts focused on attracting neighbourhood associations, dance groups, sports groups, gastronomic societies, regional centres, immigrant communities, Basque men and women living outside their home territory (even overseas, with a presence through documentaries and exhibitions but also live through video conference), youth groups involved in the preservation of their cultural heritage, associations for the historical remembrance and many other entities to the programme for the first time, so that they could join the list of participants in previous editions. In fact, associations for the protection of heritage, museums, municipalities, individuals, companies, etc. have taken part the EHD in Biscay since its first edition 16 years ago. The theme suggested by Europe, therefore, enabled us to work on the same lines that the EHD had been promoting for years in Biscay: a broader, cross-disciplinary concept of cultural heritage in which people and human values occupy a core position (Council of Europe 2005: preamble).

Working for interculturality. Examples of heritage interpretation with migrant communities

Biscay's society is committed to the protection and promotion of cultural heritage at all levels: administrative, associative and individual. This is reflected every year in the European Heritage Days, which always seek greater synergy of competencies among all the public, institutional and private actors involved. To that end, the 2016 EHD successfully attracted migrant communities that had never taken part before to share their understanding of culture and heritage in the programme.

We developed this challenge in four ways: 1) recognising the migrant identity of the Basque people; 2) giving prominence to immigrant communities living in Biscay; 3) finding connections between local and immigrant citizens; and 4) giving the same degree of appreciation to all activities.

1. Recognising the migrant identity of the Basque people

As a part of the Basque Country, Biscay has historically been a territory of emigrants: from the Middle Ages to the industrial boom of the 19th century, many Basques left their land looking for a better way of life far from home. Some of them made fortunes in America, working for the Spanish Crown. These returned migrants are known as *indianos* (meaning, literally, “back from India”), and they showed their wealth by building mansions, great gardens, schools, chapels and churches and by developing industries. Part of this heritage was interpreted during EHD 2016 in some of Biscay’s towns and villages, such as Balmaseda, Carranza, Gueñes, Gordexola.

Many of those who left their homes over the centuries to work hard as farmers, shepherds or fishermen, established strong links with other cultures that still survive today. The *Arrantzaleen Museoa* (Fishermen’s Museum) in Bermeo organised a transnational meeting with Iceland to illustrate the common past of the Basque and Icelandic peoples in whale hunting.

First, the Basque-Icelandic Association organised a conference in Hólmavík (Iceland) under the name, "Basque people in Iceland. Reading between the lines", presented by the Icelandic archaeologist, Magnus Rafnsson. This event examined the links between the Basques and the inhabitants of Strandasýsla (north-east of Iceland) in the 17th century, when the former arrived at Icelandic ports to hunt whales and fish cod (Image 2). Some days later, Basque archaeologist, Xabier Armendariz, gave a conference in Bermeo, titled "Basques in Iceland: Hunting whale and fishing cod", which revealed little-known details about the endeavours of Basque fishermen in Iceland, from both the commercial and human points of view.

These encounters and conflicts illustrate a common history, the cultural memory and influence of which have survived to the present day in aspects as diverse as language and Icelandic traditional dress.


Image 2: Basques in Iceland: hunting whale and fishing cod

The relationship between the Basque Country and Iceland, as manifested through language, was central to European Heritage Days 2016. *Euskaltzaindia* (the Academy of the Basque Language) gave a lecture on the subject: Basque philologist, Gidor Bilbao, talked about traces of the Basque language in Iceland, focusing his talk on the Basque-Icelandic pidgin, a simplified language that permitted basic communication between Basque fishermen and whalers and the Icelandic population. It constitutes a common heritage of two peoples that was also materialised in a dictionary, the first in Iceland to be devoted to a living language: Basque.

The Basques have also had ties with Britain, at least since the 15th century, mainly based on trade in iron ore. As a result of these commercial ties, and especially with the intense industrialisation that took place in the Basque Country from the mid-19th century onwards, a significant British community established itself in Biscay. That community still has an important presence in the territory and has left its imprint on cultural heritage. One of the most relevant places is the "English cemetery", a site owned by the British Crown in the municipality of Loiu, established in 1926 to provide a burial place outside the city of Bilbao for non-Catholics, especially British protestants. The EHD thus provided a chance to visit and learn more about a place that is a symbol of coexistence between cultures and religions (services and celebrations are still held there today) about which local people knew very little.

One of the most traumatic episodes in Basque migration took part during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and the dictatorship of general Francisco Franco (1939-1975), when many Basques had to flee into exile for political reasons. The Centre for Refugee Aid of the Basque Country helped to organise a street theatre performance called *Tras la Frontera* ("Beyond the Border"), created as part of the "Memorias compartidas" (Shared Memories) initiative, which seeks to raise

awareness of the right to asylum by identifying analogies between current refugees and the Basques exiled because of the war and the Franco dictatorship. The play also shed light on the contribution of women in conflicts and focused on the current situation and the experiences of Basque exiles.
Cultural manifestations thus emerge as a resource for facilitating peaceful co-existence by promoting trust and mutual understanding with a view to resolving and preventing conflicts.

2. <u>Giving prominence to immigrant communities living in Biscay</u>
Migrant communities themselves directly set up many of the activities to mark EHD 2016. They were thus not only participants in but also protagonists of the programme, which was carried out from an intercultural perspective, advocating a positive discourse on diversity and, above all, fighting discrimination against and exclusion of individuals and groups.

Image 3: Federación Gentes del Mundo (Peoples of the World Federation)

We contacted the *Federación Gentes del Mundo* ("Peoples of the World Federation") (Image 3), a project created in 2012 by citizens from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, which seeks to raise social awareness and promote cultural knowledge and social inclusion in Basque society. The Federation brings together 45 associations and works to empower migrants, raise awareness of the importance of cultural diversity as a factor for social wealth and development and suggest the creation of spaces for dialogue centred on reflection for the construction of intercultural coexistence. In June every year, its members organise a festival that hosts workshops for dance, crafts, textiles, painting, tastings, intercultural gatherings and talks to interact and celebrate cultural diversity. It is, therefore, a community that actively participates in the cultural life of Biscay, understands the value of heritage as an element for cohesion and respects the different interpretations of each community.

In 2016, in response to an invitation from the organisers of EHD in Biscay, the Federation began a process of reflection to highlight the need to consolidate a line of work for the design of intelligent immigration policies and respect for human rights as a contribution to European cultural heritage. The results of this reflection on the theme of heritage and immigration in the European Union, which took place in several brainstorming sessions in July, were presented at the Ondare Hall at the Biscay Provincial Council headquarters in October 2016. The session was attended by people from different origins (Colombia, Ukraine, Peru, etc.) who were living in Biscay and who saw culture as a way of integrating and enriching societies and a useful tool for improving quality of life and sustainable development. Hence, heritage interpretation was used as an effective tool to boost creativity, new ideas and culture.

3. Finding connections between local and immigrant citizens

The EHD 2016 programme promoted heritage interpretation as a way of fostering mutual understanding between communities. We, therefore, sought to connect the cultural heritages of local and immigrant citizens. Obviously, the strongest connection points were in the intangible heritage, which people take with them when they leave their place of origin: music and song, typical dances, sports, gastronomy, etc.

Several activities organized for the EHD 2016 revolved around migrant communities. One of them was organized by México Lindo, a Mexican community association in Biscay, which chose to share one of the oldest traditions of their culture: The Day of the Dead, declared an Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2003. The activity was set in the intercultural work done by municipal libraries, *Bibliotecas lugar de encuentro* ("Libraries, a Meeting Place") in an effort to present themselves as places for cultural exchange and mutual enrichment (Image 4).

Image 4: México Lindo, Mexican community in Biscay

For the first time, the programme also featured the participation of the Immigrant Platform of Getxo (a municipality in the metropolitan area of Bilbao, the capital of Biscay), devoted to analysing and studying aspects related to immigration in the municipality and favouring the integration of the foreign-born population through shared work and coordination of awareness-raising activities. The workshop, *Mila Zapore* ("A Thousand Flavours") (Image 5), was organised together with the *Egizu* association, which works to disseminate and strengthen the Basque-speaking community of the municipality and its surrounding areas. This project offered a chance to discover cuisine from different countries, one of the most significant cultural features in helping to create meeting points for peaceful coexistence.

Image 5: Mila Zapore Workshop (“A Thousand Flavours”)

Image 6: Diáspora Saharaui en Bizkaia (DISABI) (Saharawi Diaspora in Biscay)

Biscay also hosted activities organised by members of the *Diáspora Saharaui en Bizkaia* (DISABI) (Image 6), is a group created to strengthen integration and solidarity between the Saharawi people (the indigenous inhabitants of the Western Sahara) and other peoples. Their work is especially significant, since many Saharawi live in the part of the Sahara occupied by Morocco, exiled in camps in Tindouf (Algeria) or scattered around the world. There is a large community in Biscay. DISABI organises activities to promote contact between Saharawi people and other groups, improve the quality of life of the Saharawi and ensure the maintenance of their culture. In 2016, they were invited to participate for the first time in European Heritage Days.

For one week, a nomadic tent was erected at Archaeological Museum, where visitors could learn about the ways of life and customs of this community, covering both tangible and intangible aspects: the tea ceremony, songs and dances of the community, the ceremony of milk and dates, women's traditional dress, everyday objects that they brought with them from the Sahara, etc. In addition, this cultural exchange was supplemented by a talk about the Basque-Saharawi collaboration project that has been trying for some years to recover the past and culture of these people through archaeology in the territories of the Sahara. This talk by the prestigious archaeologist, Andoni Sáenz de Buruaga (Image 7), was attended by prominent members of the Saharawi community, who shared the importance that they attach to their traditions and tangible heritage in the form of the objects that they took with them or left behind in Sahara, and their recollections through poems and songs. It was a moving, enriching activity, which not only brought to light the culture of a community with a large presence in Biscay but also highlighted how cooperation between peoples in regard to culture can become an important link for cohesion and coexistence and stressed the soundness of the principle of heritage policies and educational initiatives which treat all cultural heritages equitably and so promote dialogue between cultures and religions.

Image 7: Andoni Sáenz de Buruaga's talk about the Basque-Saharawi collaboration project

Another example to highlight is the work led by the Museum of Art Reproductions in Bilbao (Image 8). This museum is located in an historic district of the city, *Bilbao La Vieja* ("Old Bilbao"), where there is a significant presence of groups at risk of social exclusion and where many immigrant communities (mainly Moroccan and sub-Saharan) have chosen to settle. At the end of the 20th century, Bilbao City Council implemented an overall strategy to refurbish the Bilbao la Vieja neighbourhood. The plan envisaged the re-opening of the museum at new premises as part of one of the main lines of action of the Refurbishment Plan, with a view to driving change and integration through culture and heritage. Since then, one of the main goals of the museum, along with its educational purposes, has been to establish a network of links with the different cultural and social collectives and associations in the neighbourhood.

Among many other initiatives, the museum has lent its premises - the former Church of El Corazón de María - to any associations located in the San Francisco and Bilbao la Vieja districts that wished to use it to host a wide range of activities, from radio broadcasts to fashion shows, talks, screenings, etc.

In conjunction with different local associations in its home neighbourhood, the museum set up two interpretative tours for EHD 2016 as a supplement to its usual programme. These tours, known as *Mundu Walk* ("World Walk"), showcased the work of the associations with migrant communities and groups suffering from social exclusion. They set out from the Museum of Art

Reproductions and visited the four associations in turn. At each one, users and managers were given time to explain their operations and goals. The public participated very actively in these tours, asking questions and creating a smooth, open dialogue, which in one case resulted in a tour lasting three hours: twice the scheduled time of 90 minutes.

As well as the tours, the museum organised a meeting of languages called *Babel Txoko* ("Babel Corner") so that people could learn basic, colloquial terms and phrases in different languages of the migrant communities. Most of the impromptu teachers were users of the associations in the neighbourhood. Both initiatives proved very popular with the public and, in our opinion and according to the feedback from the associations and public during the different activities, provided a good way to showcase the advances in coexistence and integration in Bilbao La Vieja neighbourhood from the turn of the century onwards (Martija 2016).


Image 8: Museum of Art Reproductions in Bilbao: Mundu Walk & Babel Txoko

As stated, many events were organised throughout Biscay which gave a central role to migrant communities. Stand-out events include those organised in Amorebieta-Etxano and Ziortza Bolibar, which worked directly with two communities that are beginning to be well-integrated in Biscay: the Russian-Lipovan and Senegalese communities.

In Amorebieta-Etxano, a meeting was organised with the Russian-Lipovan community (Image 9) to discover their history, beliefs, arts and culture. There are about 300 Russian-Lipovans in the Basque Country, approximately two-thirds of them living around Amorebieta. Russian-Lipovans are Old Believers, which means that they maintain ancient Orthodox rites. Most of them originate from Russia. In the 17th century, after being cruelly persecuted and displaced from their places of origin for religious reasons, they settled in the Principality of Moldavia, along the Prut River and in the Danube Delta, in territories that currently form part of Romania. There they maintained not just their religion but also their language, culture and customs. In the last few decades, many have been forced to move again, this time for economic reasons; this has led to a large community arriving (and integrating well) in Amorebieta.

The meeting took place at the Old Believer Orthodox Church in the municipality. There, icons were displayed and their polyphonic music was played. Some Lipovan women have set up a choir, called Juravca, which regularly participates in the festivities of the local area. This led to the highlighting of certain features shared by the Basque and Lipovan cultures: respect for the elderly, the struggle to defend their own language, an interest in preserving their traditions, etc.

Image 9: Russian-Lipovan community in Amorebieta-Etxano

In the region of Markina-Ondarroa, where the municipality of Ziortza-Bolibar is located, there is a large migrant community of Senegalese origin. The Simón Bolívar Museum in the village organised an activity based on a meeting between the Basque and Senegalese cultures, which share the issue of migration. Markina-Ondarroa is one of the areas of Biscay that has witnessed most migration: hundreds of people set out from the area from the 16th century onwards, mostly for the Americas but also to other countries, such as Australia.

This trend continued until recent times, with many leaving to work as shepherds and players of the Basque sport of *pelota* (known in the US as jai-alai). An exhibition of this sport was given at the court in Ziortza-Bolibar by José Antonio Illoro, known as *Txikito de Bolibar*, who is one of the players to make it big in America (Image 10). He told the audience about experience and recounted the story of the exodus of the Basque *pelotaris*.


Image 10: Txikito de Bolibar pelota player in Ziortza-Bolibar

In this same place, the Senegalese community, most of whom moved to the area to work as fishermen, prepared one of their typical dishes: *thiéboudienne*, a word that derives from *ceebu jen*, which means "rice and fish" in the Wolof language (Image 11). This was served with local cider. All this made for a rapprochement between two cultures that are moving closer together: in fact, people of Senegalese origin reacted very positively to the chance to learn about *Txikito de Bolibar* and the Basque game of *pelota.*

These activities enabled immigrants and local communities to share their cultural heritage but, above all, showed how different interpretations of cultural heritage can reinforce the dialogue between communities of different origins that coexist in the same territory.


Image 11: Senegalese community preparing thiéboudienne

4. Giving the same degree of appreciation to all activities

The EHD are a showcase for activities to promote knowledge and enjoyment of cultural heritage through quality interpretation, but also a meeting point for the inhabitants of Biscay. Therefore, in developing a programme in which migrations were the main theme, the challenge of coordination was also to attract current migrations, as we wanted to show how migration brings in people with their own heritage waiting to be learned about, taught and enjoyed.

Thus, we gave the same degree of appreciation to all activities: our aim was to show that cultural heritage belongs to people and makes societies distinctive. The decision to present the intangible heritage of migrant communities on an equal footing with other more consolidated heritages (i.e. architecture and fine arts) was made deliberately and consciously so as to approach the phenomenon of migration from a new way which would engage heritage and people. The activities were meeting points for people who had never met before and who now joined in a common cultural heritage, so heritage interpretation enabled real interaction to take place between different cultural realities: the two-way knowledge flow that took place was itself an act of heritage interpretation in regard to migrations and cultural heritage. Learning about differences and singularities and establishing bonds of coexistence were the main points in highlighting the different heritages that currently coexist in Biscay.

Working on this topic has been a challenge, but it has also enabled us to break with the established idea of a monumental heritage produced exclusively by social elites. Extending the meeting points between different cultures can create real heritage communities and shift the focus to people rather than the objects which represent a particular group of humans or country, because heritage interpretation helps people to find some of themselves, i.e. meeting points, in different cultures.

Conclusion

The work done for European Heritage Days in Biscay posed a challenge for the coordination team and all the collaborators. That challenge marked the start of a new line of work that – with its successes and areas for improvement – opens a new path to be followed in future editions with the intention of introducing Biscay into a pan-European framework of co-operation on cultural heritage.

Accordingly, EHD in Biscay can be an effective tool for developing innovative ways to foster cooperation between public authorities (in this case, the Biscay Provincial Council, but also other organising entities, such as municipalities and the Basque Government) and other actors, especially in the heritage communities of our Historical Territory. Programmes such as this one can also help to encourage voluntary initiatives which supplement the roles of public authorities (Council of Europe 2005: art. 11d) and encourage nongovernmental organisations concerned with heritage conservation to act in the public interest (Council of Europe 2005: art. 11e) by taking part in the programme or organising other activities throughout the year that are relevant to this principle of respect for cultures and social cohesion.

The collaboration and interaction between public and private agents that has been built up over 16 years of marking EHD in Biscay have created an organisational model that works very effectively. A model of heritage interpretation with a methodology of its own that we believe can be adapted to new initiatives and projects, and that can be useful for specialists who wish to incorporate heritage interpretation into their programmes and, more specifically, wish to work with migrant populations by developing the theme of migration and cultural heritage.

Immigration is a phenomenon that all peoples must address sooner or later, identifying effective tools for achieving positive coexistence. Incorporating the vision or visions of these new citizens is a great challenge, probably the most complex faced by the population and institutions of Europe. Working with a theme that blends cultural heritage and immigration shows that culture can also be used to address conflicts of coexistence in Europe.

Biscay has decided to take part in this challenge and has proposed a programme based on three points: interculturality, current migrations and changing society. This challenge, that we wish to continue to address in the future, has enabled more social and cultural groups to become involved in the project of European Heritage Days. The theme for 2016 made it possible for neighbourhood associations and immigrant communities to take part for the first time, and indeed they played a central role in a programme of dissemination of cultural heritage, but it also fostered the promotion of the social and cultural contribution that migrant populations bring to the villages and towns of Biscay. Such contributions are being made all over Europe, and require a great deal of analysis and work also in the realms of culture and heritage.

The experience in Biscay has enabled successes to be identified in the choice of the theme (i.e. the benefits for both cultural heritage and participating communities) but has also brought to light areas for improvement in the territory regarding work in common with these communities in the realm of culture.

The main **successes** of the EHD 2016 programme are the following:

- Visibility of social groups of immigrants and people at risk of exclusion, of neighbours who have participated for the first time in a shared cultural programme.
- Dissemination of cultural activities and projects involving migrant communities and people at risk of exclusion.
- Socialisation of knowledge regarding the phenomenon of migration and the different cultural manifestations associated with it.
- Rapprochement of citizens (both local and immigrant) with the idea of common heritage as a framework composed of different identities.
- Strengthening of the narrative of diversity in the collective construction of the society of Biscay.
- Awareness of the importance of intangible elements of cultural heritage in migratory processes.
- Improvement of social perception regarding particular neighbourhoods and associations that tend to have a negative image.
- Feedback between migrants and local people in Biscay, sharing of cultures and knowledge.

There are also some **areas for improvement**:

- Reluctance to consider the cultural manifestations of migrant populations as a common heritage.
- Risk of trivialisation and simplification of heritage brought by migrated communities.
- Low rate of participation of migrant communities in activities organised by local population and other communities other than their own.
- Persistence of a concept of cultural heritage still closely linked to the traditional vision of the monumental and tangible rather than the intangible and changeable.

These successes and areas for improvement help us identify the challenges that we face as coordinators of European Heritage Days in Biscay, and therefore enable us to keep emphasising the value and potential of cultural heritage wisely used as a resource for sustainable development and quality of life in a constantly evolving society.

Summing up, the main challenges to be tackled in future editions of EHD are to:

- reinforce the idea of common heritage as a central factor in the mutually supporting objectives of sustainable development, cultural diversity and contemporary creativity;
- give continuity to the presence of social and cultural groups with the aim of ‘broadening’ the concept of European Cultural Heritage;
- promote effective spaces for cultural exchanges between local and migrated populations;

- strengthen the relationships between all stakeholders (migrant communities, local agents, administration, private individuals, etc.);
- provide tools to migrant communities and people at risk of exclusion to bring them closer together and help them enjoy the common heritage, creating specific programmes which consider the value attached by each heritage community to the cultural heritage with which it identifies;
- expand the cultural capital of migrant populations throughout Biscay; and
- promote interdisciplinary research in the field of migration and cultural heritage, giving a central role to the intangible heritage of migrant communities.

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Luiz Antônio Bolcato Custódio (Brazil)

Heritage interpretation – cultural materials in educational programmes

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Abstract

The media used to support heritage interpretation are unlimited and may include museographic experiments, graphic design, audio-visuals, theatre, etc. There are innumerable ways to present sites, places, stories and cultures. Thus, amplifying the quality of the visit and, perhaps, making it unforgettable.

Cultural products are under the realm of interpretation and they can improve cultural tourism if specially designed to facilitate the relationship between inhabitant/ visitor and among place/ context/ history.

Examples of the items produced by the Porto Alegre Cultural Memory Coordination to enrich heritage education activities in the local museum and in the art gallery enhance better knowledge and recognition and establish a relationship between the public and the work of art, the city and its history, using as a reference the photographic and artistic collections of the local photo gallery and art gallery as well as up-to-date photographs of historic buildings.

Among them, we can mention the **Memory Dominoes**, the **Porto Alegre – Landscapes** and the **Porto Alegre – Details** which are presented and described in detail in the paper. These three examples of cultural products are sold as souvenirs and used as support material in classes of art, photography, architecture and urbanism.

Keywords

heritage interpretation, cultural heritage, cultural souvenirs

Main text

Innumerable are the creative ways to present to the public archaeological sites, historic centres, monuments, natural environments, as well as stories and cultures. Using all kinds of contemporary resources and media it is possible to amplify the quality of the visit and, eventually, make it unforgettable. And in the cultural heritage field, help its preservation through better knowledge.

Cultural products belong to the realm of interpretation and serve to help the development of cultural tourism. Especially those designed to establish or facilitate relationships, make accessible or socialise codes between the inhabitant or visitor and a place, context or story. Among these products are the games which present historic or cultural contents that can be used in heritage education processes, cultural tourism or as souvenirs, for simple recreation purposes.

Some material of this kind was produced by the Porto Alegre Cultural Memory Coordination, in Brazil, between 2013 and 2015, to assist education activities of the local museum and the county art galleries. They are playful products that contribute to widen knowledge, recognition and the appreciation of cultural heritage of different natures, allowing the establishment of more intense relationships between inhabitants or visitors with works of art or with the city, presenting its history or its natural, architectural and artistic environments.

These products have been created based on the important collection of photographs of the Porto Alegre Joaquim Felizardo Museum, on the art collections of the Aldo Locatelli Art Gallery and on contemporary pictures of selected buildings that are representative of different architectonic typologies and architectural styles which are considered local cultural heritage.

As examples of these initiatives, we bring three kinds of games that involve memory and knowledge: Memory Dominoes, Memory Games and Porto Alegre Details (Image 1).

Image 1: Cultural materials. Photo L.A. Custódio

For instance, the **Memory Dominoes** (Image 2) uses a worldwide traditional game as a reference but, instead of the spots, it uses black and white photos of the city's renowned urban spaces in the 1920/1930 decades. These images belong to the Sioma Breitman Collection of the Porto Alegre Museum.

Image 2: Memory Dominoes. Photo L. A. Custodio

The pictures testify how rich, refined, sophisticated and diverse the urban landscape and the architecture of that period were. This game, besides promoting the photographic collection of the museum, gives an opportunity to the participants to know how these places were in the past and compare them to their - totally different –present situation.

White cards with a photograph and the story of each place shall be read by the player when it is open for the first time. A folder with a glossary with architectural styles and typologies is also enclosed.

Classic memory games are formed by pairs of cards which present the same image. Put on a table, face down, each participant opens two cards at a time to try and find the same picture to form a pair. If the participant succeeds, they earn the right to play again. The game **Porto Alegre - Landscapes** (Image 3) is another memory game made with the reproduction of drawings and paintings from the 19thand 20th Centuries that present urban landscapes, situations and events.

These works belong to the Aldo Locatelli Art Gallery collection located at the City Hal. In addition to the picture, they include the title, the technique, dimensions and the author of the work. The images of the works are cut in halves. The players must find the two cards that complete the picture. The participant that joins the most cards wins the game. A leaflet with the biographies of the artists is enclosed to provide a better understanding of the town's artistic scene in different periods.

Image 3: Porto Alegre - Landscapes. Photo L. A. Custodio

The **Porto Alegre - Details** (Image 4) is a card game that invites the participant to recognise different architectural typologies and styles in the city and find out in which it fits and to what building it belongs to. Each card has on one face a colour photo of an architectural detail of a significant building. On the other face of the card is found the façade of the construction, the identification of its style, its name and address.

The pile of cards is put with the detail face up; each participant at a time picks one card and tries to recognise the architectural characteristics. If the answer is correct, they keep the card and play again. If it is wrong, the next person takes a turn.

A folder with the description of the architectural styles and a glossary is enclosed. Each time a new style is presented on a card, its characteristics shall be read by the player that took it. The participant that manages to relate a greater number of details to its building wins the game.

The production of these games involved heritage, architecture, history, photography, language and design professionals coordinated by Flávia Boni Licht, architect of the Cultural Memory Coordination. They have used traditional games, as well as have created new versions to present and interpret urban places and significant buildings.

Image 4: Porto Alegre - Details. Photo L. A. Custodio

In addition to the three products presented, other sets are ready to be printed, which involve another art gallery, the Rubem Berta; city monuments drawn by school students and memory games designed for children.

Drawings by the well-known designer Joaquim da Fonseca of peculiar places and monuments are used to illustrate displays with the localisation of the main public spaces and monuments; signalling panels for indication of the pedestrian routes; designation panels of the public places and interpretive panels with history and old images of the historic district.

In addition to the interpretive panels, there are brochures, T-shirts, mugs and reproductions of the drawings which are sold as souvenirs at the Porto Alegre Museum and have been distributed to all the county schools.

These are examples of cultural products that can be used to publicise, in a playful way, specialised technical content, supporting the interpretation and the appraisal of Porto Alegre's cultural heritage.

Due to its simple and objective language, these games can be used as support material in classes of art, photography, architecture or urbanism. Didactic experiments have been made in a Masters' Degree course on architecture and urbanism at the Uniritter - Laureate Universities, in Porto Alegre, with a group of students that, using their memory and knowledge, achieved the pleasures of discovery.

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Elien De Meyere (Belgium)

Heritage education and young children

Author

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Abstract

Issues between the educational sector and the heritage sector often start with the lack of knowledge on “heritage education”. In this paper, we try to offer an insight into how to bring heritage to (young) children. It is our purpose to show how an interdisciplinary approach, together with artistic, participative and active methods, can be used to make children researchers themselves.

Keywords

heritage, education, children, cross curricular, didactic, interactive

The “other side”

The First World War and young children - the opinions on how to bring this theme to young children, let alone put young children in contact with this subject, are numerous. Since 2014, when we commemorated the beginning of the First World War, 100 years ago, there has been a growing attention in Belgium on this subject, both in the education and the heritage sector. The several educational programmes suggest a clear tendency: despite the growing attention and numerous programmes, this subject is not a popular one when it comes to young children. Only a few educational programmes on this subject are designed for children under eight years.

The prejudices are not hard to imagine: war is not appropriate for young children, they are not capable of grasping the historical details, they have a lack of sensing time and can’t even imagine how long 100 years ago might be, they can’t empathise with the subject, etc. In this paper, I would, however, like to argue that, regardless of theme and historical details, it is the goals you set and the way you try to achieve those goals that are the most important.

Obviously, heritage education has to be seen as a much wider and broader theme than merely a topic as large as “the First World War”. But exactly here we might find one of the issues when it comes to heritage education. A lot of teachers still connect heritage with “big” history: commemorations, statues, old paintings, old buildings and ‘dusty old’ museums. This less appealing image of heritage might be one of the reasons that some teachers are seemingly less interested in heritage education. This lack of knowledge means that the educational sector does not lose sleep over heritage. It is not a topic on the long list of courses facing children as they grow up.

The lack of knowledge about the “other” side could also be said for the heritage sector, where another issue occurs. The educational sector is an important audience for the heritage sector, but still we discovered a gap in the knowledge about this educational sector. This means a gap in knowing how education is organised, how teachers set and follow goals and how teachers organise their classes. Besides that, heritage workers often have had limited or no educational training.

Heritage education

I would like to start with some educational background before moving to the core of this paper: how to do heritage education with young children. As social constructivism suggests, education is no longer the uncritical swallowing of the information that is provided by the teacher. One could say this especially in heritage education. Cuenca investigated the use of heritage in a teacher’s context and pinpoints three levels when it comes to the didactics of heritage education in the teacher practices (Cuenca, 2003). Broadly based on this research, one might state it as shown in Figure 1.

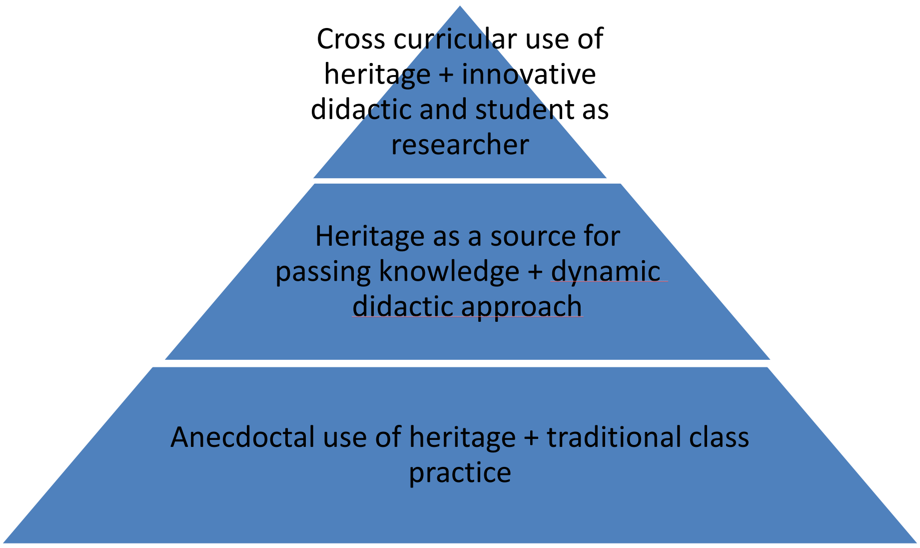

Figure 1: Didactics of heritage education

The bottom layer is about passing on knowledge with traditional didactic methods. On this level, heritage is seen as something a teacher merely anecdotally mentions. One layer above, heritage is seen as an instrument to inform the students, whereby some active methods are already used. Still, the stress remains on knowledge. The third level, however, states a cross curricular approach of heritage with innovative didactic methods. The student is seen as a researcher. This scheme might also be applicable for the heritage sector.

For some, the third level is not an easy one to reach. It means the teacher, or guide, is not the sole source of knowledge, the only - and undisputedly - keeper of wisdom. It requires an open attitude towards pupils and students. In this scenario, social constructivism really comes to the surface: the teacher as coach who provides pupils with keystones and who creates opportunities that students can take on at their own tempo, preferably with their own talents.

In regard to talents, I would like to refer to “Multiple Intelligence”, originally a model of Gardner (Gardner, 1983). Multiple Intelligence states that there are eight forms of intelligence; for example, verbal-linguistic intelligence but also musical-rhythmic intelligence, visual-spatial intelligence and so on. In order to achieve an educational goal, it would be interesting to offer different methods and didactics in order to try to reach children who are stronger in one or another kind of intelligence.

To summarise, I would stress three goals that, to me, seem important when it comes to heritage education in general:

- a **cross curricular approach** (heritage is more than history);
- involving the **student as a researcher**; and
- using the above two in order to achieve a real **heritage experience**.

Some didactics

In order to achieve those goals, I highlight three methods that can be used when it comes to heritage education and young children.

- Story(line)
- Interactive and participatory
- Possibilities of expression

1. Story(line)

The use of a story(line) can be used to involve, excite and stimulate young children. This story can contain a problem proposed to the children and a character preferably around the same age of the audience to heighten recognition. Offering stories to children in which they can identify themselves, heightens the attention and motivates children to go and search for answers to the problem.

The story can be “faction”. This term refers to both fictional and facts. The story can be invented, thus fictional, but based on true, historical facts. For example, the character and its' adventure or problem is completely invented, but the problems, the information or the buildings the character encounters during the story are true.

There are a wide variety of possibilities when it comes to using a story(line) in heritage education. With young children, one could use, for example, “Talk cards”. These are cards with an image (a drawing, old photo) that can be used with pupils to talk about a character. These talk cards can also be shown in regard to the heritage object, for example an old picture of the venue you are standing at with a group of children.

Image 1 shows an example of a talk card used for children aged five. “Marie” figures on the card, a fictional character who lived in the First World War in the village, “Oedelem”, where the children are from. She takes the children on a journey through Oedelem in the First World War. At each location the children come across, a new talk card is presented with an old picture of that venue during the First World War.

Another possibility could be a self-developed book around the heritage subject you want to present to the children. This book can be read in the classroom in advance. This way, children are already familiar with the location they will go to and with the objects, buildings, etc. that they will see there.
Another possibility for story(line) telling, is to encourage the children to develop their own story. In this case, children create their own fictional character or story, based upon information they have already discovered. This method is more suitable for children of eight years and older.


Image 1: Talk card

2. Interactive and participatory

In the last example, children are motivated to become participants. They are invited to create something of their own, e.g. their own story, based on the heritage subject that is introduced. Working to a goal and asking the children to participate in that goal, is a strong motivator. This “goal” can have many forms: creating their own story, creating their own guided tour, creating their own exhibition, creating their own museum, etc. Creating often goes hand-in-hand with the use of a story and the introduction of a problem.

“Heroes of the sea” is an example of how children created their own exhibition. In a school project in Oostende, children where challenged to create their own pirate exhibition. A lot of street names in the neighborhood of the school refer to pirates. The children were between the ages of five and ten, and every age category had its own challenge and its own approach. Some children where first challenged to investigate the talents of a good pirate, then discovered their own talent and eventually made an exhibition creating a video or a photo where they showed their own (pirate) talent. Others investigated the attributes of a pirate, categorised them and eventually made a 3D design/ collage of those attributes (Image 2).

Stimulating interactivity can also be done in an entirely different way. Not by merely giving information, but by encouraging children to search for it themselves or by challenging them to discover things. By giving them a task they can discover something. For example, by searching for a name (via letter recognition for younger children), they discover there are no female names on a remembrance statue for fallen soldiers of the First World War.

You can also encourage children to look at heritage objects in a different way. For example, using detailed pictures of a building to let children take a closer look at that building. Or using “viewing windows” for that same purpose and to help them focus (Image 3).

In doing so, one of the main goals might be “intrinsic motivation”. In this case, it means that children don’t learn about things because they have to or because we expect them to, but because we triggered them to want to know more about it. For example, when they are given the task to search for differences between an old picture compared to the current location, they discover that the tower of the church is different and they might ask themselves why. The role of the interpreter would be to ask prompting questions to help children start thinking about this topic via the enquiry-based learning technique. This is an entirely different approach to a guide giving a tour and telling them the church tower is different because of the damage it sustained during the First World War.

Image 2: Collage of attributes needed by pirates


Image 3: Children using a ‘viewing window’ to look at an old building

3. <u>Possibilities of expression</u>
The last method that I would like to emphasise is the possibility to let children express themselves. It is common knowledge in the artistic world that after impression follows expression. This expression can occur in all kinds of ways and forms. I distinguish five different forms of expression: drama, movement, music, art and language. These forms of expression can be deployed and offered after giving input, information and impression.

These expressions can be offered in all sorts of forms and for all sorts of goals: as a way of creating something at the end of a project (as seen above), as a way to repeat or review, as a way to analyse, as a way to enhance critical thinking or simply as a way to express. For example, after a walk with Marie in Oedelem during the First World War, the children are asked to express themselves in all sorts of ways - they can choose freely from: creating their own remembrance statue in clay, drawing what they have heard, playing a role-play of a situation they have heard, making a musical piece that goes along with an old picture they have encountered, etc.

The expression can be used in line with the idea of “Multiple Intelligence” as seen above. Children have different talents and different forms of expressing themselves. By offering a wide range of possibilities for expression, children can choose or explore a form of expression they feel good about or in which they are talented.

This expression can also be used as a stepping stone to analyse or to enhance critical thinking. Why do we want to preserve a heritage subject, what can we do with it or use it for…? Working on heritage education is also working on historical awareness and thinking about the past, the present and the future. With younger children, we can offer this during any of the above-mentioned didactics, but I would like to offer an example here in regard to expression. For a heritage project in Tielt, children were offered a picture of only half a building (at the end of the project). We asked how they would feel if this building was destroyed and why it seemed important for them to keep and conserve it. This building was currently empty, and they were asked to think of a new function and draw it into the other half of the picture (Image 4). In this example, past, present and future is combined and children are critically thinking of the role of a heritage subject.

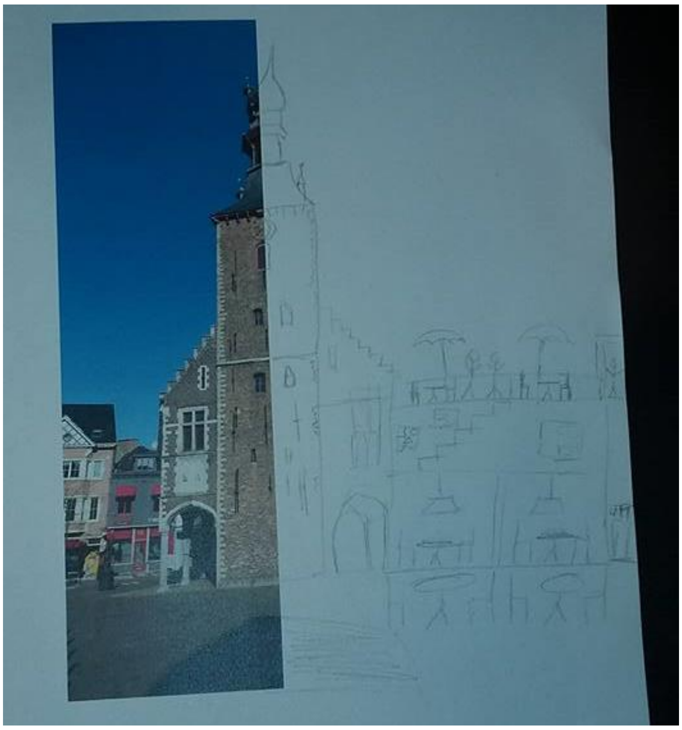
Image 4: Drawing of a new function for a building

Conclusion

By giving the above examples, I hope to have offered both heritage workers and educational workers some insights about ways to offer a heritage subject to children. The key messages to remember are:

- Emphasise the heritage experience.
- Try to stimulate a critical attitude.
- Offer the heritage subject in a cross curricular approach with attention to their talents and needs.
- Set goals to let them participate and motivate them to become researchers themselves.

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Kate Howard & Mark Wallis (UK)

Building responsible live, costumed, historical interpretation

Authors

Kate Howard is the Creative Director of Past Pleasures Ltd. She has spent twenty-five years as both manager and practitioner, defining and honing best practice in historically costumed interpersonal communications in museums, galleries and heritage environments across the world.
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Abstract

How do you maximise the potential of the real, living people at your heritage site? Can a period costume ever be more than simply a visually engaging tool for children or a dramatically theatrical barrier to historical understanding? Is it possible to quantify and measure the impact of effective live interpretation? What is the potential of historically costumed staff? Can historical material delivered by a costumed staff member truly be as academically valid as anything else presented in the museum environment? Past Pleasures Ltd, the UK's oldest and biggest freelance contractor providing live, costumed, historical interpretation to heritage sites across the globe, emphatically says 'Yes'!

Keywords

living history, historical interpretation, museum theatre

Main text

N.B.: This is the text version of information covered in a workshop session. Where information is simply written here, most of these points are uncovered via exercises in the workshop, *allowing attendees to work out for themselves how best practice in live interpretation works.*

Curators can spend a great deal of time working on the precise wording for a text panel, a descriptive label or the positioning of a display object. And yet, many modern museums spend almost no time or money investing in live interpretation. Even understanding that all live engagement at your site is a form of interpretation of that site and its objects, can be challenging. Ultimately, all site representatives - whether costumed, uniformed or non-costumed - are part of the live interpretation of the site and artefacts. I am going to concentrate on the role of historically costumed live interpreters.

What is live interpretation? Past Pleasures defines it as:
"Bringing aspects and elements of a vanished past alive for modern visitors, through scriptless but structured interactions, with an awareness of the modern world and the modern visitors' perceptions. Best practice therefore incorporates: empathy, knowledge, wit, humour, intellectual

curiousity, charm, didactic exposition, period posture, presentational skills... all in ***one*** interaction. These are necessary for first and for third person interpretation".

This paper will examine all the constituent parts of that statement.

It is my experience that often, if costumed interpretation is offered at all, sites think it acceptable to buy a mob cap with the five euros left over in a new exhibition budget, give it to the education officer to wear and call that live interpretation. The potential of costumed interpretation is yet to be fully realised. There are many reasons for this reluctance to either use costumed interpretation or then to invest in improving that offer.

Many site managers consider it, but dismiss it almost instantly as being too hard to monitor, too costly to start up, too risky academically and too much of a learning curve for the site. Statistics showing the effectiveness of live costumed interpretation are hard to come by. The data are collected, but often only for internal use within the host organisation. However, anecdotally, I can relate two findings:
A) At 'The View from the Shard' in London, where live interpreters wear uniform (which is after all a form of costume), they carry out frequent visitor satisfaction surveys. They are investing in their live interpretation programme, as there is an unavoidable direct correlation between high visitor satisfaction ratings and engagement with a uniformed interpreter. Even on a gloomy day when the London skyline is obscured by cloud and rain, engagement with one of the interpreters makes the visit worthwhile.
B) Likewise, anecdotally, I am told (but have not been given access to the statistics) that at a number of Past Pleasures regular sites, visitor dwell time on site is lengthened whenever the costumed interpretation is happening. Longer dwell time on site translates into more spend in the retail and catering outlets, which means increased profitability all round.

More and more sites in the UK are realising the pulling power of an advertised costumed event. Past Pleasures is celebrating thirty years in business this year. I can remember when a costumed event, be it a joust or a ball, was a rarity. This Easter, my local paper in Kent in the UK was filled with all manner of costumed historical events happening all over the county. This is a growth industry, a new employment opportunity for many and an exercise in truly public history.

Interpret Europe is collaborating with Past Pleasures Ltd in disseminating best practice for ensuring a standard quality control in live interpretation delivery.

"Living history can take the presentation of material culture beyond object and function, towards an interpretation of the whole human situation. It puts objects into their human context by injecting ideas and emotions...This claim is criticised from people arguing it is impossible to understand and so recreate past attitudes and ways of life. It is certainly impossible truthfully to recreate the past, but it is quite possible to present interpretation based on current research. Accurately researched and well-presented live interpretation can be as valid as anything else presented in the museum environment". Penny Wilkinson, Wansbeck District Council, Report into living history, 1992.

Costume 'says' many things. It is as much a barrier as it is an offer to engage. Visitor response to it is entirely dependent upon their previous encounters with costumed personnel. If they have formerly been humiliated by a costumed performer whilst visiting a 'schlock' attraction that cheapens history to a farcical performance, or bored to tears by a rambling history geek in costume, they will forever be afraid to approach someone in period costume again. If they always associate costume with a scripted actor, the visitor expects every performer only to stick to a script and, therefore, to have no further knowledge beyond the small piece they have memorised. However, there are a great many skilled practitioners of live interpretation across Europe, who are frustrated as they can see the potential, but are unable to realise it. It is important to acknowledge that there is also a great deal of below-par costumed interpretation offered across

Europe. It is a sad truth that any professional costumed interpreter is always judged by the visitor, by the poorest version they have ever seen. We must work to correct these errors in perception made by others with every nuance and every word. Therefore, Past Pleasures is on a crusade – an evangelical mission to improve the performance of living history across the world.

Within Past Pleasures, we have analysed the interactions between visitors and costumed personnel and have formulated a philosophy and a working methodology for the successful provision of a costumed interpretation offer.

Let us start by looking honestly at the people one finds in costume:

- Volunteer re-enactors are there for themselves – this is their hobby, a fun way to bond in their leisure time with like-minded friends; for them to part the curtains of the past to glimpse the actuality of it for themselves. Although some pay attention to the visitor, the visiting public is not their first concern.
- Craft demonstrators are there for the craft – to fascinate with it, perhaps to pass it on and to create with it. Some may use it as a springboard for engaging with the visitor but for many demonstrators the visitors are a distraction from the pure form of their craft-based interpretation.
- Actors are there to reveal a human truth, not necessarily the truth of historical veracity. Their main tool is the use of emotion and the sparking of emotional engagement – sometimes to the detriment of all else. One only has to look at the massively successful TV series, 'The Tudors', aired internationally, to see that. To understand the charisma and power embodied in King Henry VIII, a young, slim and handsome actor was used throughout to portray a king who was famously fat from early middle age. Recently, the use of non-accurate period clothing in a piece of museum theatre was explained to me thus: "Well the actresses particularly found they could not move as well in the heavy velvet French gowns with the long sleeves".

The role of the historically costumed live interpreter is to utilise all these restrictions, to embrace them and communicate them efficiently and effectively to the modern visitor. In Past Pleasures, we stick to the chain that we are working 1) for the visitor, 2) for the client and then, finally, 3) for ourselves. (You do after all need a bit of ego to stand in an outlandish costume talking to strangers all day). This order is inviolate in Past Pleasures' working methodology.

Of course, there is no such thing as the authentic experience. Even if a site were to reproduce the most perfect period interior, using the right music on the right instruments, entirely academically accurate decoration, a direct copy of an existing gown for the interpreter to wear and the best-informed interpreter, using the best period posture on the planet, the visitor has still heard jazz music and will experience everything through the filter of their modern life. The visitor knows this is not a person from the past, this is all just make believe and pretend. The visitor can suspend their disbelief for a while, but will always know they have not really travelled back in time.

For the responsible interpreter, establishing what was the agreed truth of the past is what the academic struggle is all about anyway. No two academics will entirely agree on the perception of an event. As Nietzsche said, 'There are no facts, only interpretations'. So, Past Pleasures' second working principle is that we always acknowledge the modern visitor and the modern visitor's perceptions. We always ask costumed interpretation trainees to consider who visits their site – and why? There are as many reasons as there are visitors and those reasons may not include 'to see the important object' or 'to appreciate the aesthetic beauty of this site' or 'to learn about history/science/technology'; etc. Every visiting group can be divided into the willing and the unwilling and the costumed interpreter needs to read the visitor honestly – they may not find the same thing fascinating that you find fascinating. You may want to talk about the reformation, they want to know where King Henry's toilet was. (Alternatively, you may want to talk about gory war wounds, when the visitor wants to discuss his or her knowledge of state papers). We must always have the knowledge to go where the visitor's interest goes. This means knowing 99% but being prepared sometimes to only be asked to share 1%.

Within Past Pleasures we train interpreters to monitor their flexibility in their responses to visitors. We do this with the use of 'the four hats'. These are invisible hats, which it is useful to think of wearing and changing as appropriate to each visitor. These are: the Host, the Entertainer, the Expert and the Guardian. Now, an interpreter probably uses many more than four, but we use four as a way of focussing trainee's thoughts on their interactions. You may need to be the host for the distracted mother, who is wondering how long it will be before she can sit down, or where the toilets are. The entertainer does not mean you go into your dance, but it does encapsulate that twinkle in the eye, or that charisma which keeps the visitor wanting to spend their time in your company. The expert can be as simple as knowing the orientation of the building, or it can be as complex as being able to provide great detail on the sources you have used to come up with a particular character's view of a particular issue. The guardian means not only having a duty of care for the building and objects around you, but also for visitor safety and well-being and a duty of care to the accuracy with which you interpret the past.

Within Past Pleasures, we believe first person live interpretation is perhaps the most valuable tool in understanding perceptions of the past. Presenting yourself directly as a person from the past allows you to draw the visitor in to understanding what that different world view is all about. To be clear, this does not mean engaging in Stanislavski style method acting. If you are portraying the life of a character who the historical record makes clear was having – what today we would recognise as a mental breakdown – there is no point in interpreting that as it would have been. If you are a moaning wreck on the floor, the visitors will think you are an interpreter with a problem, not, 'Oh, they are obviously interpreting a person who had a problem'. This is a tricky issue, which can sometimes be solved by interpreting difficult things in third person.

Third person is, of course, valuable – especially if you have timid interpreters who are more comfortable communicating as themselves, despite wearing a costume which is patently not of our time. The step between third and first is not so great. You need a great deal of knowledge to do either effectively.

It has often been Past Pleasures' experience that those who want to use too little or too much information with the visitor prefer third person. The costume allows them to 'hide' their lack of knowledge, lending 'authenticity' to distract from the fact they have been repeating the same five facts over and over. "If they are committed to wearing that outfit, it must be because they really know their stuff". Or, some honestly believe third person interpretation allows them to share all that they know, whereas in first person they would have to keep it too short to be of any value. This is a bit like believing that you are safe on a motorway if you drive exceedingly slowly – in fact, by driving so slowly you are just as likely to cause an accident as driving too fast. About ten years ago, Past Pleasures core guided tours at Hampton Court Palace changed from 45 minutes to 30 minutes. One interpreter would continually over run. Her excuse was, 'Well, I just know so much about these rooms, I can't do it in just 30 minutes". Management had to inform her that if this was the case, she was admitting that she could not do the job required. Actually, we live in an age where people are time poor, attention spans have diminished, but this doesn't mean knowledge gets poorer, we must simply communicate more efficiently.

Past Pleasures also makes great use of second person interpretation. We define this as giving the visitor a role: 'You are guests of His Majesty', 'I am glad so many new servants like you are here', etc. It is this second person usage which creates a fully immersive interactivity for the visitor. It allows them to don an invisible mask, you have given them permission to release their inhibitions, as you have worn a costume – costume often equals 'carnival' and 'carnival' means that the normal rules of society don't apply. This is like immersive theatre, but takes those rules and then expands them.

In tandem with this, we must always acknowledge - often non-verbally, using only paralanguage (non-verbal sounds, gestures and indicators) - that this is a game we are playing and that the visitor is constantly invited to play it with us. Too many people in historical costume use their intimidating costumed presence or peculiar language as a stick to beat the ignorant visitor with. 'Don't you know who I am?' they ask; 'This is my club, my clique and you cannot enter it'. It could be argued that, more than some posts in the heritage environment, costumed interpreters are directly and solely engaged in public history and, therefore, have a duty to make it as accessible as possible to the visitor. Using costume and assumed, pretend status to alienate and humiliate is unforgivable and makes it so much harder for all the other practitioners.

Past Pleasures believes that best practice live interpretation involves structured bullet points, but not a script. The reason for this is that if you have a script, visitors hear only the one voice of the author. If, on the other hand, each interpreter is entrusted with carrying out their own extensive research and drawing their interpretation from that, the visitor gets the benefit of hearing many angles on the past. Obviously, your interpreter's research must be monitored, to ensure it is on-going and that it is academically valid and rigorous. I believe this is the stumbling block for many sites considering live interpretation. How can you ensure everything being said by every person in costume is sufficiently accurate? There are many ways to do this, but yes, they take time to enact. Past Pleasures has an appointed Research Manager who issues each interpreter with a 'starter pack' of information, including an 'approved' bibliography. This means interpreters have been given guidelines for their own accurate further reading and research. Other methods for monitoring interpreters' output involve a ten-point development tick-list. Interpreters are watched in action and given feedback structured around the points on the tick-list. These involve assessing both the plastic skills (volume, eye-contact, placing in the room, crowd management, period posture) and the academic history skills (unpacking of period words, phrases and concepts, clear contextualising, inclusion of new material demonstrating on-going research).

Recently, Past Pleasures was presented with a challenging new project: Interpreting the story of Pocahontas for both education sessions and for a fun family day event. Research led us quickly to realise that this was a story of possible rape, kidnap, underage marriage, cultural appropriation and early death. Not so easy for telling to primary school children and for incorporation into a family fun day! It is a contentious and debated story. There are at least two contemporary versions of her life in existence: the written records of the Virginia Company and the aural history told, even today, by the Mattaponi tribe. For the modern child, this is also compounded by first knowledge coming often from the super sanitised Disney animation. So, what to do? We decided that the only responsible way to look at this story was to address all these versions and then to ask the visitors to compare and contrast. The best live interpretation is not always about having the answers, but about getting the visitors to consider the questions. Our Pocahontas pointed out herself the discrepancies between the accounts of others and her version of events. She wrapped up both presentations by asking those present to remember to always look at several different versions of events before deciding for themselves where the truth lay. Very apt in an age of 'alternative facts' and 'fake news'! Interestingly, we are being asked to do more and more projects with an explicit agenda, for instance, up-coming projects include working with a Cultural Change organisation and on projects addressing colonialism, as well as peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and elsewhere.

Past Pleasures projects always work from and with a client's stated learning objectives. These can be as varied as 'A fun day of events for families' to 'Raising awareness about this specific new object in our museum' to 'Focussing on this one aspect of the history of our site' or 'Focussing on the range of aspects of history across our site'. Identifying the learning objectives for your site is a worthwhile exercise. If they are too broad, they will not help in any strategy, so be as specific as you can.

It can further be argued that the costumed interpreter should be monitoring themselves by thinking of their own learning objective each time they open their mouth. If what you are about to say is not adding to the visitor's overall knowledge of, and engagement with, an aspect of the past which you are supposed to be imparting, then why are you saying it? If it cannot be justified as helping to explore the world view of the past, then it does not belong in your dialogue with the visitor.

Once the manager has decided on the learning objectives for their site, they can identify the best period for tackling that. Once these two things are decided, the question of which characters from the past could best interpret those. Past Pleasures would always recommend ensuring a mix of people, to a) reflect as much of society as possible at that time in the past – both 'the rich man in his castle' and 'the poor man at his gate' and b) to ensure a mix of genders to appeal to all the visitors. Many sites with sword displays or weapons demonstrations are over-whelmingly male, when the one thing we know without doubt about humankind in the past is that it has always consisted of both men and women. Even if your site is a monastery or convent, these places were always ministering to all of society around them, providing sanctuary for all and engaging with all – however briefly. There is always a way to connect to the whole story of the past, not simply one facet of it.

Trainees will sometimes try to excuse their own lack of historical knowledge by saying, 'I am portraying someone who was born and died in this place. They would have known nothing of the world, so that is what I am portraying'. This is surely worst practice. You are not a person from the past. You are a 21st century historical interpreter. If you only give the smallest part of your knowledge, this is less satisfying for the visitor. Using exercises in creating links, both from yourself to others and in linking your personal timeline with public recorded events, it is possible to find the ways in which people of the past had a larger world view than is sometimes allowed for. For instance, although we are born in a certain time, our families, our friends and our educators have told us things about what happened before we were born, so we have knowledge of the world before we were in it. Our character may never have travelled but the likelihood is we know someone or met someone who has and, therefore, have some knowledge of the world outside our own space. These techniques allow the 21st century interpreter to see what their historical persona can feasibly talk about in a way which illuminates the world view of a time in the past.

Likewise, an interpreter portraying a soldier or a footman or even a modest woman of any age – the sort of person who genuinely would have stood quietly as a piece of furniture saying nothing – is only fulfilling half the potential of a best practice live interpreter. The 21st century live interpreter must find ways to do both: a) to demonstrate the stillness/ ennui/ silence of the past life they are depicting and then b) to engage with the public to share verbally with them some of that other researched information about the world of that time. Finding ways to bond with the visitor over the repetitive nature of the monastic life, or the tasks a seamstress undertakes – or whatever – allows you to become human again, to acknowledge that this is a game you are playing and, as such, you can break out of your constrictions to illuminate other parts of that world for them. As long as you 'gear change' physically, vocally and in the material you are using from one to the other – and then back again – you will have done justice to both.

There are many ways of doing this: telling them you are not moving or speaking (when you patently are); and telling them that you can't tell them something (and then telling them what that is) are just two. For instance, I was recently interpreting in a house which was 'officially' a protestant residence in the 16th century, but which 'privately' had long catholic connections. To convey this to the visitors, my character would speak under her breath about supporting catholics, then my colleague's character would 'overhear' and reprimand my character for speaking about such things in his 'good protestant house'. My character then made a point of apologising, loudly, reiterating everything I had said under my breath, for all to hear: "My apologies, far be it from me to draw people's attention to the catholic symbols on the ceiling above us, I would never do that"….trailing off at this point, to make it clear I knew exactly what I was doing!

If much of this sounds flippant, that is because it is only with humour that we can truly connect with the visitor and, by this, lead them to a darker truth. Past Pleasures' motto is (from Gilbert and Sullivan's 'Yeoman of the Guard), "I shall trick them into learning with a laugh".

Past Pleasures teaches that the visitor is always either equal in status to the costumed interpreter or slightly above the costumed interpreter (whatever costume and roll they are in). If you are monarch of all you survey, the visitor is still addressed as 'My trusted friend and adviser/ Boon companion/ Honoured guest'. It is only with other costumed characters that one should display outrage over perceived slights. There are variations to this rule, but only for skilled and experienced interpreters, otherwise, the temptation is to start belittling the visitor. The visitor is allowed to have a lack of knowledge – they don't know the rules of the game, or even that there is a game to be played, until you impart that to them. Too many times I have witnessed costumed interpreters using sarcasm with visitors. Most famously: 'My name is Mary and I am a black cook' heard from a white, male interpreter at one site. When asked why he answered a request for his name in that manner, he answered 'Well, isn't it obvious?' Well, no, it's not. Not for the visitor who is wandering around not knowing the orientation of the site as you do, who is wondering if they put enough money in the car parking meter, who is trying to work out which year they are supposed to be in now, who is worried they will be humiliated for not knowing anything about this time and place. Sarcasm has no place in the visitor engagement experience.

The costumed interpreter has one great tool to use in the status game with visitors. It works as both an interpersonal communication tool and as an historical locator. This is the bow or the curtsey. As it involves the breaking of eye contact with the visitor, plus placing yourself in the subservient position, it allows them to take you in, without feeling judged in return. It shows you are humble and not going to attack or humiliate them. If they are still there when you rise and re-establish eye contact, it means they are open to the next stage of the interaction. Little by little, 'easy does it' and, before you know it, you are engaging in a two-way interaction with them.

Visitors are always offering to engage. We have only to see their offers for what they are and then we can optimise that opportunity.

1) 'Are you dead?'
2) 'You don't know what an Mp3 player is, do you?'
3) 'Bet you feel stupid in that get up!'
4) 'Did they have light bulbs/ radiators/ electric points like this in the middle ages?'

Despite appearances, these are all positive offers from the visitor to engage. Too often, costumed interpreters take fright, or are tempted to go on the offensive when these offers are made. Actually, they are a gift. Here are some of the best practice first person character responses Past Pleasures interpreters have given to these offers:

1) 'I am as alive as anyone in this year of 1603. You remember – old Queen Elizabeth – the first of that name – has just died….'
   Here you are giving them the rules of the game again. They thought they were being funny and pointing out the inconsistency of your dress in the modern world, but in fact you are reinforcing to them that the game you are playing involves them too – you are asking for their participation. You are giving them a date and a famous name, in the hope that this will at least partially explain the game you are playing. This needs to be said with a smile and a twinkle in the eye. On asking them to 'remember' something, you need to nod and smile. The rules of social interaction mean they will – mostly unconsciously – mirror your behaviour and find themselves nodding and smiling too.

2) 'If I want music, I call for my minstrel to come and play me something. Have you seen this instrument called a serpent?'….
   There is no need to answer the question about an Mp3 player. You are not a person from the past and you do know what an Mp3 player is. With this answer, you are tacitly acknowledging that you do have that knowledge, but your function is to draw them into

your world of the past, not discover what your past person would have made of the modern age. We don't know how they would react to the modern world and it is not something to spend your precious moments of interaction on.

3) 'Oh dear, I was afraid I might look out of place at the court, but these are the best clothes I could afford. Do you think I will get in to see the King?'
Again, instead of being cowed or embarrassed by the comment about his clothes, the interpreter has embraced the offer to engage as an opportunity to introduce the rules of the game – we are here in the past – in the past this place had a different function – let's play this game of being in this place in the past… The bottom line is that the interpreter is a 21st century man. He has honestly acknowledged that the clothes he is wearing are a bit odd to 21st century eyes. We call this 'acknowledging the ridiculous'. By appealing to the visitor's empathy, he is engaging their sympathy for his predicament, placing the bully at a disadvantage.

4) 'I think your eyes must be keener than mine. In this year of 1301, I can only see the wattle and daub walls/ the tallow candles that give light/ the fire which gives heat. No doubt you come from a wealthy estate and are shocked by this poor man's room – is that so?'
Visitors only ask questions like this - pointing out anachronisms in the surroundings - when they have not been given the rules of the game, or enough information about the game. They have been bold enough to say something, even if it is not a 'helpful' question. Stating the year clearly again helps to introduce the rules of this game again. This response also taps into a truism – by flattering the questioner by calling them 'wealthy' (and giving them the nodding and smiling mirroring indicator) we are ensuring he or she will laugh as they affirm that of course they are very, very wealthy! This is an important technique which has been inspired by Freeman Tilden's text *Interpreting our Heritage* (1957): Any interpretation which does not reflect something in the visitor's attitudes, ideas, beliefs or experience is invalid.

Interpreters must utilise the universal themes which unite all humankind in their interpretation. Why was that previous visitor keen to know about King Henry's toilet? Because all humankind in all ages need to pee! Other universal themes are the basic necessities: Food, shelter, family, health and hygiene, faith, ceremony, education, occupations (both work and leisure), economics, and emotions - love, faith, pride, shame, hate, envy, ambition etc, etc. Truisms can be very useful for encouraging active visitor participation: Imagine asking a crowd, Do children obey their parents? – Of course not! Do wives obey their husbands? – Of course not! Do siblings fight? – Of course they do! Getting a crowd laughing and joining in with these easy to answer queries allows relief from anxieties about being asked complex questions on history.

Recruitment – So who should be recruited as costumed interpreters? If nothing else, they should be nice people. If the public enjoy their company and are happy to spend time in their company, then your interpretation already has an advantage. The only thing which cannot be taught is a love for your subject, so always look for that when assessing who to recruit for costumed interpretation. The amount of research needed is monumental.

Costumed personnel, more than any others in the museum environment, do need to have good social interaction skills. Reading the visitor is vital for best practice. If you cannot read the visitor's body language or vocalising, how are you supposed to effectively manage your engagement with them? The days are gone when guided tours lasted three hours, with a guide who rambles on without taking in the interest (or lack thereof) of their public. Many organisations globally are now assessing the suitability of the volunteers they have had working with the public, doing the same - worst practice - for years. These same organisations are investing in good interpretation and supporting people with an aptitude for it. This can only be a good thing in keeping new audiences engaged with our sites and artefacts.

Past Pleasures Ltd will be running a three-day Certified Live Interpreter (CLI) pilot course in live, costumed interpretation for Interpret Europe. It will be in the UK from 1st-7th September 2017. See the Interpret Europe website for details.

Image 1: Past Pleasures costumed historical interpretation

Valeria Klitsounova (Belarus)

Special mission of teaching heritage interpretation in post-socialist countries

Author

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Abstract

This article describes the very first heritage interpretation course at the Belarusian State University (BSU), which was launched in 2014. It is based on innovative democratic approaches and principles. Students are shown best practices in interpretation and get involved in creating individual interpretation programmes. The result of research based on students' feedback will be presented.

Keywords

heritage, interpretation, mission, education, democratic values

Main text

Heritage interpretation is an absolutely new sphere of activity and knowledge entering post-soviet countries, including Belarus. It attracts a lot of interest among tourism stakeholders.

In Belarusian tourism, while developing excursions and tourism programs, soviet stereotypes still play the dominant role. From the early days of the USSR, excursions were a tool to instill a certain type of behavior. Dialogs, pluralism, even any initiative to provide your own opinion, were not allowed. It always used to be a monologue – one-sided communication. A huge amount of information was provided in order to sweep any doubts and questions aside. There was only one right opinion – the one provided by a guide. Usually, the entertainment side was missing as well.

It has been almost 25 years since the collapse of the Soviet Union. There is no longer that powerful ideological machine that could support such approaches ideologically and financially. All these approaches and stereotypes are not effective any more, consequently, there is no demand for them.

The generations are changing, and now we can see young people with different needs. There is only one way to attract the younger generation's attention – to create a completely new tourism product based on heritage, which will be able to compete with social networks, modern entertainment parks, clubs, parties, etc.

The situation is completely the opposite in western countries. There are a lot of organisations whose main activity is to work with natural and cultural heritage. They have used the interpretive approach for many years. The following can be mentioned: national parks (the National Park Service of the US has existed since 1916), other nature protection territories, museums, historical villages and farms, farmsteads, zoos, safari parks, camps, resorts, entertainment parks, tour operators, industrial heritage objects, NGOs, management and self-management bodies, etc. All of them have contributed to popularisation of interpretation and turning it into a profession. During several decades in the interpretive guides' community of western countries, mainly the USA, it has been widely discussed whether interpretation is a profession and, if it is so, is there a necessity of official recognition? There are different opinions concerning the issue. One of them – interpretation is going to be a profession in the future. Another opinion is that interpretation has already become a profession. And the third one says that interpretation is too wide and interdisciplinary to be combined into one type of professional occupation.

Interpretation already possesses many characteristics, which are necessary for a profession: its own ideology and terminology, sort of standards, permanent quality control, training and educational programmes, opportunities, connection with practical experience, acknowledgment from other disciplines.

From our point of view, interpretation is bigger and wider than just a profession. It is possible to say that today there exists some kind of non-formal Professional Code which is commonly acceptable. In order to become a profession, interpretation needs to have clearly developed professional standards, qualifications and job descriptions. Meanwhile, it is of primary importance that interpretation doesn't conflict with other professions. That's why on the current stage of becoming a profession, it would be more logical to consider interpretation as a special kind of ideology with its own system of opinions, values, approaches. This makes interpretation bigger and higher than just a profession. We can speak about it as a special sign of quality.

Usually, positions connected with interpretation might be termed Interpretive Ranger, Interpretive Manager, Interpretive Designer, Interpretive Planner, etc. Interpretation often acts as an adjective, which is linked to a traditional profession or position. Nevertheless, there is no way it diminishes interpretation, more that it demonstrates special value and its universal character. It is an added value, superior quality, spirituality, which provides a professional competitive advantage. This is what distinguishes a regular guide from a professional one, just a trip from an unforgettable excursion, an ordinary museum or national park from an outstanding museum or national park.

The National Association of Interpretation (NAI) has even produced a special T-shirt for interpreters (Image 1) which describes many of the roles or functions of interpreters. It contains a little bit of humor but it is very true. Obviously, there are various types of professional activities in the list – historian, ranger, teacher, tour guide, etc. There are so-called 'missionary' activities where the main characteristic is a mission: protector, inspirer, leader, interpreter, teacher. Interpreters try to combine all these activities to implement one of the most important ideological functions of interpretation, aimed at creating new environmentally conscious minds and responsible behavior. It is obvious that interpretation is not just a profession. It is more like a mission.

Image 1: NAI interpreter’s T-shirt

Any professional activity, especially activities connected with a mission and its own ideology, needs to have an educational system. There is a range of interpretive educational programmes, training, seminars offered in the USA. Few intellectual centres define the main development tendencies of the interpretive activity. This is, first of all, the National Park Service (USA), National Association for Interpretation (USA) and some higher institution facilities: The University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point, Michigan State University, The University of Idaho, The University of San Diego (California), etc. These are places where principal materials, programmes, books are prepared; all of it will become the basis for interpretation later on. It is the place where new approaches are being developed to meet the needs of society.

Today, interpreters can gain a professional education in more than 130 university programmes at undergraduate and graduate levels in North America. Several universities in Europe, Australia, and Asia also offer interpretation courses. Teaching of interpretation has a long history. Some undergraduate interpretation courses cover a broad overview of the philosophy, principles, and methods of interpretation and environmental education. Others build on these general concepts and require numerous exercises to develop students’ individual performance skills in different styles of interpretive presentations. The interpretive profession has long debated whether a strong grounding in communication or expertise in specific resource subject matter (e.g., forestry, natural science, archaeology, history) is more important. In fact, the work requires depth in both subject matter and delivery theory and skills (Douglas, M.).

The situation in Belarus and in other post-soviet countries is different and heritage interpretation is still in the initial stage of development. Even the term “interpretation” is unknown to the wider public. The first book about interpretation in Russian, “Heritage Interpretation in Tourism: New

Approaches in Experience Economy Era", written by me, was published in 2015 and the first few training courses, including one with Interpret Europe in 2016, have been introduced. The Belarusian NGO, "Country Escape", is an institution responsible for promoting these new ideas in Belarus. The very first course on heritage interpretation has now appeared at BSU.

There are also private initiatives based on interpretive principles – the museum of rural culture, "Dudutky", private ecomuseums, thematic tourism programmes, festivals, etc. They are designed mainly by intuition without theoretical knowledge. They prove the efficiency of interpretive approaches and attract a big interest from tourists. We may say that tourism stakeholders demonstrate its interest and use more and more interpretive ideas.

Why is it happening now? There are three reasons:

- there is a demand for new, innovative ideas in the tourism industry, which provide a competitive advantage for tourism products/ services and create added value in the hospitality industry;
- there is an active, well-educated audience – a new generation who use the internet and travel around the globe. They are able to use these new ideas and implement them; and
- new institutions have appeared and an initial network for spreading these new ideas has established. The NGO, "Country Escape", and BSU were the first ones.

Why is it happening in the tourism industry? Because it is the most dynamic sector of the economy, based mainly on private companies looking for new innovative ideas. Many young people have decided to work in this field.

Heritage interpretation is an absolutely new academic discipline in higher education of post-socialist countries. There are only few universities where you can find such courses and the Belarusian State University is one of them. The course, "Cultural and Natural Heritage Interpretation in Tourism", has been offered since 2014 as a discipline in the International Tourism Department, and includes 52 hours of teaching across ten topics (Table 1).

Topic 1	The cultural and natural heritage in tourism and creative economy
Topic 2	Cultural and natural heritage interpretation: main principles
Topic 3	Interpretation of cultural heritage in tourism: theory and best practices
Topic 4	Interpretation of the natural heritage in tourism: theory and best practices
Topic 5	Intangible heritage interpretation's features in tourism: theory and best practices
Topic 6	Using best techniques of interpretation in communications
Topic 7	Ecomuseums as a form of cultural and natural heritage interpretation
Topic 8	Greenways as an innovative approach in cultural and natural heritage interpretation
Topic 9	The quests as a modern form of cultural and natural heritage interpretation
Topic 10	How to design tourism products using interpretive techniques

Table 1: Program of the course "Cultural and Natural Heritage Interpretation in Tourism" (BSU, Minsk)

From the very beginning, there was a problem of how to attract students to this course with the title which doesn't tell them much. The basic term "interpretation" is unknown. There is no profession like that in our country, there is no clear understanding of the word "interpretation".

To make the course attractive for students we developed the "5I" model. The course should be **I**nnovative, **I**nspiring, **I**nteresting, **I**nteractive and **I**nterdisciplinary – this is what makes it very interesting and creative.

Then we used the ASK model (**A**ttitude, **S**kills, **K**nowledge) to form the content of the course. We intended for it to be universal and match to any future profession. We wanted to create a new *Attitude* among students (to teach them to have their own opinion, express it freely, care about and care for heritage, to be more responsible, etc.). We planned to develop new *Skills* (how to communicate with each other, how to conduct dialogues, how to present information in the most efficient way, how to be creative). We tried to enlarge students' *Knowledge* (to introduce new concepts, history and principles of interpretation). The course is based on innovative democratic approaches and principles.

The course provides a basic knowledge about the history, principles and best practices of interpretation (topics 1-5), introduces different techniques in communication (topic 6), gives some practical skills in tourism product creation (topics 7-10), and, as a result, it inspires students to make their own presentations at the end of the course.

During the presentation, other students are supposed to evaluate it according to a special form, in which they can award their grades according to certain criteria. All presentations should be creative, use some arts, open new meanings of resources. The programme has a clear theme, with five to seven subthemes, a clear structure, including a POW! Introduction, bridge, interesting body, transitions and inspiring conclusion (Buchholz J.).

There has been a wide variety of students' programmes. During past years, they have been dedicated to Belarusian folklore and rites, Belarusian cuisine, how to survive in Belarusian forests, Belarusian legends and even Eskimos' icehouse (igloo). Sometimes we make an open presentation for other groups, which always provides an interesting show (Images 2-5).

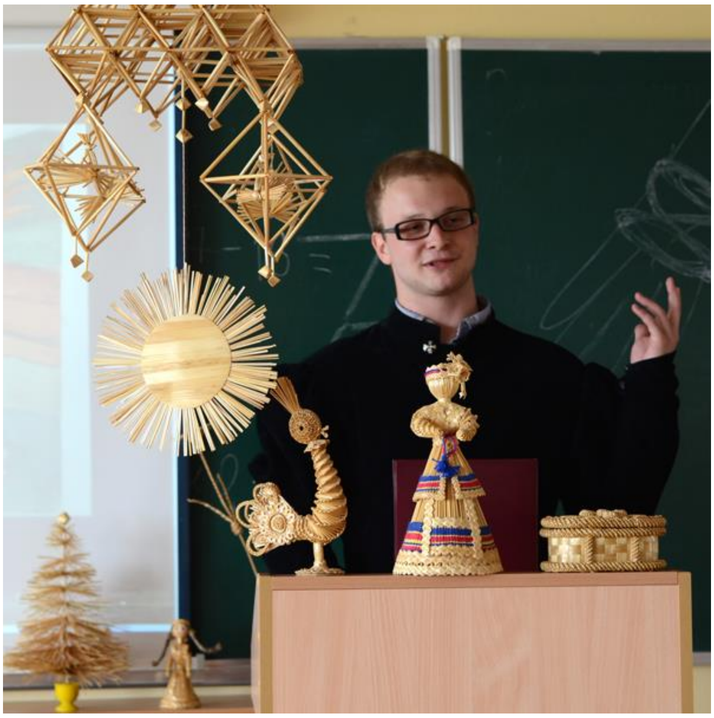

Image 2: Presenting different crafts made by students and craftsmen

Image 3: Demonstration of traditional dishes and rites on Midsummer day "Kupalie"

Image 4: Learning how to do different knots for surviving in the forest

Image 5: Making icehouse from pieces of sugar

After the course, a sort of survey is conducted (Table 2). The answers demonstrate that the students consider the course to be really innovative, interesting, creative and rather universal.

In our post-soviet education system, students are usually taught to remember things and then repeat it. The course, “Cultural and Natural Heritage Interpretation in Tourism”, introduces another approach. Students should find their own opinion, respect different views, look at resources from different angles, look for different meanings and revelations. As a result, the course introduces and promotes democratic value. It is like a special mission for teachers and students, to inspire and make them ambassadors of the great activity – heritage interpretation.

1. Was the course interesting and why? • The course was very interesting, because the interpretation is really something new and unusual for the Belarusian tourism. • The material is easier to digest by using visual interpretation in video clips. • Constant discussions, video presentations, speeches of colleagues… The contact between the audience and the lecturer created a working and creative atmosphere.
2. Where can you use the acquired knowledge and skills? • I think that the acquired knowledge can be applied in all spheres of life. • We acquired the necessary knowledge (oratory, logical and creative thinking, methods of attracting attention, conducting dialogue). • The places of use of the acquired skills are as diverse as the acquired knowledge. From ordinary communication with colleagues, to speaking at conferences and diplomatic receptions. • In any field of activity, since in our time it is very important to look at things under a different (new!) angle. • The course taught to fearlessly speak to people regardless of the information being presented. And it’s also interesting to present even quite boring topics at first glance.
3. Has it helped to improve communication skills? If so, how? • This course helped improve the skill of public speaking. Before, I was categorically afraid of any performance, even in front of familiar people. • Fear of the stage and public appearances has gone. The course also helped in conducting the dialogue between the orator and the student. • We learned how to sharpen the listeners’ attention so that they remember a lot from what has been said. • Several techniques can be used in public speaking, in interaction with the interested public, in daily communication in an informal setting.
4. What would you advise for improvement? • The course is pretty interesting, so there are no much wishes. • The course is composed interestingly and not boringly, using a lot of video material, as well as interesting presentations. But still I would like to see more concrete examples of the use of interpretation. • Creating outside excursions or taking participation in conferences.
5. Did it help to develop creativity? Have you discovered something new in yourself? • I believe that the course helped to develop not only creativity, but also taught each of us to look at things from a completely different angle. • Helped to understand that in fact we are all creative in one way or another. It was fun and interesting to prepare the project at the end of the semester. • The course certainly added a bit of creativity, because you had to look at things from a different angle, which was not familiar to me.

Table 2: Typical answers from a questionnaire for students who attended the course "Interpretation of Cultural and Natural Heritage" (group 2016/2017)

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Luďa Klusáková (Czech Republic)

Heritage representational strategies in Gascony and the Polish-Slovak Carpathian Region

Author

Luďa Klusáková is Professor of History at Charles University, Prague. Her specialisation is urban history, and she has been a member of the European Association for Urban History since its foundation in 1992. Since 2011, in the Erasmus Mundus Master Joint Degree programme TEMA: European Territories, Identities and Development, on which she participated, heritage analysis and interpretation has been seen to be very appealing to students experiencing 'otherness' when travelling.

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Abstract

The presentation will focus on two interesting cases of multiple places registration on UNESCO WHL – The French segment of the pilgrimage trail to Santiago de Compostela in Midi-Pyrenées newly integrated with Languedoc and Roussillon (and since September 2016 entitled Occitanie) region and the wooden churches in Šariš and Krosno regions. The main question is about representational strategies of the regions, where UNESCO World Heritage sites are located. How they play with local/ regional/ national/ global value, if at all. How they deal with other kinds of heritage reflecting the region's history. The objective of the presentation is to look for similarities, differences, and analogical situations and categorise the variety of representational strategies of valorisation of tangible heritage, including intangible heritage and traditional economic practices, to explore how the local communities, regional bodies and cross border projects highlight the overlooked and identify good and bad practices, and bottlenecks.
The presentation will give opportunity to discuss the practice of heritage presentation in peripheral regions, which is the more frequent situation than in large cities or at monumental sites. To contrast UNESCO and local/ regional heritage. How they are used in self-identification, and what type of obstacles they meet.

Keywords

UNESCO World Heritage, Occitanie, Midi-Pyrenées, Gascony, Gers, Carpathian region, Slovak-Polish borderland, Šariš

Main text

The questioning of strategies of heritage representations is based on comparative research of three regions in France, in Slovakia and in Czech Republic – Gascon/ Gers, Šariš and Vysočina/ Třebíčsko. The first outcome was published in 2008 and is accessible online.[i] Recently, the author has revisited the issue to study the identification strategies of small towns, which will be published this year, and will also be free access, I believe.[ii] To return to this topic was partly motivated by the people from these regions interested to hear about similar or different cases in analogical situations, and partly by the fact that our international students respond with quite an interest in these topics. Last, but not least, it is my own interest in the composition of the local or regional "heritage basket" – what comes in, and what is left out. Whether the heritage presentation is related to trendy aestheticisation of cities (Jürgen Hasse, 2011: 49 – 51), which spread from metropolises down to small towns and villages? Does this find an expression in relationship to heritage as well? I presume that these processes are not accidental. I have chosen only two cases from my research to highlight here, though they are complex, offering analogies, similarities and differences.

Introduction of cases

Pilgrim´s road to Santiago de Compostela in Gers

Ten years after the inscription of the first 12 sites of outstanding universal value (OUV) on the World Heritage List of UNESCO, the French party succeeded to have registered an exceptional bid – multiple site registration of Pilgrims road to Compostela in France. It comprised 78 sites – a variety of religious and civic buildings represented as carriers of the memory and tradition living for many centuries[iii]. There are in the set 44 churches or cathedrals, 10 abbeys, 5 hospitals, 7 bridges, 2 towers, 1 gate, 7 segments of the trail, 1 dolmen and among all these were seven complexes, such as Mont St. Michel and a cloister, bishop´s palace, and ramparts in Saint-Lizier. They are spread along the pilgrim's trail crossing the country. There are well-known monumental structures in the set, such as Basilique Sainte-Madeleine in Vézelay and Cloister in Moissac, which appear in every history textbook in the chapter on medieval art, or St. Sernin Cathedral - one of the symbols of Toulouse, as shown on the map in Figure 1.[iv]

Figure 1: Map showing the monuments enlisted as Pilgrim´s road to Compostela in France on WHL along the marked pilgrim's trails

The pilgrim's trails also cross rather unknown places, peripheral areas, such as Gers, one of the departments in the South-West of France. Here we can identify four UNESCO sites: Virgin Mary Cathedral in Auch (registration ID 868-048), Pont d'Artigues ou de Lartigues between Beaumont-sur-l'Osse and Larressingle (868-049), collégiale Saint-Pierre in La Romieu (868-050) and a 35km-long segment of road - Chemin du Puy, connecting Lectoure with Condom (868-077).

Gers is a mountainous, poorly populated, rural region (Figure 2). Lacking large cities or spectacular monuments, it chose about thirty years ago to motivate its economy through tourism. The marketing of the region was supported by articulation of its brand through its presentation as rich in heritage – natural, tangible and intangible.

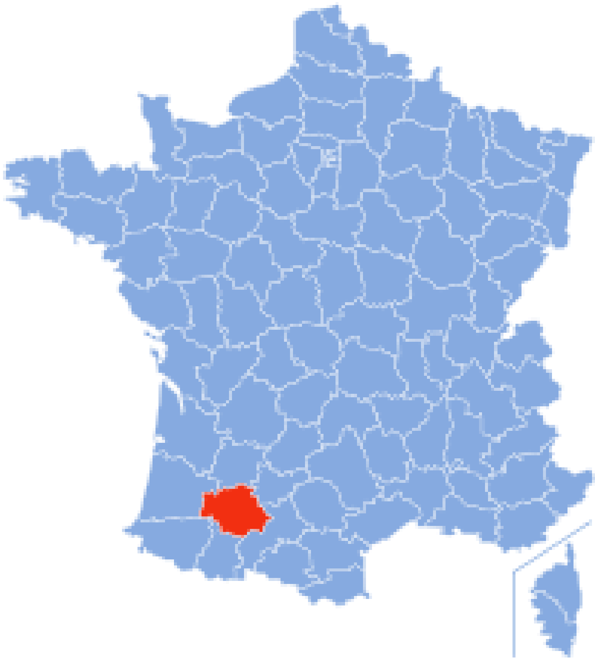

Figure 2: Gers highlighted on the map of France[v]

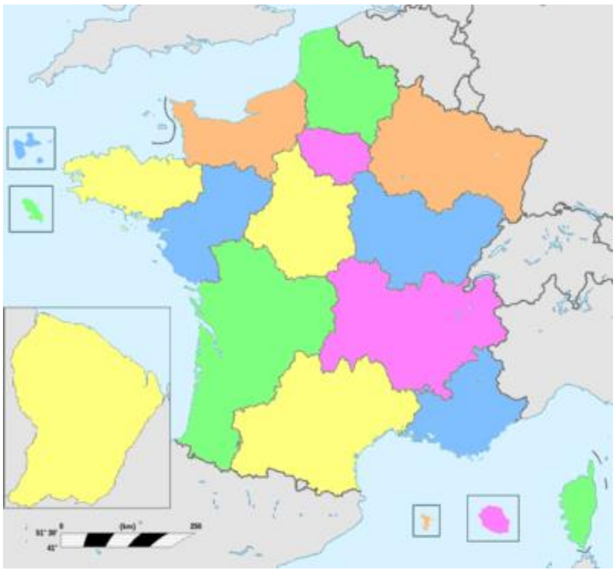

Figure 3: Regions in France since 2016. Occitanie borders the Mediterranean in the East[vi]

"The Carpathian Wooden Road"

In the border region of north-east Slovakia and south-east Poland, a traveller often finds an information desk inviting them to take a tour focused on the sacral wooden architecture of this region. The invitation relates to two, relatively recent, multiple sites UNESCO registrations.

On the Slovak side of Eastern Beskid Mountains, the Wooden Churches of the Slovak part of the Carpathian Mountain Area consists of nine sites, inscribed in 2008, in eight different places. The wooden churches are numerous in northern part of Slovakia. Those enlisted were built between the 16th and 18th Centuries. Two of them are Roman Catholic: Hervartov (registration ID 1273-001) and Tvrdošín (1273-002). Three are Protestant – Articular churches in Hronsek (1273-005), Leštiny (1273-004) and Kežmarok (1273-003). Three Greek Catholic churches in Bodružal (1273-007), Ladomirová (1273-008) and Ruská Bystrá (1273-009), plus one belfry in Hronsek (1273-006).[vii] The Greek Catholic and Orthodox tserkvas outnumber the other denominations in the Slovak-Polish border area. Here, in addition to the eight UNESCO churches, there are some 50 more.

In the Polish border region, the nomination of Wooden *Tserkvas* of the Carpathian Region in Poland and Ukraine[viii] was accepted by UNESCO only in 2013, consisting of 16 sites, eight in Poland and eight in Ukraine. They were preceded by a registration of just one multiple site registration in 2003 of Wooden Churches of Southern Małopolska. In the Polish side of Carpathians, the wooden sacral architecture is also very visible, and the Greek Catholic and Orthodox churches are very important among them, although often held now by the Roman Catholic Church. The Polish UNESCO sites are not close enough to the Slovak border, and they are quite a distance away on the Polish side. Therefore, the construction of a cross-border trail of UNESCO churches has not been considered for this multiple sited registration.

The region in Poland, as well as in Slovakia, is working on its tourist offer. There is no one common brand which would connect the Polish and the Slovak side of the Carpathian mountains, but, since the sacral wooden architecture is enlisted on both sides of the border, the question of possible collaboration is quite obvious. Further, we shall look into the local practice - whether the idea of cross-border promotion of cultural heritage is functioning with other types of heritage

Heritage presentation
Gers

The tangible heritage representing the pilgrim's trail in Gers is a mix of sacral (churches) and civic building: bridge and road. Since the last one connects two places - Larresingle and Beaumont - they both appear in the picture as well. UNESCO selection is easily integrated into the map of places which serve as stops for refreshment or overnight stays, the footprints marked by the sign of the shell or pilgrim's figure. Since the department is crossed by two roads - *via podiensis* and *via tolosana* - there are many of them (Figure 4).

The pilgrim's road is promoted not so much as a religious exercise, more as a lived experience (physical, intellectual and spiritual). In fact, all the road with all its places is "enlightened" by the UNESCO registration. However, in the region's strategy of heritage interpretation, the UNESCO registration does not stand out, or dominate. Gers has appropriated the symbols related to Gascony, the cultural and historical region.

Figure 4: Postcard belonging to the author, showing the shell logos to mark the refreshment stops on the pilgrim's trail

Gers is presented as Gascony's heart. The proximity of Spain is visible in the regional culture; wherever the visitor spots a bullring devoted to Tauromachia (corrida) and combination of red and yellow colours in decorations, the language, the place names, type of settlements and urbanism, regional cuisine and production of local vines and unique brandy (Armagnac), sports and games and, last, but not least, historical events and people – the actors of historical change. The historical narrative is inclusive, there are no preferred periods, and, obviously, the well-known heroes steal the show[ix].

The pilgrim's road points to religious and cultural traditions shared in Europe, the highlighted events and their actors link local with national and European history. It is not a set of positive stories with happy endings. Gers was a border region in the Hundred Year´s War, a stage of bloody, religious wars. Since there were no natural resources, the absence of industrialisation has maintained the rural style of life, and has not changed the landscape. Although the battlefields of the Great War were in the north, the monuments commemorating the heroes and the victims in every village and town make it very present. The fact that Gers was part of the Vichy state during World War II is concealed, on the other hand; places related to the struggle with the Nazis are well kept. You can find street, square and place names, even in very small communes, linking them with national and European history.

Thus, all these places are carriers of national identification and regional pride. There are commemorations held. The heritage interpretation is produced mostly by professional historians, displayed in printed matter, distributed in information centres. The role of digital media has gained importance through the period of observation, and has also been changing. From strictly informative to colourfull with ringing bells and sounds of local poultry, back to a developed informative format. The very important task of both was to develop a positive image/ stereotype of local people. Historically, the northern image of Gascons (or heterostereotype) was negative, and is still surviving, although we may have an impression that the positive one has been successfully created and adopted first of all in the region itself, and presented in local media (La Dépêche du Midi).

The problem of Gers is the low population density. Many places are virtually empty except during the tourist season, although the statistics indicate stability or even a small increase. The region's tourism administration goal was to encourage people to return – this they achieved through various festivals which, over the years, became traditional for the holiday period, mostly in July and August. According to Bernard Kayser, a French sociologist based in Toulouse, we can apply to Gers his concept of *renaissance rurale*: an optional strategy, involving rural society and the society of small provincial/ rural towns, in which active and creative individuals (so-called neo-rurals) settle, abandoning large towns. The strategy can lead to a variety of results between desertification and successful revitalisation. (Bernard Kayser, 1990: 28-30, 255-6, 316; B. Kayser, 2001:151- 160.) Gers would be the successful one (up to a limit).

Slovak-Polish border region

The wooden trails are promoted on both sides of the border. They can profit from their large numbers spread across the region. As a rule, in those villages, there is no other attraction, with the exception of cemeteries, which may be also war cemeteries. On the other hand, the monotonous offer of churches which look very similar to each other in the eyes of the average tourist with broad interests, invites us to look for other types of heritage, tangible or intangible. On the Slovak side, the region identifies with Šariš, an historical administrative region (Figure 5), on the cultural border, ethnically mixed with a strong minority of Ruthenian (and Ukrainian) population, rural, where singular folklore developed. It is characterised by a specific dialect and music, and a local cuisine. Last, but not least, the Tserkvas in their villages are quite specific.

Ruthenians in Poland, called Lemki, also live on the Polish side in the south east touristic region as indicated on the map (Figure 6). Over the long-term, the region has suffered a decrease in population due to labour migration, and economic problems, in effect creating a similar picture to Gers (although with many differences). One of the similarities is their geographic distance from the metropolis, creating low social and economic status and negative opinions among people regarding being on the peripheries.

Figure 5: Šariš on the map of Slovakia (Klusáková, 2008: 305)

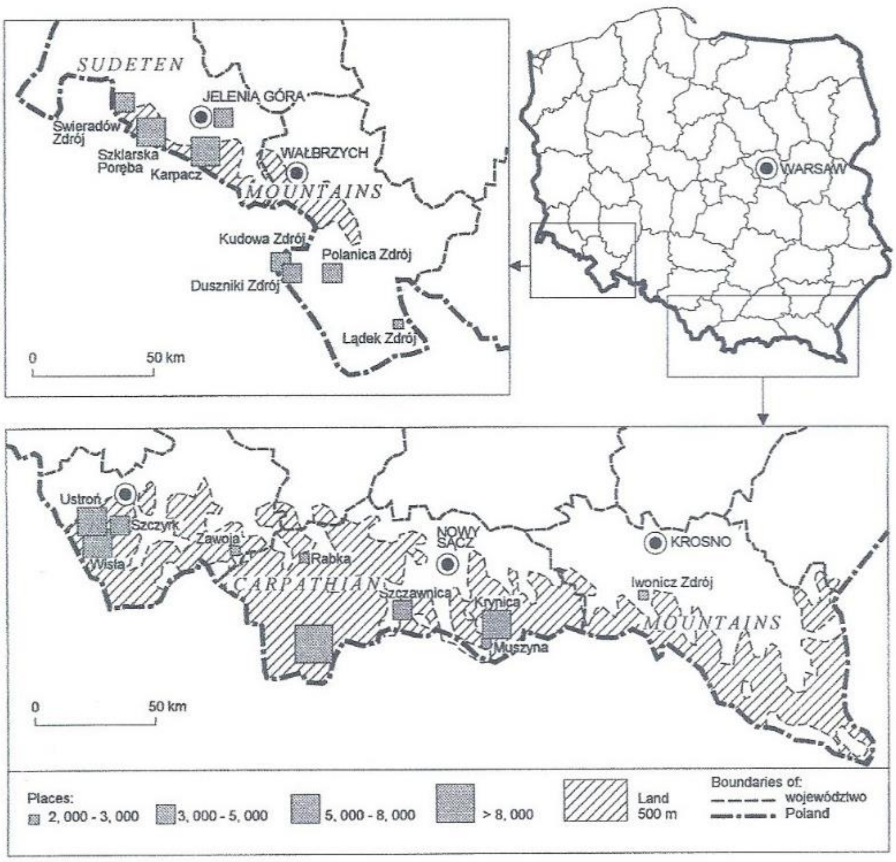

Figure 1 Principal mountain resorts in southern Poland
Source: University of Łódź Cartography Unit.

European Urban and Regional Studies 2000 7 (3)

Figure 6: Polish side of the Carpathian Mountains region (Ray Riley: 2000: 197)

The region performs a specific type of settlement, less compact and less variety than we have seen in Gascony, but can offer a very specific mixture of heritage:
(1) urban: a UNESCO town, Bardejov, and its neighbour - an old spa town - Bardejovské kúpele;
(2) ethnographic: two open air museums of rural architecture – in this spa town and in a relatively nearby town, Svidník. The Šariš museum of Bardejov, Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník and the Dezider Milly Gallery offer an overview of the culture of the local Ruthenian population and their popular and sacral art;
(3) focusing on modern art: in Medzilaborce, a project was launched to redefine the image of the city into an "Andy Warhole city" and a trail, "artists of the borderland", played with the idea of creativity;
(4) military/ war heritage: unlike the French case, the Carpathian Polish-Slovak borderland became a battlefield in the Great War and in World War II (WWII). The war cemeteries and memorials, on both sides of the border, hold memories of burned villages. The WWII story is still living, and cross-border commemorations and reconstructions of battles point to a functioning collaboration between administrations of the towns and regions, local museums and various civic organisations. The construction of two projects was very revealing about the limits of the potential of the region. It is not only about financial and human resources, but also about confidence when needing to appear as actors to people from outside of the region.

These two projects are:

- http://www.dukla1944.com/ - a multimedia guide through the battle which started in Poland and crossed over the Carpathians. The team that produced it is international, linking academic historians and geographers, professional actors in media and tourism and local stakeholders. The story of the battle in 1944, and the effort to keep alive the memory of those who fought it, is a strong identifying element. This narrative, of one of the largest mountain battles fought in the war, links local history with the national, European and global context.
- https://www.dukladestination.com/ - promotes regional tourism, offering practical information, and linking the various regional presentations, heritage institutions, and activities. It was announced in 2015, and opened a year after, so it is still quite new. It confirms the weaknesses and bottlenecks identified earlier by all who were involved, or just observed, the situation.

Fashion of our age – **festivals**. Whilst the target audience for Gers is holiday makers, in Svidník, festivals are organised mainly for the citizens and their families coming to visit, as they are all scheduled in spring before the beginning of the summer holiday season. We see the different strategies if we apply the theories developed by Bernard Kayser. In Gers, we may find involvement of neo-rurals, but not in the Carpathian region. Plus, we observe a difference in the draw for tourists – the Polish side gets government support and is more successful than the Slovak one.

Conclusion

The intention to reverse the negative into positive image (connotation) through the heritage presentation appears spontaneously. The success of this effort is limited by the weak development or even absence of infrastructure.

For a professional historian, based in an academic institution, heritage was for a long time mainly interpretation of historical events, actors, institutions, presentation and interpretation of monuments. As heritage studies are now understood, the heritage is a product of negotiation of those who are involved (stakeholders). It was fascinating to observe: (1) the range of objects, individuals and activities which became understood and interpreted as heritage in both cases; and (2) their instrumental/ strategic use in the process of branding. The persistence of heterostereotypes with negative connotation linked with peripheral regions is still strong.

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[ix] Just few most famous – F. Petrarque, d´Artagnan, mousquetaires, cadets de Gascogne, Henri de Navarre, Michel de Montaigne, etc.

Irena Lazar & Zrinka Mileusnić (Slovenia)

Heritage interpretation as part of the heritage study programmes in Koper

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Abstract

The University of Primorska offers several programmes under the Bologna Process covering the topics of heritage studies as well as its interpretation. Insights and skills acquired during the course of study introduce students to the specifics of the area, guiding them to understand various heritage fields and cultural assets within international setting. One of the courses was designed with the Faculty of Tourism Studies and is based on estimates about the need for a broader and quality inclusion of heritage in the tourist offer in Slovenia and abroad, due to a lack of suitably educated professionals. The study course is the first of its kind in Slovenia to fill in the void in higher education in the field of heritage, heritage management and cultural tourism.

An important part of the study and students' training is practical work on sites. One of the monuments where our students develop their understanding of heritage management and interpretation is the Archaeological park Simonov zaliv.

Keywords

heritage education, pedagogical methods, heritage experience, learning outcomes

Introduction

The University of Primorska Faculty of Humanities (Slovenia) offers several programmes under the Bologna Process, covering the topics of heritage studies and heritage management. An important part of the study is practical work on sites and monuments.

The Faculty of Humanities was established as an independent institution of higher education in Koper on July 19th, 2000, becoming an affiliate of the University of Primorska in 2003 (Čok 2013: 62-66). The Faculty of Humanities offers both undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses as well as engaging in scientific and specialist activities in the field of humanities, arts and social studies. To ensure the highest quality in its activities on all these fields, the Faculty promotes the following core values: excellence of study courses, continuous development of infrastructure and equipment, highly qualified and experienced staff, working in a harmonious professional environment, enhanced attention to the well-being of students, creating better employment opportunities in a highly efficient support network, both within the University of Primorska and the wider academic field in Slovenia, as well as internationally.

The Faculty of Humanities has gained recognition for its dynamic outlook due to its progressive orientation, its creativity and capacity for critical thinking, as well as the collaboration of its dedicated teaching staff, together with students in an atmosphere of mutual support. The Faculty enjoys the advantage of being situated in the multicultural and bilingual area bordering on Italy and Croatia, providing the potential for drawing on positive cultural and economic influences. Insights and skills acquired during the course of study introduce students to the specifics of Istria, Slovenia and the Mediterranean, guiding them to understand diversity, multiculturalism and the variety of heritage and its influences within a wider European and international setting.

Heritage study programmes

The study programme, Cultural Heritage (BA), provides knowledge about different fields of heritage, its protection, and its importance in modern life. The broader knowledge of heritage bridges a professional gap in the fields of natural and cultural heritage preservation, protection, interpretation, development, and marketing. In addition to basic subjects, the Cultural Heritage course offers numerous elective subjects within this field of study, as well as other fields and scientific disciplines.

The graduate programme, Archaeological Heritage of the Mediterranean (MA), is designed to deepen and widen the professional training of students in the field of archaeology and archaeological heritage, whereby the educational process includes theoretical aspects, as well as the transfer of knowledge for application in institutions dealing in research, protection, promotion and marketing of archaeological heritage. During their studies, students develop an in-depth insight into the state and development of concepts in archaeology and archaeological heritage protection, get to know the fundamental, practical, scientific methods of archaeological, conservation and museum work, understand the conceptual affiliation of knowledge into a wider context of disciplines concerned with the research, protection and promotion of archaeology and cultural heritage, develop the ability of solving concrete problems in the field, and an ability to use the results for theoretical scientific work, as well as acquaint themselves with the work process from fundamental research to the preparation of scientific publications.

In the framework of their studies, students have an opportunity to be involved in the research work early on through the Institute for Archaeology and Heritage at the Faculty of Humanities. Additionally, they have access to a well-stocked scientific library, can take part in national and international scientific and professional meetings, in field research, and also in the summer school of museology, organised every year since 2007. An important part of the study and education about archaeological heritage in practice are excursions, visits and interviews. Organised tours of archaeological collections, sites, monuments, parks, museums, etc. give students an opportunity to face the problems, projects, and state in the field of archaeological heritage, whilst at the same time enabling an authentic and informal contact to the field, professors, and a mutual exchange of opinions and views about questions linked to their studies. The course combines various elements of practical training and research work and provides a varied employment range for the graduates. Very important also are the possibilities of student exchange and their participation in programmes, such as Leonardo da Vinci, Jean Monet, Erasmus+, Ceepus, Archeoped, etc.

The new Heritage Tourism graduate study programme (MA) was designed from cooperation between the Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Tourism Studies Portorož – Turistica, and Science and Research Centre of the University of Primorska, based on estimates about the need for a broader and better inclusion of cultural heritage in the current tourist offer in Slovenia and abroad, due in part to a lack of suitably educated professionals. The study course is the first of its kind in Slovenia and aims to fill in the void in higher education in the field of tourism and heritage, where these two independent disciplines overlap, but not integrate in a combination of topics, as the University of Primorska has the appropriate professional and research potential available. The Heritage Tourism study programme offers skills and competences in the field of cultural heritage and tourist management with emphasis on the implementation of heritage contents into the tourist offer. In this way, students receive an education enabling creative work in a promising economic discipline with the focus on heritage protection and development of tourism. The aim of the study programme is to develop a professional profile able to engage and address equally in both fields of tourism and cultural heritage. The programme is interdisciplinary and is conducted jointly by Turistica and FHS; enrolment is open to all students with a BA in humanities, tourism and other fields.

The Faculty of Humanities is inviting applications for enrolment in several postgraduate programmes; we could single out *History of Europe and the Mediterranean, Geography of Contact Areas, Theory and Philosophy of Visual Culture, Management of Cultural Assets and Archives,* and *Archaeology*. The courses provide a variated selection of contents and hence allow postgraduate students to create individualised study programmes tailored to their interests. The lecture cycles enable group work and socialising among students who can exchange experience in and knowledge of specific topics inherent to their study discipline. With these programmes, we aim to train qualified, open graduates who will confidently and critically enter the job market and will be capable of efficient operation during the times of incessant cultural, social, political and economic changes permeating Slovenia, Europe, and the entire global community.

Pedagogical methods and goals

Higher education teachers participating in heritage study programmes are implementing their lectures within a wider choice of subjects, focusing on basic topics of heritage disciplines but also on their interdisciplinary potential, primarily in the collaboration in the field of tourism. This can be recognised by the active use of various pedagogical methods and approaches for the transfer of knowledge by all participating teachers. This kind of teaching approach, focusing on both scientific research and pedagogical methods, is the result of compulsory education for all teachers at the University of Primorska in the field of adult and higher education pedagogy. Its learning outcomes greatly contribute to an easier and better transfer of knowledge. Through the implementation of this kind of compulsory education for teachers, the University of Primorska stands out and it is the only university in Slovenia that demands a higher level of pedagogical knowledge from all teachers.

Pedagogical methods used in heritage teaching courses include: standard ex-cathedra lectures on basic end theoretical topics, short student papers on specific broader topics or specific heritage sites and monuments, small scale projects, small scale field work, workshops, individual consultations, e-learning.

The main goal of the use of different pedagogical methods is the transfer of knowledge on three different levels: introduction of the main topics and theory; explanation and discussion; and gaining experience.

The first level is mainly focused on the teaching of the basic definitions. Getting acquainted with the basic definitions is the basis of learning that enables the student to gain the knowledge that can form the solid foundation and the starting point for understanding of heritage and for the upgrade of these foundations. During this process, students are also testing and comparing their perception and understanding of basic topics, such as: culture, heritage, cultural heritage, tangible and intangible heritage, movable and immovable heritage, monuments, documentation, recording, restoration, conservation, protection, promotion, use and interpretation of heritage.

After mastering the definitions, topics change focus towards the legislation by analysing the existing laws and regulations, but also by comparison with the legislation in the region and throughout history.

The following phase focuses on the introduction and experience of heritage institutions, their function. This enables students to learn about the institutions dealing with heritage from different perspectives and in different fields: protection, promotion, education and scientific research of heritage.

With these topics, students acquire the basis for upgrading of the basic topics. Topics underpinning their basic knowledge are organised in a number of lectures focused on the historical development of museums, collectibles and tourism, and the possibilities for their interconnection. These topics undoubtedly open the issues of presentation and promotion of cultural heritage, as well as the relation of heritage to tourism and the development of a special type of tourism – cultural/ heritage tourism. These topics are introduced through a number of practical examples. By pointing out good and bad examples, students learn about the relationship and the way of communication among institutions in the area of cultural heritage and cultural tourism and the media.

The second phase of the learning process is based on an explanation. However, unlike the first, which is performed through lectures, the second phase includes practical work. The second stage dynamics also determines the additional application of learning through the experience, fieldwork and display of good and bad existing examples. Topics covered in this part are: documenting, recording, conserving, preserving and protecting cultural heritage.

In the second phase, students are already familiar with the basic definitions of the mentioned topics, so the work and the learning process are directed to the methodological approach, i.e. the principle and the way of work within the individual topics. This phase also has a practical final value, since students learn and work with the documentation formats of different institutions, thus getting to know the minimum standards of documentation as well as its possibility of their upgrade depending on the specific professional needs. Other topics are also presented in the same way, by supplementing lectures with examples from practice. Beside the lectures, depending on the possibilities, independent work is carried out, including recording of the immovable cultural heritage, allowing the students to gain the knowledge through practical work and meet with a realistic way of fieldwork, which enables them to think further about methods and other elements of work in the field of cultural heritage.

The last stage of learning is not based on classical pedagogical methods. It is understood that, up until the beginning of this phase, the students have mastered all the materials they have been taught so far and that they understand it. Therefore, teaching at this stage is based on exchange of experiences. With the goal of achieving all of the pedagogical goals, the students perform a series of exercises that supplement the pedagogical process. Exercises are of a smaller scale and differ depending on the topics to which they relate. First of all, the importance of exercises is to enable students to understand and comprehend the heritage topics through different levels of experience, and most often based on comparisons with examples from everyday life and the environment in which they live. By now, the most efficient method is role playing.

Lecturers share their experiences and present examples of good and bad practices with students. Likewise, on the basis of their experience, students are required to prepare presentations of their experiences. At this stage, students have to gain experience by evaluating different experiences with heritage promotion and interpretation. Their work has to include critical evaluation, but the main focus covers their proposals for the further development. In such a way, the exchange of experiences also includes students who gain knowledge through examples that they can relate to or which they find interesting. In this part, communication is developed in the form of a dialogue or discussion that provides one of the goals - exchange and transfer of knowledge, and the reversed role, when students can argue and explain their understanding of heritage. The process is also positive for the lecturers as students share their experience with smaller or less well-known examples of heritage that may not have been properly documented, or documented at all, but have certain (often high) value for specific communities. In any case, it is the most dynamic learning phase in which the knowledge base is upgraded by the exchange of different categories of information.

In the end, we should mention the other objectives of performing the teaching process that arise from the described methods. The goals are related to the competences and knowledge acquired by the student during the pedagogical process. The first, and possibly the most important, goal is to teach the students to understand and adopt basic concepts. This is the only way that enables students to understand the development of specific heritage topics. Understanding enables students to recognise the values of cultural heritage, evaluate ways of working with heritage, its protection, preservation and promotion, and also encourages self-reflection on cultural heritage. Such a background provides a basis for the constructive way of thinking and proper relation and attitude when working in the field of cultural heritage.

Students and practical experience/ training

An important part of the study and students' training is also the research and practical work on sites and monuments. This includes excavations, field surveys, and use of non-destructive methods on sites, processing of the archaeological material, as well as didactical work, and dissemination. One of the sites where students train and develop their understanding of heritage protection and management is the *villa maritima* Archaeological park of Simonov zaliv in Izola (Zanier 2009).

The site of *villa maritima* – The Roman villa and the port of Simonov zaliv (St. Simon's Bay) were first mentioned as an archaeological site in the 16th century (Stokin, Zanier: 2011). The first archaeological excavation took place in 1922, when the remains of the harbour were also measured for the first time. The residential part of the villa stretches across a surface of 3,000 m^2; the living quarters are arranged around an inner courtyard, while the whole complex is connected by a portico to the port. Southwest of the port, a structure made of stone blocks is still visible under the sea level, which probably once formed part of the harbour's storage facilities. In the hinterland of the villa, remains of the water supply system of the complex were discovered. Recent excavations have brought to light new information about the villa's history; the villa was built between 25 and 10 BC. Parts of the residential area were already abandoned between 50 and 70 AD (Groh, Sedlmayer: 2008). The portico and the port were in use through a longer time period. In the early medieval period, the church of St. Simon was built on the property, giving the bay its name. Various finds were discovered during the excavations in the villa of Simonov zaliv, from which the life of the villa's inhabitants and the economic branches in which they were employed can be reconstructed. Some of the discovered objects can be seen in the Maritime Museum Sergej Mašera in Piran and in the Regional Museum of Koper.

Around the beginning of the Common Era, seaside villas were built from the 1st century BC along the whole Istrian coast at a distance of every few kilometres. Such villa complexes were usually made up of a representative residential part, outbuildings, and a harbour with storage facilities. These residences were important economic focus-points, where fish and shells were bred, wine and olives cultivated and produced, brick and amphorae manufactured, sheep bred and wool processed, while the warehouses were used to store and reload the goods imported through the sea.

The Roman harbour of the villa in Simonov zaliv was one of the largest on the western coast of Istria, covering a surface of over 7,000 m^2. It was well protected from the wind and could receive ships of more than 25 metres in length, which could freight up to 1,000 amphorae. The embankment and the pier, which still had bronze mooring rings in the 19th century, are now covered by the public baths complex. The remains of the breakwater are still visible in the sea under sea level, as the sea level today is 1.6 metres higher than it was in the Roman period. The harbour remained in use until the Early Middle Ages.

Student Collaboration

The varied activities connected to the work on the archaeological site of the Roman maritime villa and the formation of an archaeological park also offer an excellent opportunity to combine scientific research and university education (Lazar: 2013). Archaeology, heritage, history, museology, restoration, conservation and tourism are only some of the content areas where students have contributed, deepening and expanding their knowledge in the framework of the official study process or workshops and summer schools.

In the framework of undergraduate and graduate study programmes, students participating in the heritage courses at the University of Primorska prepare seminars and final papers on the themes of Greek and Roman history, Roman villas, Roman religion, life in the Roman period, archaeological sites in the Slovenian coast, analyses of archaeological material, and have conducted numerous surveys about the visibility of the site, its tourist opportunities, etc. Under the mentorship of professors from the Department of Archaeology and Heritage, and researchers and collaborators of the Institute for Archaeology and Heritage of our Faculty, students also participate in the annual field research and maintenance of the site throughout the year. Practical work in the park also included participation in, and preparation and implementation of, public events. Within one of the study courses (*Latin Language and Roman Sources)* students selected excerpts from ancient literature on the theme of Roman villas and prepared a literary evening entitled, “Architect, philosopher, and poet speak about a Roman villa”. In this way, they expanded the course topics in various subjects and gained practical experience for work and public programmes on the site.

The International Summer School of Museology, which has taken place in Piran since 2007, organised by the Faculty of Humanities in cooperation with the Forum of Slavic Cultures and European Museum Academy, links its annual topics to ICOM’s annual themes at the International Day of Museums on May 18th. The chosen themes of museums and heritage management, cultural tourism and museum presentations could thus be connected to activities at the villa in Simonov zaliv. Students could acquire 3 ECTS by participating in the summer school, which provides five days of lectures, seminars and workshops, excursions and practical work. The official language of the school is English.

The villa was also included as an archaeological site into the programme of conservation and archaeological workshops organised in collaboration with the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia. In the framework of the conservation workshop, students collaborated with foreign and national experts and the cleaning of the black-and-white mosaic and its consolidation was undertaken. In the afternoon, lectures on the topic of mosaic conservation and restoration were organised. During the course of the work, the necessary tests were made to determine the most suitable methodology for cleaning and strengthening the mosaics on site (Lazar: 2011). The International Archaeological Workshop 2011 Magdalensberg, organised by the Austrian Archaeological Institute (ÖAI) from Vienna, the Landesmuseum Kärnten from Klagenfurt, and the Institute for Mediterranean Heritage, SRC Koper, UP, offered students from universities in Vienna, Graz, Ljubljana and Koper an opportunity to visit and work at the main archaeological sites in the northern Adriatic in the framework of a practical study of Roman material culture (ceramics, glass, mosaics).

The students who express their interest for an even closer cooperation in the work and activities linked to the villa in Simonov zaliv, have the opportunity to continue their work in the summer months and outside their study time as volunteers. During 2015 and 2016, they had an opportunity to participate in free educational courses with additional topics on cultural and natural heritage within the project, “AS. Archaeology for all”. During the summer, they can work in the park as tourist guides (conditioned by their knowledge of English and Italian, and suitable archaeological contents), and contribute to the implementation of pedagogic and adult-learning workshops in the park, as well as public events (international museum day, summer museum night). The themes of the pedagogic workshops include: making a mosaic, making a necklace, what is an amphora, dancing into the past, what the Romans ate, etc., and were prepared with the help of students. Some of the graduates lead the workshops independently.

Graduates of the study courses in heritage studies will have opportunities for professional employment within the framework of public institutions for the protection and promotion of cultural heritage. Therefore, it is extremely important for the students to gain as much practical experience as possible during their studies in the fields of heritage research, protection, and promotion. In this way, they can become directly acquainted with different fields of work, but also the positive and negative aspects of heritage protection. Moreover, they thus have an opportunity to come into contact with various institutions and organisations, which have the potential to become their future employers.

Local society and students – sharing experience and transferring knowledge

With the organisation of didactic workshops for children from 2009 onwards, the work in Archaeological park Simonov zaliv in Izola became well known and attracted the interest of several public institutions who expressed interest in collaboration. Since 2010, we developed the long life learning programme with workshops in collaboration with City Library Izola. We invited experts for mosaics, stone-cutting, ancient jewellery, costumes, etc. These workshops were organised as basic and advanced courses and took place at the site or in the library premises during the winter period. Additional programmes included public lectures with the topics on archaeology, heritage, heritage management, local history, etc., which were open to the public.

This collaboration led further to the local schools and from 2011, our programme out of the summer season is oriented to workshops, lectures and other activities that we implement in the frame of the school programmes. This collaboration developed mutually and the Secondary School for Tourism in Izola can be mentioned as an example. In the past years, we have organised the events for the International Day of Tourism on 27th September in archaeological park entitled “Porta patens”. During their practical work, they prepared food from the Roman recipes we selected for them and this was offered to the visitors. Students informed visitors about the ancient diet, how to prepare this food, about ancient spices and their use in modern nutrition.

Conclusion – Experiences and evaluation

Heritage programmes aim to transfer the basic knowledge required for the understanding and research of heritage and, at the same time, the basis for the development of students' own interests and further development in the field of heritage in general as well in specific areas, such as legislation, conservation, restoration, museology and tourism.

However, despite all the possibilities, teaching methods and other imputs that we give as teachers, we have to evaluate our work through the teaching outcomes. The first, and easiest way, to do that are the exams. Generally, by evaluating the grades, we evaluate our success as teachers. But this mostly shows only the success of the first and second teaching phases, which can be measured and tested with questions and answers or shorter essays. This method of teaching evaluation does not give any answers about whether our students developed or deepend their interests in the field of heritage. In order to get those answers, we perform an anynomous evaluation in the form of a questionnaire. This way we receive non-biased responses evaluating the courses, teaching methods and the general experience. This is a valuable form of evaluation, since students do not hesitate to express their opinion and mostly they evaluate our work by evaluating the quality of our methods but at the same time the knowledge and experience they gained during the course. In many cases their comments are emotional and sincere and allow us to learn about their comprehension of heritage.

This is all very helpful, but the question that is unanswered is how good are they going to be when working in the field of heritage and are they going to be involved in it? Fortunately, we have the opportunity to follow them after graduation. Students that have finished heritage courses stay involved in the activities in the archaeological park by working as guides, preparing and implementing workshops and collaborating in other ways. In one of our ongoing projects, they had the opportunity to prepare a set of workshops for children. They have shown a great level of independency by preparing workshops, programmes for teaching a foreign language through the heritage workshops, connecting sport activities with heritage and promoting their own activities.

On the other hand, we also keep in touch with our students through an Alumni club. At annual meetings, we find out that most of our students have managed to be active in the field of heritage in many different ways. They visit many of our lectures and other activities for the public. They also attend our and other educational courses for the general or specific public. The most important outcome that we can trace is that they work in the field of heritage at different levels and work as independent professionals in collaboration with other institutions, such as libraries, museums, heritage sites. They design their own heritage products or offer and perform it in the above-mentioned institutions. Topics that they cover are mostly connected to or derive from the Roman heritage from the site of Simonov zaliv and they include it in the forms of storytelling, historical re-enactment and other means of interpretation.

In conclusion, we can emphasise that including the Archaeological park Simonov zaliv in Izola into the study process of the Department of Archaeology and Heritage at the Faculty of Humanities University of Primorska is a good example of integrating studies and practical and research work, whilst at the same time also opening new paths of cooperation with the local community and in finding employment opportunities for the students.

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Patrick Lehnes (Germany)

What do populist victories mean for heritage interpretation?

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Abstract

This paper discusses the challenge of populism for democracy and what this means for the mission of heritage interpretation.

Populist leaders aim to dismantle people's sense of reality. One of the first actions after the Trump team entered the White House was to openly claim the opposite of obvious evidence that people could see with their own eyes. Populist leaders also attack language and thinking by twisting the meaning of fundamental concepts, such as the strange notion of "alternative facts". This also matters for heritage interpretation. Experience of real things that people can perceive and meaningful language are both crucial for any meaningful interpretation.

On the other hand, populists have a lot in common with interpreters. Their success is based on similar communication techniques: short sentences, metaphoric language, relating themes to the audience, to name just a few. This observation demands us to look more closely into the philosophy of heritage interpretation. Is it merely an advanced skill-set to communicate with (the) people or does it have its own mission?

Heritage interpretation is about linking the sphere of things, beings and events which people can or could perceive with their sense to that of ideas and values. First-hand experience is a powerful asset when it comes to withstand populist attack against people's sense of reality. Meaning-making and thinking is closely related to identity constructions.

The approach of multiple perspective interpretation aims to provoke reflective thinking based on first-hand experience and factual information rather than communicating predefined messages. Reflective thinking is closely linked to the human conscience – it is probably the only way to combat the adverse effects of stereotyping, which is involved in collective identity constructions. It is the appropriate approach for interpretation in plural and democratic societies based on human dignity and human rights.

Keywords

heritage interpretation, populism, plural democracy, first-hand experience, facts, narratives, progressive education, normal thinking, reflective thinking

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Foreword

The following considerations are based on a small study (Lehnes 2016), which investigated different activities of the mind that play a significant role for heritage interpretation. It analyses a heritage interpretation experience from first-hand experience to critical reflective thinking. Some ideas and key concepts are developed there in more detail and from a different angle than in this paper. For understanding of heritage interpretation as a progressive educational activity, which is influenced by movements of the Enlightenment and the Romantics Movements, c.f. Carter 2016. Both studies are published as an e-book, which is one of the results of the multilateral project, InHerit, which was supported by the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme. The current work is part of the ongoing Erasmus+ project HIMIS.

The ideas and conceptual framework presented here and in Lehnes 2016 are, to a large extent, based on reflective thinking about the process of interpretation. It is inspired by the works of a small number of other authors and elaborates on the challenges of totalitarianism and populism for the field of interpretation. This investigation follows a heuristic approach in exploring some basic concepts for the discipline based on experience and self-observation of mental processes, i.e. it follows a phenomenological methodology. Sound research of existing literature in the relevant fields is still pending. It would certainly lead to more profound insights and probably some revision of terminology.

Nowadays, human dignity, diversity and plurality are increasingly questioned, even in Europe and North America. This paper intends to contribute to furthering the philosophy underlying heritage interpretation and its key concepts. I hope that it will lead to fruitful discussions about the role and the potential of interpretation in these challenging times.

An iconic moment

It was an iconic moment: The new White House Speaker, Sean Spicer stated that the audience attending Trump's inauguration "was the largest audience ever to witness an inauguration. Period." Defying photo and video evidence that had already gone viral (Image 1). In their first full day in office, the just inaugurated Trump administration denied the obvious. (Hunt 2017)

One day later, the Counsellor to the US President, Kellyanne Conway, called Spicer's claim "alternative facts", thus twisting the meaning of "fact" to cover up falsehoods (Blake 2017). Both, Spicer and Conway, caused shock waves in the media and probably among most heritage interpreters.

Why did the populists act like that immediately after their arrival in the White House? Was it a lack of professionalism? Maybe not. It seems more likely that this was a bold statement of power celebrating the greatest victory of nationalist populism which just won power in the White House. The Trumpian team's campaign was based on something more powerful than democratic discourse seems to be. In August 2016, when hardly anybody expected Trump to win the US elections, his new chief strategist Steve Bannon gave obscure hints: "Darkness is good. Dick Cheney. Darth Vader. Satan. That's power. It only helps us when they get it wrong. When they're blind to who we are and what we're doing" (quoted by Wolff 2016).

But what kind of power is it, which "the establishment" of "mainstream" media, civil society groups and professional politicians could not see?

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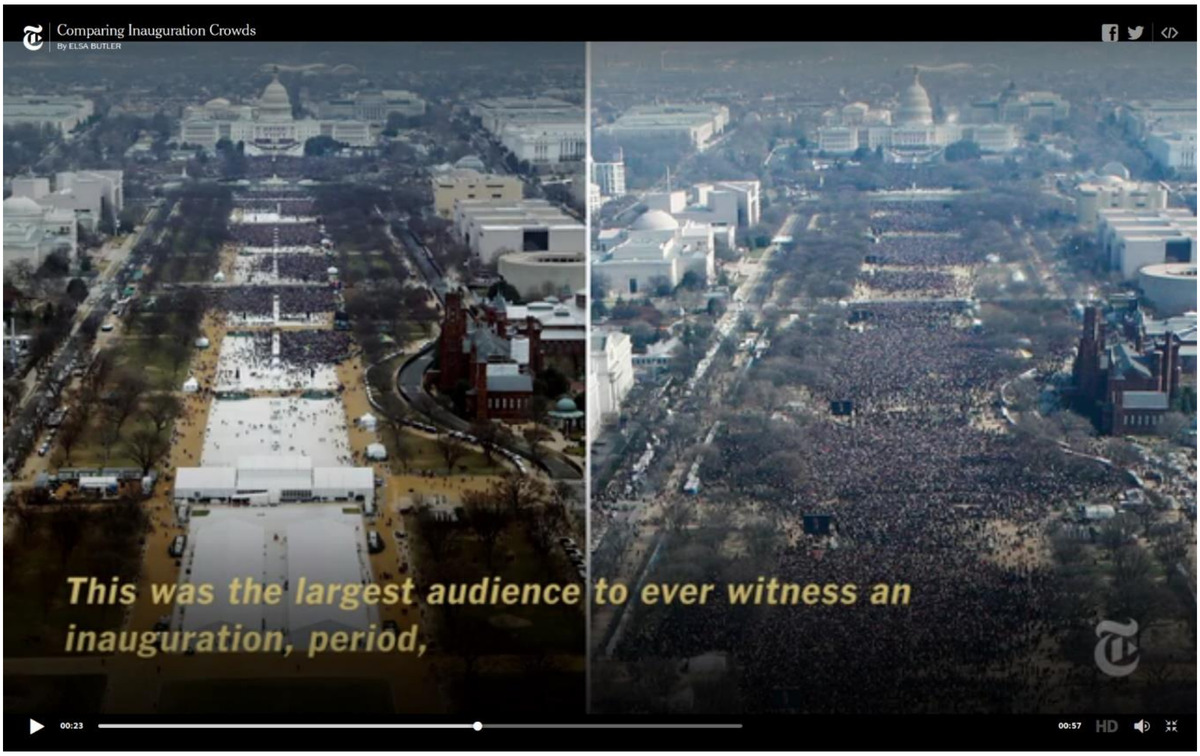

Image 1: Just one example of an abundant media reaction: A NYT video confronts the White House's false claims with reality based on obvious evidence (this screenshot shows Trump's inauguration audience on the left and Obama's on the right)

First of all, the power of populism seems immune to rational arguments. Many followers of populists do not care when their leaders' claims are quickly uncovered as half-truths or outright lies. On the contrary: "The point of the obvious lie is to prove how powerless the truth is (…) It's a fight against reason. People can control perception. The Enlightenment taught us to make good use of that. Trying to take perception away from people therefore is an act of anti-Enlightenment" wrote Marina Weisband (2017) who was reminded of Soviet propaganda.

But it is not only an attack against human perception. Twisting the meaning of basic concepts, such as 'fact', almost to their contrary is an assault against language, i.e. the basis of any meaningful argumentation. Many people were reminded of George Orwell's "newspeak" (Seaton et al. 2017).

Populism threatens the cornerstones of Western democracies: respect for the factual reality based on empirical evidence and rational discourse based on shared language. Populism is not just attempting to influence the political debate by false premises, i.e. faked data; it is a fundamental assault against rationality itself.

It is not clear yet whether the American system of checks and balances will be able to contain the effects of a populist US president. But even if the Trump team might be tamed by the rule of law, the powers of parliament and the free media in the US, Trump's victory in elections demonstrates how powerful anti-democratic populism has already become in the 21st century.
Furthermore, the wave of populism also threatens European plural democracies. Nationalist populism won referendums for the Brexit and for an authoritarian leadership in Turkey. National populist parties won elections in Poland and Hungary and they are looming in various other countries.

This development threatens the foundations of the European Union stated in Article 2 of the Treaty of European Union (EU 2016): “The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.”

What seemed inconceivable a decade ago has become a serious risk: Plural democracy and the values of Humanism and Enlightenment could be dismantled by democratically elected populist leaders – again.

But what does all this mean for us, the heritage interpreters working at precious sites, such as museums, national parks, monuments and other sanctuaries separated from the demands of day-to-day affairs? Is this all just “politics” – a nasty thing which has not much to do with heritage interpretation?

Obviously not: The iconic images of the inauguration crowds are directly linked with American heritage. They were taken from a national monument in the middle of a national park. Furthermore, it was not the Pentagon, the Department of Homeland Security or the Treasury, but the US National Park Service (NPS) which Trump approached as one of the first – maybe even the very first – agencies. In the morning after his inauguration, Trump called the National Park Service Director. He wanted the NPS to provide other photos that “prove” the unreal (Tumulty & Eilperin 2017). He wanted to control how the historic moment of his inauguration was interpreted by contemporary media and how it will be interpreted in future.

It is important for us, as heritage interpreters, to gain a deeper understanding of those powers of populism which won the White House and what they mean for our own profession. At first, we will look at populism from a different angle, its deep relationship with popular culture, which will reveal some kinship between populism and heritage interpretation. Then we will outline a conceptual framework for heritage interpretation, which allows us to discuss differences and some consequences for handling the powers of interpretation in a responsible way.

The kinship between populism, popular culture and heritage interpretation

In an interview (Irtenkauf 2017), the German media scientist and essayist Georg Seeßlen pointed out that the Trump team cannot be understood within the logic of political discourse or rational argumentation. Trump’s populism follows the fundamentally different paradigms of popular culture. Most hero-and-villain films, casting shows, soap operas, pop music, etc., are not about what is real, but what the audience wants: drama and emotions.

This applies also for soap operas, which picture a fenced idyllic cliché, playing with people’s aspirations of richness and beauty; in such plots the good life is usually challenged by some evil-minded characters but finally the good prevails in an emotional happy ending. In such popular narratives, nobody cares about facts – it is all about entertainment which arouses emotions.

Popular culture also appeals a lot to the dark desires and instincts that people do not usually allow to surface in real life. Trash TV reality shows – often based on scripted reality – give room for immoral, unfair and sexist behaviours. The humiliating “You’re fired” of Trump’s Apprentice show is a good example of spectators’ fun at the expense of the loser, who is not oneself. Film makers, cinemas and TV stations serve the great demand for thrillers. First-person shooter video games are among the most successful in the gaming industry. There is a fascination in dark feelings, such as fear and catastrophe, or arbitrary powers of villains or mafiosi.

All this does not do much harm, as long as it is confined to the sphere of pop culture. Nobody will take blockbusters from Hollywood's dream factory seriously. It's fiction with the purpose to entertain. But populism transfers the mechanism of pop entertainment into real politics. Trump stages his family in the world of the rich and beautiful – he poses as the successful man who can afford any luxury product, women included: women with perfect bodies in perfect outfits – what many men dream to possess and what many girls dream to become – inspired by Barbie puppets.

Populists frequently make use of the hidden power that lies in dark emotions. Remember Steve Bannon's reference to Darth Vader from Star Wars who has fallen to the Dark Side of the Force. Trump followers are fascinated by his ruthlessness which brings others to heel. He demonstrates the sugar-daddy's macho power to grab women wherever he wants. The movie beast, the fascinating villain, is much more entertaining than boring democratic discussions. A lot of Trump's appeal comes from his appeals to the uncivilised instincts that most people would normally not allow to surface. (Seeßlen 2017)

This creeping of pop culture narratives into politics blurs the distinction between facts and fiction. Mass media contributed to this development with inventing new formats, such as talk shows, which blur the borders between serious politics and entertainment.

Unsurprisingly, popular culture and Trump's populist campaign also use similar communication techniques towards these ends: provocative speaking aiming to leave others speechless; very short and simple phrases, which fit perfectly well into the Twitter format, rather than well-balanced arguments. When populists talk, they use a visual language with many metaphors instead of abstract concepts. (Seeßlen in Irtenkauf 2017)

Logic and experience, the decisive criteria of serious discourse, are not so relevant. What counts in popular mass culture – including the advertisement industry and social media – as well as in populist communication, is the effective punchline. Excitement overrules reflection. Entertainment trumps truth.

By transferring communication methods from the entertainment industry into politics, populists can reach people who normally do not care much about political discourse. At the same time, populists become rather immune against rational criticism. The appeal to emotions is a perfect way of masking the real political and economic agenda that populist leaders and their aides pursue. Arguably, this is an important aspect of the powerful darkness which Bannon hailed. Provocation, evoking emotions, entertaining the audience, telling exciting stories, customer orientation, embedding messages into narratives, preferring visuals and metaphors over abstract arguments, keeping sentences short and simple, all these communication techniques are also employed by heritage interpreters.

It does not come as a surprise that there is some kinship between popular culture, populism and heritage interpretation. All address ordinary people rather than experts, all need to capture the attention of non-captive audiences (Ham 1992, 5). Popularisation of scientific and historic knowledge is at the very centre of heritage interpretation.

Indeed, there have been propositions to stop using "interpretation" in the name of our profession, and to brand ourselves a "persuasive communicator" (Novey 2008, 54). Populist campaigners as well as advertisement professionals would probably also identify themselves as "persuasive communicators". Such a move would reduce heritage interpretation to a mere set of powerful communication techniques and skills. It would become an instrument which could be employed to achieve any goal set by those who pay.

Many interpreters would disagree, but there are also many others who advocate for such an instrumental view. NAI[1] proposed a new definition (Ham 2013, 7) which also considers interpretation to be a communication instrument towards another end:
"Interpretation is a mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and meanings inherent in the resource". The mission on which interpretation shall be based is the mission of the organisation owning the heritage site and governing its management (ibid, 8).

At the same time, NAI upholds the values of diversity (NAI no date). This is not a problem – as long as the mission of the heritage organisation, be it a public body, a not-for-profit organisation or a for-profit enterprise, does not contradict these values of diversity. But imagine Steve Bannon drafting a new mission statement for the US National Park Service (NPS) demanding interpreters use their communication skills to support a one sided, populist agenda. Most probably, NAI was unaware of such potential implications when changing the definition of interpretation from an "educational activity" (Tilden 1977[1957], 8) to a "mission-based communication process". Who could have predicted ten years ago that nationalist populists might be elected into the White House? And, arguably, nobody imagined then that a coalition of Super Rich, Tea Party and "Alt-Right" (alternative right) could gain the powers to reformulate the mission statement of the NPS.

On the other hand, NAI had a good reason for this change: Pitching 'interpretation' as a powerful instrument for heritage site managers to achieve their mission makes interpretation a core business of those organisations. It overcomes an erroneous image of interpretation as a simple add-on customer entertainment function (Ham 2013, 8). By highlighting the relevance of the profession for managements to reach their goal, the chances increase of securing funding and jobs are increased (Merriman & Brochu 2005, 3f). Novey explains that re-branding, and redefining, the profession of 'heritage interpreter' to 'persuasive communicator' will enhance job opportunities in other fields of public-relations, too (ibid, 57). And it's true, a "certified persuasive communicator" who cannot find permanent employment in the heritage sector would certainly find jobs more easily in the advertisement industry, political campaigning etc.

At the same time, leading NAI protagonists made an unambiguous stance to distinguish interpretation from propaganda and to avoid what they called 'interpreganda' (Brochu & Merriman 2002, 17). But what if a renewed mission demands exactly that? In such a case the proposed definition would justify heritage related propaganda to be subsumed under 'heritage interpretation'.[2]

As an interim result, we can keep the question that mission heritage interpreters should follow: Is it just a powerful tool to work for anybody's mission who controls heritage sites and pays interpreters? Are there any ethical limitations to such an attempt? Or should heritage interpretation rather follow its own, educational, mission?

We will come back to this question later. All this demonstrates that key concepts and fundamental definitions need to be carefully thought through and the implications of how we define our discipline's basic concepts should be checked.

1 NAI is the US National Association for Interpretation, the world's largest professional organisation in the field of interpretation.
2 NAI's definition also refers to "meanings inherent in the resource". This could point towards something "objective". But I did not find any clear explanation what this phrase is supposed to mean and how to apply it in practice. Do 'inherent meanings' exist independently of human beings? Are they somehow inscribed into a resource? Or are meanings ascribed by humans? Can a thing have different meanings for different humans? The problem becomes evident in Sam Ham's rephrased definition: he writes about "provoking in audiences the discovery of *personal* meanings" (2013, 8, emphasis by PL) which means rather the contrary of meanings that are *inherent in the resource*. Despite this difference, Sam Ham agrees to see "interpretation as purposeful and relevant within an organization's core mission" and he also defines it as mission-based communication (ibid).

The essential meaning of ‘interpretation’

Heritage interpretation is about the question: Why is this piece of heritage significant for people? It is about connecting the real world with meaningful ideas.

Freeman Tilden was already very clear about this idea of heritage interpretation when he introduced the concept for the very first time: “Thousands of naturalists, historians, archaeologists and other specialists are engaged in the work of revealing, to such visitors as desire the service, something of the beauty and wonder, the inspiration and spiritual meaning that lie behind what the visitor can with his senses perceive. This function of the custodians of our treasures is called interpretation.”

This initial introduction of the concept of ‘heritage interpretation’ (1977[1957], 3f) takes first-hand experience of what appears to the visitors’ senses for granted. Tilden’s point was that interpretation means to go far beyond the impression that is made on a visitor through sense perception.

Tilden then defines ‘interpretation’ as “an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.” (ibid, 8)

Again, he makes it clear that interpretation is about connecting two spheres; that of objects which can be experienced first-hand and meanings. He takes factual information for granted. He is clear about this in his second principle: “Information as such is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.” (ibid, 9)

And, in order to avoid misunderstanding of his definition, “for dictionary purposes” Tilden adds several other attempts to express in different words what he means: “The true interpreter (…) goes beyond the apparent to the real, beyond a part to a whole, beyond a truth to a more important truth. (…) Interpretation is the revelation of a larger truth that lies behind any statement of fact (…) for the enrichment of the human mind and spirit” (ibid, 8).

The whole book is about this core idea, not to stop with the findings of empirical science but to connect it with the deeper truths, insights and ideas which make heritage meaningful for contemporary people. He struggled hard to find the right words which point to this sphere of the human mind and spirit, which is fundamentally different from that of objects and facts.

In his time, Tilden had good reasons to focus on this dimension of meaningful ideas. Almost all interpreters have a background in empirical academic disciplines which require scientists to be very disciplined in order to produce pure factual information. But the core idea of heritage interpretation is to embed this empirical world of first-hand observation and factual information in mental and spiritual contexts which are meaningful to humans in a much deeper sense.
He mainly needed to stress this deeper dimension of the human mind.

This is still a very important task today, as we will see later. But in the age of populism, a significant change is happening. Tilden could take for granted that everybody appreciates what is perceived with the senses and what has been established as facts. But these days, when populism attacks facts and sense perception, we must take a closer look also on this side of interpretation.

In 2003, David Larsen introduced a new perspective on the relation between the heritage “resource” and the deeper meanings. He described the essential activity of interpretation (2011

[2003], 73): "All successful interpretation can be described as linking a tangible resource to its intangible meanings. Effective interpretation is about connecting one to the other – tangibles and intangibles exist together."

His distinction of tangibles, intangibles, icons and universals (c.f. discussed more in-depth in Lehnes 2016, 32-36 and 49-53) points in a direction which is very useful. It helps to understand what we do when we interpret and to understand why heritage interpretation can play a very important role in the context of the populist threat to plural democracy.

First-hand experience of tangible phenomena

One of the great assets of heritage interpretation compared to many other forms of education or communication, is first-hand experience of real phenomena (Ludwig 2015, 14). So, what happens during an interpretive experience of heritage?

The phenomena appear in a person's mind through the outer senses, i.e. a concrete observable thing, being, event or process that appears in time and space.[3] A building appears differently for different persons who see it from different angles, or for the same person from a distance and then up close. Similarly, a musical performance appears to our eyes and ears more-or-less differently depending on the position from where a person is listening. But for all those visitors who observe the heritage thing from different sides, the phenomena point to the same concrete object or happening, despite it appearing differently.

When we talk about phenomena in interpretation, we refer to a heritage thing in the way that it appears to the senses. This is different from talking of the same thing as an objective or inter-subjective thing without an implied perspective, as we are used to do in scientific contexts. The notion of 'tangible phenomenon' always implies a person who perceives the heritage thing first-hand through one or more senses.

From a particular place in the Wisla valley on the outskirts of Kraków in Poland, one can see Przegorzały Castle – a particular thing –situated on top of a hill (Image 2). Perception of a phenomenon through the visual sense is more than seeing what the eyes transmit, a continuum of colours and shapes. The pure sensory perception (colours, shapes, tones, smells, etc.) is always infused with matching concepts (castle, hill, forest, or cathedral, woman, bird, flower, concert, lightning). When we perceive something, then the object is constituted in our mind through the impression on our senses *and* the concept associated with it.

Larsen used the word "tangibles" for both – those tangible things, events etc. which are part of the world outside of us – w hich cause the sensory impression – and those abstract concepts we have in our mind which refer to such concrete tangible things. 'Tangibles' is then an abbreviation for the class of concepts which *refer* to concrete things, beings, events or processes which can appear to the senses of human. It refers also to imaginable things, such as the unicorn, which are conceived similar to real things or events. Also, fiction employs "tangible concepts" to describe a situation as it could be perceived by a fictiional character's senses. Of course, a concept itself is never tangible, it is an entity of the mind and spirit. But "tangibles" are those concepts with which the mind appropriates any observable thing, being, event or process that appears, or could appear through our senses, from the outside world.

3 This use of the term 'phenomenon' in the context of heritage interpretation is close to the original, ancient Greek meaning. It must not be confused with the other meaning, that a phenomenon is something outstanding, special or extraordinary, although for heritage both often apply.

It happens that different people perceive the same phenomenon differently because they (unconsciously or subconsciously) connect different concepts with what appears to them: 'building' is more abstract and thus less specific than 'old castle', 'Pregorzały Castle' is even more concrete as it is the proper name of a singular thing. Hence, what we see, hear, smell, taste and touch is also influenced by the concepts we are familiar with. "Man sieht nur was man weiß" (one only sees what one knows) is a German proverb attributed to Goethe.

Thus, how the world – and heritage – instantly appears to us depends on both our physical perspective as well as our mental predisposition, i.e. the concepts we have available. This implies a double limitation when we perceive concrete tangible things in the world: First, our standpoint and time which define a limited physical perspective and, second, the different concepts which we personally have available.

Image 2: Przegorzały Castle, Krakow, Poland, is a phenomenon as perceived from the Wisla valley for a few seconds while passing by in a car. When a visitor approaches it from the rear, where the entrance is located, then the phenomena perceived can be very different (Images 3 and 4)

Image 3: Przegorzały Castle as seen from the entrance side; and Image 4: The "Tower" building, which stands some metres to the right of the castle (Image 4, inset, by Zygmunt Put. Licenced under CC BY-SA 4.0, cropped by PL)

Image 3 shows the castle entrance. A person with knowledge in architectural styles who has many differentiated concepts available might see at a glance that these buildings are not so old. But many others probably spontaneously recognise this as a rather old castle ensemble, though their impression regarding its age might be very vague.

Nevertheless, these limitations do not destroy our *feeling and firm conviction* that *what we experience first-hand is part of the real world in which we also take part*. This firm conviction of experiencing a reality is very important in our context. It is one of the cornerstones which totalitarian regimes and most populist movements try to attack.

This conviction that things or events which we perceive first-hand are real is grounded in our experiences. First, our entirely different senses, i.e. what we see, what we hear, what we touch with our hands, what we smell, etc., usually fit together with those concepts we have of things, beings, events and processes. Secondly, the thing or process appears not only to one alone in absolute solitude, but also to others. We can talk with others about what has happened or things we have perceived. We can read an interpretive text which clearly relates to what we can perceive. Thus, others bear witness of our own experience. Thirdly, even animals with very different senses, confirm through their behaviour the reality of the thing. (Arendt 1978, 50; see also Lehnes 2016, 24)

Furthermore, we experience things in the contexts of other perceived things, events, beings and processes. They usually all fit together and also contribute to the sense of reality. This is not a static experience, but a dynamic process. We move through the world – subtly feeling our body as we move – and the spatial perspective on all the things changes accordingly. We can move closer and find more detailed phenomena or features but the discrete things still match our overall picture.

In order to strengthen first-hand experiences of heritage as authentic, special and individual, the interpreter can focus awareness on special features. Such special features and more detailed phenomena often reflect aspects of the history of the heritage. Highlighting what makes it special leads to closer observations and a richer first-hand experience of a real-world thing or process. In this respect, first-hand experience facilitated by interpreters should avoid discussing general knowledge in abstract terms before a vivid experience of the concrete particular thing is achieved (see also Ludwig 2015, 14).

This deep sense of being a part of and witness of a real situation does not occur when watching a TV documentary or surfing the internet. They may offer dramatic scenes and detail which one will never see with one's own eyes, but it happens on a screen in the living room or with mobile devices in other contexts.

Media-based interpretation that does not involve first-hand experience of real phenomena also fails to convey this feeling of authentic reality. In a world where media play an increasing role, first-hand experience of heritage sites and collections becomes a more and more valuable asset. The important point is that first-hand experience of heritage phenomena in a worldly context anchors the interpretive narrative in the visitors' firm conviction of reality. Therefore, first-hand experience provides rather firm grounds in times of populists' attack against the sense of reality.

Factual information from second-hand sources

Heritage is considered as heritage because it is linked with the past. But past structures, people and events are gone and cannot be perceived first-hand. We can memorise what we experienced first-hand. But we rely on second-hand descriptions in order to learn more about past things and events which we did not witness.

For many visitors, the small panel mounted at the "Tower" building (Image 5), offers a surprise. It is not the oldest part of a castle, but a much younger villa. For most, a new, and very specific, concept is introduced - 'neo-romantic style of modernism' - which is now connected with what the person observes with his or her eyes first-hand. This private modernist building was designed by an architect in the late 1920s for his own private use.

The initial perception of an "old castle"– based on previous experience and knowledge – is corrected. It was a mistake in the literal sense. Nevertheless, the first-hand experience of the phenomenon and the totality of its context remain something real. But the concept which corresponds to the perceived colours and shapes is now replaced by the new and more specific concept of "villa in neo-romantic style of modernism". With this change, the imagined context also changes (no knights in armour, but the domestic Kraków of the 1920s...).

Descriptions about something which could not be experienced first-hand – the architect designing the building and the construction – is second-hand information. Such a description also uses tangibles that refer to observable things and events. It relies on the accounts of a narrator or author, e.g. the interpreter.

All second-hand descriptions can be questioned whether and to what extent they are reliable. What are the sources? Facts? Or is it fiction? Or fake which pretends to communicate facts? Or an unclear mixture of all?

Image 5: Panel at the “Tower” building of Przegorzały Castle (shown in Image 4) with selected information

Most visitors assume that information on panels is true, based on evidence or reliable secondary sources, for example from scholars who are able to judge the validity of original sources. Such an assumption is usually based on trust in the site owner and the author.
But this trust in factual information is attacked by the populists’ notion of “alternative facts” and by ‘disinformation’ campaigns. Spicer’s and Convey’s implicit message was that one cannot trust facts, because “facts” would depend on personal perspectives, on the standpoint from which we see reality. Thus, one could paraphrase Spicer and Convey, facts are relative: From an alternative perspective, the same property of the same particular event, e.g. the sizes of Trump’s inauguration crowed, manifests differently, i.e. it is an alternative fact. And different people can hold alternative facts and alternative realities for exactly the same thing. Convey’s wording implies that facts are genuinely subjective.

But Convey’s notion of “alternative facts” was immediately rejected by the interviewer as an attempt to disguise what was a “false claim”. Other than a ‘phenomenon’, a ‘factual information’ is considered independent from the observers’ perspectives and personal experience, i.e. it refers to reality as an intersubjective or objective entity. “Alternative facts” referring to the same property of the same particular thing or event at the same moment in time is logically impossible, if one does not fundamentally twist the meaning of ‘fact’.

However, every interpreter knows the problem, that we have to select which factual information to include and which to omit. Usually, abundant facts are linked to heritage places such as the Bastion building, and it is not possible – and would not make sense – to communicate them all. For instance, the author of the “Tower” panel decided to omit information about the years between 1928 and 1975. The panel does not mention that the villa was confiscated by the Nazis-Germans in 1939. From late 1939 to early 1942, the villa was the residence of Otto Wächter, Governor of the District of Kraków in occupied Poland. As one of his first actions, Wächter banned Jewish children from visiting any school. The man who resided in the "Tower" ordered the expulsion of 68,000 Jews from the city of Kraków and, later, the erection of the Kraków Ghetto for the 15,000 Jews who had remained. This information comes from *Longerich (2010, 161) who is quoted in the English* Wikipedia article about "Otto Wächter"*. And the castle building next to the "Tower" was even built by the Nazis. A panel at the castle complex mentions the building dates, but not the Nazi history.*

In our context, this Wikipedia article (in the version of January 2017) is also of interest for another reason: it is marked as having issues with regard to neutrality and missing citations of sources. This refers to the article's claim that Wächter was opposed to the brutal treatment of the Polish population. Is this mere fiction, propaganda or biased half-truth? Is the citation of the letter from the private family archives fake evidence? This cannot be decided here. However, the facts that the Nazi district governor lived in the confiscated building and that he signed those decrees targeting Kraków's Jewish population are undisputed. Regarding reference made to Longerich as a source, this is a publication by Oxford University Press, which is highly credible. As heritage interpreters, we must often rely on secondary literature. But we have a responsibility to check whether our sources might be of low credibility. And in times of conspiracy theories and claims that facts are faked, it becomes increasingly important to make our sources easily available for those visitors who want to check them.

Still the question remains, whether the authors of the panels should have mentioned the fact that the Tower building and the "castle" are closely linked to the history of Nazi occupation in Poland. Populists often accuse 'mainstream media' to be biased when selecting which information to communicate and which to omit (of course populists do the same). But do we deal in a good way with the necessity to select which facts to include into a narrative, and which leave out?

The same problem occurs with regard to first-hand experience. A curator selects the exhibits to be displayed, and a nature guide selects the stops and the phenomena which he or she will include in the interpretive walk. Of course, we select what is relevant in the context of the theme or the central idea we have chosen for the interpretation. But this only shifts the problem to the question of which central idea and which intangibles we develop.

Ideas and values – intangible but meaningful

The aim of interpretation, as Tilden understood it, is to go beyond the perceptible phenomena and factual information in order to reveal deeper meanings for the enrichment of the human mind and spirit. These deeper meanings are ideas and values which refer to entities that are, as such, principally not tangible for the human bodily senses.

Those intangibles are another class of concepts.[4] They refer to thought-things such as freedom, power, love, which never appear as such embodied as particulars in time and space. It is principally impossible to ever see freedom with human eyes, or to smell justice, or to hear slavery with our ears, or to touch the surface of a nation. It is not possible to imagine these thought-things in a similar way as particular tangible things or events.

4 This use of tangibles and intangibles in this epistemological context must not be confused with the use of the same words in the context of classifying different kinds of heritage, i.e. tangible heritage and intangible heritage. Most, if not all, of the latter is tangible for the human senses. We can taste a typical traditional food, we can watch a performance of a song or a concert, etc. (Lehnes 2016, 51). Maybe in future, a better term will be found to discern "tangibles/ intangibles" as types of concepts, i.e. mental entities, in order to avoid confusion with "tangible/ intangible heritage" in the sense of material heritage.

Intangibles belong to the metaphysical sphere. That might sound “philosophical” and abstract, a matter of scholars in the ivory tower. But intangible concepts. such as justice, honour, tolerance, responsibility, nation, etc., play an important role in everyday life, arguably for every human. Therefore, probably all human cultures have produced various symbols, such as flags and anthems, and symbolic events, like rituals, which physically represent such intangible ideas. Symbols are tangible/ intangible links.

Heritage interpretation embeds heritage phenomena in meaningful contexts which connect tangibles with intangibles. This happens through narratives about a particular heritage thing. These narratives reveal why/ how/ in which respect individual incidents/ things/ persons at a concrete place and time are meaningful with regard to universal intangible concepts and ideas. That’s what we can call meaning-making.

The urge for meaning-making

In order to illustrate the strength of people’s desire to associate themselves with the historic past, Tilden used an exceptionally long quote, which describes the making of group identities. Watch the many intangibles and symbolic terms in this passage: “The underlying design is of course to set up a group of the living, the dead, and those who are yet unborn, a group of which the individual finds himself a part and of which he is in fact glad to count himself a member, and by virtue of that fact an individual of no mean importance in the world. All the great group victories he shares in; all the great men are his companions in the bonds of the group, all its sorrows are by construction his; all its hopes and dreams, realized and thwarted alike, are his. And thus he becomes although of humble status a great man, a member of a great group; and his humble life is thus tinged with a glory it might not otherwise ever hope to achieve. He is lifted beyond and above himself into higher worlds where he walks with all his great ancestors, one of an illustrious group whose blood is in his veins and whose domain and reputation he proudly bears.” (Merriam 1931 quoted by Tilden 1957 [1977], 12)

Tilden added that “generally speaking, certainties contribute toward human happiness; uncertainties are a source of spiritual loneliness and disquietude. Whether or not he is conscious of it, Man seeks to find his place in nature and among people.” (ibid., 13)

Collective identity constructions link tangibles (persons belonging to the group) with intangibles (ideas and values). People seek for deeper meaning, which provides orientation. Such a group identity creates or reassures their meaningful place in the world.

These ideas of Merriam and Tilden are very convincing. But at the same time, they reveal another parallel to populism: certainties, and this means, in the context of non-captive audiences, rather simple or simplified certainties contribute to happiness. Whereas the plural views and complexities of democratic discourses tend to produce uncertainties and disquietude.

Anti-Enlightenment populists respond to this urge for holistic ideas. They offer identities, such as belonging to a great nation and / or to a great religious group. They reassure traditional identity constructions.

People in local-bound, more traditionalist milieus seem to be more often attached to national and / or religious values and narratives: workers, craftsmen, ordinary civil servants, or owners of small companies which serve a local or regional market. The same is true for some conservative intellectuals. The rise of populism in this perspective is probably a response to the overwhelming force of globalisation – based on cold, rational intellect of science and technology (digital revolution) which threatens employment. Economic thinking seems to dominate politics, it unleashes market forces and permanent competition reducing humans to consumers. Certainties about traditional roles are getting lost and the personal identity is questioned.

From this point of view, the liberal and internationalist attitudes, the universalism of human rights, of the elites, don't work for the 'left-behinds'. Science and economy, critical discourse and deconstruction, do not satisfy the urge for meaning. This reflects back to the Romanticism movement, which was in search of deeper, holistic meanings after the rise of empirical sciences and rational thinking during the Enlightenment period (Carter 2016).

Could it be that the human urge for meaning-making has been neglected for too long?
Could it be that this is one of the reasons why nationalist populism and, at the same time, religious fundamentalism are gaining momentum?

If there is some truth in this view, then heritage interpretation could become a significant part of a solution – if interpreters succeed to reveal something of the beauty and wonder, the inspiration and spiritual meaning that lie behind what the visitor can perceive with his senses.

Dangers of meaning-making

But making people happy through the construction of a great group with which they can identify is a dangerous venture. This becomes obvious when we consider that identity constructs are also at the very centre of populism. So, what is 'populism'?

Populus and *demos*; the first is Latin, the second, ancient Greek. Both mean "people". But there is a very significant difference. The populist narrative considers *the* people as a homogeneous group. The populist leader is in direct contact with *the* people, i.e. the leader gives the great, or formerly great, people a voice. On the other hand, even as far back as the ancient Greeks, democracy referred to a people which is composed of citizens with diverse interests. Democracy takes into account that these plural interests need to be articulated. In a democratic discourse, diverse voices argue in search for the best solutions; problems which affect different people in different ways. (Gäbler 2017)

In order to define a homogeneous people, differences to others are stressed. For most populists, those 'others' are *the* establishment and other peoples, i.e. foreigners. The defining narrative of populism follows a WE-against-THEM logic or, often, the other way around; a THEY-against-US pattern. Populist group identities tend towards a binary black-and-white thinking. The populist leader is the hero of the ordinary people who fights against the "crooked" establishment and foreign powers. (Seeßlen 2017)

The Merriam quote vividly describes how the construction of such a strong WE works for a national group identity in a positive way. He does not define the group negatively through a THEM. But this resolves the problem only partly, if at all. Sam Ham warned to be careful using labels, because they classify and thus tend to stereotype people. Even positive and neutral labels have the potential to offend (Ham 1992, 16). Positive labels in interpretation for some – or a majority group – may put down others because those others do not belong to that great group.

There are more dangers beyond making people feel excluded. Filter bubbles and echo chambers: People tend to perceive the reality through the filter of the preconceived meaningful narratives. This is especially powerful when they are part of that narrative, i.e. when these narratives are related to their group identity. People then prefer narratives which reinforce group stereotypes regarding the others, and reassure the self-stereotype of their own "great group". There is a tendency to ignore perceptions and facts which contradict these narratives. If it is not possible to ignore them, then conspiracy theories are another way to explain what does not match.

George H. W. Bush gave a prominent example in 1988: "I will never apologize for the United States – I don't care what the facts are... I'm not an apologize-for-America kind of guy." At that time, he was vice president of the United States. So as not to compromise the view of the US as a great nation, he preferred to ignore the facts – one month after the US military had shot down a civilian Iranian aircraft with 290 causalities.[5]

Taking European experience of the 20th century into account, Merriam's last sentence should ring alarm bells: Probably many Germans believed the Nazi narrative that they belong to an illustrious group with Nordic or Aryan blood in their veins. The narrative of superiority of the German people painted the Jews as parasites in the "Volkskörper" (the body of the German people, i.e. a metaphor equalling a people with an organism). Thus, eliminating them from the German Volkskörper was taught as an act of self-defence to those men who ordered the mass-murder (Wette 2011, 43).

But the ideology of the superiority of the German race was turned also against another group that was merely considered as inferior, the Salves (Wette 2011, 45). The Nazis used this narrative to justify deportations of Krakow professors to concentration camps and mass killings of Polish people. Most of those who were involved in mass murders and genocide believed they had to do a very unpleasant job. But they did it in order to fulfil what they believed was a higher mission for their people. Identity constructions are not the only reason for the Nazi crimes. The reasons are much more complex. Another important aspect, for instance, is that ordinary people (not just fanatic ideologists) tend to follow orders given by an accepted authority, or act upon a sense a of duty because of belonging to a police corps which is also a group identity (c.f. Browning 1992). But the Nazi's meaning-making narratives to construct stereotypes and a mission certainly played an important role that so many people took part in committing crimes against humanity.

There seems to be a risk that – under certain conditions – creeping shifts can happen: from meaning-making with positive values linked to an illustrious group, to "our great group first" calls implying inferiority or meanness towards others, to the construction of dangerous enemies of "our people" which can result in discrimination and even in genocide.

But what does all this mean for us as interpreters? How can heritage interpretation in the 21st century deal with constructing and deconstructing group identities in a way which suits democracy – or rather contributes to defend democracy? Should we reject attempts to interpret heritage as a nation's or a people's achievement? Should we instead contribute to build a sense of belonging to Europe or the EU?

Maybe, yes. Based on "Western values" which evolved since Humanism and Renaissance in the course of a long history of battles and catastrophes, which finally resulted in the Declaration of Universal Human Rights and the idea of sustainable development.

But such an approach still risks remaining captured in the identity-making pitfall: Here are WE, the progressive elites; and there are THEY, the ignorant left-behinds. It would basically recreate a dichotomous we-against-them thought pattern.

5 https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4555921/bush-ethnic-coalition-speech see also https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran_Air_Flight_655#Aftermath

We probably need a more radical approach. We need to investigate more closely how the connection of the tangibles and intangibles works and how narratives become beliefs and identities.

Interpretation is thinking

We remember, tangibles and intangibles are different kinds of concepts. Tangibles are concepts which refer to particular things, beings, events and processes as they appear in the real world – or as they can be imagined to appear in a fictional world. Intangibles are concepts referring to ideas, values, etc, which principally cannot be imagined similar to physical things and processes.

The mental activity which connects concepts in a meaningful way is thinking. If the essential activity is connecting tangibles with intangibles in a meaningful way, then interpretation essentially *is* thinking.[6]

Throughout his book, "Interpretation – Making a difference on purpose", Sam Ham (2013) frequently stressed how important it is for successful interpretation to provoke audiences to think. Concepts are like building blocks for thinking (Image 6). Heritage interpretation links concepts that are part of the perception of concrete heritage phenomena, as well as pieces of factual information related to this heritage, with ideas and values that are meaningful for the audience. There is no interpretation without thinking.

The basic result of a thinking process is a thought. The thinking process connects thoughts to a narration or a line of arguments, etc. The human mind can connect thoughts because they consist of concepts, and every concept can connect with many other concepts in various ways. A linear sequence of thoughts is like a thought-train.

Of course, visitors do not necessarily need an interpreter. They can interpret for themselves. The interpretive thinking process is then sparked by a perception that arouses curiosity. Depending on the knowledge they bring with them, they are able to connect the perceived phenomena with factual information and meaningful contexts by themselves. Experts and knowledgeable enthusiasts can very well interpret and appreciate a piece of heritage without any facilitation. But many visitors are hampered by their lack of specialist knowledge when seeking a meaningful experience, unless they have guidance and input from an interpreter.

Whilst receiving interpretive communication, the visitor's first and basic thinking activity is to follow the thoughts and narratives that are presented to them. Here, the well-known communication techniques for interpretation come into play: to use a language which is familiar to the audience, to present thoughts in a well organised way, etc. At that stage, the visitor's thinking process is all about apprehending the thoughts and narratives communicated by the interpretive guide or media.

6 This view does not neglect the importance of emotions for interpretation. But arguably emotions come often after thinking processes (Lehnes 2008). The relation of thought and emotion cannot be further elaborated here.


Image 6: Solid building blocks in various shapes are connected to form a bigger structure. There is some flexibility, but the structure falls apart if the blocks are not connected well enough. Concepts are the building blocks for thoughts, which can then be connected to narratives.

The next stage of the visitor's thinking process is to check the compatibility of these recently apprehended thoughts with his or her own, preconceived thoughts and narratives. This check may result in one of three scenarios: a perfect match; in some kind of mismatch, which can be easily resolved by adopting a new, more precise concept or by slightly adjusting the meaning of a preconceived concept; or in a more fundamental mismatch, which leads to a cognitive dissonance. This third case usually results in some search for reasons to reject the narrative in order to defend their own accepted preconceived ideas, i.e. one's beliefs (especially when they are relevant for their own identity constructions). Others just stop paying attention because the experience begins to feel unpleasant, and others keep the question open for pondering the origin of that dissonance.

This second level or stage of the thinking process includes judgements by the visitor about whether to integrate the new phenomena, facts and, especially, the new meaningful insights into their own belief system, the world view, or whether to reject them or ignore them as irrelevant.

All this usually happens very quickly, almost instantly, and often while a presenter is still speaking - provided the interpreter's communication is easy to follow and captivating. The visitor's consciousness is out there with the speaker (or the images and texts and / or the phenomena). The person's thinking is reactive and fast, almost automatic; the person is not consciously directing these thought processes. Thinking can be so fast because we normally connect ready-made, pre-conceived concepts and ideas. The attention is out there, and the self-awareness and consciousness of the thinking process is rather dim. Most of us would not be able to tell when and how they gained their pre-conceived concepts that are readily available for use. It seems to be clear that this happens through thought processes based on experience and / or communication with other people, but conscience is so much focussed on the subject matter 'out there' that we cannot recall the thinking activity.

Similar thinking processes – to apprehend information and ideas from others and to judge their relevance – happen often every day. For example, when someone listens to or reads political arguments or populist narratives that claim, for example, "to take control back for a great nation". However, such communications normally lack possibilities for the audience to experience first-hand the original phenomena that are relevant for the theme.

This thinking, which just uses pre-conceived concepts as building blocks, is the every-day mode of thinking. We can call it normal thinking.

Disturbing ideas and reflective thinking

Sometimes it happens that interpretation gives many answers where there is no question. That's usually not so successful. Often, visitors have questions when they experience heritage about things they don't yet know. Then they are happy to receive answers. And sometimes it is the interpretation which provokes thinking that stimulates visitors to question and challenge what they thought they already knew (Ham 2013, 155).

Tilden was an advocate of the power that lies in understatement (ibid, 80). But there is an emphatic sentence, even with an exclamation mark; a dramatic turn after he appealed to interpreters' empathy to understand the ignorance and the less favourable life conditions of their visitors: "There is the challenge! to put your visitor in possession of at least one disturbing idea that may grow into a fruitful interest" (ibid, 91).

He uses the metaphor of a seed. It may germinate, it may grow if the conditions are right, it may develop over time and bear fruits. This will not happen with an easy answer given by the interpreter which instantly satisfies the audience, but only with a disturbing idea. Interestingly, someone else used a similar metaphor: Socrates. He compared himself to a midwife, helping others deliver their thoughts. With the expert knowledge of a midwife he could decide whether the thought was a real child or a wind-egg, i.e. an unexamined pre-judgement (Arendt ibid, 172). A lively thought has the potential to grow and develop into an interest – which will then bear new fruits.

A disturbing idea is anything but a simple, satisfactory answer. Disturbance comes from a mismatch, a big question which is relevant to a person's important beliefs but cannot be resolved easily. It leads to questioning the meaning of concepts and the coherence of thoughts and beliefs.

In a silent moment, this may provoke him or her into reflective thinking[7], to indulge in the soundless dialogue between me and myself: to give account of the meanings of concepts and beliefs which constitute the incoherent narrative or world view, to examine which concept needs to be reshaped in order to achieve a coherent whole. At the same time, reflective thinking unfreezes pre-conceived concepts, ideas and narratives.

This process stops immediately when the reflecting mind is attracted by the outside world. To keep a result from reflective thinking, it must be fixed as a thought through words or a metaphor.

7 For the following discussion of reflective thinking c.f. Arendt who calls it simply "thinking" (ibid, 172-193) and with an example Lehnes (ibid, 36ff, 53f)

The new or revised concept and thought must freeze again (Image 7). Otherwise, it cannot be communicated.

Image 7: Even rocks can unfreeze – deep under the surface of a mountain range. We can still see the result of this process when they surface later.

The development of a skill and habit of reflective thinking has or, maybe, can have, side-effects with significant impacts for a person regarding identity, conscience and the attitude towards diversity and plurality.

As concepts and narratives are linked to others in multiple ways, reflective thinking may lead to unfreezing and reshaping other concepts and ideas. Such a process can also involve those concepts and beliefs that are the building blocks for a person's identity constructs. A fixed identity, then, can become fluid (Image 8). It shifts from a fixed standpoint to moving and changing perspectives. Identities come in flux, beliefs may be changed, etc. A pre-conceived identity construct based on stereotypes – which might have been passed on from family, peers, school education in a certain socio-cultural milieu – can finally change, or even completely dissolve into meaninglessness.

That's why many people tend to avoid reflective thinking. They are afraid that it could lead to disquietude and uncertainty. It may confront them with an insight that, in their ordinary workaday life, "they are travelling the wrong road, and bitterly conclude that it is too late to return to a distant fork." This sentence precedes Tilden's call to put such visitors in the possession of at least one disturbing idea (Tilden ibid, 91).

It is the task of the interpreter to understand and appreciate the visitors, i.e. to develop sympathetic empathy. This will make it easier for the interpreter to find an appropriate way to provoke with disturbing ideas without putting off.

Image 8: An entire mountain can unfreeze. In a semi-fluid state, the layers can be folded. Such processes can lead to re-arrangement and some layers turning upside-down. Similarly, an entire belief system and identity construction can become fluid and be completely re-arranged through reflective thinking.

There is an important side effect of the experience of reflective thinking, which compensates the unfreezing of collective identities. It is accompanied with a higher level of awareness of the active self. Consciousness is not out there in the world of phenomena, facts or the partner in a debate, as is the case in normal thinking. The consciousness is with the active thinking ego in introspection. It is the inner dialogue of the me with myself. This experience has been described like becoming more alive or rousing from sleep. Therefore, people who develop a skill and habit in reflective thinking do not need to borrow self-esteem or certainty from constructed group identities any more.

It is evident that a person who experiences this inner activity of reflective thinking frequently will become more-or-less immune to the luring offers of the populists.

Another side-effect of this active introspection is its close link with conscience. In reflective thinking, one is both sides of the dialogue. Aristotle held that one cannot object against oneself, and it is impossible to cheat or to betray oneself. One would become one's own adversary. It is impossible to think, "I do not think about the red elephant", and at the same time not to think about a red elephant. The inner examination of meanings and beliefs is a giving account to oneself. The criterion for this venture is consistency and coherence of one's own beliefs and world view. Deliberately thinking and conscious action against one's own beliefs would be uncovered in reflective thinking. The only way to avoid the confrontation with conscience is to avoid this activity of critical reflection.

Reflective thinking does not result in a definite body of knowledge but in clarifications. It uncovers unsubstantiated preconceptions and prejudice. Fixed thoughts and beliefs become fluid. This process rather raises new – more precise – questions, which can result in the fruitful interest to find out more. More first-hand experience, more facts and more understanding will rarely – if ever – provide final answers, but more food for thinking. It leads to discover subtle shades where there had only been either black or white…

The world is rich – and it is enriching to enjoy diverse heritage as well as to find inspiration from the views of other people. With this experience, plurality becomes less of a threat rather than an asset in order to reach a deeper and more meaningful understanding of "Man's place in nature and among men"…

Heritage interpretation in support of plural democracy

We have seen that the populist narrative is rooted in simplified general ideas and based on a binary black-and-white thought pattern. It tends to filter perception (or virtual reality) in order to fit that narrative. Populism is a powerful political myth: it constructs a homogeneous people, the WE in contrast to THEM, either a selfish elite or other homogeneous peoples. These simplified ideas are linked to stereotypes which aim to boost the self.

Interpretation is all about the particular: particular individuals in history, particular incidents at a particular place, particular structures, such as buildings, artefacts, natural and cultural environments, landscapes. It is rooted in the reality of first-hand experience and based on factual information. It explores the relations of reality with meaningful general ideas. Concrete real things, individuals and events exist in the plural and in diversity. Individuals and particular heritage things rarely fit into a black-and-white pattern; there are many shades of many colours to discover.

Constructing homogeneous peoples based on stereotypes can be seen an assault against Humanism and Human Rights, a neglect of the dignity of each human being as an individual. Heritage, on the other hand, reflects diversity of the tangible world and the plurality of humans. Heritage interpreters act as facilitators for visitors to experience this richness and. at the same time. as provokers to check preconceived meanings and beliefs.
Provocative heritage interpretation can never force a visitor into reflective thinking – indeed, many tend to avoid this kind of introspection because it threatens to question certainties. But interpretation can prepare the grounds and sow "disturbing ideas". They may or may not germinate. For some, reflective thinking may be triggered years later after a disturbing life event. A past interpretive experience can then turn out to be most valuable food for thinking.

The mission of interpretation

Back to the question of whether heritage interpretation is a mere instrument for other's missions or has its own mission. It should be clear that this is not necessarily an either-or alternative. Interpreters can follow different missions simultaneously as long as these missions do not contradict. However, in the age of populism, we can conceive situations of conflict. Then, it makes a difference whether interpretation is defined as a mere communication instrument or as an activity with its own inherent mission. It makes a difference for our own collective identity as interpreters, and it is easier to reject demands or orders that contradict such a mission. Journalists are an example.

From the perspective of this paper, heritage interpretation has an inherent mission.

But I do not dare to freeze this inherent mission in a sentence. For now, it needs to remain in a fluid state. It is certainly something around the idea of putting people in possession of disturbing ideas which may grow into fruitful interests. It is certainly around facilitating first-hand experience of the real world in its diversity, and around the inspiration which comes from including plural views in the process of meaning-making.

All this about the enrichment of the human mind and spirit. And this is an end in itself. The human potential to practice the soundless inner dialogue, giving account to oneself, is at the core of the dignity of each human individual; it is similar to consulting one's conscience; it is closely related to freedom because reflective thinking helps to overcome socio-cultural conditioning and collective identity constructions, especially those that are inappropriate towards other people.

In the bigger picture of modern societies, provocative heritage interpretation is not the one-and-only answer to populism, but can make a significant contribution to combat the attack against reality and the twisting of meaning to build foregone narratives.

It can contribute to appreciating the diversity of the real world and the emancipatory powers that we inherited from the Humanism and Enlightenment movements. And it can connect the real world with the search for deeper meanings and holistic ideas that we inherited from Romanticism. Or, in other words: it can reconcile the sphere of philosophy and metaphysics with the love for the diversity and plurality of the real world.

Some things we can do to this end

Accompany visitors to help them experience authentic real world phenomena first-hand. This anchors the interpretation and themselves in the subtle but important feeling of reality.

Provide credible factual information and explanations that reinforce the reality of the heritage experience and are relevant for meaningful narratives.

Interpret a theme under multiple perspectives, embedding the tangible phenomena and background information in meaningful narratives from different socio-cultural points of view, including plural belief systems and world views.

In the context of selecting a meaningful theme, the interpreter may ask him- or herself some questions, such as:

- Is the material suitable to uncover stereotypes, to question established narratives by revealing nuances and well-founded alternative views?
- Could there be, or have there been, people who would challenge a seemingly obvious or mainstream narrative?
- How would minorities or marginalised people perceive the phenomena and facts from their perspective? How would we feel if we were in their shoes? What is the valid point in their perspective?
- Could we frame a story in a European or international context instead of, or complementary to, a national framing?
- Is there potential to connect the interpretation with universal values, their emergence, their ignorance and negations?
- And last, but not least, how can we provide disturbing ideas or narrative that could provoke reflection on these values without putting those off who come with incoherent beliefs and prejudice?

We need to stimulate interaction and exchange of views among the audience, as well as between the audience and the interpreter. The latter can always kick-off something new, a disturbing idea that demands crossing mental borders for the interpreter themselves. When we are true interpreters, we are open to scrutiny of our own concepts and ideas through reflective thinking and to, thus, unfreeze our own beliefs.

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Czech National Stud Kladruby nad Labem – interpreting a living heritage site

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Abstract

Kladruby nad Labem is a place where economic, social and environmental aspects are integrated. It can provide a useful reference for challenges relating to sustainable development in rural areas. When carefully managed, the national stud retains clear evidence of its historic origin, while maintaining an active role in society and economy. The cultural landscape is an added value for the competitiveness of the region. It helps understanding the quality of rural space for the preservation of cultural heritage, the protection of biodiversity and the quality of life of the population[i].

While heritage professionals often work with historic sites, which have lost their original purpose, the stud is continuously in use according to the rhythm of nature and the horses' needs. The outstanding cultural value of Kladruby nad Labem lies in its unique connection of tangible and intangible heritage with the Oldkladruber horses as "living monuments" the centre of attention. Professional heritage management, including high class interpretation, is essential to preserve these values. Therefore, knowledge about both horses and heritage is required.

Keywords

living heritage, continuity of use, authenticity, horses, stud

Introduction: Historic horse breeding institutions of Europe

The Czech National Stud at Kladruby nad Labem is one of the most significant traditional horse breeding institutions of Europe and beyond. These precious institutions derive from a time when horses played a vital role in transport, agriculture, military support and the representation by monarchs and members of important families. Thinking about the wide-ranging relevance of horses in the past, it becomes evident why farseeing rulers founded not only royal studs for their own representative purposes, but also state studs to improve the quality of horses in their kingdoms. The quality of horses was a decisive factor for the productivity and military successes of a state[ii].

In France, it was Colbert, the first minister of Louis XIV, who invented the national stud system with Le Pin, Pompadour and Rosières-aux-Salines as the first national studs. During the French Revolution, the studs were closed but Napoleon quickly reopened them and even added quite a few. After all, he wanted to conquer Europe and without good horses his chances would have been rather small. The most influential horse breeders on German ground and – not surprisingly – the most successful rulers of their time, were the Prussians. At its peak, the Prussian Stud Administration included six actively breeding studs and 16 stallion depots with more than 2,000 stallions[iii]. The most famous institution was Trakehnen, established in 1732. The Habsburg Dynasty founded a number of significant horse breeding institutions in the former Austria-Hungary. Some of them still exist today, such as Bábolna and Mezöhegyes in Hungary, Radautz in Romania, Lipica in Slovenia and Kladruby nad Labem in the Czech Republic.


Image 1: The central stud yard of Kladruby nad Labem is surrounded by stables, a church and a palace

After the motorisation of transport, agriculture and war during the 20th century, the number of horses, and with them the number of breeding institutions, declined. Today, the surviving institutions are in a period of new orientation and re-structuring. They have recognised the need to shift their focus and develop new business areas preparing them for the future. Service around the horse, education, culture, events and tourism are key words in this context. State studs, being dependent on public funding, need to demonstrate the role they can play, not only for horse breeders and riders, but for the widest possible range of citizens as places of regeneration and back-to-nature experiences.[iv] In west European countries this process of change started during the second half of the 20th century, in post-communist countries of middle and east Europe it began during the last few years.

National Stud Kladruby nad Labem

The Czech National Stud reflects on more than 430 years of history. In 1579, the Emperor Rudolf II established Kladruby, located 75km east of Prague and thus close to the most important middle European court of the time, as the imperial stud. The “Altkladruber” breed is considered to be the oldest cultural horse breed of Europe. Employing Spanish and Italian horses, one systematically developed a heavy but noble gala draft horse for the elaborate imperial carriages[v]. Under Leopold I the stud was home to 300 brood mares and 30 sires. At its bloom during the second half of the 18^{th} century, more than 1,000 horses used to live at Kladruby. Until 1918, the main task of the stud was to provide the court with two perfect grey and black eight-in-hand carriages for ceremonial and religious occasions. Since 2002, the herd of the stud has been registered as a national monument of the Czech Republic. Today, the population reaches 1,400 horses worldwide. About half of them live at Kladruby. The horses with their characteristic convex foreheads are used for carriage driving, baroque and leisure riding and for hippotherapy.


Image 2: Eight-in-hand of Oldkladruby stallions at the “Day of the Oldkladruby horse” in the historic stud yard of Kladruby nad Labem

Image 3: The National Stud's team at the World Championships of four-in-hand driving, 2016

The National Stud consists of different sites. While the grey horses are bred, reared and trained at the historic stud premises of Kladruby nad Labem, the black population is located at Slatiňany and Hermanův Městec in the originally private stables of the noble Auersperg and Kinsky families, which were confiscated by the state during communist times. The site at Kladruby nad Labem features a cultural landscape of 1,200 hectares shaped by centuries of horse breeding, a palace and different historic building ensembles, which are connected by avenues. Whoever enters the stud premises today feels like stepping back into a time when the hoof beat of the horse defined the speed in war and peace, in agriculture and transport. In the shade of century-old trees, generations of horses graze(d) – proud stallions, dignified mares and lively foals. Empress "Sissi" comes to mind, who was known as an excellent rider and loved staying at Kladruby.


Image 4: Mares and foals in the Kladruby stud landscape

Renaissance of a jewel

The stud survived the troubled 20th century, with its political and social changes, miraculously intact. As almost all studs of Eastern Europe, Kladruby experienced difficult times, characterised by several director changes, after the collapse of the communist system. During the last few years, the historic stud premises at Kladruby nad Labem have undergone intensive renovation with the help of European funding. An urgently needed project to save the historic building fabric was undertaken in 2014 and 2015. Ailing roofs have been repaired, drains renewed and historic building proportions recreated. The time-honoured stables, with their vaulted ceilings, wooden floors, terrazzo and tile decorations, now shine in new brightness. They are as elaborate as the neighbouring palace – noble homes for precious horses.

Images 5 and 6: Historic stables under renovation and afterwards

New facilities and services for visitors have been introduced and more are currently in preparation. A museum has been established in the representative rooms of the palace and, in the former gate house, historic carriages, harnesses and information about the Oldkladruby horse breed are on display. A saddler and a farrier workshop welcome visitors and one of the stud's water towers was transformed into an observation tower offering aerial views across the stud farm and its landscape. New interpretative signage has been installed at places of interest.

Image 7: New exhibitions welcome visitors

Image 8: Interpretive signage has been installed at places of significance

Challenges and tasks for the future

Fortunately, the outstanding cultural significance of Kladruby nad Labem has been recognised at the national level and now the responsible authorities strive for World Heritage status. To present the stud premises in their former glory, there is still a lot to be done. Some buildings that were erected in communist times still harm the integrity of the place. They need to be demolished or replaced by more appropriate ones at places with less visual impact. Large parts of the designed landscape are still in need of rehabilitation and, therefore, another application for European funding has been submitted.

As so often with EU-projects, time and funding for the recently completed architectural renovation project was limited in relation to the amount of work, which led to compromises in quality and suboptimal solutions. Another question is sustainability. The new facilities need to be filled with life, but no permanent jobs for well-educated staff could be created. Professional heritage interpretation is largely unknown; the focus lies on marketing and tourism. The local population is only little involved. People benefit only indirectly and often feel excluded, which causes fear and opposition.
The enormous heritage and tourist potential of Kladruby nad Labem, which is located within perfect day-trip distance of Prague, could easily become a threat. As with all heritage sites, at some stage the issue needs to be addressed how much touristic development is appropriate, so that the historic stud does not turn into an amusement park, losing its heritage values. Introducing tourism and new events to a working stud poses challenges and requires sustainable management. There is no point in turning a traditional breeding institution into a “horsey Disneyland”. Visitors are grateful for certain standards but, at the same time, they prefer authentic experiences. Introducing tourism first means to show what a living stud is all about.

Image 9: Daily routine: stud employees guiding the mares to their pastures

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Thorsten Ludwig (Germany)

Developments around the interpretive triangle

Author

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Abstract

As a catchy and compact model to introduce heritage interpretation in more European countries, the interpretive triangle was first presented in 2003 through the EU Leonardo project TOPAS (Training of Protected Area Staff). In 2015, the model was implemented into Interpret Europe's newly started training programme.

During its 15 years of development, the focus of the model has slightly changed. Questions around the triangle now reflect debates on interpretation in the 21st century. This paper traces the origin of the model, introduces the four qualities included and emphasises some of the questions that are critical to keep the interpretive triangle up to date.

Keywords

interpretive triangle, heritage interpretation, progressive education, digitisation, participation

Introducing the interpretive triangle

At the European level, the interpretive triangle was first presented in 2003 as a model to explain interpretive processes in an easy way. Since then, it has served as a valuable tool to:

- introduce interpretation to various audiences from front-line staff to decision-makers;
- locate specific skills in training courses and to make sure why they are needed; and
- remind planning teams what they should basically be heading for.

One further benefit the model provides for the interpretive community itself: the simple arrangement of the four key qualities allows consideration of contemporary ideas about each of these parameters without losing the whole picture.

Focusing on the interpretive triangle means that this paper might not introduce something new to those who are familiar with interpretation. It rather intends to raise some current questions about key qualities and to trigger thinking about these questions against the background of the model.

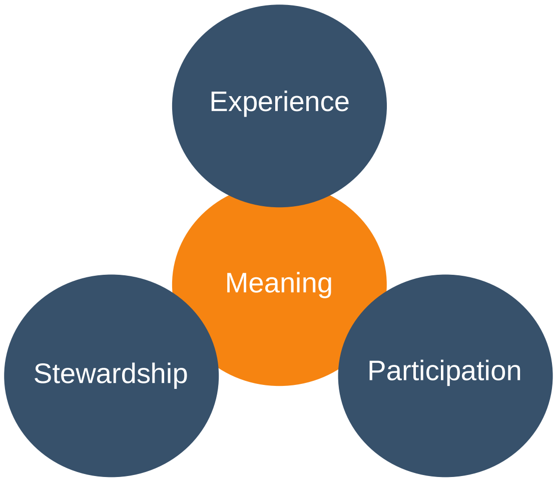

Figure 1: The interpretive triangle

The interpretive triangle (Figure 1), as it is currently used within the Interpret Europe training programme, highlights the four following qualities of heritage interpretation:

- Offering paths to deeper meaning
- Turning phenomena into experiences
- Provoking resonance and participation
- Fostering stewardship for all heritage

The four key parameters, *meaning*, *experience*, *participation* and *stewardship,* describe what heritage interpretation is aiming for. They resonate with Interpret Europe's mission: "To serve all who use first-hand experiences to give natural and cultural heritage a deeper meaning" (IE 2017).

In Interpret Europe's training practice, the four key parameters correspond with four basic elements to be included in any interpretive process:

- the theme catching meaning
- the phenomenon being subject to any first-hand experience
- the participants enjoying active participation
- the interpreter representing stewardship

Interpret Europe's trainers usually use more appealing artistic versions of the model to discuss the basic qualities of heritage interpretation in their courses (Figure 2).

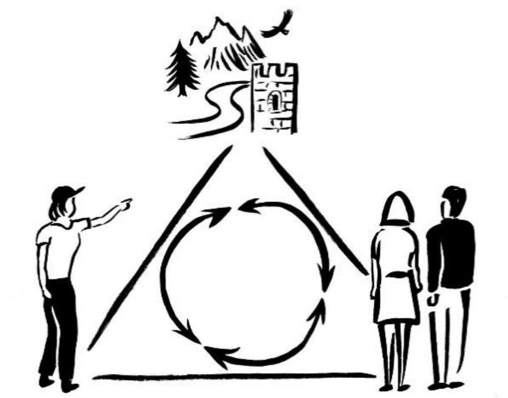

Figure 2: The interpretive triangle – artist's view (Philipp Rutt in Ludwig 2015)

The development of the model

The interpretive triangle first originated from interpretive training courses in German national parks during the 1990s (Ludwig 1995). The idea was to focus on the specific combination of a few qualities of heritage interpretation (the 'four aces') in order to underline the significance of the interpretive approach. The most advanced interpretive training programme on heritage interpretation at that time was the US National Park Service's (NPS) *Interpretive Development Program* (IDP) which provided significant inspiration for the European interpretation community.

For two reasons, it nevertheless made sense to introduce a new model:

- Different from the situation in the NPS, the interpretive approach was still rather unknown in many European countries. Several non-formal learning concepts had already been established, and it was critical to explain what specific qualities interpretation could offer.

- In the 1990s, communication approaches that triggered dialogue rather than aimed to deliver messages played a prominent role in Europe. For example, the interpretive triangle was discussed against the background of theme-centred interaction (Cohn 1992).

When the EU project *TOPAS – Training of Protected Area Staff* was launched in 1999 (Clarke 2006), the challenge was to think about ways of introducing heritage interpretation in a catchy and compact way. The model was considered to perfectly meet this requirement and, therefore, found entry into the course manual of the training course *Basic Interpretive Skills* (Ludwig 2003).

In this first version of the model, the three corners were designated as *phenomenon* (top), *interpreter* (left) and *visitors* (right) with the *theme* as a fourth element hovering above the triangle. Bauszus (2004) brought the *theme* into the centre and, during the following years, this variant was used, quoted and discussed, e.g. by Zoepp (2005), Hellwig (2007), Detel (2007), Hermes (2010), Heinemann (2012) and Molitor (2012).

The interpretive triangle was inspired by the idea of the "interactive threesome" (Lewis 1989:22). It clearly emphasised the thematic approach of interpretation in the sense as it was described especially by Ham (1992).

Using a triangle to illustrate interpretive learning was not an entirely new idea. Before the interpretive triangle was introduced internationally through *TOPAS*, several authors in heritage interpretation had suggested similar approaches (Figure 3).

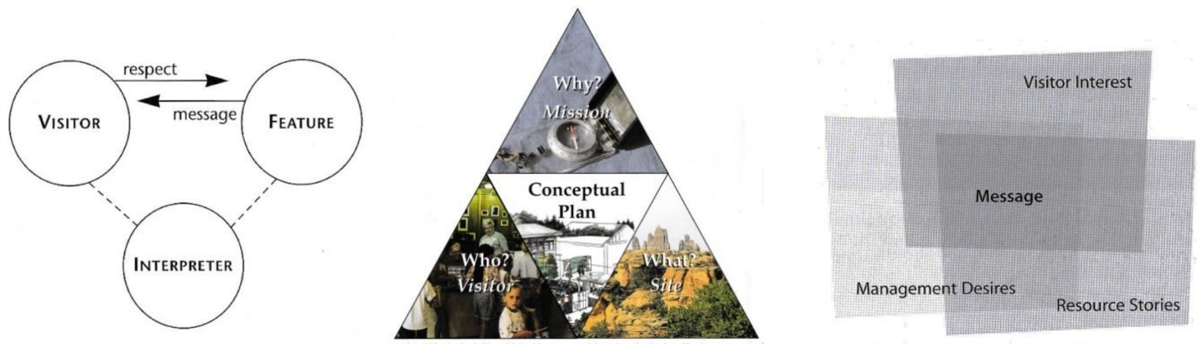

Figure 3: Triangular models showing fundamental relationships in heritage interpretation
(Pierssené 1999:5, Gross and Zimmerman: 2002:134, Brochu 2003:93)

In 2014, the model was implemented in the EU Transfer of Innovation project, *HeriQ – Quality in Heritage Interpretation*. Its four qualities where described in brief phrases and the word *visitors* was replaced by *participants* to include residents in local communities (Ludwig 2015). This version of the model was finally introduced into Interpret Europe's newly started training programme.

The four qualities within the interpretive triangle

As mentioned above, the four qualities included in the interpretive triangle are:

- Offering paths to deeper meaning
- Turning phenomena into experiences
- Provoking resonance and participation
- Fostering stewardship for all heritage

In the following chapters, these qualities shall be used to discuss the original ideas of heritage interpretation (Tilden 1957) against the background of contemporary demands. An earlier version of this discussion can be found in Tilkin (2016).

1. Offering paths to deeper meaning

Compared to other concepts of learning from first-hand experiences, the most significant characteristic of heritage interpretation is that it actively encourages participants to interpret their experience, i.e. to search for personal meaning (Larsen 2011). As Freeman Tilden put it: "Interpretation is the revelation of a larger truth that lies behind any statement of fact" (Tilden 1957:9).

Some authors connect the parameters *meaning* and *experience* in the triangle by bringing "meaningful experiences" to the centre (Buchholtz et al. 2015:31). In other works, the idea to focus heritage interpretation on themes plays a major role (e.g. Ham 2013), which is why *theme* is often suggested to be at the centre of the triangle (Bauszus 2004).

Themes help to express meaning. To do so, themes need to be clearly distinguished from topics (Ham 1992). While themes extract meaning, topics are more means of factual classification. Table 1 shows two examples of this relationship.

	Example from natural heritage	**Example from cultural heritage**
Topic	Life cycles	Industrial Revolution
Theme	This fallen tree provides nourishment for new life	This railway opened up a new world to the people of the village

Table 1: Topics and themes

A theme is like a one-sentence story derived from a phenomenon, be it an overgrown tree or an old railway station. The *red thread* is a useful metaphor for a theme. It can be traced back to Goethe, who described, in a metaphorical way, the function of a tracer thread marking the ropes of the British Navy (Goethe 1972, first published in 1809). Removing the thread would have meant that the rope would have fallen apart.

To be meaningful for many individuals, themes are often based on universal concepts, i.e. ideas that concern almost all people (Brown 1991). In the two examples in the table, the ideas of *renewal* and *liberation* could be seen as universal concepts behind the two suggested theme statements.

Themes also help to organise and to remember information. Neuroscience found that people learn more through narratives than by facts (Spitzer 2009). People often think metaphorically, connecting facts to inner images (Hüther 2006) that have meaning for them (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Furthermore, themes (as well as metaphors or narratives) activate frames which are connected to values. Values and frames suggest how heritage phenomena are perceived and whether and in what way individuals relate to them (Holmes et al. 2011).

For example, a frame like *war* includes processes that are usually unacceptable – but go without saying, once this frame has been accepted (Lakoff 2008). The degree to which ideas or products are accepted by people mainly depends on how they are framed (Entman 1993).

Talking about "a larger truth" (Tilden 1957:9), it is important to distinguish between surface frames and deep frames (Darnton and Kirk 2011). At the surface, for example, the frame of *home* might consist of a bed, a kitchen, a garden, etc. but it is obvious that the personal meaning of *home* is much deeper, and this is what would be addressed by an interpretive theme.

Themes should always be seen as offers because "the chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation" (Tilden 1957:9). Several authors claim that meanings are always created by people (Buchholtz et al. 2015, Lehnes and Carter 2016) and that they are, therefore, not "inherent in the resource" (NAI 2017) as some definitions of heritage interpretation suggest. The interaction of participants with phenomena and interpretive media might result in meanings that are different from what an interpreter has to offer. The aim of the interpreter is always to reveal a larger truth and not the larger truth.

Framing interpretation through themes also requires some awareness of responsibility, towards the heritage resource as well as towards the individual. This becomes more relevant the more heritage interpretation intends to connect heritage to the daily lives and decision-making of people. Especially at heritage sites, which are sensitive because they can be interpreted in conflicting ways (e.g. battlefields or other places where people suffered at the hand of other people), framing can easily get a political dimension (Lakoff 2008).

How to deal with themes, and with the meanings they express, might be one of the most controversial debates in heritage interpretation. Considering that heritage interpretation intends to encourage people to take ownership of heritage and to foster sustainable development, it makes sense to offer especially common-interest frames triggering self-transcendence values.

- But should interpretation be utilised that way?
- Where does manipulation start?
- Is it sufficient if such frames are communicated in an open and transparent way?

These are some of the questions that are currently subject to debate. However, an IE trend study based on short-term research suggests that two out of the five current key trends in European societies are linked to the search for purpose (IE 2016) – and this is what interpretive themes support.

2. Turning phenomena into experiences

First-hand experiences with heritage sites, objects or sensations are at the core of interpretation and, therefore, on top of the interpretive triangle. For participants in such activities, Tilden claimed "a kind of elective education that is superior in some respects to that of the classroom, for here he meets the Thing Itself – whether it be a wonder of nature's work, or the act or work of man" (Tilden 1957:3).

The *Thing Itself* is an old philosophical term especially related to Kant which Tilden uses in a rather casual way. Following Kant, the *Thing Itself* is linked to the world of the *noumenon* which is the actual reality of an object and which cannot be grasped through individual perception. The word Kant actually uses for the sensually experienceable, is *phenomenon*. Regarding both terms, Kant is referring to Plato (Kant 2007, first published in 1787).

The term *phenomenon* was first introduced with the EU TOPAS project in order to summarise tangible heritage sites or objects and intangible sensations (e.g. songs or dances) that can all be subject to first-hand experiences. In different languages, the term is also used for something which is of significant relevance.

Perceiving a phenomenon first-hand does not necessarily result in an experience, if an experience is understood as an individual and emotional event, involving the whole person. For example, a panel of text which does not touch a participant will hardly trigger such an experience, even if it is placed directly in front of a heritage object. In addition to the outer (sensory) experience, an inner (psychological) experience is needed.

Several 20th century approaches to learning underline the value of involving such personal experiences (e.g. Dewey, Neill, Freinet, Decroly, Hahn, Montessori, Korczak), supported by research from authors such as Vygotsky, Maslow and Csikszentmihalyi. Inspired by the work of Lewin, Kolb (1984) developed a popular *Experiential Learning Model* for adult education, completed by Honey and Mumford (1992), which is still quite popular.

Experiential learning became even more relevant through the requirements set for the 21st century by UNESCO, listing experiential learning in first place in its programme, *Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future* (UNESCO 2017). Education for sustainable development must share the characteristics of any high-quality learning experience, with the additional criterion that the process of learning/ teaching must model the values of sustainable development itself (UNESCO 2008).

Compared to formal learning, non-formal learning approaches, such as heritage interpretation, have significant advantages in achieving these demands. Against the background of an increasing virtualisation, of the need for digitisation of heritage and of the tendency to approach subjects (including heritage sites and objects) primarily via screens, the interpretive quality of first-hand experiences should receive special attention. However, technology has significantly improved during recent decades and raises some questions:

- Does an interpretive experience need to be a first-hand experience?
- Would one quality of the interpretation triangle be missing, even if interpretive skills are used?
- Can the perception of a replica (e.g. created by using a 3D printer) replace the perception of an original object?

One out of five current key trends defined in the IE short-term research mentioned above is “search for authenticity” (IE 2016:3).

3. Provoking resonance and participation

A strong key word in the current debate on education and learning is participation. Freeman Tilden already used that term and wrote: “It is another of those words to which interpretive activities have given a special significance. […] Not only must it imply a physical act, it must also be something that the participant himself would regard as, for him, novel, special, and important” (Tilden 1957:107). According to Tilden, participation means complete involvement in the first-hand experience, which is especially reflected by the premises of relating all interpretation to the participant’s world (Tilden’s first principle of interpretation, Tilden 1957:9) and to address the whole person (Tilden’s fifth principle of interpretation, Tilden 1957:9). Provoking resonance and participation is an ambitious goal which requires particular skills if it shall be transferred to all interpretive media, and which is still not achieved at many heritage sites.

However, when Tilden reflected on the demand for true involvement in 1957, he did this mainly against the background of visitor services in remote areas. If people decided to visit such areas, there were not too many options for guided activities and there were not too many points of view different from those that the US National Park Service did offer.

In present Europe, the situation at most heritage sites is not like that. Supported by more information, people are used to making individual decisions and asking back. And regarding natural as well as cultural heritage, one key concern is often whether and how sites shall be reused. This strongly influences the character of interpretive activities as it requires new skills. For example, participation during an interpretive walk needs to go much further nowadays than participation at an interpretive walk more than 50 years ago, and guiding residents is different from guiding visitors that are not personally related to a site. European heritage sites especially are rarely isolated from their social surroundings. Contemporary interpretive planning, therefore, also needs to involve heritage stakeholders which are not just forming a receptive audience. They often appear as informed expert groups with controversial points of view. Local residents, who are not necessarily driven by conservation interests but partly deal with the particular heritage in their daily lives, play a critical role in the so-called heritage community.

Although traditional interpretive skills form a good basis for communicative processes with all stakeholders, they need to be further developed in order to meet contemporary requirements (Tilkin 2016). If heritage interpretation intends to follow the calls of the United Nations, namely UNESCO, if it intends to play a role in lifelong learning, it needs to put one focus on the empowerment of people to use heritage for reflecting on daily life issues. UNESCO also states that meeting the challenges of sustainable development in democratic societies involves the requirement to strengthen learners through far-reaching participation (UNESCO 2008). The interpreter turns into a “facilitator of meaning making” (Ham 2013:82). The idea, not to reduce heritage interpretation to visitor services planned by experts, but to develop heritage sites together with their stakeholders, is gaining ground in the current debate (Brochu and Merriman 2011). A vision paper of the US National Park Service calls for “letting go of the traditional role of primary expert” (USNPS 2014:10) and adopting a “new paradigm for interpretation” including “21st century skills (e.g. critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, as well as communication and collaboration)” (USNPS 2014:6).

It should be kept in mind that the interpretive triangle was first developed with the ideas of Theme-Centred Interaction (TCI) in mind. As a participatory approach, TCI follows postulates such as “be your own chairperson” or “disturbances take precedence” (Cohn 1992). For successful interaction processes, the individual’s autonomy and integration and the freedom of decision within flexible borders are seen to be critical.

Questions that are currently subject to debate are:

- To what degree should the interpreter actually become a facilitator?
- Where can modern technology support experience and involvement – and where not?
- What relevance has heritage agreed upon by a governmental body compared to heritage perceived as such by the individual?

4. Fostering stewardship for all heritage

One corner of the interpretive triangle is dedicated to the administrative unit behind the interpretive media, which includes its staff. Usually, an organisation managing a site or collection has to advocate for heritage; but as the last question in the previous chapter shows, this can actually cause tension with the *participation* corner of the triangle. Lehnes and Carter (2016)

suggest not to think of interpretation as a communication process that is “mission-based” (NAI 2017) because that way interpretation might be more focused on the objectives of the administration than to support participants to foster their own relationships.
Actually, an individual interpretive experience does not necessarily require any interpretive media. In 1871, John Muir first introduced the term interpretation to describe the process of acquainting himself with natural heritage. He wrote: “I’ll interpret the rocks, learn the language of flood, storm and the avalanche. I’ll acquaint myself with the glaciers and wild gardens, and get as near to the heart of the world as I can” (quoted by Wolfe 1978:144).

At its best, participants are successfully encouraged to interpret heritage on their own and interpretive media is mainly aimed to trigger and to facilitate this process. Image 1 shows a *Trailside Museum* from the early days of Yosemite National Park which is nothing more (and nothing less) than a stone shelter facing one of the most impressive rock formations at Yosemite Valley.

Image 1: Glacier Point Trailside Museum from 1924, designed by Herbert Maier (Wearsunscreen 2013)

Tildens’s suggestions to define interpretation include to “capitalize mere curiosity for the enrichment of the human mind and spirit” (Tilden 1957:9) and, as mentioned before, this is supported by different learning theories, especially such rooted in progressive education.

However, reflecting different social trends during recent decades, European interpretation is slightly swinging between the poles of:

- encouraging learning as a means of individual human growth; and
- meeting external and clearly measurable objectives.

The latter can either result in straight-forward behavioural objectives, such as visitors picking up litter, or in monetary outcomes, e.g. by visitors leaving money at shops, restaurants, parking lots, etc. This is often caused by interpreters themselves praising their services by highlighting what expenses could be avoided or what income could be achieved through interpretation. However, research shows that the values of universalism or benevolence (caring and sharing) can be outweighed if opposing values, such as power and achievement, are aspired (Holmes et al. 2011).

In periods where economic issues get the upper hand, interpreters who see personal human development of participants in interpretive processes as their overarching goal (i.e. learning as a means of encouraging individual human growth) become regularly under pressure. For some years, authors register an increasing economisation, especially in formal learning (Spring 2015). This is not just limited to direct monetary output treating heritage like an economic resource, it can also influence the learning process in itself. While some interpreters welcome measurable outcomes to justify their work, others feel alienated or even offended by indicators, assessments, etc.

This is especially true for UNESCO World Heritage Sites (WHS). According to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention (Article 4) each Member State recognises that “the duty of ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage […] situated on its territory, belongs primarily to that State” (UNESCO 1972). Nevertheless, even in European States with the highest GDP there are examples where WHS have to achieve profitability and where they are either set aside, mainly because of economic considerations, or the withdrawal of their status by UNESCO is accepted, again for economic reasons.

Some questions resulting from this chapter:

- How prominent or how humble should heritage interpretation be?
- What role should determined learning objectives play in heritage interpretation?
- Does heritage interpretation need to contribute to meeting economic challenges?

Conclusion

Since 2003, the interpretive triangle has suggested four key qualities assigned to heritage interpretation. The model meanwhile appears as a useful tool for communicating interpretation and as a valuable stronghold for Interpret Europe’s Training Team.

Although there seems to be a principal agreement on the parameters, their relationship and the influence of each of them might be seen differently. How much first-hand contact, meaning-making, stewardship and participation is needed to result in a well-balanced interpretive experience? Even if some principles of heritage interpretation seem to be timeless, the answers to these questions have changed, reflecting the socio-political situation within the past 60 years.

Such reflection is also critical to keep the interpretive triangle up to date and, therefore, alive. The aim of this paper was to raise some of the questions that could trigger this reflection.

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Verena Perko (Slovenia) with contribution by Dijana Pita da Costa (Slovenia)

Balkans between East and West: The social responsibility of heritage interpretation
(Through the panopticum of the heritage musealisation)

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Abstract

The Balkans is a historical and political name for the region of South-eastern Europe with an area of approximately 550,000km^2 and around 53 million inhabitants. The region is heavily transient: the area of passage between the East and the West. Unbolted and uncontrolled Balkan doors have always jeopardised the stability and existence of Europe. The most important military, migrational, cultural, and trade routes have run across the Balkans, without which – in the *ex Oriente lux* sense – Europe would not have been what it is today.

The Balkans have been an intersection of multiculturalism and a spectrum of religions. Mixing of Slavic, Germanic, Romance, Hungarian, Jewish, Turkish and Greek world, Christianity with Catholicism and Orthodoxy on the one side, and Islam and Judaism on the other side, has created an unprecedented wealth of cultures and a multitude of identities. World War II inflicted deep wounds to the ethnic identity and cultural image of the Balkans. The Communist era and time of Sovietisation deepened ethnic conflicts. In a pseudo democratisation and internationalisation atmosphere, some groups were privileged while others were oppressed or even exterminated. After the fall of the Berlin wall, the newly formed countries each went their separate ways. The countries of former Yugoslavia ignited in the flames of religious, national, and cultural intolerance that never completely stopped burning.

Today, Balkan countries are dominated by an alienated, characteristically ambivalent and mostly indifferent attitude towards heritage. People are still convinced heritage is a matter of the state. An alienated heritage experience is evident also in problems with including the public in active participation of heritisation.

Keywords

heritage, museums, heritisation, values, interpretation, Balkans

Main text

The Balkans is a historical and political name for the region of South-eastern Europe with an area of approximately 550,000km^2 and around 53 million inhabitants among the Adriatic, Ionic, Aegean, Marmara and the Black Sea. It is separated from the rest of Europe by an apparent line between Trieste and Odessa and is defined by the Soča–Vipava–Krka–Sava–Danube border (Figure 1). The whole region was in the past, and still is, heavily transient: the area of passage between the East and the West. Unbolted and uncontrolled Balkan doors have since forever been jeopardising the stability and even the very existence of all European countries. The most important military, migration, cultural, and trade routes have run across the Balkans, without which – in the *ex Oriente lux* sense – Europe would not have been what it is today. The Balkans have always been a boiling cauldron and an intersection of multiculturality. Let me mention here the city of Trieste, regarded as the first *Mitteleuropa*, or Istanbul, the ancient Constantinople.

Figure 1: The Balkan Peninsula, as defined by the Soča–Vipava–Krka–Sava–Danube border (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balkans#/media/File:Balkan_topo_en.jpg)

Constantinople was the largest and richest urban centre in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea during the late Eastern Roman Empire (until 1453), mostly as a result of its strategic position commanding the trade routes between the Aegean Sea and the Black Sea (Figure 2). It would remain the capital of the eastern, Greek-speaking Empire for over a thousand years. It was the richest and largest European city, especially important for preserving in its libraries manuscripts of Greek and Latin authors throughout a period when instability and disorder caused their mass-destruction in western Europe and north Africa: On the city's fall, thousands of manuscripts were brought to Italy by refugees, and played a key part in stimulating the Renaissance, and the transition to the modern world.

Figure 2: The oldest surviving map of Constantinople (1422) by Florentine cartographer Cristoforo Buondelmonti (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantinople#/media/File:Map_of_Constantinople_(1422)_by_Florentine_cartographer_Cristoforo_Buondelmonte.jpg)

The discerning of identity processes and the understanding of the role of museums in the 19th and 20th Centuries – especially in the Communist era – requires mentioning of Eastern Europe as a mostly Slavic world with strong indigenous population islands and a decisive substrate of old Pannonian, Balkan, Illyrian, Greek, Thracian, and Turkish peoples. In this vast region, the Slavic languages spoken by over 260 million inhabitants are predominant. The cultural appearance (for instance the use of Latin or Cyrillic alphabet) and religion adherence were strongly influenced by the ancient Roman border between the Eastern Greek and the Western Latin Empire that ran roughly along the line that divides the Orthodox and Catholic Europe even today (Figure 3).[8]

[8]The distinctions between East and West originate mainly in the geopolitical history of the ancient Roman Empire. It based on the social, cultural and linguistic division between the Greek-speaking Eastern provinces with the highly urbanised Hellenistic centres and Western countries with prehistorical proto-urban societies.

Figure 3: The Jirecek Line represents the division between the Greek and the Latin influence in the Balkans during the Roman Empire (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balkans#/media/File:Bgiusca_Jirecek_Line.jpg)

Thanks to the farsighted multicultural politics of Constantinople (Armenians, Syrians, Slavs, and Georgians were part of the Byzantine social hierarchy), Byzantine Emperor Michael sent two missionaries, Cyril and Methodius, to Pannonia on the request of the Moravian Prince, Rastislav.

Cyril (baptized Constantine) and Methodius, adapted the Greek alphabet to Glagolitic script and translated the liturgical texts into the (invented) Old Church Slavonic language. They wrote the first Slavic Civil Code, which was used in Great Moravia. The language derived from Old Church Slavonic language, today known as Church Slavonic, is still used in liturgy by several Orthodox Churches and in some Eastern Catholic churches.[9] From the Glagolitic alphabet, the Cyrillic alphabet later emerged.

The activities of Holy Brothers Cyril/ Constantine and Methodius became crucial for the survival and expansion of Slavic languages and are the basis for a strong national identity of many Slavic nations.

With the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Balkan gates were open to the Ottoman Empire. The use of the Turkish and Arabic language and the adoption of their culture is a result of the administration and military history and, mostly, of the spread of Islam and Arabian culture, which provided an extremely fertile ground for the Balkans' multiculturality, especially for Bosnia, where many Jewish refugees had settled after their exodus from Spain.

[9]Cyril and Methodius (826-869, 815-885) were two brothers from Thessalonica, theologians and Christian missionaries. They may have been of wholly Slavic descent or of mixed Greco-Slav origin. The holy brothers influenced the cultural development of all Slavs, for which they received the title *"Apostles to the Slavs"*. Pope John Paul II declared them co-patron saints of Europe (Cyril and Methodius – *Epistola Enciclica*, 31 December 1980).

Only three years after the fall of Constantinople and the Ottoman occupation of the Balkans, the Habsburgs managed to anchor themselves in Middle Europe with the Princes of Cilli heritage (Cilli, today Celje, Slovenia).

The princes of Cilli joined the Luxemburg-ruling house by marrying Barbara to Sigismund in 1405, gained independence from the Habsburgs with their newly acquired prince titles, and became their most bitter rivals. After the murder of Ulrich II of Cilli, on 9th November 1456 in Belgrade, the Cilli dynasty lost its political supremacy, which was taken over by the Habsburgs. Three years after the fall of Constantinople, the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires created a balance of power that characterised Eastern European countries.
The dissolution of both empires lead towards the formation of new states entities. However, when presenting the importance of national museums as representative places of national identity par excellence, I will focus on the region of former Yugoslavia with the presumption the process ran in a similar way - *mutatis mutandis* - in neighbouring countries.
The earliest collections and museum exhibitions can be found in Dalmatian cities on Rab, in Zadar, Šibenik, Trogir, Split, Hvar, and Korčula – as well as the decisive factor of ecclesiastical and secular elites, their contacts with Italian humanists and antique dealers, i.e. Cyriac of Ancona and the prosperity of Adriatic communities.

The great humanist and poet Marko Marulić of Split kept a large collection of antiquities and manuscripts (Image 1). There were at least ten equally prominent collections in Ragusa, the Fanfani collection in Trogir. The first lapidaria emerged, special *armamentaria*, numismatic and natural history collections. Some later became cornerstones of first museums, for instance Valvasor's collection at Bogenšperk in the mid-17th Century, or the Nikola Zrinjski collection in Čakovac, or the Zois collection in Ljubljana.

One of the earliest museum presentations in Eastern Europe could be recognised as the insertion of a statue of an unknown Roman empress of the 1st Century AD into the princes of Cilli castle façade as early as the end of the 15th Century (Image 2).

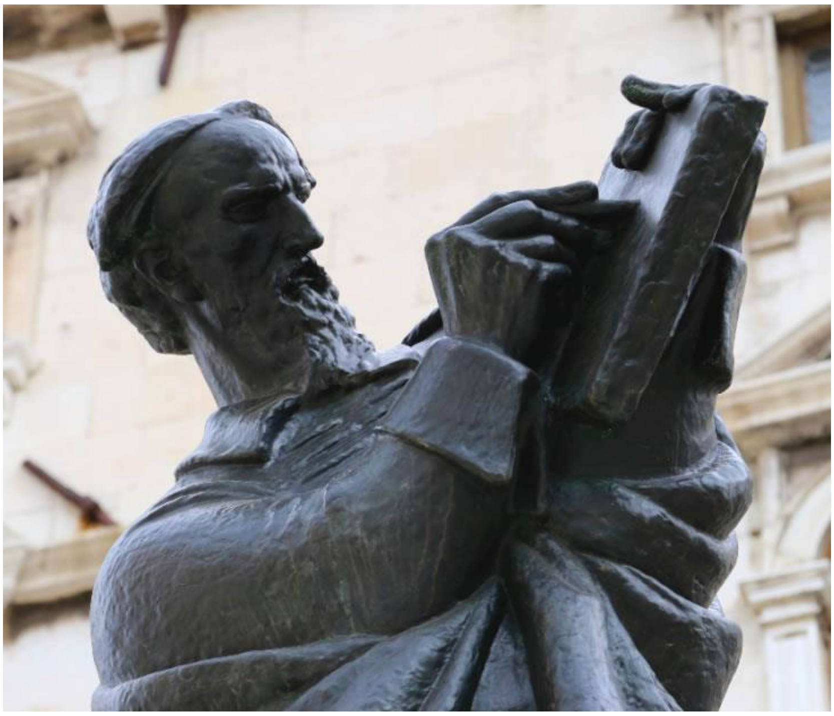

Image 1: Ivan Meštrović, Statue of Croatian poet Marko Marulić in Split (1925) (Foto Giuseppe Sepe)

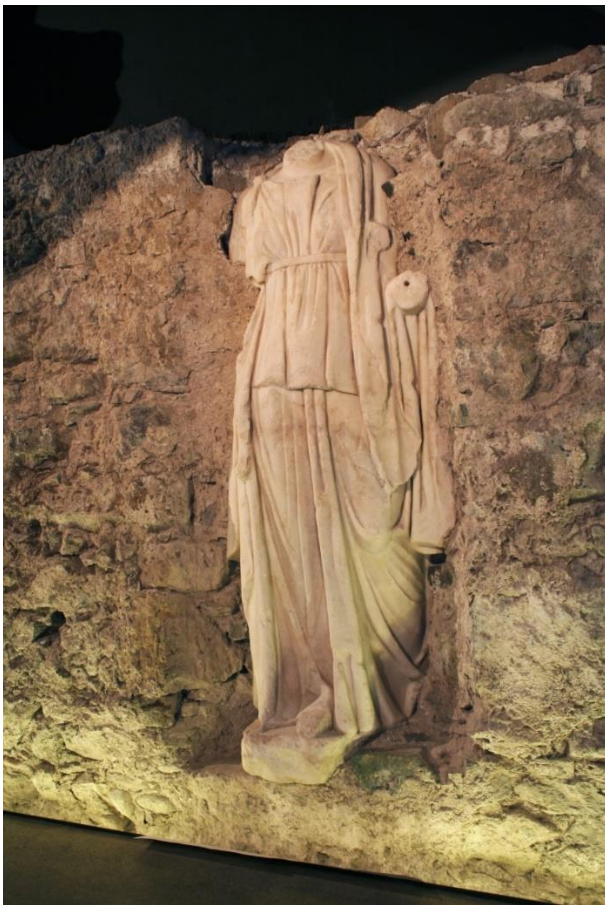

Image 2: Celje, statue of an unknown Roman empress, 1st Century AD, inserted into the Princes of Cilli castle façade from the 15th Century (Photo Archive Regional Museum Celje)

The first phase: The beginnings of collections and museums

The initiative to establish museums in the lands of the Hapsburg Empire were the result of ideas that were brought by the French Revolution. They were also indirectly influenced by the reforms of Emperor Joseph II, who abolished a number of religious orders, as a result of which, numerous monastic collections and libraries were doomed to ruin. The political and cultural movements of young national bourgeoisie played an important role for preserving the cultural heritage of 'Southern Slavs', in which the romantic idea of pan-Slavism was dominant.

Pan-Slavism was a romantic idea of artists and linguists, which later became a cultural movement and was crystallised in the mid-19th Century as a political ideology. It was concerned with the advancement of integrity and unity for the Slavic peoples. Thus, for example, the philosopher Valtazar Bogišić, from Cavtat near Dubrovnik, proposed the establishment of a general 'Slavic Museum' in the area of the southern Slavs (later Yugoslavia). Many museums were established on the initiative of vibrant working societies. In addition to Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian, there were also German, Italian and Hungarian societies.

The first museum - the Archaeological Museum - was established in 1818 in Split in the Diocletian's Palace, close to Roman Salona. The second was the Carniolan Provincial Museum, established in 1821 in Ljubljana. The first national museums in the Balkans were established in Belgrade in 1844 and in Zagreb in 1846.

Only two years earlier, Serbia was freed from the Turkish Empire, and Croatia was at that time still under the Hungarians in the Hapsburg Monarchy. Both museums had important and complex collections and developed into renowned scientific institutions with publications such as '*Starinar*' (Antiquarian) in 1884, '*Vjestnik*' - The Herald of the Croatian Archaeological Museum in 1870, and the Split Archaeological Museum *Bulletin,* published in Italian-Croatian in 1878.

The establishment of the National Museum, and later the National Gallery, in Zagreb was more than a result of the important political role, which the Croatians undoubtedly had in the Hapsburg Court – a reflection of the efforts of the young, strong patriotic Croatian bourgeoisie in the role of Zagreb as an important cultural centre. The Spring of Nations and awakening of the national consciousness encouraged patriotic demands for the establishment of museums elsewhere. The process was very tardy in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The *Matica Srpska* Museum in Novi Sad and the Strossmayer Gallery in Zagreb were established, as well as some specialised museums, such as the Natural History and Archaeological Museum in Zagreb (as part of the National Museum) and the Ethnographic and Military Museum in Belgrade.

Under Turkish rule, things ran differently. Many owners retreated to southern Hungary with their treasures. The eastern part of the Balkans was mostly dominated by rich monastic collections and treasures. The best known were those in the monasteries in Ohrid, Mileševa, Žice, Dečani etc. The establishment of museums only happened with the fall of the Ottoman Empire: the Bulgarian National History Museum in Sofia was established in 1889. As a sign of gratitude for liberation, it was placed near the Russian Orthodox Church on *Tzar Osvoboditelja* Boulevard. It was the first and largest museum of its kind in the Balkans. In the same period, a National Museum was also established in Bucharest, Romania.

Summary of the first phase

The relative proximity of Constantinople, Venice and the connection to Italian merchant and banking families sparked an economic and cultural flourishing of Dalmatian towns. Rich private collections emerged under the influence of Humanism and the lively Renaissance interest in discovering the past. With the fall of Venice and Napoleon's conquest, who briefly instituted the use of national languages in public schools, the awareness of one's own cultural and linguistic identity became stronger. The period of the first stage can be referred to as one of collecting, arranging and classifying collections and material studies. It was also a period of the formation of the first museums in the early 19th Century and the first national institutions in the mid- and late-19th Century.

The suppression and consequential tumultuous awakening of the national consciousness, especially from the period of the Spring of Nations from 1848 onwards, influenced the young national bourgeoisie, which played a decisive role in establishing museums. Pan-Slavism, the idea of reciprocal culture and political unification of all Slavs, which was already present in writers in the 17th Century, took the form of an all-cultural movement with strong political connotations in the 19th Century. Pan-Slavism embodied the desire of southern Slavs for their own country. This was influential in the theory of a common Slavic origin, the Slavic family of languages and the operation of the Holy Brothers of Cyril and Methodius. The latter was also the basis of the identity of Orthodoxy - as a strong counterweight; on the one hand to Muslimism in Macedonia, Kosovo and Bosnia, and on the other, to Catholicism in the West (mainly in Croatia).

Up until World War I, national museums were established on the initiative of cultural and economic circles.[10] Among the decisive factors for their founding were political tendencies and research and collector interests, for example, private collectors and connoisseurs. Museums were also formed as a reflection of the awakening of strongly suppressed consciousness under the

[10]City museums in what is Slovenia today, were established in the 19th and the first part of the 20th Century by local associations, which also managed them until these so-called association museums were granted the status of municipal museums.

great empires (e.g. the Museum of Croatian Antiques in Knin in 1893, with the aim of researching the nations neglected past, and the Cetinje Museum). Some other reasons for the establishment of the museums (at least of those with archaeological collections) were patriotism, desire to take care for heritage, protecting objects before decay, desire to show the local identity to others, desire to complement people's education and, very often, the desire to keep the objects in the local environment and, with this, to prevent their reselling to museums abroad.

Numerous museums and exhibitions were a reflection of the expression of political desire for the unification of southern Slavs, for example, artists' colonies, Yugoslav exhibitions in the pavilion in Rome where the first exhibitions were held of Mestrovic's masterpieces and the hosting of Serbian ethnographic exhibitions in St. Petersburg. In this spirit, it is necessary to also understand MiloradVasić's appeal for the establishing of Yugoslav galleries.

Until the commencement of World War I, only a handful of museums were operating: the National Museum in Ljubljana, the National Museum and National Gallery in Zagreb, the National Museum in Belgrade with the Ethnographic and Military Museum, the Natural History Museum in Sofia, and the National Museum in Bucharest. These institutions were of significant importance in shaping a strong national identity of leading national groups. Other museums, established under the 'watchful eyes' of monarchies, operated primarily as regional or national scientific research institutions. The prudence of Viennese politics was also reflected in the naming of the Provincial Museum in Ljubljana after the young Hapsburg prince and heir to the throne, Rudolph. In the National Museum in Sarajevo, which was established in the newly occupied territory of Bosnia, the Austro-Hungarian government ensured that the very complex institution was provided with excellent archaeological and ethnographical collections. The museum was known for the excellent organisation of its scientific apparatus and its publications, such as the renowned '*Glasnik*' (The Herald), otherwise known as *'Wissenschaftliche Mitteilungen*'.

The Second Phase

The year 1918 brought the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the unification of the Yugoslav nations into the common state of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians (other nations did not have equal political status). Unfortunately, the hegemonic (ruling) aspirations of the Serbs and partly the Croatian bourgeoisie, soon came to light and were also negatively reflected in cultural policies and the functioning of museums. The new state was not in favour of culture, which was also reflected in the stagnation of museums, and in monument care as well, in poor personnel policies. Collections and museum activities of those times were of an elite nature. 'Common Yugoslav' or, more correctly speaking, “Serbian themes”, were given priority. Greater attention was paid towards scientific research and the expectation of establishing national elitist museums: the Provincial Museum in Ljubljana acquired the status of a National Museum.[11] A renovation of the Military Museum took place in Belgrade – one of the most important Serbian national institutions (the Battle on the Kosovo fields is one of the cornerstones of the Serbian national identity). In Skopje, Macedonia, the Museum of Southern Serbia (*sic!)* was established, with archaeological, ethnographic and natural history sections: the entire museum served to consolidate the Serbian national identity and denial of the Macedonian nation. In 1926, the National Museum was established in Cetinje, Montenegro; the Serbs considered the territory of Montenegro as part of its own national territory.

[11] Nevertheless, the conditions to work were far from optimal. The National Museum has very limited financial support, thus the only curator in the years 1929-1941, Rajko Ložar, has had to mix the tasks of conservator (covering the area of the whole Slovenia), curator and those of the librarian (Novaković 2005. 140).

Summary of the second phase

The second phase, during the inter-war period, marked the start of the systematic compiling of collections, producing inventories of materials and exhibiting, which were mainly carried out according to the scientific and aesthetic criteria.

Leading nations had national museums - the Serbs, Croats and Slovenians - and similarly, elsewhere. In the inter-war period, there were Yugoslav National Museums in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana, and in areas of Serbian national identity origin, such as southern Serbia (i.e. Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro). It was evident that there was imbalance in the organisation and operation of museum staff in favour primarily of the Serbian, and partly Croatian and Slovenian nations. The indirect political role of museums could be seen in the shaping and 'preserving' of the national identity of elite nationalities and in the absence and neglect of minority nations.[12]

The Third Phase: Tito's Yugoslavia as a paradigm of Eastern Europe

The first post-war period was dedicated to the revision of the state following the destruction caused by the war (Image 3) and the replenishment of museum collections and federal centres, to where confiscated and nationalised artistic works were brought. The new state realised the importance of cultural heritage and protection of memorial heritage and introduced new legislation to this effect in 1945. It founded institutes for the protection of cultural heritage, which, prior to the war, had only existed in Croatia. Museological education was introduced, linked to encouraging the functioning of museum societies, which began to bring out numerous museum publications.

National museums were entrusted with the task of organising major international exhibitions. A publication about Yugoslav museums from 1962 stated that *'National museums are renowned representative republic centres which strengthen their scientific and educational character and thematically cover a wide field of the state*.' At that time, national museums were divided by specialisation (ethnographic, archaeological, National Liberation Battle (NOB), military, and other museums). Concepts of specialised regional museums began to develop.

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[12] In Slovenia, this situation was recorded in the case of the two museums, Regional museum in Koper and Regional museum in Celje. The first museum exhibition in the Koper Museum presented moreover the Italian-venetian urban culture then what in reality was ethnically mixed region coloured with Slavic cultural heritage (Žitko 1993: 4). After the beginning of II. World War most of the museum collection was broken in parts that were kept in various sides of Furlan region and the entire Archive of the city Koper has been (in the year 1945) taken to Rome. After Cone B has been annexed to Yugoslavia, new era began for the Koper Museum. It got the first Slovenian director and Slovenian archaeology started to develop.

The Regional museum in Celje was managed by Celje's Museum Association. According to Cvirn (1993: 13), the members of the Association were dominantly German and were, as members of the Museum Association, trying to present the history of what was to them German Celje, that was supposedly established on the ruins of roman Celeia by German colonisers. After the fall of the double monarchy, German members of the association moved to Austria. This temporarily put a stop to the work of the Association, but not for long. By 1922, the Association was renewed and its leaders and members became Slovenian.

Image 3: Ruins of the Serbian National Library, destroyed in the German bombing attack on *Belgrade* on of April 6,*1941***:** 350,000 books, including invaluable medieval and Ottoman manuscripts, maps, engravings, works of arts were destroyed (http://www.historyofinformation.com/expanded.php?id=2954)

The majority of the national museums in Tito's Yugoslavia covered national themes. Soon, large nationwide Yugoslav museums were established in Belgrade and Zagreb. Numerous new museums were established with 'socialist, and very international' themes: the Agricultural Museum in Novi Sad (devoted to the development of modern socialist agriculture), as well as railway and hunting museums (President Tito and his wife Jovanka were keen hunters) (Image 4) in Belgrade, and a mining museum in Bor, etc.

The desire to preserve documents about the heroic struggle of the Yugoslav people was followed by the establishment of National Liberation Battle (NOB) museums. Their task was the awakening of interest in the past and history in terms of Marxism. Numerous museums were formed covering themes such as the national revolution, peoples' revolution, sessions of the anti-fascist council (AVNOJ), partisan printing, the museum of Communist Party conferences in Zagreb, and the museum of the German attack on Drvar.

In the year 1962, there were 311 museums in Yugoslavia, the majority of which were established post-1945. National museums were entrusted with the care of 'proper' relationships to national life, as well as for the correct maintenance of natural, artistic and artisan goods and techniques. They were also entrusted with the task of developing museum doctrines, which were based on the achievements of the socialist system and communist revolutions, such as *liberté, égalité, fraternité,* as well as democracy and worker autonomy.

The general starting point for museology was: museums should serve the people (i.e. working class), be understandable, and attention should be paid to cultural goods and monuments, which were important for the nation and protected by the new legislation. One of the basic forms of the museum work was mutual expert assistance and co-ordination, which became part of the national museum's task.

Image 4: President Tito and his wife Jovanka beside hunting prey (Private Photo Archive)

In carrying out these roles, the associations of museum workers (usually with their seat in national museums throughout the republics) played an important political role. The *Guide Through Yugoslavian Museums* from 1962 states for the associations: *to encourage and resolve questions of museology*, which, in other words, means that the doctrine was under close political control - which could be inferred only from the detailed descriptions of the associations' tasks. These were: organising meetings with museum staff, co-operating with authorities (!) with the aim of monitoring activities, the development of institutions and experts, publishing newspapers and announcing the most important results of museum operations and maintaining contacts with foreign associations.

The Alliance of the Association of Museum Workers also organised the 'Week of Yugoslav Museums', which was first held in 1954 (and which proved to be of significant political importance). In 1950, the national board of International Committee of Museums (ICOM) was also founded.[13]

Thus, contrary to expectation, national museums did not take on direct or even active political roles. These roles were taken on by museum associations, which also published the main museum gazettes with contents including museological and conservation tasks, as well as other content, which was published in Belgrade. Museum council institutions took care of the implementation of the socialist doctrines (democracy, autonomy and independence, workers and social autonomy as a basis of a socialist democracy). Members of the council came from the ranks of cultural workers and were appointed by the founders (municipalities, republics, countries), whilst remaining members were appointed by museums. As is highlighted in the *Guide Through Yugoslavian Museums* from 1962: *this method ensures that working people are able to participate in decisions about museum politics.* Uncovertly, that meant an unambiguous display of

[13] ICOM and UNESCO have, since the 1950s, emphasized the educational value of museums. The Slovenian Museums Association organised the symposium on the educational role of the museum in 1959, focusing on the relations between museum and school (Tavčar 2001: 71 – 74). Schools became the most important museum visitors.

the past according to the current political usage that made out peasants, the bourgeoisie and the clergy as class enemies and portrayed religion as opium for the masses.
Museum work took place in accordance with museological knowledge, which was taught at the universities in Brno, Zagreb, Belgrade and in Ljubljana, etc. (and which primarily comprised strictly museographical, mostly technical knowledge).

Summary of the third phase

The time after World War II was one of recovery, not only of the ruined country but also that of a census of cultural heritage and confiscated artistic treasures that were taken abroad (some of which are still the subject of international negotiations today). At the same time, the post-war period was one of settling with political opponents and collaborators, the consequent destruction of bourgeois and aristocratic heritage (arson and demolition of castles and, in certain places, also churches and sacral monuments) with simultaneous nationalisation and confiscation of art collections and valuable objects from the ranks of collaborators and the expropriated (catholic, anti-communist) bourgeoisie, who had partly emigrated or disappeared in post-war massacres.

The post-war years also represented a turning point in the development of museums. The cultural politics of Tito's Yugoslavia was based on the cognition of the national (communist) revolution: new methods of work were based on their new social roles. Political organisation of the new state, the federation of Yugoslav nations, was also directly reflected in the status of national museums. Former major provincial museums were granted the status of national museums (the National Museum of Ljubljana, the National Museum in Sarajevo). New national museums were established, where they apparently decided to conceal political national interests, which is also evident from the statistics about the number of national museums. In 1959, Serbia had 21 (*sic!*) national museums, Croatia had three, Slovenia two, Bosnia and Herzegovina one, Macedonia seven (*sic!*) and Montenegro none.

The tasks of national museums were directly proportionate to the political status that national groups occupied in the newly formed state. Serbia carefully nurtured its national identity with primacy according to the number and distribution of national museums in Kosovo and Macedonia, and with the choice of museum themes in national museums (e.g. medieval art as a story about Orthodoxy and, with it, inseparably connected to the growth of the early Serbian state). Croatia, whose identity was always considered to be more prominent than that of Serbia, had only three national museums. Despite securing democracy and equality of the Yugoslav nations, the national museums partly circumvented the Bosnians and entirely omitted the Kosovars. This can only be understood in the light of the strong, albeit concealed, Serbian interests, since the Kosovo area was based on fundamental national importance and identity for Serbia and a permanent bone of contention in the Balkans.

The museum work was considered equal in importance to that of factories, reconstruction of roads and towns, and the building of hydroelectric power stations. Museums, especially national ones, had an important educational and research role, their political role in building the new socialist state was of a more passive and indirect nature (sometimes it seemed that it was more important what they didn't do, than what they did). Simply put, museum doctrines of the socialist era are based on an active role of society, which can often be contradictorily passive, quietly exclusionist, and misleadingly democratic.

The role of museums in former communist countries became clearer only through analysis of the museums themselves and their exhibitions. The main body was devoted to preserving the values of the Communist Revolution (memorial rooms, specialist museums, special NOB museums and communist congresses, which were to change the view of the working population's perception of history). The dominant theme of museums was the battle against the occupiers (partisan themes) and exploitation of the working class, the so-called 'enemy of the people' (Turkish battles and peasant risings). The Illyrians and Slavs served as a natural endowment of the then-current state of political links (archaeology and chosen ethnographic themes). There was no lack of museum scenes which showed 'the backwardness and conservatism' of the rural population 'Kulakov', which unjustifiably resisted industrialisation, nationalisation and kolkhoz (ethnographic themes).

The ethnographic displays of simple (primitive) habitats and crop cultivation chores or customs were awakening a subconscious resistance and condescension towards the millennial rural architecture adapted to nature and an underestimation of the natural environment. Eventually, this lead to a systematic neglection and destruction of the millennial peasant heritage and natural landscape. On the other hand, such display of peasantry and old crafts lead to the extinction of ancient knowledge and, indirectly, to the destruction of ancient heritage rooted in the environment. Natural science exhibitions of minerals and ores demonstrated the natural wealth of the socialist homeland (and how this wealth was appetite for imperialistic greed). In some ways, people were taught that nature needed to be looked upon as a source of prosperity and raw materials and not something that needed to be preserved. On the other hand, they were taught respect towards (industrial) labour as a personal and society's value, they were taught solidarity and the sense of belonging to the community, as well as pride towards the joint history. With educational tasks at the forefront, museums began to expand and consolidate the doctrine of the Communist Revolution, building the Yugoslav identity. [14] The Serbs and Croats were also the only ones who accelerated the growth of their own national identity, despite the proclaimed policy of the common state of equal nations and nationalities.

National museums were (and to a large extent still are) important research institutions with internationally important periodicals and scientific journals and publications. Almost all museums have developed archaeological departments. Among the most important activities of the national museums were scientific publications of major archaeological metanarrative, devoted to Illyrian, Thracian, Macedonian and, of course, pan-Slavic themes. Great emphasis was placed on museum research projects, especially archaeological ones, which, in reality, also yielded some exceptional international results, such as, for example, an international exhibition of situla[15] art with a high-profile symposium along with bilingual monographs and catalogues. This needs to be understood through the prism of multiple meanings: research was a firm part of all traditional museums throughout the Western world**. Scientific knowledge gives museums credibility and the appearance of objectivity, which for all totalitarian regimes was of significant importance.**[16]

Tito's Yugoslavia placed great importance on its reputation: national museums were important institutions, whose exhibitions and scientific publications greatly lifted the country's reputation abroad (in Paris, Vienna, Moscow, etc.). They held a flagship role. They were the bearers of many, in an international sense, important research and exhibition projects. In conjunction with universities, individual institutions also played a unique role in the development of museological knowledge (e.g. Zagreb, and, similarly, Brno).

Despite declarations, however, museums also reflected the inequality among nations (both in Yugoslavia and elsewhere in Eastern Europe): exclusivity, a carefully concealed status with especially emphasised, more or less expressed imperialist roles and strong, albeit indirectly

[14] As already said, the educational value of museums was emphasised by international and national institutions since the 1950s. At the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, the focus was on the application of knowledge about users into museum's everyday practice and on the division of public into various target groups. In the 1970s, museum pedagogics became quite accepted by Slovenian museums, also because of the efforts of Pedagogics Section (part of the Museum Association, established in 1971). In the year 1971, 30% of Slovene Museums had employed a museum pedagogue, while in Britain at the same time, only 10% of their museums had a museum pedagogue (Kos 1993: 13, Žnidar 1973).
[15] Early Iron Age ritual bronze vessel.
[16] A curator's credibility was also developed by publishing the results of field and material research in the form of scientific articles and books and also in the form of articles in daily local periodicals, radio interviews, etc.

expressed, national identity, was reserved for the 'big' nations. In multinational countries, this fell to the leading nation in the country. Minority and politically subordinate nations and national groups, which Marxism never favoured, was devoted to cosmopolitan internationalism with the task of neglecting their national identity – and heritage – which was always carried out in a sophisticated, manipulative way in the form of a quiet, invisible side effect.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the newly formed countries each went their separate ways. The countries of former Yugoslavia ignited in the flames of religious, national, and cultural intolerance that never completely stopped burning. Certain new countries of Eastern Europe based their politics on national identity and once more yoked museums heavily. Those that bred a 'monocultural' internationalism in the shadows of leading nations are now drowning in fragmentariness and the opportunism of a liberalist capitalism. Only a few of them have recognised cultural heritage as a base asset of democratisation and cohesive / connective, universal values.

With a pinch of generalisation, we could claim that the Eastern European countries are dominated by an alienated, characteristically ambivalent and mostly indifferent attitude towards heritage. People are still convinced heritage is a matter of the state and that the state should be looking after it. An alienated heritage experience is evident in problems with including the public in active participation. Experts still cling to an authoritarian posture, authorised heritage discourse all too often. The consequences of the ruthless communist expropriations (of farmers, landlords, and factory owners) are reflected in the generally indifferent attitude towards the natural environment, rural and peasant landscape, traditional and priceless convivial knowledge,[17] and to religions and religious lore, etc.

Other evident consequences are those of a ruthless privatisation after 1991: labour, belonging, solidarity, social security, basic acquisitions of a socialist society are no longer valued. As a result, even the best industrial heritage – worldly renowned production brands, often original designs and recipes, but also factory buildings, machines, and corresponding worker quarters all over Eastern Europe – is being left to decay (Image 5).

In addition, despite all the renovations, important achievements, and many superb museums, we can notice an increase of those museums that are blowing into the sails of booming nationalisms. Most of them, however, are treading the path of a shallow cultural consumerism. Under 'the surface', doctrines of the 'Marxist' internationalism are still smouldering, but the internationalism itself has already quietly gone through all of the metamorphic phases of a globalist liberalism.

Moreover, we cannot overlook those who benefit the most from alienated masses that were uprooted from their own cultural environments. In the manner of the old museum doctrine, science is still a most convenient 'museum cloak', fitted to objectivity and a-politicalness.

I'm not blaming museums for the ambivalent, sometimes immature and idolising, uncritically 'nostalgic', and 'ost-algic' (a German term for the nostalgia of life in East Germany), mostly indifferent and alienated attitude of Eastern European societies towards heritage. I am claiming, however, that they have contributed to this situation with their (overly) passive role.

[17] Convivial knowledge is a philosophical terminus coined by Ivan Ilich; after Peter Sloterdijk, *Kritik der Cynischen Vernunft*. Suhrkamp Verlag; Berlin, 1983.

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Image 5: Ruins of an excellent industrial heritage, Rakušev Mill in Celje, Slovenia, 2015 (Private Photo Archive)

So, what is the role and mission of heritage experts and institutions in a modern, identity-lacking - bulimic - Eastern European society? There is no unambiguous answer, for there are many viewpoints – some diametrically opposing. Among the priority tasks, we should include the research of a specific attitude toward heritage, research of society's needs, and identifying the factors that are influencing the social role of museums and their activities.

However, not many museums in Eastern Europe are following this direction. Museums, at this point in their development, have embraced the neoliberal mind-set, and are claiming to be learning institutions, that is, they are facilitating learning, rather than education. The most quoted and used research and books by Hein, Falk & Dierking, etc. are in favour of learning. Learning is seen as a more democratic and more neutral term, while education can imply one's past and a possible lack of education. Even if we agree with this, and we decide to go with the term, learning, we should know what learning means. It means acquisition of new knowledge and skills, but not the values. Education is about values. So, if museums, as treasuries of our common heritage, are claiming to be the tools of democratisation, they should do that by promoting the right values (ethical, moral) and through education. We have enough institutions to entertain us, but we don't have institutions that would motivate us to think critically and to reflect on things (Skramstad 2004: 132).

Museums have to adopt the role of a medium, relating universal values encoded in heritage that can enable a critical assessment of current affairs. Particularly national museums play a major role in this, which are committed to the development of doctrine and the dissemination of basic museological knowledge about the social role of heritage.

Image 6: KRANEAMUS, Croatia, Krapina, Museum of Neanderthal, exhibition and realisation authors Željko Kovačić and Jakov Radovčić, photo: D. Fabijanić

Conclusion

Every hermeneutics is thus, explicitly or implicitly, self-understanding by means of understanding others (Paul Ricoer).

Heritage institutions should be the promoters of ethical and moral values. Heritisation, especially the interpretation process, must become socially responsible acts that lead to democratisation and in to the better future.

The interpretation process must respect, and be based upon, the fundamental historical and social characteristics of each environment. Heritage interpretation is not something that can be ‘transplanted’ from one country to another without long-term damage.

Contribution, therefore, appeals for the establishment of national schools for heritage interpretation and discourages the spread of global models, which lead to new colonialism – and, in the long term, it accelerates the emergence of new nationalisms.

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