Towards a Critical Heritage Approach to Heritage Interpretation and Public Benefit

Comparative Case Studies of England and Germany

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UCL

DECLARATION

I, Nicole Deufel, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Signature

ABSTRACT

In this thesis I present a Post-Tilden approach to heritage interpretation that is informed by critical heritage studies. Using particularly Smith's (2006) critique of the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD), I argue that current heritage interpretation discourse and practice is shaped by Freeman Tilden's principles of *Interpreting Our Heritage* (1957), themselves rooted in the AHD. Subsequent interpretive textbooks have not challenged Tilden's account, leading to an interpretation-specific AHD that does not respond to challenges posed by critical heritage studies, aspirations of decision makers, as expressed in legislation and policy, or to contemporary events.

My research question is whether current interpretive practice delivers the public benefits of heritage, which it is attributed by legislation and policy. My methodology is a comparative study at two sites in England and Germany. I test the benefits that visitors associate with heritage and compare these to those asserted in legislation and policy. I examine the impact of current discourse and practice on visitors' ability to realise these benefits.

The study reveals gaps between official and visitor-reported benefits. In particular, benefits associated with place emerge more strongly in visitors' estimation, while social benefits such as cohesion, asserted in legislation, are less prominent. The study suggests that current practices may in fact hinder rather than support visitors in realising some benefits. It also shows a discrepancy between visitors' expectation of interpretation and current best practice.

Based on these findings, I propose a critical heritage approach to heritage interpretation, taking note of concepts such as the intangible nature of heritage, connectivity ontologies, and heritage as assembling futures. I pose that as a representational practice, the key purpose of interpretation must be to make visible the layers of representation and meaning within heritage, establishing the key outcome of interpretation as enabling people's continued heritage-making to assemble their own futures.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 1957, Freeman Tilden's book *Interpreting Our Heritage* was published, laying out what have become the fundamental principles and concepts of the field of heritage interpretation. Tilden defined interpretation as 'an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand [sic] experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information' (Tilden 1957, p.8). Tilden's assertions about interpretation continue to underpin interpretive philosophy and practice today, as evident in key textbooks (e.g. Beck & Cable 2002), interpretive research (e.g. Henker & Brown 2011), and sector initiatives (InHerit n.d.). As an applied practice, interpretation is now encountered daily by visitors to heritage sites and museums in the panels, object arrangements, illustrations, audio/visual displays, audio guides and live demonstrations they see, use and participate in, to name but a few interpretive media.

However, recent developments have raised questions about the continued suitability of this interpretive discourse based on Tilden's account. These questions emerge on a philosophical level, for example in light of critiques of heritage seen as material and an existing expert/non-expert binary in professional approaches as they have emerged from critical heritage studies. They also emerge in terms of heritage interpretation as a professional heritage management practice charged with producing tangible benefits for the public, as envisaged in heritage legislation and policy developed over the last decade or so (e.g. English Heritage 2008; UNESCO 2001; Niedersächsisches

Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kultur 2014). Echoing Waterton (2005, p.318), I argue that a lack of critical engagement with these developments as outlined above results in interpretive philosophy and practice that is fundamentally compromised and in danger of becoming irrelevant in the context of critical academic debate about heritage and contemporary political and social environments. In this thesis, I explore the specific implications of this lack of engagement, both theoretically and in practice, for example concerning interpretation's current limitations in adequately reflecting diverse heritages, supporting public uses that go beyond conservation, and responding meaningfully to challenges to the social status quo, as highlighted below.

In 2014, the year that I finished my fieldwork for this study, 18-year-old African-American Michael Brown was shot by a white police officer in the town of Ferguson, Missouri, USA (The New York Times 2014). 'Ferguson' has since become shorthand for questions of racism against black people in the United States (Jennings 2015a; Jennings 2015b). It has put into sharp focus concerns over the notion that museums, heritage, and 'the past' are conflict-free spaces, separate from contemporary social unrest and negotiations about culture, memory and identity. It has also underlined these concerns for an interpretive practice that supports and perpetuates these representations. In December 2014, a group of museum bloggers in the United States posted a joint statement on what Ferguson meant for museums (Jennings et al. 2014). They asked, 'What should be our role–as institutions that claim to conduct their activities for the public benefit…?' (ibid). They asserted that, 'As mediators of culture, *all* museums should commit to identifying how they can connect to relevant contemporary issues irrespective of collection, focus, or mission' (ibid).

What is evident in the joint statement is the perceived, urgent need for museums to move beyond a narrow understanding of museums as being primarily about the acquisition, conservation, research, communication and exhibition of heritage ‘for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment’ (ICOM 2012). Museums are instead viewed as actors in society, with strengths, opportunities and responsibilities that transcend material collections and an exclusive engagement with history as a scientific field of study. This poses a direct challenge to the practice of heritage interpretation also. And yet, the current discourse about interpretation offers no guidance, or even reflection of these concerns, as I shall show in the next chapter and throughout this thesis. Indeed, the motivation for the bloggers to issue their statement was the silence from established museum and heritage associations (Jennings 2015b; Jennings et al. 2014), and contributors to subsequent discussions reported heritage management practices that actively discouraged engagement with Ferguson (see for example Twitter #*museumsrespondtoferguson*).

Perhaps even more worryingly, there is a palpable sense of mistrust in the ability of current museums and heritage practices to respond to Ferguson, particularly through heritage interpretation. The June 2015 shooting of nine African-American worshippers in the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, sparked a debate about the meaning and use of the Confederate Battle Flag (Jenkins 2015) and how it should be managed and interpreted, after pictures of the perpetrator emerged which included the flag. While for some, the flag is a symbol of Southern heritage, for others it is a symbol of hate and on-going oppression (The New York Times 2015). Following the murders, the flag was removed from the state capitol,

where it had been flown for over 50 years, in an acknowledgement of its divisive impact on contemporary society (Blinder & Fausset 2015). And yet, the question of how to manage its symbolism and heritage value following its removal remains unresolved. Brown's article (2015b) on exhibiting the flag in a museum highlights the deeply emotional importance of finding an appropriate solution. It also underlines the need to re-think current interpretation philosophy and practice. To Brown, an African-American public history scholar, notions of the flag's heritage value as 'a symbol of respect, integrity and duty' (Nikki Haley quoted Brown 2015b) are unacceptable and mask the historical roots of the flag in ideas of white supremacy and black oppression. Brown deeply mistrusts museums' ability to find a way to appropriately present the flag, noting that, 'Too many museums are blind to how race lives in their collections, exhibition spaces, and public interactions' (ibid). She concludes that currently, the approach used by museums '*devalues* the lived experience of black Americans' (ibid, my emphasis), leading her to suggest that rather than go to a museum, the flag should go to the church community that lost members during the attack.

This is a devastating judgment on the current practices of museum and heritage management, and heritage interpretation in particular (see also Brown 2015a). It derives even greater poignancy from having been made by someone whose heritage is directly concerned. It suggests that current professional practice may in fact be failing in representing and managing people's heritage in such a way that they, and others, feel able to meaningfully engage with it. Brown's conclusion gives further urgency to the need to radically rethink the philosophy that underpins the field of heritage interpretation, and to ask how interpretation practice must change in order to inspire greater confidence that it

will indeed support and reflect, rather than ‘devalue’ people’s heritage and their lived experiences.

In this, I come back to the concept of the public benefit of heritage as asserted in heritage legislation and policy. The continued centrality of this concept is vividly illustrated by a speech given by then UK Culture Secretary Sajid Javid on 27 February 2015 at the launch of Historic England and the new English Heritage Charity at the Chapter House of Westminster Abbey. After referring to the Chapter House’s long history, Javid highlighted that built heritage embodies ‘something much greater’:

> *‘[Buildings and monuments] help define who we are and give form to our sense of self. They talk to us about how we came to be the people we are today. They tell our national story and how we sit within it.’ (Javid 2015)*

As ‘our common history’, he saw heritage contributing to society at a ‘particularly important’ time, when ‘shared values and ideas’ were being discussed: by ‘identifying what unites us as a nation’ (Javid 2015). Javid thus continued a discourse about the benefits and public application of heritage that emerged particularly strongly over the past decade, not only in the UK, but also in the European Union and on a global level in the conventions and guidelines of UNESCO. In both legislation on heritage protection and in policies for heritage management, the role of heritage has been increasingly described as active. Heritage is meant to *deliver* something: for communities, for nation states, and for international understanding. At least nominally, there has been a shift away from a narrow focus on heritage as purely material toward the practices that *make* heritage and their intangible outcomes for people. At the heart of this development is a widening of heritage values and community

engagement. In addition to the traditional expert values of, for example, archaeology and history, others have been introduced that seek to reflect the heritage values of communities. For example, in 2008, English Heritage's *Conservation Principles* identified communal value, to capture the commemorative, social, spiritual and symbolic values that places hold for people (English Heritage 2008). The public are meant to be included in the identification and crucially, in the management of heritage, as expressed for example in UNESCO's *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2003). All of this is based on the recognition of the role that heritage plays in the lives of individuals and communities, both within and across national borders. These *benefits* of heritage listed in legislation and policy include, as I show in Chapter 4, identity, social integration/cohesion, creativity and mutual understanding, among others. Recent legislation and policy is clear that the purpose of all heritage protection and management, if not directly then certainly indirectly, is to facilitate individuals and communities being able to realise and enjoy these benefits of heritage. 'Public benefits', where not further specified, is in the following used as an umbrella term for all potential added value that visitors may receive from heritage and visits to heritage sites in particular, and which they would not have received without (Arts Council England 2011, p.45).

Heritage interpretation is widely viewed as the tool to communicate between heritage and visitors (Tilden 1957; Brochu 2003; National Park Service 2007; Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.). For this reason I argue that it should be regarded as a central practice in the delivery of public benefits through heritage. The concept of public benefit therefore frames my

examination of the philosophy and practice of heritage interpretation, as I ask in my main research question whether current interpretive practice delivers the public benefits enshrined in recent legislation and policy. To 'deliver' should not be understood here as the hypothesis that interpretation is responsible for 'making happen', or indeed *revealing* these benefits, similarly to the way that interpretation is currently described as *revealing* meaning (Tilden 1957, p.8). Rather, my hypothesis is that interpretation has an as yet to be determined impact on the process of realising benefits from heritage. Importantly, in focusing on heritage interpretation, I am not discounting the impact of other heritage management practices on people's ability to derive benefit from heritage, such as for example listing and general site management. These do all influence the delivery of public benefits, and as I note below and in Chapter 5 on Methodology, throughout this thesis I suggest that heritage interpretation should be seen as part of the wider system of heritage management, and that indeed it is difficult to separate its impact from those wider practices. However, as I will show in the next chapter, interpretation is largely discussed in current discourse as separate from other heritage management processes, and this therefore determines my focus on heritage interpretation in my main research question.

In the following, where not further specified, the terms 'heritage interpretation' and 'interpretation' are used interchangeably. While I acknowledge the debate that has surrounded the term 'interpretation' from its earliest use on the basis of its application to, for example, language translation and interpretation of dreams (Tilden 1957, p.3/4), leading some to use the spelling of 'interpretor' (Veverka 1994, p.1), this debate is not central to my

research aim. Rather, I focus on the concepts that underpin the discourse and practice to which the term is applied. Therefore, I continue to use the term 'interpretation' as it has generally been adopted for this particular field in the English-speaking world. However, I will return to this debate briefly when I outline a new paradigm of heritage interpretation at the end of this thesis.

The terms 'heritage interpretation' and 'interpretation' as used in this thesis denote the entire process of interpretation as currently understood within the field and include planning, messages, and media in all its forms, ranging from text to visual to personal. As mentioned above, current interpretation discourse largely discusses interpretation is separate from other heritage practices, such as identification. For the purposes of examining this current discourse, the terms 'heritage interpretation' and 'interpretation' will therefore be used in the same fashion. However, throughout this thesis I will return to this concept of interpretation as separate and suggest that rather than merely 'translate' heritage (Veverka 1994, p.20) in an unconnected and independent act, interpretation itself is fundamentally about the identification, selection, and management of heritage from a position of power and should be understood as an integral aspect of professional heritage management. Furthermore, I concur with Harrison (2015, p.34ff) who proposes that an expanded understanding of heritage also builds connections between fields of practice that were previously seen as separate, and I specifically want to add heritage interpretation to these. As I will further discuss in Chapter 5 on methodology, there are also issues with, and limitations to, examining interpretation in isolation from other heritage management practices.

While I use the public benefits of heritage as asserted in legislation and policy as my research framework, these are not without challenge. As I show in Chapter 4, there is no empirical evidence given in legislation and policy that the broad range of public benefits declared therein are in fact perceived, desired and received as such by 'the public'. Research into public benefits of heritage as well as associated practices is still limited overall, as evidence from the UK shows. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the key funder in the heritage sector in Britain, sought to capture the non-economic benefits resulting from funded projects (Applejuice Consultants 2008; BDRC 2009b; BDRC 2009a; BOP Consulting 2010), although it can be argued that these studies are not about heritage *per se*. As the Arts Council England has pointed out, there continues to be limited objective evidence of the public benefits of heritage, and particularly how they are impacted through heritage management activities (Arts Council England 2011; Arts Council England 2014). In response to this, and in addition to the primary research question of whether current interpretive practice delivers public benefit, I examine what benefits, if any, visitors take from heritage and specifically from a visit to a heritage site or museum. This addresses the gap in empirical evidence for heritage benefits asserted in legislation and policy. It should be noted, however, that visitors to heritage sites and museums represent only a sub-section of the public that legislation and policy envisage as benefitting from heritage. Heritage, and intangible heritage in particular, are acknowledged as permeating all aspects of people's daily lives, as is evident for example in the Council of Europe's *Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (2005). However, I am particularly interested in heritage interpretation, which is a practice encountered primarily at, or in

relation to, managed sites. Managed sites, their presentation and interpretation also feature in many pieces of heritage legislation and policy, such as the British *National Heritage Act* (Act of Parliament 1983), which in Article 33, 2a calls for the provision of 'educational facilities, services, instruction and information'. Therefore, I pose that a singular focus on site or museum visitors can provide a suitable test case to begin to illuminate any potential differences between the heritage benefits perceived, desired and received by the public, and those established in legislation and policy.

There have also been critiques from within critical heritage studies of the framing of certain concepts in heritage legislation and policy, such as community and social cohesion (Waterton & Smith 2010; Waterton 2010), which in turn have an impact on the asserted public benefits of heritage. These critiques maintain that these concepts reinforce what Smith (2006) termed the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD). The AHD, these writers argue, continues to privilege expert values, despite professions of political commitment to community values and involvement, thus effectively excluding community narratives and restraining participation in favour of officially sanctioned accounts of heritage. However, there has been no reflection of the implications of these critiques in legislation and policy, suggesting that operational structures are allowed to remain the same and thus to reproduce the AHD in current heritage management practices. I argue that this is also the case for current interpretation philosophy and practice, and that Tilden's account has created an interpretation-specific AHD that continues into the present. Returning to the example of Ferguson and Brown's (2015b) conclusion concerning the most suitable management of the Confederate Battle Flag, I suggest that this

Interpretive AHD (IAHD) may in fact be the cause for a practice that fails to inspire confidence and as such may hinder, rather than support, the kind of engagement with heritage that is necessary to realise its benefits for the public as asserted in legislation and policy. For this reason, and in addition to the research questions already established, my research illuminates the role interpretation plays in delivering the benefits that visitors seek from heritage. This includes an exploration of visitors' expectations of interpretation, to provide a secondary basis from which to examine the suitability of current interpretive philosophy and practice.

The empirical research on which I base this thesis draws on a comparative study of two sites: 1066 Battle of Hastings and Battle Abbey in England, and Varusschlacht – Museum und Park Kalkriese in Lower Saxony, Germany. The two sites are comparable in several ways. Both are of national significance, which is an important consideration given that my primary concern is with public benefit as established in national and international legislation. The hypothesis is that such sites are able to provide more widely applicable benefits than regional or local sites. The two sites are also of a similar nature. Both relate to key battles in the country's history and are represented by the actual field of battle and a supporting exhibition and visitor facilities. The hypothesis is that visitors' emotional response to a site is partly due to its character. Thus, findings from sites of vastly different character would not be comparable. The two sites are also comparable with regard to the managing organisations. The Battle of Hastings site is managed by English Heritage, which at the time of site selection in 2011 was an executive non-departmental body of the British Government and thus funded directly by the government (it is now a charity). Varusschlacht is

substantially funded by the county council as well as a state-wide cultural funding body with close ties to the state government. As such, both organisations can be expected to deliver national legislation and policy.

I chose England and Germany as the two countries for my case studies due to their different developments concerning the field of interpretation. England has one of the oldest professional bodies for interpretation, the Association for Heritage Interpretation (AHI), which was founded in 1975 (Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d). Interpretation departments are well established at organisations such as English Heritage and the National Trust. In contrast, interpretation as a distinct discipline does not exist in Germany, neither academically as a field of study, nor professionally as a recognised comprehensive practice as defined above. The field of *Museumspädagogik* encompasses aspects of interpretation, but while it currently strives to assert a widened sphere of application (Bundesverband für Museumspädagogik 2006), it still tends to be largely conceptualized in terms of educational programmes for children and young people visiting as part of formal school groups. Its professional body, the Bundesverband für Museumspädagogik, is relatively young, having been established only in 1991 (Bundesverband für Museumspädagogik n.d.). Exhibitions and other provision of interpretation are of course developed in Germany, however, the qualifications required are generally subject specific, such as art history, rather than interpretation, as a look at the job listings on the website of the German Museums Association illustrates. Recently, *Museology* (Museums Studies) and *Kulturvermittlung* (Cultural Education) / *Kunstvermittlung* (Arts Education) have emerged as accepted qualifications in some job listings, but neither field of study fully covers

what is included in interpretation. *Ausstellungsgestaltung* or *Ausstellungsdidaktik* (Exhibition Design) is not a fully formed field of academic study and is rarely required in job listings.

The remainder of this thesis is organised as follows: Chapter 2 examines the current philosophy and practice of heritage interpretation. Starting with a critique of Freeman Tilden, the chapter charts his influence on subsequent interpretive writing and discourse, as well as research and practice, and critically explores the implications of the concepts applied by the IAHD. Chapter 3 turns to critical heritage studies and particularly critiques by Smith (2006) and Waterton (2010) of the AHD as they apply to the IAHD and heritage legislation and policy. Other concepts that have emerged from critical heritage studies and which are relevant to my research are also reviewed, such as connectivity ontologies (Harrison 2013) and heritage as future-making (Harrison 2015; Zetterstrom-Sharp 2014). Chapter 4 illustrates the introduction of the public benefits of heritage in legislation and policy internationally and nationally where applicable to England and Germany as the countries of my two case study sites. The chapter reviews the nature of these benefits as well as any provision for presentation and management on site that are intended to secure the delivery of these benefits to visitors. The chapter compiles a list of the public benefits of heritage that serves as the baseline against which findings from my case studies are compared. Chapter 5 presents the methodology used for the study, followed by detailed discussions of the findings from the case study at Varusschlacht (Chapter 6) and 1066 Battle of Hastings and Battle Abbey (Chapter 7). Chapter 8 reviews the data obtained from the two case study sites to respond to the research questions and to identify insights into the impacts of current heritage

interpretation philosophy and practice. The final chapter draws on the findings from my research and turns to a critical reframing of heritage interpretation philosophy and practice that responds to critiques of the AHD and other debates from within critical heritage studies and to the implications of aspirations in heritage legislation and policy for the delivery of the benefits of heritage for the public.

2. HERITAGE INTERPRETATION: PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE

This chapter examines interpretation philosophy and practice. It tests my hypothesis that the current discourse of interpretation is based on Freeman Tilden's book *Interpreting Our Heritage* (1957), which, I suggest, is rooted in the AHD, and from which consequently has developed an interpretation-specific authorized heritage discourse, or IAHD. I argue that this IAHD does not, and cannot, respond to the challenges raised from within critical heritage studies, the aspirations for public benefit as asserted in heritage legislation and policy, or to contemporary events that concern our societies. While in the next two chapters I discuss in detail the concerns emerging from critical heritage studies and the public benefits of heritage in legislation and policy, in this chapter I simply highlight the critique. The focus of this chapter is to test my hypothesis concerning the IAHD based on Tilden. In doing so, I follow the example of Waterton et al (2006) and use critical discourse analysis to examine and map the concepts of Tilden and the AHD as evident in current interpretation literature.

The review is structured in two parts: key textbooks, and definitions of interpretation by key professional membership associations. The focus is on English-language interpretation literature. As discussed in the previous chapter, there is no single field of heritage interpretation in Germany, neither within academia nor professional practice. Separate aspects of heritage interpretation are covered by different fields, such as *Museumspädagogik* (Education/Live Interpretation), *Museology* (Museums Studies), *Kulturvermittlung* (Cultural

Education) / *Kunstvermittlung* (Arts Education), and *Ausstellungsgestaltung* (Exhibition Design). While German-language literature exists that pertains to each of these fields (e.g. Vieregg et al. 1994; Braun et al. 2003; Tyradellis 2014), there are few if any connections made between these fields and writings, which means that no unified discourse has developed. Some writers (see for example Tyradellis 2014) have highlighted the weaknesses of this fragmented approach in integrating, for example, exhibition design and public programming/cultural education, and organisations such as the *Bundesverband für Museumspädagogik* (2006) have attempted to widen their respective field to create a more comprehensive practice. However, these initiatives are neither widely endorsed nor nearing completion. As such, German literature on aspects that might otherwise be considered as elements of interpretation is not included in this review, in favour of a more thorough, critical examination of the discourse of heritage interpretation as developed in the English-speaking world.

Key Textbooks on Interpretation

Only monographs that are concerned specifically with interpretation are considered for this review. The reason for this focus is that I am interested in complete bodies of work that build a coherent philosophy and practice of interpretation as a distinct field. While collections of essays, particularly, as is often the case, by multiple authors (see for example Hems and Blockley 2006) may contain elements of interpretive philosophy in individual essays, this is not in general sufficiently developed and referenced to justify inclusion in a review of the discursive formation of interpretation. This is true for books also that are not specifically about interpretation, but may contain chapters on or references

to what might be considered interpretation (see for example Dean 1994). This exclusion therefore also applies to books on museums and museum exhibitions. While these cover what is ultimately interpretation in a museum context (see for example Falk and Dierking 2000, Falk 2009), and while books on interpretation include the production of (museum) exhibitions (see for example Veverka1994), to date there continues to exist a *de facto* separation between museum literature and interpretation literature. The former are rarely, if ever, referenced in the discourse of interpretation or used as guidance by practitioners in interpretation, particularly those that work outside of a museum setting at, for example, cultural or natural heritage sites. This separation is therefore reflected in the selection for this review of key textbooks of interpretation, although it should not be understood as an endorsement of such continued separation. As I will argue throughout this thesis, greater integration between the various museums and heritage practices, including interpretation, should in fact take place.

In deciding which books to review, I used Lackey's (2008) survey of interpretation programmes at North American academic institutions as a starting point. Lackey's survey is the only systematic and published assessment of the use of textbooks to teach interpretation in an academic (as opposed to organisational) context that could be found. It thus provides the only quantified information on what universities view as the key works in the field of interpretation. Lackey sought to determine how future heritage interpreters were trained academically in order to identify consistencies and inconsistencies and capture trends as well as gaps (Lackey 2008, p.28). Lackey sent a questionnaire to 129 faculty and instructors and obtained 45 valid responses,

which, beside skills taught also identified the textbooks used, among other insights (Lackey 2008, p.29). Books mentioned fewer than four times in Lackey's survey were immediately excluded from my list as this was seen as a reasonable threshold below which books could not be classed as 'key textbooks' of interpretation. Of the remaining books, those dealing with specific interpretive media, e.g. personal interpretation or wayside signs, were also excluded. Books that aimed at a narrow national or organisational context, such as US National Parks, were excluded. This led to the following list, in order of popularity:

- Ham, S. 1992. *Environmental Interpretation*
- Beck, L. and Cable, T. 1998 & 2002. *Interpretation for the 21st Century.*
- Knudson, D. Cable, T. and Beck. L. 2003. *Interpretation of cultural and natural resources.*
- Tilden, F. 1977, *Interpreting Our Heritage*

To reflect the Non-American context of my case studies, the reading list recommended by the *European Association for Heritage Interpretation* (n.d.) was reviewed and the same selection criteria applied. One book was no longer in print. This led to the following additions to the list:

- Ham, S. 2013. *Interpretation. Making a Difference on Purpose.*
- *Veverka, J. 1994. Interpretive Master Planning.*

The list thus established is considered to reflect the 'key' textbooks of interpretation, and is not presented as a complete list of books used in the field.

In this section, these key textbooks are reviewed in chronological order, with the exception of Ham's books, which are reviewed together.

Freeman Tilden, Interpreting Our Heritage

Freeman Tilden's 1957 book *Interpreting Our Heritage* continues to be one of the most often used textbooks in interpretation courses (see for example for the US Lackey 2008, p.34/5). Tilden was a journalist who had already written a book about US national parks in 1954 (Merriman & Brochu 2006, p.19). He was subsequently invited by the then director of the US National Park Service (USNPS) to write specifically and formally about interpretation, a practice already well established within the service (Merriman & Brochu 2006, pp.13ff, 19). *Interpreting Our Heritage* is based on Tilden's observations of interpretive programmes, mostly within the USNPS, as well as conversations with practitioners and reviews of USNPS manuals.

Tilden notes a lack of a philosophy of interpretation (Tilden 1957, p.4) and thus presents his book as a first contribution toward such a philosophy (p.4, also p. 35). He does not, however, claim 'finality' (p.8), pointing out that this is a new field. Tilden discusses at length how interpretation might be defined and offers the following:

> *'An educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by first hand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.'* (Tilden 1957, p.8)

With this definition, Tilden establishes education of the visitor as a key purpose of interpretation (see also p. 33). He writes that it is 'a kind of elective education' (p. 3) for those visitors that 'desire the service' (p.3). This emphasis

on the voluntary selection of education in the form of interpretation foreshadows what later is characterised as the specific leisure or recreational context of interpretation (see for example Ham 1992; Ham 2013; Veverka 1994). Nevertheless, for Tilden interpretation is fundamentally about educating visitors. He has a humanist goal for this elective education: it is intended 'for the enrichment of the human mind and spirit' (p. 8), and this is one of the concepts of interpretation that Tilden establishes. It also reveals the subject position that Tilden assigns to visitors: they are fuelled by 'mere curiosity' (p. 8), 'aimless' (p. 105), and should be '[aided]…in the direction of a happy and fruitful use of leisure' (ibid). Visitors are therefore seen as an essentially uneducated, albeit potentially interested 'other' in need of enlightenment. Tilden acknowledges that a visitor may be able to use their senses (p. 4) and feel 'aesthetic joy' (p. 6), but this is presented as inadequate: it is not 'the real' (p. 8) nor the 'more important truth' (ibid). It is not clear why Tilden believes visitors to be necessarily less knowledgeable than interpreters about the sites they visit, or why sensory experience should be inferior to thought as a source of meaning. Phenomenology, for example, has presented a strong argument for the validity and depth of such experience as individuals make sense of their life-world. Similarly, many visitors will know a great deal about the subject matter presented, having, for example, a specialist interest or considering it an important aspect of their own history or heritage. Many others will have a deeply felt connection with the heritage, as I observed in my face-to-face interactions with visitors as Learning Manager at Culloden Battlefield in Scotland. A large proportion of visitors came to the site on the basis of their deeply emotional connection with the Scottish Diaspora, or a sense of the site's importance to

their own history of Scots. Some simply came because of films and literature that had inspired them on a personal level, but with no less intensity or relevance than had it been their own history. As Poria et al (2003) have found, there are different types of 'tourists', and three out of the four groups they identify have some pre-existing connection and knowledge of the site's heritage. This suggests that only a portion of visitors will fall into a category that has neither knowledge, nor an existing connection to a site.

Tilden's positioning of visitors becomes even more apparent when we consider the role that Tilden gives to 'specialists' (p. 23). Specialists are for example naturalists, historians, and archaeologists (p. 3). They 'are engaged in the work of revealing…something of the beauty and wonder, the inspiration and spiritual meaning that lie *behind* what the visitor can with his [sic] senses perceive' (p. 3,4, my emphasis). Using interpretation at Crater Lake as an example, Tilden writes that interpretation 'takes the visitor *beyond* the point of his [sic] aesthetic joy toward a realization of the natural forces that have joined to produce the beauty around him' (p. 6, my emphasis). This again asserts the division between perception and a 'larger truth that lies behind' (p. 8), which, as Staiff (2014, p.35) notes, has a long tradition in Western and Eastern thinking, going back as far as Plato. To arrive at this 'larger truth' science is required. This may explain Tilden's unspoken dismissal of the validity of visitors' own meanings, arrived at without the help of science. However, as Staiff rightly argues, 'Reality does not need to be conceptualized as a binary, the visible and the invisible, with the latter somehow more important' (Staiff 2014, p.36).

The separation between material reality and 'truth' hidden within it is a central concept within Tilden's account on which most of his subsequent

philosophy rests. With ‘specialists’ as the only ones having the knowledge of the ‘larger truth’, interpreters become ‘middlemen [sic]’ (p. 4) between knowledge about reality, as held by specialists, and visitors, a concept that runs through much of interpretive discourse to the present day. The underlying idea is that specialists are neither able to communicate their knowledge appropriately to visitors, nor are visitors able to understand specialists’ language. Tilden writes that the ‘tools’ and ‘thoughts’ (p. 44) of specialists are not those of the public. The interpreter therefore becomes a kind of translator between specialists and visitors. In this, the interpreter’s ‘raw material’ (p. 22) is the research and information gathered by specialists, and Tilden is adamant that it is they who decide the facts: ‘…the man [sic] engaged in interpretation…must wait for authoritative decision from some source’ (p. 23). Specialists thus have the ultimate authority over knowledge of heritage. They are needed to understand heritage. Interpreters, in turn, are needed for visitors to access and understand this specialist knowledge. This creates a double barrier between heritage and visitors, who are not only assumed to not have a valid pre-existing understanding of or connection to heritage, but who furthermore require both specialists and interpreters to acquire that understanding and connection. This is not softened by Tilden’s point that interpretation should provide ‘provocation to the visitor to search out meaning for himself, and join the expedition like a fellow discoverer’ (p. 36). Tilden is far from suggesting that visitors could arrive at any meaning they choose, for interpretation serves a specific purpose. It is in fact in his famous section on provocation that Tilden makes this purpose of interpretation most clear. Referring to an NPS Administrative Manual, Tilden notes, ‘Through interpretation, understanding; through understanding,

appreciation; through appreciation, protection.' (p. 38). He writes that the 'preservation of the treasure itself…may be the most important end of our interpretation' (p. 37/8). This, then, is the purpose of the educational activity that is interpretation, and the journey, which visitors should join: it is a journey toward preservation, through understanding the (specialist's) reasons for why a site should be preserved. As Tilden writes, interpretation is 'education based upon a systematic kind of preservation and use of national cultural resources' (p. 9). Inherent in this is the suggestion of what will in subsequent interpretation discourse become behavioural change toward preservation. Importantly, this is preservation of the material. It is 'the Thing Itself' (p. 3), the 'treasure' (p. 37), and the 'physical memorials of our natural and historic origins' (p. 100) that are to be preserved. While Tilden at times seems to hint at intangible meanings beyond the material, such as in the quote above referring to 'spiritual meaning' (p. 3/4), this is subservient to his concept of the material nature of heritage, similar to what Waterton et al (2006) have found regarding the Burra Charter, and to the exclusive expert knowledge about that heritage. The 'spiritual meaning' and 'inspiration' in this particular quote are realised through understanding and sharing the specialist's knowledge about material heritage, not any other. The overwhelming majority of examples concerning Tilden's 'greater truths' (p. 33) behind what one can see in fact relate to the scientifically uncovered mechanisms underlying the material (e.g. p. 42), rather than intangible meanings that visitors may develop independent of understandings of this science.

Tilden's view of heritage as material, and the subject positions of expert, interpreter and visitor are further illustrated by his six principles of interpretation

(table 3.1) through which interpretation would be 'correctly directed' (p. 9) if applied. This therefore represents the core of what Tilden considered best practice.

Table 2.1 Tilden's Six Principles of Interpretation	
I.	Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
II.	Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.
III.	Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.
IV.	The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.
V.	Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.
VI.	Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate programme.

I am not in this context concerned with the validity of Tilden's recommendations. My aim is to note those concepts that are evidence of the AHD, and foreshadow subsequent developments in interpretive philosophy as it stands today. This is therefore the focus of this concluding section on Tilden's book.

Principle 1 ('relate') is to some limited extent about empathy, in that for Tilden interpretation should make visitors wonder, 'What would *I* have done under similar circumstances?' (p. 15) and recognise, that 'These folks were not so different after all' (p. 16). This is achieved by *relating* what is interpreted to

visitors' 'experience, thoughts, hopes, way of life, social position, or whatever else' (p. 13). Importantly, this does not undo Tilden's separation between visitors and what is interpreted. Visitors are still seen to not have an existing connection to the heritage on any of these bases, and to require interpretation to make that connection for them. Tilden does not consider the possibility that visitors may already have a deeply felt connection to those same people, for example as their ancestors, and his principle consequently does not reflect on the implications of such existing connections for interpretation. Tilden's examples for applying this principle to practice include the use of personal pronouns ('you', p. 16) and making reference to the location that visitors find themselves in (p. 16), which remains a major best practice principle in recent textbooks, as will be shown below. Perhaps the best expression of what Tilden suggests in this principle is found in the following chapter, when he writes about relating 'the unfamiliar to the familiar in the mind of' visitors (p. 21). Again, it is of note that the heritage being interpreted is mostly seen as 'unfamiliar' to visitors.

Principle 2 reiterates the notion of 'revelation' (p. 18), which forms part of Tilden's definition of interpretation. The principle specifically rejects giving pure 'information', which for Tilden is merely the 'raw material' (p. 22) provided by 'specialists' (p. 23). Information as such is necessary, Tilden writes, but requires interpretive treatment since specialists, as noted above, do not speak visitors' language. 'Revelation' thus becomes an act of translation on which visitors rely to make sense of specialists' knowledge of heritage. This reasserts that visitors do not have existing knowledge of, or connections to heritage, and cannot themselves understand heritage. It also confirms specialists' privileged position of power over knowledge of heritage. The principle also fundamentally

distinguishes between information and interpretation, a dichotomy that Staiff (2014, p.38) rightly called ‘false’, as facts ‘are themselves an interpretation’ (ibid). However, as the discussion of interpretive textbooks below shows, this assertion that interpretation is *not* information continues as a core characteristic in interpretive discourse, without prompting, as I argue, a sufficiently critical engagement with the ethical implications of that aspect of interpretation that, as per its current definition, is ‘not’ information. The issue that arises here links to the treatment of facts in Tilden’s third principle, according to which ‘interpretation is an art’ (p. 9). This principle deals with creating a story (p. 28/9), or giving ‘form’ (p. 30) to the scientific information provided. In so doing, Tilden introduces what in later interpretive textbooks becomes the ideal of ‘thematic interpretation’ (see for example Veverka 1994, p.21), in that the ‘skilled raconteur…excludes every word and phrase that does not lead directly to *his* [sic] ending’ (p. 31, my emphasis). Tilden does not address the ethical implications of this process of selection nor of the manipulations inherent in rhetoric, which is the skill he hopes interpreters will acquire (p. 31). However, these implications are of imminent importance if we accept that there is more than *one* ‘larger truth’. On the surface, Tilden himself appears to do so: in his fifth principle, Tilden makes clear that while interpretation must present a whole, this is ‘”a” whole, not “the” whole’ (p. 40), for the latter ‘soars into infinity’ (ibid). And yet, Tilden does not establish criteria that would guide selection, suggesting instead that as long as *a* whole is presented this is better than the alternative, which to Tilden is but ‘a mélange of information’ (p. 41). This reference back to information, which he established as the raw material and which requires the ‘form’ achieved through selection, raises again the role of the

specialist and their knowledge. While Tilden may well have allowed for more than one whole within the specialist's information, this information still appears to form a more or less coherent single unit of overarching *knowledge*, which the interpreter merely organises and breaks down into 'a whole' so that it may be understood by visitors. However, unless an ultimately single and overarching *truth* is in fact claimed, questions concerning the ethics of *excluding* information from the interpretive story become increasingly pressing. Such consideration is, however, missing from Tilden's discussion. The principle also makes clear that despite his initial plan to contribute to interpretation philosophy, Tilden ultimately was less concerned with a philosophical examination of interpretation, and more with providing 'teachable' (p. 26) techniques. While this should have prompted further critical engagement with the underlying philosophy that Tilden establishes, and acknowledging that he had never intended 'finality' (p.8), subsequent writers and researchers have rather focused on providing evidence for Tilden's techniques and assertions based on contemporary theories (see for example Ham 2007).

Principle 4 concerning provocation was already mentioned above, but it is worth emphasising again the way it frames visitors as not already having a meaningful connection to the heritage: they require 'provocation…to search out meaning' (p. 36). Although the principle suggests that interpretation is *not* instruction, it does again link interpretation with a stimulus for a visitor to 'widen his [sic] horizon of interest and knowledge' (p. 33). Considering that Tilden's definition of interpretation also marks it as an *educational* activity, 'instruction' may therefore refer to the education 'of the classroom' (p. 3), from which Tilden differentiated the type of education that interpretation provides. The ultimate

purpose of both is still the same, however: the assumed improvement of the mind through knowledge and diversified interests, although importantly, the improvement here is only considered achieved if it is improvement according to specialist’s knowledge, leading to preservation, as discussed earlier. In addition, it is questionable that Tilden’s distinction between education of the classroom and interpretation can be maintained in light of modern theories and practices of formal education. In Scotland, for example, the Curriculum for Excellence has for nearly a decade promoted self-selected learning for pupils, based on their interests and skills (Education Scotland n.d.). Far from rigidly teaching pure information in isolation, which for Tilden is a key attribute of formal education, the Curriculum for Excellence encourages in-depth engagement with ideas and meanings, emphasising skills and experience above formal knowledge. Even learning outside the classroom is now an essential part of many formal educational settings, for which schools obtain accreditation (Council for Learning Outside the Classroom 2015). Based on these characteristics used by Tilden, interpretation is therefore no longer distinguishable from (modern) education.

The first part of Principle 5 concerning the whole that should be presented refers back to the need to create a story (p. 42) about place (p.41), as discussed under Principle 3. The second part of the Principle expresses the need to refer to ‘the whole man’ (p. 40), which primarily concerns the various motivations visitors may have, and the fact that interpreters need to respond to these. Implied is that without so doing, the ultimate goal of interpretation, to provide understanding, appreciation and protection, will not be achieved. Principle 6, concerned with interpretation for children, is not central to this study.

In summary, Tilden sees heritage as primarily vested in the material. Specialists are required to research and thus understand heritage. Interpreters are required to 'translate' between specialists and visitors. The key aim is education and ultimately, protection of the material. Visitors are viewed as having no pre-existing connections with or knowledge of the heritage. They rely on specialists to obtain either. Although Tilden set out to contribute to a philosophy of interpretation, he does not discuss these concepts, but rather presents them as given. In addition to these issues discussed above, there is one more observation to be made. Tilden notes that, 'The scope [of interpretation as a new kind of group education] has no counterpart in older nations or other times'. This may well be true on the basis of his assumptions. Before the 19th century, even the West did not know the kind of formalised identification and protection of material heritage that is at the heart of the AHD, and Tilden's account of interpretation. However, if we accept for the moment that those assumptions of the I/AHD are at least questionable, then many cultural practices re-emerge that can be understood as forms of interpretation, in its essence as sharing heritage and knowledge about 'the past' (see also Staiff 2014, p.35). In fact, traditions such as songs and storytelling which are now classed as 'intangible heritage' (UNESCO 2003) are arguably themselves mechanisms to pass on heritage, where heritage is more than just the material. In formalising interpretation in his narrow sense based on the AHD, Tilden has turned interpretation into another professional heritage practice that is out of the hands of regular people. I want to argue that the continuing competition from these non-professional interpretive practices is an underlying factor in prompting what Staiff (2014, p.25) called the 'exceedingly technocratic

discourse' of interpretation. It gives rise to a professional *angst* that seeks constant reassurance of its own relevance and justification in light of a philosophical foundation that cannot resolve key issues, and meet the demands of a changing world (see for example Staiff 2014, p.9,10,26).

Sam Ham, Environmental Interpretation* and *Interpretation* & *Making a Difference on Purpose

In 2008, Lackey (2008, p.34) found that Sam Ham's book *Environmental Interpretation* (Ham 1992) was by far the most used book in university courses covering interpretation in the United States. The book continues to be cited widely (see for example Ballantyne et al. 2013; Hughes et al. 2013a; Stern & Powell 2013a). The book is heavily influenced by Tilden. Ham quotes Tilden's definition of interpretation in full at the start of the book (p. 3) and adds it, slightly amended, as the definition of interpretation in the book's Glossary (p. 411). Ham notes that while Tilden was not himself a specialist, 'he was an unusually sensitive person with a profound intuitive understanding of how humans communicate best' (p.3). The book is broadly aimed at an environmental context, with the majority of its identified target audiences working in natural settings or zoos (p. xvii). However, 'museums and other settings' (ibid) are also identified as potential work places of target readers. The link between these otherwise distinct work places lies in 'a need to *communicate* technical information to non-technical audiences' (ibid, my emphasis). Ham writes that interpretation 'involves translating the technical language of a natural science or related field into terms and ideas that people who aren't scientists can readily understand' (p. 3). This directly echoes Tilden's

concept of interpreters as ‘middlemen’ (Tilden 1957, p.4). As was the case for Tilden, for Ham the core of interpretation thus flows from a specialism, such as ‘natural science’ (p. 3). Implicit is again the role of the expert, or the naturalist in Ham’s example, who has the knowledge, but not the language or tools to communicate this knowledge to the public. The public emerge, as they did in Tilden’s account, as requiring assistance in understanding that specialist knowledge, which they are also assumed to want. This in turn creates the necessary, specialist role of the interpreter as translator between the subject specialist and the public, reaffirming the double barrier that I described in the discussion of Tilden’s book above. This act of translation is presented as a rather straightforward mechanism of communication, as I show below. However, translation between two languages or cultures is itself a complex process (see for example Hall 2013a). There is no mathematical equation between the concepts that have evolved in the cultures and their languages in question. Rather than being a matter of simply selecting equivalent, and possibly easier words, translation often deals with concepts whose meanings are fundamentally different or non-existent in the target culture or target language. Translation thus goes further even than mere selection and becomes a process of transformation that is often based on necessarily subjective understandings of *the other*.

The central concept of Ham’s account, and his lasting contribution to the discourse of interpretation, is his view that ‘interpretation is communication’ (p. xviii). For Ham, interpretation is not linked to heritage; he writes that the ‘best teachers, salespeople, lawyers, and cab drivers’ (ibid) are, in fact, interpreters. Consequently, for Ham ‘being an interpreter first means knowing about

communication' (ibid), and interpretation is 'simply an approach to communication' (p. 3). This leaves open the question why interpretation should be considered a separate discipline from other communication-based disciplines, such as marketing and journalism. There is some contradiction here too, when, although considering good teachers to be interpreters, Ham writes that interpretation is communication concerning a 'pleasure-seeking audience' (p. xviii), marked by 'the recreationist's freedom of choice' (ibid), and it is this audience that interpreters 'have to *reach'* (ibid, my emphasis). In this, Ham mirrors Tilden again and his emphasis on self-selected learning in a leisure context. Ham makes the same distinction as Tilden between interpretation and what Ham calls 'conventional instruction' (p.3). Ham further illustrates this distinction in a section on 'interpretation versus formal instruction' (p. 4ff), referring, like Tilden, to the 'classroom' (p. 4) and also to non-captive audiences as the features that distinguish formal instruction from interpretation. It is not clear why good communication should not, despite reference to good teachers, apply to formal instruction after all, or why formal instruction that is not based on good communication should not rather be simply considered poor instruction. Whether or not learners in a formal context are 'captive' does not seem a tenable characteristic that would somehow make poor standards of communication acceptable in formal instruction.

Since interpretation, in Ham's view, must reach non-captive audiences, it is necessary for interpreters to use good communication that 'captures attention and makes a point' (ibid). The book, therefore, deals with '*how* to communicate' to 'achieve excellence' (p. xix) in interpretation. Ham does not question the core assumption that gives rise to the idea of interpretation as communication, i.e.

the concept of interpretation as *translation* between specialists and the public. When Ham discusses Tilden, it is through a communication prism, establishing how, in his view, Tilden *intuitively* (see p. 3) understood and applied the communication principles that Ham lays out in his book more formally and backed by empirical evidence. In Ham's assessment of Tilden's definition of interpretation, Tilden 'stresses the *transfer* of ideas and relationships rather than isolated facts and figures' (ibid, my emphasis). The use of the word 'transfer' is an important key to Ham's view of interpretation as communication, the goal of which is, as he writes, 'to communicate a message' (p. 4). Like Tilden, Ham does acknowledge the role of 'factual information' (ibid). However, for Ham, interpretation is about 'points and meanings' (ibid). Here, Ham differs from Tilden somewhat. Where Tilden confined himself to interpretation as translating specialist research in support of preservation, Ham is more concerned with the interpreter's intended *message*. Facts are used 'only when they help the audience understand and appreciate *what we're trying to show or explain*' (p. 4, my emphasis), or in other words, the 'message' (ibid) that interpretation seeks to communicate. The vision of communication that Ham presents here is of a straightforward, predictable process that can be controlled by an interpreter. The suggestion appears to be that equipped with the practices described in the book, the skilled interpreter can package a message so that it may be *transferred* to the visitor-recipient, who will subsequently be able to repeat the message as it *reached* him or her (see p. 38 and below). Linguistics and semiotics have shown that such a depiction is simplistic and entirely unrealistic (see also Staiff 2014, p.32). It is worth noting here again that interpretation for

Ham is not tied to heritage, but could happen in any context where a message is communicated, including selling shoes or arguing a legal case (p. xviii).

Ham highlights four qualities of the 'interpretive approach to communication' (p. 8):

- Interpretation is pleasurable
- Interpretation is relevant
- Interpretation is organized
- Interpretation has a theme

(ibid)

In Quality 1, Ham writes that interpretation is 'entertaining' (ibid), although 'entertainment isn't interpretation's main goal' (ibid). In this context, Ham for the first time mentions 'learning' (p. 9), without however explaining further what purpose such learning serves within interpretation. His concern is 'how to make learning fun' (ibid) so that interpretation is not 'classroomlike [sic]' (ibid). Ham's second quality of interpretation as being relevant directly echoes Tilden's first principle. For Ham, relevance has two qualities: 'it's **meaningful** and it's **personal**' (p. 12). Drawing on psychology, Ham explains that something is meaningful when 'we're able to connect it to something already inside our brains' (ibid). He uses similar language as did Tilden for an example where the interpreter 'could try to **bridge** the unfamiliar…to things that his audience is likely to already know something about' (ibid), or, as Tilden wrote, to the familiar (Tilden 1957, p.21). However, Ham separates Tilden's own principle of relevance from the concept of being meaningful, and refers to it instead with regard to the quality of being personal. Ham quotes Tilden's first principle in full

(p. 13), suggesting that Tilden ‘meant that interpreters must not only find a way to link the information being presented to something their audiences know about, but to something they care about’ (ibid). His examples of things that are personal are ‘ourselves, our families, our health, our well-being, our quality of life, our deepest values, principles, beliefs and convictions’ (ibid). In a section on self-referencing, Ham, like Tilden, points to the use of personal pronouns in making interpretation relevant (p. 17). Ham’s third quality, according to which interpretation is organised, is reminiscent of Tilden’s third principle, which calls for interpretation to give form (Tilden 1957, p.30). Ham writes that organised interpretation ‘is easy to follow’ (p. 19) and uses a limited number of ‘main ideas’ (p. 20), drawing on psychology studies for evidence. Finally, in the fourth quality of his interpretive approach to interpretation Ham establishes thematic interpretation. Calling for interpretation to have a theme, Ham quotes Tilden’s words on story (p. 21). He defines a theme as ‘the main point or message a communicator is trying to *convey’* (ibid, my emphasis). Themes also ‘help interpreters select…facts and concepts’ (p. 23). Ham does not examine the implications of such a selection process further; rather, selection is tied to the question any interpretation should, in Ham’s opinion, answer. That question is, ‘so what?’ (p. 23). This means ‘the big picture, the moral to the story, the punchline [sic], the main idea, etc.’ (ibid), or ‘a **message**’ (p. 33). Ham’s instructions on how to write a theme (p. 37) further illustrate his emphasis on the interpreter’s intention as the starting point of all interpretation. The public or the visitor are absent from this framing beyond considerations of how to organise the theme so that it relates to what is meaningful and personal to the visitor (see above), ensuring that he or she understands the theme. Successful

thematic interpretation for Ham means ‘the audience should be able to summarize [the theme] in one sentence’ (p. 38). This blunt selection of facts to support the interpreter’s message brings into sharp focus again the ethical issues that were inherent in Tilden’s more subtle writing about story and ‘a whole’. Like Tilden, Ham does not explore these issues further. In combination with the lack of acknowledgement of visitors’ own existing connections to the heritage as the context my study is interested in, and which is one of the contexts for which Ham intended this book, this immediately implies that it is somehow permissible for interpreters to *not* select the facts that support a message other than their own. The line separating this kind of interpretation from propaganda and manipulation is arguably so thin to make the three nearly indistinguishable.

In summary, Ham’s focus is on the interpreter’s message and successful ways of communicating this message to non-captive audiences. Interpretation as communication applies to varied contexts that are not necessarily linked to heritage. Ham draws on empirical studies from communication, education and psychology to add further detail to Tilden’s principles, such as his formal introduction of ‘thematic’ interpretation, which in Tilden’s account was rather more vaguely, and unobjectionably described as a ‘story’ and a ‘whole’. The fundamental subject positions of specialist, interpreter and visitor remain the same as for Tilden, although Ham strengthens the autonomy of the interpreter, making the specialist’s facts subservient to the interpreter’s message. The largest part of Ham’s book is dedicated to practical methods of an interpretive approach to communication, beginning the technocratic discourse that Staiff (2014) noted.

Ham's 2013 book *Interpretation – Making a Difference on Purpose* is presented as not just a practical book on interpretation, which is how *Environmental Interpretation* is described, but also as 'a book on how to *think about* interpretation' (p. xv). However, large sections in the first two chapters of the book repeat verbatim sections of *Environmental Interpretation* (for example pp. 9-14, p. 23, p. 25, pp. 26-28, p. 31, pp. 38-42), thus reaffirming many of the fundamental concepts that underpinned Ham's philosophy and principles in the first book. As in the first book, Ham writes that 'interpretation is simply an approach to communication' (p. 1) and that it involves a 'pleasure-seeking audience' (ibid). This audience does not always include visitors, but can also mean 'households or businesses, someone surfing the web at home or reading a travel guide' (ibid). He again quotes Tilden's definition of interpretation in full (p. 7), asserting that this definition shows that 'Tilden saw interpretation as an approach to communicating in which the primary aim is the construction of meanings and the revelation of relationships in the visitor's mind' (ibid). This creates 'connections' (ibid), and making these connections is for Ham 'the single most important outcome of interpretation' (p. 8). The interpreter is required, no longer to merely translate technical language, as was the case in the first book, but more specifically to '[facilitate] or [stimulate] visitors to make these connections for themselves' (p. 7) as 'a result of the thinking that good interpretation can provoke them to do' (ibid). The connections, according to Ham and in reference to Tilden, lie in 'the construction of meanings and the revelation of relationships in the visitor's mind' (ibid). Ham quotes in full the definition of interpretation offered by the National Association for Interpretation (USA), which defines interpretation as 'a mission-based communication process

that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and meanings inherent in the resource' (p. 7). Ham stresses that this definition 'clearly distinguishes interpretation from other forms of communication' (ibid), and highlights particularly 'its emphasis on connection making and the audience' (ibid). However, many other forms of communication share similar objectives; marketing may be called mission-based as it is about 'getting the *right* message across' (Chartered Institute of Marketing 2015, my emphasis). Documentary journalism is described by the International Documentary Association as 'fostering an informed, compassionate and connected world' (International Documentary Association 2015), which is undoubtedly about connecting the audience to what is shown or described in the documentary.

Ham's own working definition of interpretation takes 'the heart of NAI's definition and [applies] it directly to Tilden's focus on provocation' (ibid). Ham's definition reads,

> *'Interpretation is a mission-based approach to communication aimed at provoking in audiences the discovery of personal meaning and the forging of personal connections with things, places, people and concepts.'* (Ham 2013, p.8)

Implied in the above is now what we may call heritage, represented at the very least by 'things, places, people' (ibid), in a way that Ham's first book did not. Nevertheless, Ham does not consider the possibility that visitors have pre-existing connections with that heritage, nor that this heritage should already have personal meaning for them. It must also be stressed here that while Ham asserts that Tilden did not suggest that it is interpreters that create the meanings (p. 7), and that rather, his own (and

Tilden's) is a '"constructivist" perspective' (p. 66, footnote 5) in which a communicator 'stimulate[s] learners…to think for themselves' (ibid), what visitors think, and the meanings they arrive at, are not all equally acceptable within Ham's view of interpretation. This is the aspect of his book that is about interpretation that can 'make a difference *on purpose*' (p.75). The interpreter's intended message is still the one that matters most, as it did in Ham's first book, and it is this message (p.9), or meaning, that visitors should get: the connections that are desired are 'those that pertain to the things interpreters actually show and explain to their audiences' (p.8). Thematic interpretation becomes more central than in the first book; the four qualities of the 'interpretive approach to communication' (p. 14) from the first book are rearranged to place themes in the first position (ibid). The theme is framed in the same way as in *Environmental Interpretation* as 'the main point or idea a communicator is trying to convey' (p. 20). A theme 'provide[s] a focal point for thinking' (p. 95) for the audience, and Ham emphasises in a footnote that 'a theme is a *meaning*' (p. 119, footnote 3). In reflecting on other terms that might describe a theme, Ham includes controlling idea, main message, overarching meaning on the interpreter's side, and on the side of the audience, the central ideas gotten, the emotional connections made, the lessons learned and the meanings made (p. 111). This shows the central role that a theme plays in determining the connections, or meanings that audiences should make. Accordingly, successful interpretation, i.e. interpretation that purposefully makes a difference, is not generally about just '*any* kind of thought' (p. 143), as Ham explores in his discussion of zones of tolerance.

Only in the unrestricted zone is it acceptable that visitors arrive ‘at whatever conclusions and implications [that] suit them’ (p. 154). However, for Ham, it is the wide zone of tolerance in which most interpretation falls (p. 156), because ‘interpretation’s role in “making a difference” is frequently predicated on audiences appreciating, valuing, and caring about the things we interpret’ (p. 156). In other words, in order to be called successful, interpretation that aims to make a difference on purpose must produce the connections and meanings in audience’s minds that were selected by the interpreter. Ham acknowledges that in this there is a ‘hint of manipulation’ (ibid), but he does not further discuss the ethical implications of this, but rather discusses tools to more successfully induce visitors to make the intended meanings. The final zone of tolerance that Ham identifies is the narrow zone, which Ham connects with ‘learning outcomes’ (p. 161), but also with behaviour change and interpretation of ‘highly sensitive or controversial subjects’ (p. 162). In the discussion of the narrow zone Ham does raise the issue of ethics, and writes that interpreters ‘have to be confident that the best interests of the audience and/or the place or object we’re interpreting are honestly served by attempting to persuade people to think, feel, or act in a particular way’ (p. 163/4). This is the ‘subjective call’ (p. 164) of the interpreter. Through this, Ham further elevates the interpreter into a position of power; he or she makes the call on what is in the best interest of the audience, place or object. Even if we were to accept such authority given to interpreters, at the very least there should be a thorough discussion and assessment of the criteria that should be applied to making such a decision. To use Ham’s example of ‘controversial

subjects' (p. 162), it is clear that a decision *against* a point of view, or a *meaning*, means to disenfranchise and discriminate against the particular group that holds the view excluded from the interpretation. This is a serious implication. In giving interpreters the sole authority over meaning, interpreters are furthermore presented as somehow above the issues at work, ignoring, for example, the social biases interpreters themselves might have. Relying solely on what appears an assumption of morality and impartiality on the part of interpreters seems not a very strong foundation on which to base decisions with such far-reaching representational implications. Ultimately, Ham suggests that 'a wider zone of tolerance is probably called for' (p. 165), but not, as it appears, because of the ethical issues with a narrow zone, but rather because he acknowledges that studies have shown that a narrow approach is likely to be unsuccessful. Nevertheless, Ham's outcomes of interpretation, or what he calls the difference that interpretation can make, include 'influencing behaviour' (p. 3), which for Ham requires the narrow zone of tolerance. In the end, therefore, Ham appears to accept and sanction the ethical questionability of interpreters narrowly controlling the meanings that visitors should make.

Ham poses three outcomes of interpretation: enhancing experiences, facilitating appreciation, and influencing behaviour (p. 3). According to Ham, for most interpreters enhancing experiences is 'interpretation's highest purpose' (ibid). Visitors' experience is enhanced when they 'make personal connections to the places, features, or ideas someone interprets *for* them' (p. 2, my emphasis). This again reasserts visitors' reliance on someone else (the interpreter). The assumption is that their existing

experience of a place, feature or idea is somehow less and lacking a personal connection. Facilitating appreciation aims at ‘audiences having a positive attitude about the things that are interpreted for them’ (p. 2). These ‘things’ might be the managing organisation, but they ‘almost always’ (ibid) include ‘the historic place or person, the time period or era, the valley or mountain, the river, the plant community, the geologic history, the wine or the wildlife’ (ibid). Influencing behaviour, the final outcome of interpretation, according to Ham is ‘less common’ (p. 3) and ‘promote[s] *proper or preferred behaviour*’ (ibid, my emphasis). He emphasises the sequence of these outcomes from enhancing experiences to appreciation to behaviour, and quotes Tilden (ibid) who first highlighted ‘the steps in this sequence’ (ibid) and linked understanding with appreciation and protection. It is not clear whether Ham implies that readers may equate his enhancing experiences to Tilden’s understanding, and Tilden’s protection to his ‘influencing behaviour’. In addition to the three outcomes of interpretation, Ham also establishes three ‘endgames’, which emerge as effectively ways of doing interpretation:

- Provocation
- Teaching
- Entertainment

Ham introduces the endgame of provocation entirely based on Tilden (p. 56), quoting Tilden at length when he wrote that interpretation is about stimulating audiences to widen their horizon (ibid) and to ‘think for themselves’ (p. 57). The second endgame of interpretation, teaching, is again introduced by

reference to Tilden (p. 57). Ham is somewhat critical of this endgame when it becomes too much about 'facts' (p. 58). He notes that in this endgame, the desire is to 'leave [people] knowledgeable; informed about the facts…and capable of remembering those facts later' (p. 61). The endgame of entertainment is linked to Ham's '*obvious* fact that most audiences of interpretation are pleasure-seekers who want to be entertained' (p. 58, my emphasis). He does not draw on studies to substantiate his claim that there is indeed a majority of audiences that are pleasure-seekers, and studies (for example Poria et al. 2001; Poria et al. 2009; Basu 2007) have certainly provided sufficient evidence to question this assertion.

Ham notes that none of these endgames alone are 'achievable and of interest to most interpreters' (p. 60). He does establish provocation as 'a necessary goal of virtually all interpretation' (ibid) but notes that elements of the other endgames are also needed, which reflects his four qualities that interpretation needs to achieve its three outcomes.

In summary, both of Ham's books closely follow Tilden's concepts of the visitor as lacking a connection to what is being interpreted. In *Environmental Interpretation*, Ham, like Tilden, places specialists in the role of those with knowledge about what we may call heritage, with interpreters acting as 'translators'. This changes in *Interpretation – Making a Difference on Purpose*, where the theme as selected by the interpreter takes centre stage. The interpreter thus takes on a greater position of power than previously. The idea of the theme is further developed in the second book and linked more specifically to meaning, and the central concept of meaning-making, for which people again rely on interpreters. Both books do not discuss heritage, although the second

book mentions aspects which are, primarily, tangible heritage. Ham references Tilden's progression from understanding to protection in his three outcomes of interpretation, which are (enhancing) experience, appreciation, and (Influencing) behaviour. In both books, Ham heavily refers to Tilden, quoting long passages and expanding on Tilden's concepts through use of contemporary scientific studies particularly from education, psychology and communication. These are however used to confirm Tilden's assertions, and do not step outside of Tilden's discursive framework to challenge it.

John Veverka, *Interpretive Master Planning*

In 1994, John Veverka published his book *Interpretive Master Planning* (Veverka 1994). He uses the spelling 'interpretor' to distinguish the interpretive profession from those of language translators (p. 1), although he too (p. 20, see below) invokes the act of translation as interpretation's main goal. Like Ham, Veverka sees as the 'primary mission' (p. 1) of interpretation to communicate with visitors. Veverka links this communication to adult education (p. 2), emphasising that interpreters must understand 'how or why visitors learn or remember information' (p. 1). That visitors learn something emerges without further explanation as a central purpose of interpretation, despite Veverka asserting that visitors' main motivation for coming to a site is to undertake 'recreational activities' (ibid). Like Tilden and Ham, Veverka notes the 'recreational settings' (ibid) of interpretation and introduces the concept of 'recreational learning' (ibid), which in his view visitors 'are usually most interested in' (ibid). For this reason, 'interpretive services must promote the notion that learning is fun and enjoyable' (ibid), making learning itself a

recreational activity (ibid). The challenge for interpretation is therefore to encourage visitors to select interpretation and the learning it provides over another activity (ibid). One might argue that if learning were indeed most visitors' primary interest no special effort on the part of interpretation as learning should be required. However, Veverka's concern seems to be to avoid, as did Tilden, the notion that interpretation, as *recreational* learning, is *instruction.* He writes that visitors 'don't want to become experts' (p. 3) and quotes Tilden that 'The chief aim of interpretation is provocation, not instruction' (ibid). Veverka then expands on learning concepts, which support interpreters in 'helping visitors to remember' (p. 3) what was presented through interpretation, reaffirming interpretation's key purpose of providing learning. The underlying subject position of the visitor is consequently the same as it was for Tilden and Ham: visitors do not already possess knowledge, or at least not the *right* knowledge, as I shall show below. Veverka identifies that 'the role of the interpretor [sic] [is] to help visitors "see" and comprehend the story being interpreted' (p. 7). His language is reminiscent of Tilden: he advises interpreters to ensure visitors 'understand the *whole* picture' (ibid, my emphasis) and says through interpretation 'the answer or information is "*revealed*"' (p. 8, my emphasis) to visitors. Again, the concept of knowledge that is applied is one of an apparently coherent unit, which it is possible to unambiguously assess and translate as revelation to the visitor.

Visitors' learning, achieved through interpretation, serves the specific purpose of behaviour change (p. 13): the interpreter's 'job is to employ a strategy for change' (p. 11). The three components of this progression to change are expressed through objectives (see pp. 13, 46 and 47):

1. Learning Objectives: express what visitors should learn.
2. Emotional Objectives: create ‘a strong “feeling”’ (p. 47) in visitors and thus become ‘”the driving force”’ (ibid). Emotional objectives ‘are instrumental in helping to accomplish the behavioral [sic] objectives’ (ibid).
3. Behavioural Objectives: ‘what you want the visitors to do’ (p. 46). Veverka considers behavioural objectives to be ‘the most important of the objectives’ (ibid).

Veverka does not refer to Tilden here, but his progression (learning – emotion – behaviour) is conceptually and structurally the same as Tilden’s understanding (learning) – appreciation (emotion) – protection (a behaviour). Veverka does not specify what kind of behaviour should be the objective of interpretation; however, all of his examples relate to conservation and preservation (p. 46). In his formal definition of interpretation, Veverka quotes in full the definition given by Interpretation Canada in 1976:

> *‘Interpretation is a communication process designed to reveal meanings and relationships of our cultural and natural heritage to the public (visitors) through first-hand experiences with objects, artifacts [sic], landscapes, or sites.’ (p. 19)*

He stresses that interpretation is ‘a very specific type of communication process’ (ibid) that does not ‘simply dispense the facts’ (ibid) but ‘reveals a story or larger message’ (ibid). In doing so, he writes, interpretation ‘[relies] on Tilden’s Principles…to help the visitor *relate* to that message’ (ibid, my emphasis). Veverka quotes Tilden’s six principles of interpretation in full (p. 20) and writes that ‘the main goal of the interpretor [sic] is to translate from the

technical language of experts to the “everyday” language of the visitor’ (ibid). This mirrors how Tilden and Ham (1992) conceptualised the interpreter’s role as translator. Similarly, it assumes a special position of knowledge of experts over that of visitors. As we have already seen, visitors are seen as *wanting* to learn and as *requiring* learning. Here, it transpires that this learning is required because, for Veverka, visitors lack the kind of knowledge that would produce the behaviour desired by interpretation. Like Tilden and Ham, Veverka acknowledges visitors’ context in so far as it must be considered in order to achieve interpretation’s objectives (see for example p. 5ff). Veverka also introduces a ‘short-hand version’ (p. 21) of Tilden’s Principles, which are to provoke, relate, reveal, address the whole, and strive for message unity. Veverka does, however, slightly differ from Tilden in his interpretation of the ‘provocation’ principle. To provoke for Veverka is not about getting visitors to think, as Tilden implied, but rather to capture their attention through ‘a provocative statement, title, or other technique’ (p. 21). The other principles mirror Tilden’s concepts. Veverka specifically links Tilden’s principle relating to ‘the whole’ to the notion of a ‘theme’ (p. 21). As did Ham, Veverka defines a theme as ‘the central or key idea of any presentation’ (p. 40), but for Veverka this idea ‘should be based on what you actually have on-site’ (ibid). Veverka thus specifically links interpretation to place and its visible, material aspects. Veverka’s inventory checklist (p. 35), which aims to help interpreters identify what they have available onsite, is entirely focused on material remains and resources. Veverka consequently also suggests that the theme should guide the selection of ‘those *resources* on-site…that best illustrate that theme’ (ibid, my emphasis). This introduces a measure of limitation that is not part of Ham’s

approach to themes as message and meaning. However, since, as I have argued above, the material does not have a single inherent meaning, this connection to the physical resources on site still does not address the ethical issues identified in my discussion of Tilden and Ham, and which relate to selection of facts to communicate a single, main idea.

The remainder of Veverka's book is focused on guiding the interpretive planning process based on these concepts and using visitor psychology, learning and communication theories. In summary, therefore, I have shown that Tilden's principles form the central framework for Veverka's own work. Concepts of experts holding knowledge that requires translation through interpretation for visitors are the same as in Tilden's book, and indeed in Ham's book *Environmental Interpretation* (1992). Veverka also stresses the leisure context of interpretation, which in itself negates a deeper and pre-existing connection to sites by visitors that forms an intrinsic part of the fabric of their everyday lives. Like Tilden and Ham, Veverka conceptualises visitors as not having such connections, and assumes both a need and a desire by visitors to learn. He mirrors Tilden's progression from understanding through appreciation to preservation, or behaviour change. Like Tilden, Veverka has a material understanding of what he calls the resource, and its preservation appears to be the main desired outcome of interpretation, although Veverka does not explicitly state this. Finally, linking directly back to Tilden's principle on 'the whole', Veverka introduces the concept of the 'theme', which had already emerged in Ham's book (1992). As such, we are beginning to see the emergence of a discursive formation for interpretation, which can be, and is consciously by writers themselves, traced back to Tilden.

Larry Beck and Ted Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*

The first edition of *Interpretation for the 21st Century* was published in 1998, updated by a second edition in 2002 (Beck & Cable 2002). The authors specifically relate back to Tilden, writing that the book ‘restructure[s] Tilden’s treatment of interpretation to fit today’s world’ (p.xii). The authors acknowledge Tilden’s place in interpretive philosophy (p. 6ff) alongside Enos Mills, and begin their own ‘framework of principles’ (p.7) by repeating Tilden’s own in slightly re-worded form, ‘out of respect’ for Tilden’s work, and ‘particularly because of the familiarity so many interpreters have’ (ibid) with Tilden’s principles. Tilden’s core concepts, established in his principles and as discussed earlier in this chapter, thus become the starting point for Beck and Cable’s work. Their definition of interpretation closely follows that of Tilden and calls interpretation ‘an educational activity that aims to reveal meanings’ about resources (p. xi). In doing so, interpretation ‘enhances our understanding, appreciation, and, therefore, protection’ of sites (p. xi), thus reinforcing Tilden’s progression and ultimate main goal of interpretation, protection (see also p. 42). This protection is linked to ‘unselfishness, compassion, enlightenment’ (p. 45). Beck and Cable accept that sites can be ‘inspirational’ (ibid) in their own right, but through interpretation a ‘fuller understanding of their beauty and meaning’ (ibid) can be achieved, suggesting that what inspiration people might obtain from sites is, comparatively speaking, inferior and lacks the depth that interpretation can facilitate. In fact, places may be ‘foreign’ (ibid) to people, and the authors reiterate that therefore interpretation can give ‘meaning’ (ibid). This suggestion further emphasises the underlying notion of a non-existing, or at the least insufficiently deep connection of people with places, as was apparent in Tilden,

as well as Ham and Veverka. In fact, according to Beck and Cable through effective interpretation ‘a response’ (p. 2) can be obtained from an audience in the form of ‘astonishment, wonder, inspiration, action, sometimes tears’ (ibid). Through interpretation ‘visitors see, learn, experience, and are inspired firsthand [sic]’ (ibid) and can thus go ‘beyond their capabilities’ (p. 3). The implication is that without interpretation, visitors do not make connections, see, learn or experience, and if they do, they achieve inferior outcomes to those provided through interpretation. The role of interpretation is again likened to translation (p. 1), and it is once more the knowledge of the specialist that is translated (ibid). This is again knowledge of the material, ‘about the geology, ecology or history’ (ibid). Beck and Cable then discuss their fifteen principles in detail. The first six principles are those of Tilden, albeit rephrased, while the subsequent nine are their own to ‘provide a more elaborate interpretive *philosophy’* (p. 7, my emphasis):

1. To spark an interest, interpreters must relate the subject to the lives of the people in their audience.
2. The purpose of interpretation goes beyond providing information to reveal deeper meaning and truth.
3. The interpretive presentation – as a work of art – should be designed as a story that informs, entertains, and enlightens.
4. The purpose of the interpretive story is to inspire and to provoke people to broaden their horizons.
5. Interpretation should present a complete theme or thesis and address the whole person.

6. Interpretation for children, teenagers, and seniors – when these comprise uniform groups – should follow fundamentally different approaches.
7. Every place has a history. Interpreters can bring the past alive to make the present more enjoyable and the future more meaningful.
8. Technology can reveal the world in exciting new ways. However, incorporating this technology into the interpretive program must be done with foresight and thoughtful care.
9. Interpreters must concern themselves with the quantity and quality (selection and accuracy) of information presented. Focused, well-researched interpretation will be more powerful than a longer discourse.
10. Before applying the arts in interpretation, the interpreter must be familiar with basic communication techniques. Quality interpretation depends on the interpreter's knowledge and skills, which must be continually developed over time.
11. Interpretive writing should address what readers would like to know, with the authority of wisdom and its accompanying humility and care.
12. The overall interpretive program must be capable of attracting support – financial, volunteer, political, administrative – whatever support is needed for the program to flourish.
13. Interpretation should instil in people the ability, and the desire, to sense the beauty in their surroundings- to provide spiritual uplift and to encourage resource preservation.

14. Interpreters can promote optimal experiences through intentional and thoughtful program and facility design.
15. Passion is the essential ingredient for powerful and effective interpretation – passion for the resource and for those people who come to be inspired by it.'

    (p. 8)

The following reviews Beck and Cable's fifteen principles in detail.

The first principle, to relate to people's lives, remains conceptually the same as in Tilden. The authors write that Tilden's principle 'may have been intuitive' (p. 14), but that it is, in fact, grounded in educational psychology and theory (ibid). In this, they use the same approach as did Ham, as they link Tilden's principle to later empirical studies. They review Cognitive Map Theory and the External-Internal Shift, and draw from these that interpreters should know 'the common knowledge and experiences' (ibid) of audiences so that they can 'target messages to trigger existing maps and to build on that scaffolding' (ibid). Beck and Cable thus state more clearly than did previous writers that engagement with visitors' existing experience and knowledge is not so that interpreters may understand and respect visitors' heritage values. Rather, it is to better 'target' the 'messages' that interpretation seeks to convey. Furthermore, 'relating the message to the knowledge and experiences of the audience teaches new information' (p. 15).

Of particular interest is also Beck and Cable's review of meaning-making, 'a new communication paradigm' (ibid). They emphasise that information in this paradigm is seen as being '*created* rather than transmitted' (ibid), as people

‘*shape the meaning*’ (ibid) based on their ‘past knowledge and experiences’ (ibid). The authors stress that therefore awareness of this background is important for ‘successful’ (ibid) interpretation, as highlighted above. This discussion of the co-creation of meaning is, as with Ham, not validating pre-existing meanings, however, or advocating a view of interpretation as accepting *any* meaning-making by visitors. Rather, it is part of a context of *adjusting* interpretation so that it may better influence the meanings audiences create. This also applies to motivations, learning styles, or the barriers that audiences perceive (pp. 17/8), which ‘provide clues for presenting information in interesting ways’ (p. 17). However, visitors’ interests and motivations remain subordinate and responding to them is limited to where they are ‘appropriate for the site and consistent with management objectives’ (p. 18). This implies once again an underlying structure that separates people, described alternately as audiences or visitors, from the heritage, which is under the control of ‘management’, or those with knowledge (see above). The site’s preservation is also considered more important than people’s interests in it. Principle 2 also follows Tilden’s concepts without alterations. The authors write that ‘without information’ an activity does not ‘qualify’ as interpretation (p. 22), while the presence of information also does not make an activity interpretive. They discuss the notion of ‘revealing meaning’ (p. 23) and write that ‘the key to revealing meanings is to find connections between the tangible aspects of the site…and the intangible ideas associated with those resources’ (p. 24), since the latter ‘cannot be perceived by the senses’ (ibid), echoing Tilden’s construct. The role of the interpreter is ‘to help make the connection between the tangible and intangible meanings’ (ibid). The material has pre-eminence, as ‘information about the

tangibles lays the foundation for bringing in the intangibles' (p. 25). This is all in line with Tilden's own thinking. The material is seen as most important, behind it is hidden knowledge, which can be accessed via scientific information about the material. In support of their argument, Beck and Cable also cite in full the definition of interpretation by the National Association for Interpretation (p. 25). The third principle focuses on creating 'a meaningful story' (p. 31) and discusses various ways of creating stories (p. 32ff) that provide ' a whole, yet focused message' (p. 38). The fourth principle on provocation affirms Tilden's own as being about 'prompting' people 'toward broadening his or her horizons and then acting on that newfound breadth' (p. 39), because 'at its most powerful level interpretation can result in changed perspectives and behaviour' (ibid). The declared goal of provocation is therefore attitudinal and/or behavioural change (p. 42). The interpreter's 'convictions' (p. 44) emerge as the overarching principle toward which visitors should be influenced. While the authors acknowledge instances where there is 'conflicting evidence' (p. 45) and unresolved issues, 'when it is clear that…"a thing is right" or "it is wrong", then it must be logically and *forcefully* presented as such' (ibid, my emphasis). This, as with Ham (2013), assigns to interpreters a heightened morality that places their subjective judgment above all else. The fifth principle deals with thematic interpretation, and has been reworded as such (p. 47). A theme is defined as 'a specific message', which 'the interpreter wants the audience members to understand and take away with them' (p. 48). Again the theme therefore aids in the selection of facts that 'develop and support the theme' (ibid), and here, the authors refer to Sam Ham's book *Environmental Interpretation*. Presentation of multiple points of view is acknowledged as a possibility, although it is not

resolved how this sits with the assertion of themes as messages, and the interpretive goal of prompting visitors to a desired behaviour. The sixth principle deals with interpretation for children, teenagers and seniors specifically, and is not considered as part of this review.

From the seventh principle onwards, the principles represent the authors' entirely original contributions. The seventh principle is concerned with how 'interpreters can bring the past alive' (p. 69). The majority of the chapter is dedicated to forms of personal interpretation, but acknowledges that such interpretation of history means 'interpreting *interpretations*' (p. 73), making it 'the interpreter's task…to sort through "the agreed-upon lies" for truth' (ibid). The authors stress that values change through time and with them our interpretations of events and people (ibid), a fact interpreters should 'acknowledge' in their choice of themes (p. 74). Interpreters 'should also be aware of, and sensitive to' (ibid) audiences' differing values and present 'an objective program' (p. 75). There is no further discussion of the heritage values of audiences, or their pre-existing and presumably highly personal connections to sites, or how these can be reconciled with the interpretive concepts built up so far about meaning-making, and the 'mission and interpretive objectives for the site' (p. 78). There is also no guidance or discussion of how the interpreter may achieve such objectivity, leaving the interpreter herself to make the call, as was the case in Ham's discussion on the narrow zone of tolerance (2013). The eighth principle deals with modern technology and its 'proper application' (p. 82). It reinforces the notion of revelation beyond what can be perceived through the senses (ibid), as well as the goal of education (ibid). The ninth principle deals with 'the quantity and quality of information' (p. 97) used in interpretation,

but does not go into detail as to how facts should therefore be selected beyond reiterating the need ‘to accomplish the interpretive objectives’ (p. 99). The principle also focuses on embellishments and ‘myths’, both those perpetuated by interpreters and those held by the public (p. 102ff). Regarding the latter, the principle asserts the existence of a ‘truth’ (p. 103), and it is in service of this truth that interpreters should challenge myths (ibid). The authors paraphrase Costa Dillon’s principles on how to deal with myths (p. 105/6) and conclude that ‘interpreters should eagerly take myths and use them as tools to bring people to the truth’ (p. 106), which is a curiously missionary turn of phrase. The tenth principle is concerned with ‘basic communication techniques’ (p. 107) which every interpreter must master before they can apply art as suggested in principle 3. Principle eleven deals with elements of good writing (p. 117ff), and here the authors emphasise again the importance of the interpreter’s enthusiasm about the subject (p. 118). The twelfth principle notes that in times of budgetary pressures interpreters must prove their ‘essential service providing multiple benefits to individuals, so society, and to the sponsoring organizations’ (p. 125). The authors point to empirical studies since the late 1970s that ‘quantified the benefits of interpretation in reducing vandalism, littering and other visitor impact, and in redistributing visitor use’ (p. 133), and note that together with studies using social psychology theories, interpreters now ‘can claim the ability to serve agency administrators and managers by affecting *the way the public thinks and behaves*’ (ibid, my emphasis). Benefits, therefore, appear framed primarily with regards to management objectives and the protection of sites. The principle thus discusses ways to gain financial, volunteer, political and organisational support (p. 126ff). The thirteenth principle

deals with creating ‘a sympathetic atmosphere’ (p. 142) that ‘prepares visitors to be receptive to beauty’ (p. 137). Although the authors acknowledge that ‘beauty is too personal, too subjective’ (ibid) to be defined, they assert a ‘proper frame of mind’ (p. 142) that is required to ‘maximize the impact of the beauty’ (ibid). Referring back to the second principle, they write that some things are not ‘immediately discernible to the untrained eye’ (ibid), invoking again the concept of the trained expert who shares his insights through interpretation. Consequently, ‘interpreters can help people see, hear, or feel the beauty that is not readily apparent’ (p. 143). The fourteenth principle deals with promoting optimal experiences, described in reference to Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi as ‘a sense of exhilaration, a deep sense of enjoyment’ (p. 147) when we are challenged within our abilities. The authors here describe sites where interpretation generally is offered as places that people visit ‘during their leisure’ (p. 148), although they emphasise that leisure can mean anything ‘from relaxation to pushing oneself to the limits’ (ibid) for different people, a distinction that was not part of the previous discourse on interpretation. The final principle echoes Tilden’s assertion that love is the ‘priceless ingredient’ for interpretation (Tilden 1957, p.89/90), but the authors call it ‘passion’ (p. 155), both for the resource and people (p. 156). Passion ‘plays a role in influencing visitors’ (ibid) as interpreters’ ‘passion for the resource…may bring out a similar passion’(ibid) in visitors. Interpreters’ personal views and feelings are thus given inherent importance in this account of the philosophy of interpretation, and this, I argue, lies at the heart of the authority given to interpreters throughout Beck and Cable’s book regarding making decisions about right and wrong, and objectivity. Why interpreters’ own ‘passion’ should convey such power above and beyond

the passion of visitors is not evident, nor is there reason to believe that interpreters' own positioning and biases may not negatively influence their passion, and subsequently their decisions.

In summary, the review of Beck and Cable's book has emphasised first and foremost the continued importance that Tilden's concepts have in interpretive philosophy. While aiming to 'provide a more elaborate' (p. 7) philosophy, the authors ground this in Tilden's own six principles. These therefore become the framework within which the 'new' principles are developed to respond, primarily, to advances in technology, professional and organisational training requirements, and basic techniques not covered by Tilden. Rather than challenge Tilden's fundamental concepts, these remain in place with regard to the materiality of heritage, the superiority of specialists, the goal of protection, the need for education of the public, an inferior or missing personal connection of the public with sites/heritage and the ensuing need for revelation of meaning through interpretation. Themes are also reasserted as the best approach to interpretation, and there is a strong emphasis on the personal vocation of interpreters that is based on 'passion'. As with Ham (2013) there begins to emerge a dilemma when, for example, the changeability of historical interpretations and values are acknowledged but the implications for the core concepts of interpretation are not expounded upon. Selection of facts based on interpretive objectives and themes is reasserted, leaving a conflict that remains unresolved, while at the same time, much effort is spent drawing on empirical studies to prove Tilden's assertions.

Douglas Knudson, Ted Cable, and Larry Beck, *Interpretation of Cultural and Natural Resources*

Interpretation of Cultural and Natural Resources by Knudson, Cable and Beck (2003) is a comprehensive introduction to and review of interpretation as a profession, while also offering a discussion of interpretive techniques and media, backed by references to academic research. In reflecting on what is interpretation, the authors review various definitions, including Tilden's, and assert, as did previous writers, that '*interpretation* translates or brings meaning to people about natural and cultural environments' (p. 3). In doing so, interpretation goes beyond 'instruction in facts' (p. 4), reiterating Tilden's statement on the matter. Interpreters, the authors write, 'communicate the significance of cultural and natural resources' (ibid), thus supporting the notion of interpretation as communication. In reference to communication theory, the authors write that interpreters 'try to get the message from their head into the visitor's head' (p. 110), where it may stimulate and enable further learning. Communication is 'the essence of interpretation' (ibid), and the authors consequently discuss ways of structuring communication. The message is important in this process, to 'persuade, thereby affecting changes in attitude and behavior [sic]' (p. 113). The authors are clear that 'messages carry normative components, even in the most objective presentations', suggesting 'behaviors [sic] and attitudes that are either acceptable to or advocated by the interpreter' (ibid). This is somewhat in conflict with the authors' acknowledgement that there may be controversy on issues and philosophies, which requires 'careful preparation of factual presentations', allowing for 'differences of opinions and outlook' and making 'fair presentations' (p. 117). They call for more

interpretation to address issues, and to provide ‘an apolitical analysis of current issues and long-range trends’ (p. 123). In doing so, interpreters should call on ‘outside experts’ and an ‘advisory and program committee from among volunteers’ (ibid). The discussion does not, however, examine more deeply what the implications of this are for the established concept of interpretive messages, and the behaviours that interpreters want to encourage. Nor does it acknowledge per se the pre-existence of diverse heritage values held by people regarding certain sites. Rather, the key interpretive principles remain the same as in previous accounts of interpretation. For example, in discussing what should be interpreted, the authors refer to ‘major themes’ (p. 117), which should be based on an ‘inventory of the main features and stories’ as well as the ‘special character of the place’ (p. 118). In this, interpreters are again referred to specialists, the ‘professional historians, archaeologists, and others’ (p. 278), as they gather facts for inclusion in programs, echoing the role that Tilden and others give to specialists. Importantly the authors assert that interpreters ‘*instil* understanding and appreciation’ (p. 4, my emphasis). This again suggests that visitors do not already have an understanding and appreciation of the heritage, or indeed their own sense of its significance.

The authors specify five purposes of interpretation:

- Developing a sense of place
- Enriching experiences
- Meeting mandates
- Producing marketing and management benefits
- Serving the client

(p. 8-10)

Developing a sense of place is about helping ‘visitors to recognize a location as more than just another mountain’ (p. 8) etc. suggesting that they do not already associate such an ‘identity’ (ibid) with a place. Through enriching experiences, interpretation adds ‘value to leisure time and recreational activity’ (p. 9), which again links interpretation with a leisure context, as all previous writers reviewed, including Tilden, have done. In fact, the authors later write that ‘interpretation occurs most often in recreation places during leisure time’ (p. 12), asserting that therefore ‘visitors seek pleasure, fun, and even peak experiences from interpretation’ (ibid).

The purpose of meeting mandates acknowledges the need for interpretation to support management objectives, with the examples given being education, interpretation, and conservation (p. 9). Interpretation’s role in marketing the offer of tourism companies is highlighted under the fourth purpose, as is interpretation’s asserted ability to ‘lower costs of resource protection’ (p. 10), as interpretation influences visitors’ protection behaviour. Interpretation finally serves the purpose of helping visitors, seen here as clients, ‘to develop skills to interpret for themselves’ (ibid) and become ‘skilled amateur interpreters’ (ibid). Through ‘exposure to many interpreters’ visitors become ‘an alert, informed, observant, active citizenry that understands and retells the stories of the cultural and the natural environment’ (ibid). Interpretation thus ‘takes people from passive appreciation to exciting understanding’ (p. 13), a turn of phrase that echoes Tilden’s progression, although it swaps the two concepts around.

The overarching goal of interpretation is ‘stewardship’ (p. 13), i.e. protection, as was the case for Tilden and others. This is again stewardship of

the material (ibid). At the heart of this lies learning, and the book dedicates a chapter to how people learn (p. 131ff). Interpreters, the authors write, are 'informal educators' (p. 131), echoing the distinction between interpretation and formal education, or instruction. The authors also reflect on the benefits that interpretation can bring: knowledge, recreation and inspiration to the individual (p. 49ff), as they write with repeated reference to Tilden. To society interpretation brings informed citizens able to participate in democracy, identification with the landscape and culture, and responsibility toward natural resources (p. 56ff). The authors also give room to the concept of 'the community' using museums as places for 'dialogue', where they can use 'the past to shape the future' (all p. 10), although the above suggests that this use is expected to be confined by the original messages intended by interpreters, and the purposes of interpretation, including stewardship of the material.

In summary, Knudsen, Cable and Beck go a long way to consider the complex and diverse contexts in which interpretation operates today. They refer to many of the same benefits that can be found in current heritage legislation and policy, as I will show in Chapter 4, from national identity to community building. They advocate interpretation of controversial issues and call for interpretive centres to become sites of community discussion. Nevertheless, the underlying concepts as they were established by Tilden's book remain the same, and the contradictions arising from this remain unresolved. Heritage is seen as material, visitors are conceptualised as having no connection to heritage and as visiting as part of their recreation, thus looking for fun and possibly learning. Specialists and their research are the source of objective knowledge, which must guide interpretation. The ultimate goal of interpretation is

protection, toward which interpreters, through messages, must seek to influence visitors' attitudes and behaviour.

Professional Interpretation Associations

The following section reviews the definitions of interpretation put forward by the major established professional associations for interpretation, and maps any references to Freeman Tilden's book *Interpreting Our Heritage*, or the concepts that have been further crystallised by subsequent textbooks on interpretation as reviewed above. The associations are, in order of formation:

- Interpretation Canada (IC)
- Association for Heritage Interpretation (AHI), UK
- National Association of Interpretation (NAI), USA
- Interpretation Australia (IA)
- European Association for Heritage Interpretation/Interpret Europe (IE)

Interpretation Canada

Interpretation Canada (IC) was established in 1973 (Merriman & Brochu 2006, p.53). It acknowledges that 'no single definition can capture the vibrant …practice' (Interpretation Canada n.d.) of interpretation in Canada, but cites its definition of 1976 as still in use. This definition describes interpretation as 'any communication process designed to *reveal meanings* and relationships…to the public' (ibid, my emphasis), in language similar to Tilden's, suggesting that these meanings and relationships do not already exist for the public. The 'meanings and relationships' may be understood as related to the 'learning experiences

and feelings of connection' that interpreters create, emphasising the learning and behavioural outcomes for interpretation. The definition also emphasises the material: 'an object, artefact, landscape or site' (ibid), and, like Tilden, it invokes the importance of 'first-hand' (ibid) exposure to this material. 'Stewardship' is created by interpretation also, alongside learning and feelings of connection, which is reminiscent of Tilden's progression from understanding to appreciation to protection. Overall, therefore, we find in the definition of interpretation used by IC the same concepts as in Tilden, although Tilden himself is not mentioned. These concepts are of heritage as material, visitors lacking existing meanings and connections, and the need for interpretation to therefore educate the public. The outcome is stewardship through learning and personal connections.

Association for Heritage Interpretation

In the United Kingdom, the Association for Heritage Interpretation (AHI) was established in 1975 as the Society for the Interpretation of Britain's Heritage (Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d). AHI write that interpreters 'bring places, objects and ideas to life' (Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.), which suggests that without interpretation, they would either somehow be 'dead' or inaccessible in their relevance to contemporary life. Inherent in this may be a notion of 'the past' as completed and distant, as is often implied in the amended version of this expression, to 'bring history/the past to life'. AHI cites Tilden's definition in full as 'still one of the clearest insights into the role of the interpreter' (Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.). Their own definition describes interpretation as a communication process that 'helps people make sense of, and understand more about, *your* site, collection or event' (Association for

Heritage Interpretation n.d. my emphasis). Interpretation can, AHI write, 'bring meaning to *your*…resource' (Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d. my emphasis), and '*reveal* hidden stories or meanings' (Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d. my emphasis). AHI thus echo Tilden's view of heritage as not already having meaning for visitors, using similar language. Like Tilden's account, AHI's description of interpretation suggests that visitors, and communities, are not already knowledgeable about heritage. This knowledge is again viewed as 'hidden' in the material, thus requiring interpretation. In fact, AHI write that interpretation 'enable[s] communities to better understand *their* heritage' (Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d. my emphasis), which may produce as a result that individuals 'identify with lost values inherent in *their* culture' (ibid, my emphasis). Both sentences express the notion that the communities themselves have somehow 'lost' something, either specifically, like values, or in terms of understanding/knowledge. In contrast, interpretation is in possession of that knowledge. Of particular interest is also the use of the possessive pronoun in the first quotes: *your* site, *your* resource, asserting a position of ownership of the heritage. While this is no doubt due in part to a desire to highlight the benefits of interpretation to an organisation, it also perpetuates the ultimate exclusion of visitors from such ownership of heritage, and, as we have seen, knowledge about it. In combination, inherent in this account is also the view that heritage, or values, do not and should not change or cease to be important to a community. Again, the key outcome of interpretation is protection, or 'care' (ibid). AHI mirror here the mechanism that Tilden quoted: interpretation can '[enhance] visitor appreciation and [promote] better understanding. As a result your visitors are more likely to care' (ibid).

Highlighting further the benefits of interpretation to organisations, AHI stress that interpretation 'will lead to increased income and create employment' (ibid) through encouraging repeat visits and longer dwelling times. AHI stress as a general quality of interpreters 'passion' (ibid), echoing Tilden's quote regarding the love of the interpreter for the resource and people, and indeed the choice of word by Beck and Cable (2002). Overall, AHI directly refer to Tilden in positioning their understanding of interpretation. The concepts are the same, although layers are added that develop them further: heritage is not only material, its unchanging character is also specifically affirmed as communities are hoped to rediscover the 'hidden' values they 'lost'. People are not only assumed to not have pre-existing connections to heritage and meanings associated with it; they are also directly excluded from concepts of ownership of this heritage. Learning and behavioural outcomes around understanding, appreciation, protection, as well as repeat visits are the key outcomes for interpretation.

The National Association for Interpretation

The National Association for Interpretation (NAI) in the United States was established in 1988 (Merriman & Brochu 2006, p.47). It defines interpretation as 'a mission-based communication process' (National Association for Interpretation n.d.), which places interpretive objectives at the heart of the work of interpretation. The definition continues that interpretation 'forges emotional connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource' (ibid). Although NAI does not refer to Tilden, the elements of this definition mirror Tilden's concepts: again there is the assumption that people do

not already have connections with heritage, and must rely on interpretation to establish these. There is also the notion of ‘meanings’ that are within, or ‘inherent’ in the resource, or the material, which is reminiscent of Tilden’s ‘hidden truth’ behind what one can perceive. The implication is once more that people require interpretation to access these meanings, and that without this support, their own engagement remains inferior and insufficient. The reference to the audience’s interests is also reflective of Tilden’s first principle, which requires interpretation to ‘relate’ to visitors’ personalities and experiences.

Interpretation Australia

Interpretation Australia (IA) was established in 1992 (Merriman & Brochu 2006, p.53). IA stress that ‘interpretation brings places to life’ (Interpretation Australia n.d.), which suggests that they remain otherwise ‘lifeless’ and distant, or inaccessible. IA write that interpretation ‘communicates ideas, information and knowledge’ to help visitors to ‘make sense of their environment’ (ibid). This suggests that without this interpretive offer, visitors may find it difficult to understand that same environment, which implies that they are lacking a substantial existing connection to that environment that would enable them to ‘make sense’ of it. IE list four points that characterise good interpretation. According to these, interpretation should make visitors’ experiences ‘more meaningful and enjoyable’ (ibid), although it is not further clarified how both ‘meaningful’ and ‘enjoyable’ might be measured. Interpretation should also ‘assist the visitor to develop a keener awareness, appreciation and understanding’ (ibid) in a turn of phrase reminiscent of Tilden’s progression from understanding via appreciation to protection. In fact, the following point asserts

that interpretation should encourage ‘thoughtful use of the resource’ (ibid), which may hint at a protection outcome, and includes a direct suggestion of desired behaviour. In achieving this, interpretation supports ‘management objectives’, which is further emphasised in the final point. According to this, interpretation should ‘promote public understanding of heritage management organisations and their programs’ (ibid). The implication appears to be that conservation and protection are the objectives of these organisations and programs, and thus of interpretation itself. IA does not refer to Tilden. However, the underlying concepts invoked are the same: visitors are viewed as lacking connections to heritage, and requiring the support of interpretation. Protection is the ultimate goal of interpretation, through encouraging a certain behaviour.

European Association for Heritage Interpretation/Interpret Europe

The European Association for Heritage Interpretation/Interpret Europe (IE) was founded in 2010 (European Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.). On its webpage ‘Interpretation defined’ IE cite Tilden’s definition in full as the only definition discussed, and write that ‘his key principles are still widely adopted’ (European Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.). Their own definition sees interpretation as ‘a structured approach to non-formal education’ (European Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.), which highlights the educational nature of interpretation. IE, like Tilden, contrast interpretation to formal, or classroom education. IE emphasise the ‘leisure’ (ibid) context and interpretation’s ‘informality and personal approach’ (European Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.). The definition continues that interpretation, as non-formal education, is ‘specialised in communicating significant ideas about a

place to people', through which it 'establishes a link between visitors and…heritage sites' (European Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.). Again this implies that visitors are not already connected to sites through their own associated 'significant ideas', thus requiring the help of interpretation, and the 'education' it provides. The definition focuses on 'place', using as examples 'a nature reserve, a historic site, or a museum', and further on 'objects' (ibid), which suggests a material concept of heritage. IE continue to state outcomes of interpretation in language that is directly reflective of Tilden, yet without referencing him. IE write that interpretation '*provokes* visitors' curiosity and interest', '*relates* the site or objects to visitors' own knowledge, experience, background and values' and '*reveals* the significance…which visitors can *understand* and *appreciate*' (ibid, my emphasis). Although protection is not specifically mentioned in IE's definition of interpretation, conservation is cited as a key benefit of interpretation for site managers (European Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.). Overall, Tilden's influence on IE's thinking is evident through the full mention of his definition, as well as phrases that echo Tilden's own principles. The concepts that are used are the same: of heritage as material, of underlying meanings that are not readily accessible to visitors, of visitors lacking significant ideas about and links to sites, and of interpretation providing the necessary education.

The Interpretive AHD

The above review of interpretation literature and definitions of interpretation used by professional membership associations has revealed key characteristics of an interpretation-specific discourse, which is based on Freeman Tilden's book

Interpreting Our Heritage and which, as I will show in the next chapter, is rooted in the AHD as described by Smith (2006) and Waterton (2005; 2010). Heritage is primarily seen as material, and much emphasis is placed on 'firsthand [sic] experience' (Tilden 1957, p.8) of this material, a notion that is carried through much of interpretive discourse, even using exactly the same language (see for example Interpretation Canada n.d.). Related to this is the idea that a 'larger truth' (Tilden 1957, p.8) lies behind the material, also described as 'meanings inherent in the resource' (National Association for Interpretation n.d.). Tilden's concept of interpretation as 'revealing meanings and relationships' (Tilden 1957, p.8) is consequently a particularly prominent and oft repeated pillar of the IAHD (e.g. Ham 2013; Veverka 1994; Beck & Cable 2002; Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.; National Association for Interpretation n.d.; Interpretation Australia n.d.).

For Tilden, it is 'specialists' (Tilden 1957, p.23) that have the knowledge about what this meaning is, and this privileged position of knowledge is asserted for experts in other writings as well (see for example Ham 2013). Correspondingly, the interpretive AHD frames visitors as lacking sufficient, or the *right* kind of knowledge about heritage, and connection with it. This lack of connection between people and heritage is for example implicit in the view that people visit heritage sites only for 'enjoyment' (Tilden 1957, p.29) and as part of a leisure activity, which is another key concept of the IAHD that is prominent in nearly all accounts of interpretation (Ham 1992; Ham 2013; Veverka 1994; Beck & Cable 2002; Knudson et al. 2003; European Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.).

Since visitors lack both knowledge of and connection with heritage, education of the public becomes a central concept of the interpretive discourse. Tilden defined interpretation as an 'educational activity' (Tilden 1957, p.8), and direct reference to education can be found in several accounts and definitions (see for example Beck & Cable 2002; European Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.). However, it may be argued that indirectly, education is part of all interpretation literature reviewed, either as visitor learning (e.g. Veverka 1994) or as part of mechanisms to change behaviours (e.g. Ham 2013).

Tilden made much of the distinction of interpretation from instruction or 'classroom' education (Tilden 1957, p.3), and subsequent writers have continued to stress this difference (Ham 1992; Ham 2013; Beck & Cable 2002; European Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.). This ultimately also establishes interpretation as a central management tool to make sites more attractive and enjoyable in a leisure market as it 'enhances experiences' (e.g. Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.). In this market, heritage emerges as one offer among many.

Much interpretation literature invokes Tilden's progression from understanding to appreciation to protection (Tilden 1957, p.38), either quoting Tilden's terms directly (e.g. Beck & Cable 2002) or using similar ones (e.g. Veverka 1994; Interpretation Canada n.d.; European Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.). Protection, or conservation, largely remains constant as what Tilden called 'the most important end' of interpretation (Tilden 1957, p.37/8). Inherent in Tilden's progression are also the subordinate goals of attitudinal and behavioural change: appreciation is an attitude that is sought to be cultivated, while protection is the result of the desired behaviour. Both,

attitudinal change and behavioural change, remain as major goals in interpretation literature, albeit not always by that name (e.g. Ham 2013).

The concept of interpretation as communication (see for example Interpretation Canada n.d. (1976)) is another key pillar of the interpretive AHD. Of the authors reviewed, Ham (1992) is the first to expand on this, but other authors have followed suit (see for example Knudson et al. 2003). Communication theory, alongside psychology, is applied to prove Tilden's principles and to show how interpretation can be more effective in achieving its desired outcomes. This is communication toward specific ends, and it continues to be inherently educational as it enhances 'understanding', as Tilden wrote at the beginning of his progression toward protection. In this process of communication, interpreters' role is that of 'middlemen' (Tilden 1957, p.4) between the specialists that have the knowledge about the meaning behind the material, and the public, who lack this knowledge and the ability to understand specialists directly. In subsequent texts this act performed by interpreters becomes more bluntly referred to as 'translation' (e.g. Ham 1992; Veverka 1994). Interpretation is therefore framed entirely around the material site and its meanings as understood by experts, in addition to more recently, the objectives of the managing organisation (see for example National Association for Interpretation n.d.; Ham 2013). The latter places further emphasis on the need for interpretation as communication to be 'persuasive' (Ham 2013).

This brings us to another central concept of the IAHD, which is that of 'themes', which visitors should be able to repeat after having engaged with interpretation. Themes are already implied in Tilden's principles relating to 'story', and are subsequently included in all interpretive textbooks, often linked

with the idea of 'messages' (see particularly Ham 1992; Ham 2013, but also Veverka 1994; Beck & Cable 2002). In addition, the outcomes of interpretation, continually re-asserted to be conservation, attitudinal and behavioural change through informal education (see also Skibins et al. 2012), and achieving management objectives including enhanced visitor experiences (e.g. Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d), also require the practice of persuasive communication via themes and messages.

The concept of 'meaning-making' has received particular emphasis in more recent interpretation discourse (Knudson et al. 2003; Ham 2013), which is connected to the idea of 'provocation'. Both originate with Tilden's fourth principle, according to which interpretation is 'not instruction, but provocation' (Tilden 1957, p.32). Provocation continues to be referred to in interpretation literature (Ham 2013; European Association for Heritage Interpretation n.d.), generally quoting Tilden as 'the provocation to the visitor to search out meanings for himself' (Tilden 1957, p.36). In more recent writing, 'meaning-making' has been connected to education and communication theory as well as psychology to assert that interpretation does not aim to *put something into* the minds of visitors (Ham 2013, p.7). Empirical studies are employed to prove the impossibility of such an act, while showing how techniques may be used to still make communication persuasive (Ham 2013) to achieve interpretation's desired outcomes. The inherent conflict remains unresolved: interpretation is required to make a *selection* of facts in support of themes that will communicate specific messages and achieve specific outcomes such as attitudinal and behavioural change (see for example Veverka 1994; Beck & Cable 2002), while visitors' autonomy in making meaning is asserted at the same time.

The interpretive AHD views interpreters as having, or requiring to have, certain characteristics, which Tilden described as ‘love’ (Tilden 1957, p.94) for the place they interpret and the people for whom they interpret, and what Beck and Cable (2002, p.155) reassert as ‘passion’. Beck and Cable write that interpretation ‘isn’t a job or occupation, but rather a way of life’ (Beck & Cable 2002, p.158). Beck and Cable, and also Tilden frequently quote the bible and refer to ‘God’ in this context, thus aligning interpretive philosophy with the morality of religion.

The IAHD also has an impact on the types of empirical studies that are undertaken. Many reference Tilden (e.g. Ballantyne et al. 2013; Moscardo 1996) and some are set up specifically to examine the effectiveness of the application of Tilden’s principles (e.g. Ham 2009). This effectiveness is measured by the outcomes of interpretation asserted in interpretation philosophy, and consequently studies test knowledge gain, or understanding/learning (e.g. Ballantyne et al. 2013; Cameron & Gatewood 2000; Ham 2007; Henker & Brown 2011; Lee 1998; Wiles & Hall 2005), attitudinal change (e.g. Knapp & Barrie 1998; Stern & Powell 2013b; Wiles & Hall 2005) and behavioural change (e.g. Ballantyne et al. 2013; Hall et al. 2010; Moscardo 1996). Studies also use the overarching outcome of stewardship or conservation attitudes as a measurement of success (Ballantyne et al. 2013; Henker & Brown 2011; Hughes et al. 2013b; Lowenthal 1999). While some studies that are framed within the IAHD reveal that the effectiveness of asserted principles in achieving traditional outcomes cannot be conclusively proven (Skibins et al. 2012; Stewart et al. 1998), this does not constitute a challenge to the IAHD’s underlying concepts.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to test my hypothesis that the current discourse of interpretation is based on Freeman Tilden's book *Interpreting Our Heritage* (1957), which itself is rooted in the AHD. The chapter has shown that key concepts of the AHD are indeed evident in Tilden's account of interpretation, and include a material understanding of heritage, a focus on expert identification, and the aim of educating a public that is assumed less knowledgeable. The chapter has traced Tilden's ideas through subsequent interpretation literature and revealed an interpretation-specific AHD with the following key concepts:

- Heritage as material
- Experts as possessing the sole 'true' knowledge of heritage
- The public as requiring education about heritage and lacking a meaningful connection
- The interpreter as 'translator' between experts and the public, and creating a connection between the heritage and the public
- Interpretation as informal education
- Interpretation as communication
- Interpretation as 'meaning-making'
- Interpretation as provocation
- Themes and messages as the core of interpretation
- Interpreters and interpretive messages as inherently moral
- Conservation as the overarching aim of interpretation, supported by the aims of learning/knowledge gain, enhanced experiences,

attitudinal and behavioural change, and achieving management objectives.

The discussion in this chapter of key textbooks of interpretation, and definitions used by professional interpretation associations has highlighted several unresolved tensions and inconsistencies within the interpretive AHD, and raised challenges to the IAHD's key concepts as presented in the list above. In particular, I have challenged the notion that visitors to sites, and the public in general, do not already have deeply meaningful connections to the heritage, and knowledge about it. On this basis, I have questioned whether interpretation can indeed be framed as education, with the associated positions of power given to 'experts' and the interpreter. I have also challenged the notion that interpretation as communication is different from other types of communication. Furthermore, I have highlighted the continued ethical concerns relating to thematic interpretation engaged in communicating messages that are ultimately intended to prompt desired attitudes and behaviours in people.

Based on the review and discussion in this chapter, I argue that the IAHD does not, and cannot, respond to the challenges raised from within critical heritage studies, the aspirations for public benefit as asserted in heritage legislation and policy, or to contemporary events that concern our societies. In order to test this further, I now turn to a review of the relevant developments in critical heritage studies, before reviewing legislation and policy in Chapter 4.

3. CRITICAL HERITAGE: CHALLENGES TO WESTERN CONCEPTS

This chapter reviews key developments within critical heritage studies to test my hypothesis that there is currently a lack of critical engagement by interpretation discourse with critiques emerging from critical heritage studies. In the previous chapter, I have already highlighted some concerns that emerge in this regard from the IAHD. I have argued that as a consequence, current interpretive philosophy and practice is fundamentally compromised and in danger of becoming irrelevant in the context of current academic debate about heritage, the public benefits of heritage as asserted in legislation and policy, and contemporary political and social environments.

Central to my argument is the notion of the AHD, and it is to this that I turn first in testing my hypothesis. Subsequent critiques are loosely clustered in thematic categories that relate to the key issues with the interpretive AHD that I have highlighted in the previous chapter.

The Authorized Heritage Discourse

Smith (2006) formulated a key critique of the Authorized Heritage Discourse, or AHD. Smith upholds the argument that 'discourse is both reflective of and constitutive of social practices' (p. 16), a notion that goes back to Michel Foucault. Foucault, as Hall (2013c, p.29) notes, asserts that it is discourse that both 'defines and produces' knowledge, by governing the ways in which a topic can be talked about and in which the objects of knowledge can be understood. Smith calls the AHD a 'professional discourse' that 'privileges expert values and knowledge' as well as 'material manifestations' (p. 4). It thus 'dominates and

regulates professional heritage practices' (p. 4), obscuring other possible understandings and approaches in what Smith calls the AHD's 'naturalizing [sic] effects' (p. 11). A glance at Historic England's National Heritage List illustrates this highly specialist discourse that identifies and determines what heritage is, and its focus on materiality. Amended in September 2014, the entry for Castle Hill House in Kent gives the reasons for listing as follows:

> *'Architectural interest: for its quality of composition, detailing, distinctive plan form and outstanding interior joinery, rococo plaster ceilings and marble fireplaces, of more than special interest; * Intactness: little altered externally, except for the addition of an early C19 curved bay. Internally nine or ten rooms retain significant C18 or early C19 fittings; * Historic interest: the home of numerous mayors and town clerks of Dover and the constituency home in the 1930s of John Jacob Astor, the newspaper proprietor; * Rarity of type: it is the only large detached C18 house in Dover; * Group Value: no. 5 was built as an annexe of the main house by the owner of Castle Hill House, who was the town clerk of Dover, to carry out his duties from there, and it is internally linked with no. 7.' (Historic England 2014)*

Smith's views on the naturalising effects of discourse echo the workings of myth as described by Roland Barthes (1957), which can further illustrate the manipulative power of discourse where it remains unchallenged. Myth, Barthes writes, is a second-order semiological system, a metalanguage (p.115), in which an existing meaning becomes a mere signifier (p.114). Presented and accepted as signifier, the first-order meaning thus introduces a connotation into the second-order communication (Hall 2013c, p.23), which, if unchallenged, 'is immediately frozen into something natural; it is not read as a motive, but as a reason' (Barthes 1957, p.129). In other words, the listing entry above becomes accepted as the exclusive ways in which heritage can be identified, understood, and subsequently managed.

Smith (2006, p.15) further maintains, like Foucault, that discourses ‘constrain and constitute the various relationships between people’. Hall (2013c, p.39) notes that for Foucault, ‘the “subject” is produced within discourse’. Hall uses Foucault’s example of sexuality to illustrate that the subject of ‘the homosexual’ could only emerge within the 19th century discourses surrounding ‘sexual perversity’ (p. 31). Prior to these discourses of morality, legality, medicine and psychology, ‘“the homosexual” as a specific kind of social subject’ (Hall 2013c, p.31) did not exist. In parallel to this production of the subject, Hall notes that for Foucault, discourse also produced ‘subject-positions’ (Hall 2013c, p.40) which assign the place participants in the discourse need to occupy in order to make sense of it. Participants in Hall’s example are the reader or viewer (p. 40). Applied to the AHD, the subjects most visibly produced are that of the ‘expert’ as opposed to ‘the public’ or ‘the visitor’. In order to make sense of, and participate in the AHD, subjects must occupy one of these positions. Hall highlights Foucault’s emphasis on the resulting power/knowledge relationships, when he writes that, ‘[The subject] must submit to [the discourse’s] rules and conventions, to its dispositions of power/knowledge’ (Hall 2013c, p.39). In our example of expert vs. visitor, this includes the assumption of the expert’s greater knowledge along with their greater care for heritage, and the visitor’s need to be educated in order to partake in this care. In fact, returning to the listing example from Historic England, the expert’s role is evident and strongly re-asserted by this specialist discourse. To non-experts that are not conversant with this discourse’s methods and terminology, only the role of one to be educated remains open. This, then, is also a key critique that Smith (2006) levels against the AHD: it assumes that only the educated can

appreciate heritage without further help (p. 21), while all other audiences are cast as passive and awaiting instruction (p. 31). This, as I have shown in the previous chapter, is a fundamental element in the discourse of interpretation. This discourse too leaves little space for non-experts and non-interpreters to occupy roles other than those that are ultimately about receiving education. While interpretation discourse follows along these lines, it makes it nearly impossible for ‘visitors’ or ‘the public’ to challenge and influence not only the discourse on interpretation, but also its practical expressions, a point that is further illustrated below.

Another subject that Smith (2006) notes within the AHD are ‘communities’ (p. 72), which are generally defined through geographical proximity to sites. This suggests that such physical closeness equals a close cultural connection. Smith challenges this notion, pointing to modern migration patterns that mean dispersed communities can still ‘share cultural, social or historical experiences’ (p. 72) that are centred on a distant site, a fact that I have found to be the case in my work at Culloden Battlefield in Scotland, as described above, and which is also evident in Basu’s (2007) study of roots tourism to the Scottish Highlands. As Smith (1991, p.23) notes for ethnic communities and their connection to place, ‘it is the attachments and associations, rather than residence in or possession of the land that matters’. Waterton and Smith (2010, p.5) continue this critique and stress that the concept of community is artificially presented as homogenous, thus negating and dismissing the diverse views present within a community in what they call a ‘misrecognition of stakeholders’ (p. 5) This misrecognition is also evident in the failure to acknowledge and represent the varied meanings that diverse audiences bring to sites (see p. 110 in this thesis).

Waterton and Smith argue that this concept of community as homogenous reinforces the power relations of the AHD between experts and communities. It is certainly true that a diverse and heterogeneous community, and one that is geographically dispersed, will struggle to occupy a position of power and assertiveness in comparison to that of specialist experts who share similar, if not equal professional discourses and opinions. This then reinforces the notion that only experts are able to make coherent decisions on heritage management, and should do so on behalf of fragmented communities that appear continually unable to reach consensus. Smith (2006) acknowledges that the AHD changes over time and is different in different cultural contexts. And yet, 'there is nonetheless a particular focus and emphasis – primarily the attention it gives to "things"' (p. 4). As a professional discourse that governs what is considered the professional management of heritage, as envisaged by those organisations charged with, for example, the management of a nation's heritage, this certainly appears to continue to hold true. Historic England's aims continue to be to 'secure the preservation of ancient monuments and historic buildings' (Historic England 2015, p.2), and as the next section shows, experts still dominate its management.

Practical Impacts of the AHD

Waterton (2005, p.319) argues that through a focus on materiality, experts occupy a position of power which excludes the public from decisions about how heritage is identified and managed. As I shall show in the following chapter, there is evidence of this in current policy. For example, the most recent *Operational Guidelines* for the *World Heritage Convention* (UNESCO 2013)

stress in paragraph 23 that decisions are ‘based on objective and scientific considerations’, which depend on ‘evaluation by qualified experts’ and ‘the use of expert referees’. English Heritage’s Corporate Plan 2011 -2015 (2011, p.23, my emphasis) states as part of the organisation’s work to ‘pass on our *expertise* through interpretation at our sites, training and guidance for people working in heritage’. This emphasis on being experts in heritage is repeated in the new Historic England’s Corporate Plan (Historic England 2015, p.2), which states as the organisation’s work to ‘pass on our expertise’. In fact, Historic England ‘are the government’s independent *expert* advisory service for England’s historic environment’ (Historic England 2015, p.5, my emphasis). It is not evident where in these frameworks of expert identification of heritage, designation, advice and management the public are to take a role in managing *their* heritage, as envisaged even by organisations’ own policies, such as English Heritage’s *Conservation Principles* (2008). Even within UNESCO’s *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2003), which relies so centrally on the public’s and individuals’ involvement in identifying and managing intangible heritage, there appears to be weariness in passing authority from experts to communities: Article 15 merely requires State Parties to ‘endeavour’ to include communities in the management of intangible heritage practices. In fact, it is still experts that control the avenues open to ‘the public’ to become involved in heritage management. It is thus they who set the parameters for such community involvement, and it is they who invite – or not – the public’s input. It is also up to them to decide what to ultimately do with this input (see also Fouseki 2010). Given the institutional structures that continue to entrench, rather than break up, the position and role of experts it is indeed

questionable whether this input is given the same weight as experts' own values (see also Waterton 2010), and whether the public is currently empowered to stage a serious challenge to expert values. The listing of Culloden Battlefield on the inventory of historic battlefields is a good case in point. The significance assessment of the battlefield undertaken by the National Trust for Scotland, who manage the site, emphasises the site's iconic status (National Trust for Scotland nd). This status is due to its emotional associations, the representation of Scottish identity and the sense of nationhood in the eyes of many, and its spiritual significance and importance for the descendants of the Scottish Diaspora. And yet, three quarters of the entry on the inventory of historic battlefields focus on its historical significance: it was the last pitched battle fought on the British mainland and the last battle of the Jacobite Risings (Historic Scotland 2011). Reference to what the National Trust's significance statement acknowledged as being the values held by people, although not necessarily historically accurate, is largely absent in Historic Scotland's own Statement of Significance as part of the inventory listing. Only at the very end does it mention that 'the site holds a particularly high significance and emotional connection' for many Scots and the Scottish Diaspora (Historic Scotland 2011, p.1). However, this 'emotional connection' is mentioned only very briefly as part of the *consequences* of the battle, rather than in relation to the battle itself. In focusing its significance statement on the battle itself, the listing effectively deprives it of its importance to those people for whom it represents heritage. The aftermath is historically qualified and thus depreciated, as the statement presents the links to the battle as a historic event as weak. To challenge this assessment, the heritage community would have to either formulate a historical

argument and thus engage in a debate based on historical interpretations, or they would have to challenge the very notion of historical truth, and the AHD as a whole. Both are nearly insurmountable tasks for lay people, which means that in effect those aspects which make Culloden Battlefield *heritage* to the heritage community become muted, if not suppressed entirely in the site's official recognition. Since interpretation discourse is part of the same discursive formation, these aspects of non-official heritage also become invisible in the site's presentation. If we accept that while Historic Scotland's statement of significance for Culloden Battlefield may have captured its *historical* significance, but not its *heritage* value to the heritage community, this then suggests that rather than interpret *heritage*, current interpretive practice based on the AHD rather interprets *history*.

Similarly, expert specialisms continue to be embedded in professional heritage management. A Spring 2015 job description for a 'Designation Adviser' for Historic England (Reference number 7357) required experience of 'specialist assessment', as well as a 'degree in a relevant subject' and 'knowledge of a specialist aspect of the historic environment', which was further detailed as 'archaeology, architectural and building history, history of landscape, designed landscape, battlefields or marine/maritime heritage'. Of particular interest is the required 'commitment to championing the interest of the historic environment to the public at large', while no such commitment or experience is required regarding working with or understanding the heritage values held by the public. With such emphasis on specialisms and material values, and without any apparent structural commitment to public and intangible heritage values, it does not appear feasible that public values could meaningfully and convincingly be

incorporated into management processes, and diverse audiences appropriately catered for (see also below, especially p. 365). Even in recruitment for positions with substantial responsibility for public impacts, specialisms that are not about public engagement regularly dominate. In the museums sector, directors and managers are recruited widely on their subject specialisms, rather than their knowledge and experience of public heritage and interpretation. Neil MacGregor, for example, the former Director of the British Museum, studied 17th and 19th century art, and was for six years lecturer in the History of Art and Architecture at the University of Reading (British Museum n.d.). As we will see later on, the Museum's manager at Varusschlacht in Germany is a trained archaeologist (Derks 2012). In other words, institutions recruit based on expert specialisms, which encourages decisions based on subject-specific expert assessment. Very often, they further desire and thus privilege outputs of expert research in a particular subject.

Crucially, this expertise is expertise clustered around the material. It is elevated to the determining authorized criteria for obtaining a role in heritage processes and obtaining decision-making power. Ultimately, therefore, it appears that final decisions on heritage management remain in the hands of experts. As Harrison (2013, p.224ff) argued, this division between lay people and experts needs to be broken down again, however. This needs to happen both structurally in terms of the processes that are put in place, and institutionally, with regard to the experience and expertise that is required for professional heritage management roles. Neither can happen, as the start of this chapter has shown, without a fundamental change in the underlying

discourses of heritage. These changes have begun to take shape, and it is to these that I turn next.

Heritage as non-material: Indigenous critiques

Waterton (2005, p.309/10) notes that the central challenges to the Western AHD came from post-colonial nations. These challenges were directed both at notions of the materiality of heritage, and of the ways in which heritage is subsequently managed. Kaplan (1994, p.26ff) for example discusses the *Te Maori* exhibition in New Zealand in the 1980s, which led to wide-spread criticism from the Maori community. Objects on display derived their 'primary value' (p. 28) not from their materiality, but their spiritual connection to the ancestors. Consequently, ethnographical and artistic interpretations of the objects, that is, a focus on their material attributes within the exhibition, were 'nonsense' and 'academic invention' (p. 28) in the eyes of the Maori community. Harrison (2013, p.118ff) reviews the challenge posed by the original owners to the UNESCO listing as a natural site of Uluru/Tjukurpa National Park World Heritage Site, which led to the inclusion of the concept of cultural landscapes and the site's subsequent re-designation. What emerges here is a challenge specifically to the notion of materiality in the Western AHD. What these indigenous communities highlight is the non-material value that heritage holds for people. They do not suggest that the material is irrelevant: rather, the material is both a visible expression of that which matters, and its carrier. It is *not*, however, itself what holds value. As Kreps (2003, p.148) notes, indigenous critiques of the AHD emphasise the cultural context of objects, and the possibility of change. Transferral or loss of value is a distinct possibility, a notion that is alien to the

AHD, whose material view of heritage fixes its value indefinitely and independent of people. Based in the AHD, the interpretive AHD is consequently similarly ill prepared to reflect and present the idea of change in heritage value.

The non-material values of objects and sites also raise challenges to their study, display and management. Graber (1999) in a review of the Burns-Paiute Tribe v. Fred E. Moore case notes that the tribe viewed the removal of burial objects for study as invasion of privacy of the dead person, whose journey was thus disturbed. Objects were considered as having been buried for spiritual reasons and they should therefore be left alone, rather than excavated for scientific study. In fact, in a similar context, Dumont (2003) cites a member of the Klamath Tribes as saying ‘I call it grave robbing; they call it archaeology’. More poignantly, Dumont notes that treatment of native remains as ‘archaeological data’ (p. 115) is in fact a political argument that constitutes a value judgment about native cultures. This illustrates again the power of discourse to shape the world according to its own concepts: in studying, and presenting, native remains as scientific data, native values and cultures are colonised and subjugated to the scientist’s cultural frameworks. Conscious effort is therefore required to reflect on processes that are rooted in the discourses that govern our actions and ways of thinking, particularly in a public-facing practice such as interpretation. However, current interpretive discourse does not highlight these issues, but rather places its faith in interpreters’ inherent morality and good intentions. This is not to suggest that, with regard to native cultures, the field of interpretation is not aware of issues. The September/October 2015 issue of *Legacy*, the magazine of the National Association of Interpretation (NAI) for example is dedicated to interpreting

native cultures, and acknowledges the importance of using nuanced language (Redfield 2015) and the (mis)perceptions of authenticity (Asselta Castro 2015). What this does, however, is also shine a light on the absence of such critical considerations, and subsequent guidance, in the IAHD and the textbooks that reaffirm it.

The above indigenous challenges to how heritage should be understood and managed also lead to different museological practices. Kreps (2009) highlights that some indigenous communities do not wish to see public access to all aspects of their culture, a point that is also raised by Kaeppler (1994, p.22) who cites the example of some objects within Pacific Island culture that are only shown to the initiated, usually men. Kreps (2003, p.148) refers to the Hoopa Tribal Museum in California, which allows objects to be taken out by owners for use in ceremonies. Here, therefore, objects retain their uses, despite being otherwise shown as material culture within museological frameworks. Where limitations are placed on displays, for example regards who may be allowed to see the objects, these limitations too are an expression of the lived culture of which they are part, as this practice continues to carry meaning for the heritage community. Objects on display are thus not removed from the culture that created and imbued them with meaning; it is that culture's discourse that governs their display, rather than a discourse that isolates the material and decontextualizes it (Kreps 2003, p.148).

Heritage as non-material: Critiques from Western contexts

Waterton (2005, p.309/10) argues that the challenges to the AHD that have emerged from post-colonial nations should not be confined to these. In her own case study in Northumberland National Park, Waterton found that similarly to indigenous communities, the local community also felt a sense of marginalisation and disempowerment with regard to the management by the Park Authority of the Linn, a local burn (p. 315). The Linn, however, was an intrinsic part of the daily life and identity of the community, which immediately challenges the assumption within the AHD that heritage (the Linn) does not have an existing meaning for and importance in the community. Just as became apparent for example in the Aboriginal challenge to the original UNESCO listing of Uluru/Tjukurpa National Park, place and the interaction with it is clearly also a concern for people and communities in the West (see also Schofield 2014). This also emerges in Basu's (2007) examination of roots tourism to the Scottish Highlands. In Basu's study, people described their journey as a pilgrimage (p. 55ff) in language that denotes their emotional experience of it (p. 59). Basu notes the power of visiting the physical place identified as 'home' (p. 158) and gives examples of people leaving things behind, such as the Canadian woman on a visit to Skye who left a ring (e.g. p. 10). This emotional importance of being in the place, interacting with it, and leaving one's own physical legacy, can be seen as a performance: on one hand, it is an expression of identity, which Basu notes as a central motivation for roots tourism. Visiting 'home' is a journey through which one is able to find a 'sense of belonging' (p. 10) and one's roots (p. 48). The associated feelings expressed particularly by US Americans and Australians strengthen this notion of performing identity, as Americans felt 'lost'

in their own society that was perceived as crumbling (p. 48). Australians felt any sense of belonging in Australia was associated with having displaced someone else (p. 207) whose claim on the land may perhaps be experienced as stronger. For these people, roots tourism is thus an accepted and safe performance of identity through a visit to where one ‘came from’. What is perhaps most striking about these examples is the strength of connection felt to these places: not for their material attributes, although these may play a role as I shall note further below, but for reasons of identity and belonging (see also Ashby & Schofield 2015). The depth of engagement with place, and the emotional need for it, is central to the reasons why Basu’s study subjects travelled to Scotland. The widespread existence of *Heimatvereine* in Germany is also a sign that people are far closer to what we traditionally may think of as Non-Western indigenous approaches to heritage than may in the past have been acknowledged in professional discourse. *Heimatvereine* are voluntary associations that are formed by local people to enhance and present their *Heimat*, a term that most closely matches the English concept of ‘heritage’. *Heimat* encompasses both the tangible environment, including buildings, townscapes and landscapes, and cultural practices, including anything from music to dance to annual festivals. Local *Heimatvereine* will consequently be involved for example in setting up interpretive panels at historic landmarks, providing benches at viewpoints, or organising village fetes. This grassroots management of heritage, which has been noted for indigenous heritage management, also extends to the creation of *Heimatmuseen*, museums run by *Heimatvereine*, generally with little, or no financial support from official sources. The *Heimatvereine* as such are therefore also an illustration of the existing connection that (Western/German) publics

have to heritage. And yet, current IAHD suggests that such connections do not exist or do not have sufficient depth, and that it is interpretation that is required to establish them. This also means that the IAHD offers no concepts to respond to these existing connections, and that sense of identity and belonging. This is an important point to which I will return in the next chapter, where identity and belonging emerge as central public benefits of heritage in legislation and policy.

Beyond Scientific Evidence: Heritage as Personal Selection

Basu also found that people's identity was constructed based on their choice of a determining factor (2007, p.41), which was often influenced also by their perception of how much the group in question was persecuted (p. 199). In addition, in the construction of their identity narratives, people were not bound by historical accuracy. Basu found that films such as *Braveheart* or John Prebble's populist book *Culloden* were important in framing people's identities (p. 89ff), although from a historical perspective, both accounts of the historical events they describe are inaccurate or plainly fictitious (see for example Watson 1998 for discussions with *Braveheart's* director). Even where people were aware of these inaccuracies or distortions, however, these did not have a significant impact on their experience (Basu 2007, p. 165ff). As people constructed their Scottish identity, their focus was selectively on the personal criteria most relevant to their current journey (p. 40/1, also 199). Basu's findings reinforce indigenous challenges to the notion of scientific revelation of the meaning or significance of heritage: it is personally constructed rather than scientifically fixed.

Similar selection is, in a related process, also evident with regards to memory and its role in heritage. Halbwachs (1992) notes that individual memories are always part of a larger group memory, reflecting the thought system which shapes us as individuals and as a society (p. 53). He suggests that society chooses memories that support the group, and forgets all that could undermine social cohesion (p. 182). Similarly, individuals select memories of periods and people in our lives depending on our current present, thus changing and adapting memories (p. 47, 49). Connerton (1989) argues that there exists a 'shared memory' (p. 3), within societies which upholds social order. Our present experience, according to Connerton, is shaped by experiences and objects of the past (p. 3), while it also adapts our recollection of the past (p. 3). Referring to Halbwachs, Connerton notes that this takes place within a social group (p. 36). Memories of the past are preserved through representations in 'words and images' (p. 72), but also through physical activity (p. 72/3). Smith (2006) expressly brings heritage, identity, memory and nationhood together when she writes that a 'sense of identity must inevitably draw on a sense of history and memory' (p. 36) with heritage being 'a discourse concerned with the negotiation and regulation of social meanings and practices associated with the creation and recreation of "identity"' (p. 5) of the individual, communities and nations (p. 36). This is crucially based on a process of selection in the moment. Côté (1996) notes that in contemporary society individuals change their identities to meet their own and contextual needs, while Antaki et al (1996, p.489) highlight that identities may also change their meaning according to context. Aspects of history and place are thus selected, narrated and forgotten based on how people construct their identity as

individuals and as imagined communities and nations. A focus on scientific evidence, and scientific research appears therefore prone to miss a key reason for why heritage is important to people, as I have already illustrated above. The emphasis on a theme and distinct messages within the IAHD also neither acknowledges these changing selections, nor does it facilitate them. However, to make and express such selections as part of their identity and heritage may be exactly what visitors come for, as the next section shows.

Heritage as a Process within and Interaction with Place

Basu's (2007) study subjects did not understand heritage as the passive consumption of the physical attributes of a place (compare Hewison 1987) but rather as an interaction with place that is endowed with pre-existing and deeply personal meanings that have very little to do with historical fact or scientific significance. McDowell (2008) argues that place is invested with symbols that are variably reaffirmed, contested and ignored in a 'symbolic dialogue' (Forester and Johnson cited McDowell 2008, p. 39). This follows the same patterns as memory formation, and in fact McDowell's discussion of heritage is framed by considerations of the different types of memory, ranging from official to unofficial, from private to collective (p. 41). She draws further parallels when she notes that heritage, like memory in Halbwachs' account (Halbwachs 1992) is selective, serving a specific purpose that depends on its context (p. 43), and the actors making the selection. Conversely, Pretes (2003) illustrates through his study of Mount Rushmore the ability to inscribe national memory and identity on sites that have no prior association with these concepts, concluding that Mount Rushmore 'becomes an icon, a shrine, an object of pilgrimage' and 'a

focus for American collective memory' (p. 134). Through heritage sites, then, identity is 'narrated', as Anderson (1991, p.204) writes.

For Byrne (2008, p.153) sites acquire significance through their place in people's experiences, which he illustrates through the example of his journey with two Aboriginal women to a fishing place (p. 157/8). For the women, it was not the place itself that held importance, but their memories and experiences of travelling to it. It may be argued that sites thus play an important role in fostering the 'imagined community' (Anderson 1991, p.6), with the act of visiting constituting an 'active statement of identity' (Smith 2006, p.68) by individuals who see themselves as part of a larger, social group – in the case of Mount Rushmore, of the American community. This may also be understood as what Rounds (2006, p.134) called 'identity work', a 'process' (ibid) of constructing but also maintaining our identity, and affirming it to other people. Similarly, Smith (2006, p.1) writes of 'heritage work' as 'being in place, renewing memories and associations, sharing experiences'. For Smith, the physical site provides the 'culturally correct or appropriate contexts and times' (p. 46), but does not itself hold value. It may constitute the 'physical reality' of heritage (p. 54), but does not constitute heritage itself. Harrison (2013, p.229) places greater emphasis on physical environments as well as objects within a 'broad natural/cultural collective' that is 'bound together' with people and other living beings. In this 'ontology of connectivity' (p. 229) 'the actions of one part of the collective have an impact on all the others', and 'each component of the collective is co-produced by the others' (p. 229). Harrison's account therefore allows us to further conceptualise the interplay with place in creating heritage, value and meaning. It enables an understanding for example of the impact of changes in

physical environments on heritage, without suggesting that conservation of sites, which often goes hand in hand with exclusion of heritage work, is the answer. Rather, Harrison's connectivity model invites us to see the necessary interaction between material reality and social beings in order to create and reproduce heritage as a process. It acknowledges the material changes within place in both the natural and cultural worlds, and enables us to think about the impact of these changes on the heritage practice of which it forms a part. This is something that neither accounts of heritage as material nor critiques that suggest all heritage is ultimately intangible (Smith 2006, p.3) have previously allowed for. In the IAHD, as in the AHD, however, the material is seen as needing to be preserved as is, and it is toward this ultimate aim that interpretation has been developed. Current interpretive practice therefore offers no consideration of such interplay between place and people, and the concept of change as a natural aspect of heritage processes. Heritage work, as suggested by Smith, is also not allowed for in the current IAHD, which serves to separate people/visitors and place, rather than facilitate a process that may change the latter. Overall, the entire concept of heritage as a process of selection and performance within place is not accommodated in current interpretive discourse, which seeks to fix narratives and experiences, as Staiff (2014, p.55) notes, and which continues to view the material attributes of place as inherently significant independent of people.

Challenging the AHD's subject-positions

Basu (2007, p.2) noted that the people in his study did not identify as 'tourists' and in fact appeared to be offended by the term. A simplistic concept of tourist

has also been critiqued by Poria et al (2001; 2003; 2006). They argue that 'tourists' are differentiated by their motivation to visit a site, and thus they speak of subgroups of tourism such as heritage tourism (Poria et al. 2001, p.1048). They define heritage tourism not through the supply of a site labelled as heritage by experts (p. 1047, see also Poria et al. 2003, p.247) but 'based on the place's heritage characteristics according to the tourists' perception of their *own* heritage' (p. 1048, my emphasis). Poria et al (2003) argue that the definition of heritage tourist should not include those visiting a site simply because it exists or because they wish to learn (p. 247). Rather, heritage tourists should be understood to be only those who perceive a site as part of their own heritage (ibid). This is based on their study at the Wailing Wall, which found that heritage tourism 'stems from the *relationship* between the supply and the demand' (p.249). The authors thus contest a subject framing of tourists as a homogenous group. The study of Poria et al in fact distinguishes four different groups of tourists based on their motivations to visit, and their underlying relationship with the site (p. 248). This also has implications for the definition of heritage itself, which, in line with other challenges to the concept of heritage as determined by site attributes as identified by experts (see above), is seen by Poria et al to be dependent on people's perceptions of these attributes (Poria et al. 2003, p.249). Heritage is thus not simply what we have inherited from previous generations (p. 248), or what the authors have termed the 'haphazard classification of things' as heritage (p. 248, citing Glen). Therefore, Poria et al (2001, p.1048) also make a distinction between heritage sites and history sites along with associated tourism, noting that the latter is motivated by sites' historic attributes, rather than tourists' relationship with these. The authors note

the implications of this for site management and specifically for interpretation, arguing that in current philosophies relationships are given dominance that may not in fact be central in determining tourists' behaviours (Poria et al. 2003, p.250), and that there is a need to respond to tourists' heritage-related motivations particularly in provision of interpretation (Poria et al. 2009, p.101). As Smith (2006, p.29) has put it, 'the past cannot simply be reduced to archaeological data or historical texts – it is someone's heritage'. As I've highlighted above, it follows that it must therefore also be interpreted and treated as such, which means reductions to materiality, scientific evidence, and single themes are not appropriate in most cases.

Manipulation and Suppression of Heritage

At the beginning of this chapter, and in the discussion of Smith's (2006) critique of the AHD, I have already highlighted the inherent power relationships in discourse in general, and in the AHD in particular. McDowell (2008, p.40ff) further notes the inherent power relations where nation states inscribe heritage with their own interpretations, thus using heritage to support their own notion of the social group. This highlights the (potential) political dimension of heritage, and the ability of players that occupy dominant positions in the associated power relations to manipulate heritage narratives. In fact, the use of material heritage by nation states has been illustrated by several writers (Goulding & Domic 2009; Howard 2003; Deacon 2004; Lowenthal 1998). Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996, p.122) for example review the use by the former German Democratic Republic of the concentration camp of Buchenwald near Weimar, to distance itself ideologically from the Capitalist perpetrators presented as living

exclusively in the Federal Republic of Germany, and the Communist resistance assumed to be resident within its own territory. In the reverse argument, Connerton (1989, p.14) makes the point that to destabilize a society, its memory must be taken away. In this, material heritage as well as intangible practices are a central target, and examples can be readily found in history and current events: from the Act of Proscription 1747 in the UK, which prohibited the wearing of Highland dress in an attempt to weaken Highland society in the aftermath of the Jacobite Rising of 1745 and the Battle of Culloden, to the destruction of cultural heritage in Iraq by Islamic State to undermine and control competing worldviews and values (Romey 2015). What emerges from these examples is the recognition that heritage practices cannot be assumed to be value-free. Where heritage interpretation is employed in contexts similar to the above, and tasked with delivering organisational missions it thus becomes also a political practice.

Contested Heritage

This leads to another challenge posed to the AHD, which is that far from being near self-evident, as the notion of expert values implies, heritage may in fact be contested. On one hand, this is a matter for example of questions surrounding the validity of the notion of expert objectivity. In his book *The Past is a Foreign Country,* Lowenthal (1985, p.218) first noted that historians are themselves situated in their own cultural and knowledge horizons, which they bring to their interpretation of historical sources, including their knowledge of what happened next. Reiterating this argument, Lowenthal notes in *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (1998) that new material also continually emerges, thus

adapting historians' own understanding of history. A similar point is made by Skeates (2000, p.89,104) with regard to archaeologists, who produce competing interpretations of archaeological data and rely on necessarily fragmentary evidence. Skeates, like Lowenthal, also stresses archaeologists' viewpoint from within their own culture, and adds the conscious or unconscious use of data for archaeologists' own purposes, and the need to refer to a general theory, all of which undermine the argument that archaeology as a science is inherently objective, an observation to which I will return in the discussion of my German case study site. Lowenthal (1998) ultimately dismisses a historical critique of heritage. His underlying argument is that heritage is fundamentally different to history, likening it to faith rather than proof.

The other challenge to the idea of heritage value being homogenous arises from the diverse meanings that the public associate with (some) heritage. Porter (2008, p.274) uses the example of colonial forts in Ghana, which to the local community were unwelcome reminders of their colonial past. The sites held value for African-Americans, however, whose ancestors were shipped from there to become slaves. Carman (2003, p.142) makes a similar observation with regard to battlefields, which are often valued and marked not by the host community but by foreign states, whose forces fought there, such as Oudenaarde in Belgium. Ashworth (2008, p.240ff), in discussing sites of violence, finds three different types of approaches or motivations of tourists, who either come as victims, perpetrators seeking reconciliation, or simply as those attracted by the horror and sadness of the event. Strategies employed in encountering the sites range from denial to blame, and victim-complicity to apologetic perpetrator, which illustrates the varying, and sometimes conflicting

relationships that people have with these sites. Battle sites are also an example for directly conflicting heritage values, where the parties involved may view the events differently. The Battle of Culloden, for example, represents for many the violent suppression and end of Highland and Gaelic culture, and the watershed moment that eventually led to the Highland Clearances. Others see it as the beginning of British unity and stability (National Trust for Scotland 2003). The Battle of the Boyne of 1690, although further removed in terms of time passed, still carries similar emotional weight for groups associating with either side, with reverberations running through 20th century society and The Troubles to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998. Lowenthal (1998, p.234) writes that heritage is always an exclusion of others, and as such full of conflict. This is also a point made by Smith (2006, p.82), who calls heritage ‘dissonant’ as it is about negotiating conflicts. Waterton (2010) also argues that such dissonance is unavoidable if heritage is seen as a discourse (p.7), calling heritage ‘inherently exclusive’ (p. 9). Waterton also highlights the issue that consequently arises from interpretive practice that insists on a singular view of heritage. In discussing the social inclusion agenda of recent years, and the practice of targeting groups that have been framed as ‘excluded’, Waterton observes that the ‘possibility that stately homes might not engender a sense of place, feelings of belonging or inclusion’ (p. 142) for those ‘excluded’ from this heritage is not considered by this practice. Waterton thus calls this ‘assimilation’ (p. 188), rather than inclusion, and notes this as another feature of the AHD. Such assimilation is also evident in Waterton et al.’s (2010, p.27) examination of the commemorations of the bicentenary of the abolition of slavery, which noted a

dominant narrative promoted by many public and cultural actors that suppressed and dismissed opposing views as ‘un-British’ and ‘divisive’.

Heritage as Future-making

Some writers have also highlighted that heritage can be a resource for the future. Rounds (2006, p.136ff), in discussing that identities may become obsolete, argues that the identity work that visitors do in museums may include collecting possible *future* identities, which may be activated later on. Harvey (2008, p.22ff) suggests that heritage as a memory of the past acts in the present as aspirations for the future. Butler (2006, p.463) argues that heritage is a resource for ‘creating a future’, and, similarly to Rounds (2006), that this involves examining questions of morality and ‘what it is to be human’. Zetterstrom-Sharp’s (2014) case study of Sierra Leone provides a particularly good example of the uses of heritage as ‘future-making’. Zetterstrom-Sharp argues that in post-colonial and post-civil war Sierra Leone aspects of the past are selected carefully for memory (p. 8), not out of a desire to preserve ‘collective pasts’ (p.4) but to shape ‘collective futures’ (ibid). This process is led by the government to bring about change and to engender public support for this vision (p. 8). Crucially, the more recent, troubled past of the civil war is left out, while ‘those “habits” identified as enabling the country to “move forward”’ (p. 16) have received the greatest attention. Zetterstrom-Sharp notes that, ‘As with most heritages, it is the idea, rather than the reality, that is important’ (p. 10), and this idea is used to ‘activate…future aspirations’ (p. 2). Rather than respond nostalgically to modernist change, then, heritage here serves to ‘[articulate] and [mould] a Sierra Leonean vision of such modernity’ (p. 3). In the

context of ‘difficult heritage’, MacDonald (2009) also notes the orientation to the future. Difficult heritage, she argues, is ‘a past that is recognised as meaningful in the present’ but which also is difficult to reconcile ‘with a positive, self-affirming contemporary identity’ (MacDonald 2009, p.1). She refers to Levy and Sznaider’s concept of cosmopolitan memory, which unites people through turning events that had relevance only for certain people into ‘universal narratives’ (p. 132). In doing so, what might otherwise remain an unchanging symbol of one people’s victimisation and another’s crime, this turns the historical events of the past into ‘part of a moral discourse about what must *not* happen in the future’ (p. 132, my emphasis). While issues remain concerning the universality of this narrative in light of local complexities, this may also be seen as an approach that turns history into inspiration for a redeeming heritage future. Importantly for my study, however, selection as already noted in previous sections of this chapter as forming part of the creation and re-creation of identity and memory, now emerges as also focused on the future, selecting from the past what can provide inspiration to create and achieve an aspiration for the future. Inspiration and shaping the future also emerge in policy, as I shall show in the next chapter. Current interpretive discourse does not, however, provide a conceptual space for such future-making, or selection that ignores or distorts facts that are deemed irrelevant by people. The IAHD, as I have shown in the previous chapter, is still fundamentally rooted in scientific evidence, and the dismissal of people’s own connections to heritage and their knowledge about it. In comparing people’s knowledge to scientific evidence, the IAHD continues to dismiss people’s experiences and desires as inferior. In providing an educational experience through themes, as the IAHD seeks to do, for the aim of

preserving materiality, there is not currently a convincing acceptance of the kind of future-making that is evident in the examples above.

Conclusion

In this chapter I reviewed the key challenges to the AHD that have emerged from critical heritage studies to test my hypothesis that there is currently a lack of critical engagement by interpretation discourse with these critiques. My review has shown that there are indeed fundamental challenges to key concepts of the IAHD to which it offers no response. These challenges concern diverse concepts, beginning with the materiality of heritage. Materiality has been put into a wider context, where it becomes a co-producer, and in some accounts little more than a mere stage, for the creation of heritage, rather than constituting heritage itself. Current interpretive philosophy with its insistence on the dominant value of the material, behind which are hidden greater truths, does not provide for this interplay between the material and people. Similarly, critical heritage studies has challenged the notion of the expert, both on the grounds of the lack of an objective scientific truth agreed upon by all, and of the evidence for the diverse and deeply held connections that people have with heritage. And yet, interpretation continues to be centred on information provided by experts, which it ‘translates’ for a public that is assumed to have no, or insufficient knowledge of heritage. The focus on scientific evidence, and the creation of themes to communicate messages in support of outcomes such as behaviour and attitudinal change, and the realisation of organisational objectives, also create interpretive practice that is ultimately sanctioned to dismiss what has been shown by critical heritage studies as the very values

through which heritage actually becomes heritage for people. The chapter has highlighted the active processes through which people create heritage, and which involve selection of facts and ideas, as well as places, that serve people's own, often personal, but sometimes communal/social purposes. These purposes include the formation of identity, the shaping and re-shaping of memories, the creation of communities and a sense of belonging, but also inspiration and the shaping of desired futures. Current interpretive philosophy and practice is not based in any of these purposes beyond the asserted need to understand visitors' motivations so that they may be better influenced toward interpretation's own goals. Like the AHD critiqued by the writers reviewed above, the IAHD specifies clear roles, which are characterised by power relationships that favour experts. Ultimately, 'visitors' remain seen as those requiring education, and their actions are to be mediated and determined by (successful and purposeful) interpretation. This does not make room for the heritage processes and purposes described above, which, as I shall show in the next chapter, in fact relate to many of the public benefits that are asserted in heritage legislation and policy. This is therefore the rationale for my research question of whether heritage interpretation does in fact deliver these benefits. This and the previous chapter suggest that current practices may disrupt the associated processes rather than support or facilitate them. It is for this reason, therefore, that I argue that as a consequence of its lack of engagement with critiques emerging from critical heritage studies, current interpretive philosophy and practice is fundamentally compromised and in danger of becoming irrelevant in the context of current academic debate about heritage, the public benefits of heritage as asserted in legislation and policy, and contemporary

political and social environments. This is a key hypothesis that I test through my case studies below. First, however, I turn to a review of relevant heritage legislation and policy in the following chapter to identify the benefits that heritage is expected to realise for people. I suggest that this can provide further guidance in developing an alternative approach to heritage interpretation that is able to respond to the challenges identified so far in this thesis.

4. PUBLIC BENEFITS OF HERITAGE IN LEGISLATION AND POLICY

In this chapter I review national and international heritage legislation and policy to identify the benefits of heritage for the public that are asserted therein. This provides the foundation from which I will explore my main research question of whether heritage interpretation delivers these public benefits of heritage, and to test, through my case studies, whether 'the public' in fact seek these same benefits. This chapter furthermore tests my hypothesis that current interpretive philosophy and practice has not sufficiently engaged with these frameworks, and specifically their aspirations surrounding the benefits that heritage provides to the public. In the previous chapter I argued that these benefits of heritage in fact mirror the heritage processes and purposes that have been described in challenges to the AHD from within critical heritage studies. My argument is furthermore that legislation and policy express the aspirations not only of decision-makers but also of our societies as a whole, and as such create a framework to which professional practises such as heritage interpretation are accountable. This also suggests that there may indeed be a need for heritage interpretation to become an active part of our societies, as inferred from Jennings et al (2014) and as outlined in the Introduction to this thesis. The review of the legal and policy context is therefore a key anchor for this thesis to think critically about the suitability and effectiveness of current heritage interpretation philosophy and practice.

While the public benefits of heritage asserted in legislation and policy are the focus of the following review, where relevant the heritage values used to

identify heritage for designation purposes are also noted, as are any statements that express expectations for management and interpretation of sites. The latter is often referred to in acts and policy as ‘presentation’, which for the purposes of this review is understood to mean, or at least to include, interpretation. It should be noted that the purpose of this chapter is not to critically analyse the logic and implications of these policies per se; observations are made as and when they are relevant for my research question and this thesis, but the primary focus is to reveal which benefits of heritage are claimed in the legislation and policies.

This review is limited to acts, guidance, and policies that are applicable to England and Germany as the two case studies used in this research. With regard to England, only policies relevant to what was then English Heritage (now Historic England) are reviewed to the exclusion of other organisational policies such as the National Trust’s. The review is intended to chart changes in the views about and approaches to heritage benefits, in order to provide an evolutionary tree against which heritage interpretation discourse can be mapped. Acts that are related predominantly to natural heritage, especially national parks, are excluded from the review. This exclusion does not constitute a suggestion that natural heritage is fundamentally and conceptually different from built or cultural heritage, or that interpretation philosophy and practice should be different for both. However, in practice, cultural and natural heritage are regularly separated. In England, for example, Historic England is the government’s advisor for the *historic* environment (Historic England 2015, p.5), while Natural England provides advice to the government on the *natural* environment (Natural England 2014, p.3). In the National Trust for Scotland, as an organisation that manages both cultural and natural heritage sites,

'Countryside and Nature Conservation' is a separate team (National Trust for Scotland n.d.). Since my case studies are two battlefields, a focus on policies and legislation concerned with cultural heritage therefore seems justifiable.

Acts and policies relating to museums specifically are excluded from this review also. While there is considerable cross-over between heritage and museums discourse, particularly in terms of heritage as museum content, this study focuses on heritage in its in situ and intangible forms, rather than heritage as embodied in movable objects. The benefits of museums in terms of legislation and policy are deemed as secondary to the immediate benefits of heritage itself, which this study is concerned with. Finally, the focus of this chapter is to examine in detail the *contemporary* legal and policy context for heritage interpretation. Historical acts and policies no longer in force, or the development history of each act and policy are therefore not considered, unless immediately relevant to the current study.

In the following, the discussion is split into four sections, to review international (UNESCO), European, English, and German legislation and policy. Benefits are recorded as such if the source document clearly presents them as benefits of heritage to the public, and if these benefits are direct benefits of the heritage itself rather than instrumental benefits, which have been likened to utility or market values (English Heritage 2008, p.27). Where terms used to describe benefits are different nominally, but appear to relate to the same content, i.e. they may be treated as synonyms or related concepts, these have been clustered under umbrella terms, to avoid inflating the number of benefits asserted. Where a benefit is recorded under such a cluster term, this has been specified in the text.

The International Context: UNESCO

The 1964 *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites* (ICOMOS 1964), or the *Venice Charter,* by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) was adopted at a congress that met specifically in response to the perceived need for a new association of conservators of historic buildings (ICOMOS 2004). This association became ICOMOS. The charter consequently focuses on 'historic' or 'ancient' monuments, which Article 1 further defines as a 'single architectural work' and the 'urban or rural setting' that contains 'evidence of a particular civilization, a significant development or a historic event'. This focus on materiality and evidence continues throughout the charter. Its introduction highlights that monuments are considered as 'common heritage' internationally, giving rise to the 'common responsibility to safeguard them' and 'hand them on in the full richness of their authenticity' to 'future generations'. The charter does not specify what the benefit of this is to the public, nor does it justify the need for safeguarding and the 'common responsibility' to do so. It uses two reasons for which ancient monuments are valued: aesthetics and evidence, the latter split into historical and archaeological evidence. Article 3 introduces the notion of safeguarding monuments 'as works of art' and 'as historical evidence'. Article 9 more specifically speaks of the 'aesthetic and historic value' of monuments. This article also mentions the need for 'archaeological and historical study of the monument', thus introducing the notion of the archaeological evidence that a monument may provide. This is repeated in Article 11, which in relation to restorations speaks of the 'historical, archaeological or aesthetic value' of earlier layers of material. These are thus the three heritage values that are recognised

by the *Venice Charter*, of which the former two are particularly emphasised for their secondary value as evidence. ‘Sciences and techniques’ are central in identifying and maintaining these values in conservation and restoration, as Article 2 points out, thus introducing the role of the expert with relevant knowledge. The charter establishes principles for the safeguarding of monuments. These principles are organised around concepts of ‘authenticity’ and ‘integrity’, which place primary emphasis on the need to maintain a material *status quo* through minimal change and interference with existing forms. Preservation is thus the overarching goal. For restoration, Article 9 establishes as its aim ‘to preserve and *reveal* the aesthetic and historic value of the monument’ (my emphasis), which is mirrored for excavation in Article 15, which states that ‘every means must be taken to facilitate the understanding of the monument and to reveal it without ever distorting *its meaning’* (my emphasis). This represents a similar idea of a ‘hidden truth’ behind the material, as exists in Freeman Tilden’s writing discussed in Chapter 2, and subsequent interpretive literature. The *Venice Charter* does not make provision for presentation of monuments to the public. However, the use of terms such as ‘reveal’, ‘understanding’ and ‘meaning’ are of note, as they are also key notions in the discourse of heritage interpretation. In all three cases, the terms are used in relation to work done on material, and in relation to application of science and techniques mentioned in Article 2: restoration *reveals* the values of the monument (Article 9) that may otherwise remain compromised and hidden by decay. Excavation must serve *understanding* of the monument (Article 15), and here presumably of its historic, archaeological or aesthetic value, which, it seems, is also implicated in creating the monument’s *meaning*, which must not

be distorted by the work (Article 15). The latter is of particular interest, as it introduces notions of meaning as intrinsically linked to the material. *Meaning* is thus effectively synonymous with *evidence*. Both are presented as static, and in fact, contemporary social use of any building is mentioned only as a facilitator of conservation, and 'must not change the layout or decoration of the building'. Public contribution to meaning, or heritage creation, is not mentioned in the charter. The *Venice Charter* therefore is firmly based in the AHD.

In 1972, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) adopted the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, or the *World Heritage Convention* (UNESCO 1972). The convention responds to what it notes as the increasing threat of destruction of heritage that is 'part of the world heritage of mankind as a whole' and which is of 'outstanding universal value' (OUV). The convention therefore provides a 'system of collective protection'. Article 1 gives definitions of cultural heritage, which includes monuments, groups of buildings, or sites. Cultural heritage is thus defined again in relation to the material, as architectural works or structures and decorations (monuments), buildings, and works of man or combined works of nature and man (sites). Article 1 includes the respective OUVs for which this cultural heritage should be protected. For both monuments and groups of buildings, the OUVs are 'from the point of view of history, art or science'. For sites it is 'from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view'. The emphasis consequently is on science and expert knowledge, a key element of the AHD, as I have shown in Chapter 3. The convention itself does not establish the specific criteria based on which these values should be assessed, or define who should make the assessment

within each State Party. However, Article 5 states that ‘appropriate legal, scientific, technical, administrative and financial measures’ must be taken, including for the identification of this heritage, implying that specialists are required, thus giving experts a central role. This article also recommends that State parties ‘adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community’. Similarly to the *Venice Charter*, this function is secondary to and a facilitator of protection, conservation and presentation of the heritage. The active expression ‘to give a function’ is of note here, implying that the heritage does not already fulfil such a function, and is indeed currently separate from the public. This notion is further expressed in Article 27, paragraph 1, which requests State Parties to provide ‘educational and information programmes, to strengthen appreciation and respect by their people’ of the heritage. As the previous chapter has shown, this idea of the need to ‘educate’ the public is also a key part of the AHD, and the IAHD. The convention does not explain what benefits there are, if any, to the public from heritage, or its protection.

To arrive at these benefits, one must turn to the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*. For the purposes of this study, I will only consider the most recent guidelines of 2013 (UNESCO 2013). The guidelines specifically state that the ‘protection and conservation of the natural and cultural heritage are a significant contribution to sustainable development’ (Article 1B, paragraph 4). However, while this establishes sustainable development as a benefit, this is an instrumental benefit, which, as outlined above, is not recorded as a benefit in this study. In paragraph 23, the guidelines also emphasise the importance of ‘objective and scientific

considerations' on which decisions about inclusion on the World Heritage List are based. Crucially, the guidelines stress the key role of 'qualified experts' in this decision-making process. The five strategic objectives for the list (paragraph 26) include two, which may be considered expectations for heritage interpretation. Through 'communication', 'public awareness, involvement and support' for world heritage should be increased. This effectively establishes two expected outcomes of interpretation, awareness and support, both of which are part of the AHD, and the IAHD. The role of communities in implementing the World Heritage Convention should also be 'enhanced' according to the objectives, which suggests an active role that communities should play in heritage management ('implementation'). However, the extent of this role is not further elaborated in the guidelines. Nevertheless, it is at this point, concerning communities, that the Operational Guidelines at least nominally begin to differ from the AHD. This would therefore also suggest that the expectation is that people are involved in the practices of heritage interpretation. The principles of integrity and authenticity are central in the guidelines also, and must be met in all criteria for assessment of cultural heritage. Importantly, the guidelines acknowledge that this must be done from within the respective cultural context, as '[j]udgments about value attributed to cultural heritage, as well as the credibility of related information sources, may differ' (paragraph 81), a view which originates from paragraph 11 of UNESCO's *Nara Document on Authenticity* (UNESCO 1994), reviewed further below. This point, however, is again particularly important to note for heritage interpretation, as it begins to increase the importance given to non-expert assessments and views. As

highlighted in Chapter 2 above, the IAHD so far continues to privilege expert knowledge.

The 1990 ICOMOS *Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage* (ICOMOS 1990), or short the *Lausanne Charter,* builds on the *Venice Charter*, with guidance on various aspects of the protection, examination and management of archaeological heritage, including its presentation. At first glance, the charter places increased emphasis on the involvement of the general public, and here specifically indigenous peoples (Article 2). However, this involvement serves a clear agenda, that of protection (Article 2) and promotion of the maintenance of archaeological sites (Article 6). There is an assumption that 'archaeologists and other scholars' (Introduction) are the primary keepers of knowledge about the heritage, which they 'study and interpret […] on behalf of and for the benefit of present and future generations', a notion which is well-established within the AHD. Sharing this knowledge is part of enabling the public to participate in decision-making about protection (Article 2), which continues nevertheless to place experts in positions of authority. The charter remains cautious when it states only that '[i]n some cases it *may* be appropriate to entrust responsibility for sites to indigenous peoples' (Article 6, my emphasis). In fact, it maintains that 'high academic standards' (Article 8) are 'essential' in managing sites, which effectively raises a barrier for public participation in heritage management. Article 7 of the charter addresses 'presentation' of the archaeological heritage as 'the most important means of promoting an understanding of the need for its protection', thus making support for protection a desired outcome for interpretation, through processes that are well-established in the AHD and IAHD. However, it is also in this article that a

clear benefit of archaeological heritage is established: presentation can give 'an understanding of the origins and development of modern societies'. This mirrors the first sentence of the introduction to the charter, which makes this understanding of 'fundamental importance to humanity in identifying its cultural and social roots'. The key benefit asserted by the charter for archaeological heritage is thus captured in this study as the identification of humanity's roots.

UNESCO's 1994 *Nara Document on Authenticity* represents a key step in acknowledging the diversity of heritage values between and even within cultures, as well as the first shift away from a sole focus on material heritage in the international context. The document is directly linked to the World Heritage Convention, and as such must be understood in the context of world heritage and OUV. It asserts that authenticity is 'the essential qualifying factor concerning values' (Paragraph 10), and that it is established through the credibility or truthfulness of information sources about these values (Paragraph 9). As did the 2013 Operational Guidelines for the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 2013), paragraph 11 of the document notes that judgments about heritage values and the validity of information sources may differ between and even within cultures, thus making 'fixed criteria' unworkable. Instead, 'heritage properties must be considered and judged within the cultural contexts to which they belong', marking, as outlined above, a nominal move away from sole focus on expert values. The document's statements on authenticity reflect the central emphasis on, and celebration of, the diversity of world cultures and heritages. Paragraph 5 identifies this diversity as 'an irreplaceable source of spiritual and intellectual richness for all humankind'. Paragraph 6 calls for 'respect for other cultures and all aspects of their belief systems', going so far as to demand that

where values appear in conflict, ‘the legitimacy of the cultural values of all parties’ should be acknowledged. This reinforces the departure from traditional experts views of heritage in the AHD, and requires that diversity be actively made visible. This is not currently pursued within the IAHD, which seeks to provide a single coherent theme in support of interpretive messages. The document views heritage as providing spiritual and intellectual richness, and as engendering respect for others. This is made possible on a global level through diversity. While these outcomes might justifiably be recorded as separate benefits of heritage, their strong connection with diversity, which is also a key source of benefit in other UNESCO policies reviewed further below, make ‘diversity’ emerge as a useful cluster term under which these benefits are thus recorded in this study. Paragraph 7 notes that heritage is constituted by ‘particular forms and means of tangible and intangible expression’ in which ‘[a]ll cultures and societies are rooted’. The document gives primacy to ‘the cultural community that has generated’ the heritage, while also acknowledging the international interest in the heritage as world heritage.

It is worth considering next the 2001 UNESCO *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* (UNESCO 2001). Although not specifically aimed at heritage overall, it presents a key point of reference for the subsequent 2003 UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage* (UNESCO 2003). The declaration was passed in the aftermath of 11 September 2001 and asserts that ‘*intercultural dialogue* is the best guarantee of peace’ (my emphasis). It understands culture as ‘distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group’, including not only art and literature, but also ‘lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs’,

which may be understood as intangible heritage. Article 1 declares cultural diversity to be 'the common heritage of humanity', which is 'as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature'. Diversity is thus understood as a benefit of heritage, and recorded as such in this study. Diversity is effectively a part of engendering peace, as asserted in the introduction to the declaration. With this strengthened emphasis on diversity, this declaration further turns away from singular narratives of truth, as found in the AHD, to an acknowledgement and celebration of diversity, which it seeks to make visible rather than mute. Article 2 establishes cultural pluralism as 'policy expression to the reality of cultural diversity', calling for 'inclusion and participation of all citizens' as a necessary practical approach and mechanism. This provides 'guarantees of social cohesion, the vitality of civil society and peace'. This also has implications for the practice of heritage interpretation with regards to involving and expressing multiple diverse views and people. Article 3 of the declaration makes cultural diversity 'one of the roots of development', which beside economic development includes intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual development. The declaration thus establishes this wider understanding of development as a benefit of cultural diversity. However, for the purposes of this study, economic benefit as an instrumental benefit is taken out of this benefit, which is consequently recorded as 'personal development' below. Importantly, Article 4 connects cultural diversity to human rights, making its defence 'an ethical imperative', particularly with regards to minorities and indigenous peoples. This too has an important implication for heritage interpretation, where, as Chapter 2 has shown, there are ethical concerns with current practice surrounding selection of views and facts to create and communicate persuasive themes and

messages. Article 6 highlights the need to ensure that ‘all cultures […] have access to the means of expression and dissemination’, as this is viewed as ‘guarantees of cultural diversity’. Similarly, Article 9 speaks more widely of the need for ‘conditions conducive to the production and dissemination’ of diverse cultural goods, which raises the notion of on-going contemporary practice as well as participation. Again, these are concepts that are not included in the IAHD. Article 7 makes direct reference to cultural heritage, and states that heritage must be ‘preserved, enhanced and handed on’ as a repository of traditions, experiences and aspirations. This serves both as a source of inspiration for creativity for the heritage community in question, but also as inspiration for others, as ‘creation…flourishes in contact with other cultures’. Cultural heritage thus not only ‘foster[s] creativity’ but ‘inspire[s] genuine dialogue among cultures’, both of which may therefore be understood as benefits of heritage in this declaration, and they are recorded as such in this study. The final section of the declaration gives several objectives for Member States. Of these, the first three appear particularly potent with regard to heritage. Objective 1 calls upon Member States to ‘[deepen] the international debate on questions relating to cultural diversity, particularly in respect of its links with development…’. Objective 2 calls for ‘advancing...principles, standards and practices…that are most conducive to the safeguarding and promotion of cultural diversity.’ Objective 3 is aimed at cultural pluralism, which should ‘[facilitate]…the inclusion and participation of persons and groups from varied cultural backgrounds’. All three objectives are directly relevant to the practice of heritage interpretation, but are not currently supported by the IAHD.

The 2003 UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* builds on the 2001 *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*, stressing intangible cultural heritage (ICH) as 'a mainspring of cultural diversity' as well as 'a guarantee of sustainable development' (Introduction). The purposes of the convention are to safeguard, ensure respect for, raise awareness of and ensure mutual appreciation of ICH, as well as to provide for cooperation and assistance (Article 1). These, it must be noted, are fundamental building blocks of the AHD, and introduce what some writers have identified as key issues and dangers of the convention, particularly concerning notions of 'official' versions of ICH described indeterminately through listing (see for an overview Alivizatou 2006; Alivizatou 2011). The convention defines ICH as 'practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills' along with the associated materials and spaces (Article 2, Paragraph 1), thus nevertheless making a connection between the intangible and the tangible that reflects some points made within critical heritage studies as reviewed in the previous chapter. Specifically, ICH may be manifested in 'oral traditions and expressions…, performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; traditional craftsmanship' (Article 2, Paragraph 2). This definition of ICH places 'communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals' at the heart of identifying something as ICH (Article 2, Paragraph 1). It describes ICH as a continuing *process* of creation, which is an important point to highlight for its challenges to a philosophy and practice of heritage interpretation that, as I have shown, is still based in notions of heritage as material and largely static. The Convention states that ICH 'provides [people] with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural

diversity and human creativity'. These four concepts of identity, continuity, cultural diversity and creativity may therefore be understood to be the benefits of ICH according to the Convention, and have been recorded as such for this study. While the convention represents a step-change from previous foci on the material, its instruments and associated language remain fairly similar, as noted above. Article 2, Paragraph 3 states that safeguarding includes 'the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.' It is not clear how this formalized approach may be reconciled with the organic creation of ICH through communities, groups and individuals noted in the charter. In fact, Article 15 concerning the participation of relevant publics appears markedly non-committal when merely requesting State Parties to '*endeavour'* (my emphasis) to 'ensure the widest possible participation' of people and 'to involve them actively in its management', rather than making this imperative. This ultimately leaves room for practices that are not compatible with the creative process of ICH that is rooted in communities or lies with individuals. The creation of a list (Article 16) as a mechanism that creates permanence also appears problematic, but does not receive further consideration in the convention. It should be noted that the convention has not yet been ratified by the UK. It was approved by Germany in 2013.

The above review of the international context and UNESCO has shown a clear step change that begins with the *Nara Document* of 1994. From this point onwards, diversity of cultures and heritage values, the acknowledgement of the

intangible aspects of heritage, and the active creation of heritage through contemporary communities receive greater emphasis. The benefits of heritage become increasingly specified, where previously they remained implied. This is evident in table 4.1 below, which charts these benefits across all documents reviewed in this section. These aspirational, if not actual changes evident in the international context highlight the gap between the philosophy and practice of heritage interpretation, with its focus on materiality, specialist narratives, and unifying themes and messages, and more recent developments in heritage policy.

There do remain concerns around the instruments and mechanisms that are put in place in policy, particularly with regard to the continued application of expert-led designation, protection and management practices even in the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, and to some extent the assumption that education of the public, including those communities creating the heritage in question, is required to ensure appreciation and respect. It is beyond the scope of this study to examine the root cause of this seeming contradiction, so I merely wish to highlight these discursive tensions here.

TABLE 4.1 **BENEFITS OF HERITAGE** **International Context: UNESCO**								
Document	**Year**	**Personal Development** (emotional, spiritual, moral)	(Identify) **Humanity's roots**	**Diversity:** source of spiritual and intellectual richness; also respect for	**Creativity** (foster; also respect for)	**Dialogue between cultures** (inspire)	**Identity** (sense of)	**Continuity** (sense of)
Lausanne Charter	1990		1					
Nara Document	1994			1				
Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity	2001	1		1	1	1		
ICH Convention	2003			1	1		1	1

The European Context

The 1975 *European Charter of the Architectural Heritage* (Council of Europe 1975) includes many concepts that were introduced only later in UNESCO's international context, as well as national legislation and policy. Although focusing on architectural heritage, and thus materiality, the charter quickly connects it to further benefits that can be understood as the intangible dimensions of heritage, alongside the acknowledgment of change and the need for public participation in management. In its introduction, the charter identifies architectural heritage as an 'expression of the wealth and diversity of European culture'. Principle 1 defines architectural heritage not only as the 'most important monuments' but also 'groups of lesser buildings…in their natural or manmade settings'. The principle notes that this heritage is 'an expression of history' and 'helps us to understand the relevance of the past to contemporary life'. This embodies a benefit of heritage, which, however, is somewhat vague. However, it appears connected to a benefit expressed in Principle 2, which states that architectural heritage is 'an essential part of the *memory* of the human race' (my emphasis), linked to the concept of 'continuity', which might otherwise be lost. Continuity therefore appears as the central benefit of heritage, which may be seen to include an understanding of the relevance of the past to contemporary life also. Continuity is thus recorded as a benefit. Principle 2 also notes that architectural heritage 'provides the sort of environment indispensable to a balanced and complete life'. While the remainder of the text in this principle raises continuity as the central benefit, the benefit of a balanced and complete life appears distinct enough to warrant separate recording. It is thus recorded under the cluster term of well-

being/quality of life. Principle 3 states that architectural heritage is of ‘spiritual, cultural, social and economic value’, all of which can be understood as intangible aspects of the materiality of architectural heritage. Notably, the principle acknowledges that the interpretation of these values changes from generation to generation, and each ‘derives new inspiration from it’. It is clear that inspiration is considered a benefit of this heritage; however, as the charter does not specify how this inspiration is expressed it is not further recorded by this study. Principle 4 introduces ‘social integration’ as a key benefit of architectural heritage, as old buildings ‘lend themselves to a beneficial spread of activities and to a more satisfactory social mix’. Principle 5 stresses the importance of education in making sure that ‘the need to protect [this heritage] is understood by the greatest number, particularly by the younger generation who will be its future guardians’. Although this principle is similar to the emphasis on education in UNESCO documents, and indeed the AHD, it is of note that this follows a strong clarification of benefits associated with the heritage. Protection thus no longer serves a purpose in its own right, but is connected to delivering benefits. This adds a new dimension to the proposed education as it is linked to unlocking the benefits that heritage brings. These benefits are the outstanding characteristic of the Charter, and it is in this that it poses a challenge to current interpretation philosophy and practice. More clearly than the international policies, the Charter is focused not on materiality in its own right, but the benefits that should be realised from it, which consequently becomes a central expectation of interpretation. This is further crystallised when we turn to principle 9, which stresses the need to inform the public ‘because citizens are entitled to participate in decisions affecting their

environment'. This is a very early example of public policy seeking to involve the public in decision-making about heritage. This, too, must be seen as an early call for interpretation to involve the public in ways that current philosophy does not adequately provide for.

The 1985 *Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe* (Council of Europe 1985) makes provision for the establishment of national inventories of protected architectural heritage (Article 2), and associated infrastructure (esp. Article 4). Article 1 defines architectural heritage in similar terms to UNESCO's *World Heritage Convention* in the three categories of monuments, groups of buildings, and sites. It further classifies this heritage as being of 'conspicuous historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest', or what may be called value. Article 14, paragraph 2 calls for Parties to make provision for mechanisms of information, consultation and co-operation between stakeholders, which importantly includes the public. Article 15, paragraph 1 requires each Party to 'develop public awareness' of the need for protection of architectural heritage, and gives as reason that it is 'an element of cultural identity' and 'a source of inspiration and creativity'. This effectively represents the benefits that are derived from architectural heritage, and which I shall record as identity and creativity. What is worth highlighting here is that 'identity', as discussed in Chapter 3, is a deeply personal and involved matter, which presupposes a connection to heritage that is currently not recognised in interpretation philosophy. Inspiration, although clearly presented as a benefit of heritage, seems to serve creativity, and as such is not separately recorded. Developing awareness of the need for, along with (paragraph 2) 'awakening or increasing public interest' in the protection of this

heritage may be understood as desired outcomes of heritage management, including heritage interpretation. It may be of note that while participation by the public in the decision-making process is encouraged, public access to protected sites appears as secondary to the protection of their 'architectural and historical character' in Article 12.

The 1992 *European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised)* (Council of Europe 1992), or short *Valletta Convention*, requires State Parties to create inventories of archaeological heritage (Article 2) and associated infrastructures (see particularly Article 3). Archaeological heritage is defined broadly as 'all remains and objects and any other traces of mankind from past epochs' which 'help to retrace the history of mankind and its relation to the natural environment' and which are primarily researched through excavation and 'other methods of research into mankind and the related environment' (Article 1). Article 1 also identifies that this heritage is 'a source of the European collective memory' and 'an instrument for historical and scientific study'. While 'study' may be understood as a benefit of archaeological heritage primarily to academics, 'collective memory' may be viewed as a *public* benefit of this heritage, and is recorded as a benefit accordingly. Article 9, paragraph 1 concerns the promotion of public awareness 'of the value of the archaeological heritage for understanding the past' but does not, as other Council of Europe conventions reviewed so far have done, provide further reason for why this is of benefit to the public. In this regard, this Convention most closely follows the AHD.

The 2005 *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (Council of Europe 2005), or short *Faro*

Convention, defines cultural heritage not in terms of material attributes, but entirely in relation to people. Cultural heritage thus is a 'group of resources…which people identify…as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions' (Article 2, paragraph a). This introduces the notion of a dynamic process of heritage driven by people, which stands in marked contrast to the assumed materiality of heritage in the IAHD, and the hidden value that must be revealed to people by specialists via interpretation. The convention uses the concept of 'heritage communities' defined as 'people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage' (Article 2, paragraph b). Notably, the convention is the first to specifically speak both of people benefitting from heritage (Article 4, paragraph a) and the benefits of heritage (Article 12, paragraph d), and it emphasises that 'everyone…has the right to benefit from the cultural heritage' (Article 4, paragraph a). The convention identifies a number of benefits: Article 1, paragraph c speaks of the 'goal' of cultural heritage as 'human development and quality of life'. While it is not clear what exactly is meant by 'human development' as a benefit of heritage, 'quality of life' was mentioned by other documents already and is therefore recorded under the cluster term of 'well-being/quality of life'. Article 3, paragraph a, speaks of cultural heritage as a 'shared source of remembrance, understanding, identity, cohesion and creativity', which may be understood as the benefits of heritage, and which are recorded under the cluster terms of Collective memory/remembrance (remembrance), Dialogue between cultures/Understanding (understanding), and Social integration/cohesion (cohesion), as well as identity and creativity. Understanding is also reiterated as a benefit in Article 7, paragraph c, which identifies cultural heritage as 'a

resource to facilitate peaceful co-existence by promoting trust and mutual understanding', which ultimately contributes to 'resolution and prevention of conflicts'. Article 5, paragraph d also names cultural heritage as 'a central factor' in 'sustainable development, cultural diversity and contemporary creativity'. This adds 'diversity' as a benefit of heritage in this convention. Sustainable development is considered an instrumental benefit, and thus not recorded. The benefits of social cohesion and development are also repeated in Article 8, paragraphs a and c. Overall, the convention places the greatest emphasis on benefits, which, as discussed previously, require and presuppose connection in ways that current interpretation philosophy does not recognise. Participation by the public in various cultural heritage activities is also an important feature of the convention. Article 5, paragraph d, calls for the establishment of an environment that 'supports participation in cultural heritage activities', which is further developed in Article 12, which calls for measures that encourage 'everyone to participate in', for example, the 'identification, study, interpretation, protection, conservation and presentation' of the heritage (paragraph a). This call for participation is particularly noteworthy with regards current interpretation philosophy that still emphasises specialist knowledge and interpreter's control over themes and messages. The suggestion in the convention appears to be that participation is directly linked to people's ability to realise the various benefits of heritage mentioned. Article 7 addresses issues of presentation, or what may be understood as interpretation in the definition of this study. Crucially, paragraph a calls for 'reflection on the ethics and methods of presentation…as well as respect for diversity of interpretations', while paragraph b requires Parties to 'establish processes for conciliation to deal

equitably with situations where contradictory values are placed on the same cultural heritage by different communities'. This is an immensely important observation in light of the ethical issues with current interpretation philosophy that I discussed in Chapter 2 regarding themes and messages. The IAHD offers no response beyond a casual acknowledgement that issues exist, while continuing to propose equalised narratives that mask diversity and conflict. Instead, the Faro Convention calls for practices that reflect and make visible such 'diversity of interpretations'. To date, however, neither the UK nor Germany has ratified the convention.

The review of the European context shows very early consideration of the need for public participation in all aspects of identifying, managing, and interpreting heritage. It is noticeable that from the earliest document reviewed, protection is not merely asserted as a good in its own right, but is linked to the benefits that may be derived from heritage. The earliest document also introduces the benefit of social cohesion, which emerges only much later in national legislation, and which isn't considered in the international context at all. Similarly, the benefit of identity, which in the international context did not emerge until the ICH Convention of 2003, was already raised in 1985 within the European Context. With the Faro Convention, which is solely focused on the value of cultural heritage to society, and thus to its benefits, the latter receive much emphasis, which is evident in the sheer number of benefits asserted in this convention, as shown in table 4.2 below. These benefits of (cultural) heritage continue to be asserted in various policy statements on the European level (see for example European Commission 2014; Council of the European

Union 2014; Council of Europe 2015) and particularly in the Faro Convention (Council of Europe 2005), which speaks for example of the benefits of identity, cohesion, and creativity. In terms of the current philosophy and practice of heritage interpretation, the European policy context particularly raises questions about interpretation's ability to respond to views of heritage as process and to enable realisation of benefits that are rooted in existing connections to heritage. Participation also emerges as a key point, which policy sees as crucial and which appears in direct opposition to the still-dominant view of specialists determining knowledge in interpretation, and interpreters determining messages to achieve their own outcomes. However, perhaps the most noticeable gap between current interpretation philosophy and European heritage legislation is the concern in the latter with respect for diversity and conflicting values in presentation, a call for which currently interpretation makes no room in its approaches using themes and its outcomes of knowledge gain, and attitudinal and behavioural change.

TABLE 4.2 BENEFITS OF HERITAGE The European Context									
Document	**Year**	**Diversity:** (source of spiritual and intellectual richness; also respect for)	**Creativity** (foster; also respect for)	**Dialogue between cultures** (inspire)	**Identity** (sense of)	**Continuity** (sense of)	**Social Integration/ cohesion**	**Collective Memory/ remembrance**	**Well-being/Quality of Life**
Charter of Architectural Heritage	1975					1	1		1
Convention of the Protection of the Architectural Heritage	1985		1		1				
Valletta Convention	1992							1	
Faro Convention	2005	1	1	1	1		1	1	1

The National Context: England

The *National Trust Act 1907* (Act of Parliament 1907) incorporated the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty, or short, The National Trust. Article 4, paragraph 1 names as The National Trust's purpose the promotion of preservation of 'lands and tenements…of beauty or historic interest', the latter constituting the two values for which sites might be purchased for protection. This is done 'for the benefit of the nation', and article 29, Paragraph a may provide the answer to wherein this benefit lies, when it states that land must remain accessible and undeveloped 'for the recreation and enjoyment of the public'. While recreation appears as an instrumental benefit through particular use, enjoyment emerges as an immediate benefit, which is thus recorded as a benefit accordingly in this study. The National Trust Act 1937 (Act of Parliament 1937) further refines the values for which sites will be protected by the charity, to now include 'national interest or architectural…interest', while reaffirming historic and artistic interest (Article 3, Paragraph a). These values are very much AHD values that are centred on the material, which people are thought to enjoy and value in its own right. Paragraph c of this article consequently extends The National Trust's work to specifically promote 'access to and enjoyment of' its properties, thus reiterating the benefit of 'enjoyment' that may be derived from them. This benefit is thus recorded for this study.

The 1979 *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act* (Act of Parliament 1979) provides for the 'investigation, preservation and recording of matters of archaeological or historical interest' (long title) and creates a schedule of monuments which are of 'national importance' (Article 1). Article 9,

paragraph 4b speaks of ‘the public’s enjoyment’ of monuments, which emerges as the only benefit of this heritage for the public in the act. Again, the underlying concepts are very much those of the AHD.

The *National Heritage Act 1983* (c.47) (Act of Parliament 1983) establishes the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England, which, until 01 April 2015, was known as English Heritage (now Historic England). Article 33 gives the duty of the Commission, and lists first the ‘preservation of ancient monuments and historic buildings’, which Chapter 4 has identified as the key aim of the AHD. Following the ‘preservation and enhancement’ of conservation areas, the article lists as the Commission’s final duty the promotion of ‘the public’s enjoyment’ of ancient monuments and historic buildings, and the advancement of their knowledge thereof, as well as preservation. This advancement of knowledge, too, has been shown as a key element of the AHD. While the act does not directly establish a benefit of heritage, its emphasis on the promotion of enjoyment suggests that this is considered a key benefit that the public can gain from heritage. Consequently, enjoyment is recorded as a benefit raised in this act. Paragraph 2 of the article also requires the Commission to ‘provide educational facilities and services, instruction and information to the public’ about ancient monuments and historic buildings, but does not further specify the purpose of this education. The reference to knowledge and education therefore appears to be an end in itself, rather than generating a *heritage* benefit to the public.

English Heritage’s Strategy 2005 – 2010, *Making the Past Part of Our Future* (English Heritage 2005b) is included in this review as it was still the most current strategy at the time when this research was undertaken. Its introduction

asserts that, ‘Most people now see the historic environment as reinforcing their sense of place, belonging and well-being; and putting quality, variety and meaning into their lives’. These may all be understood as benefits, although the latter appear to be aspects of well-being. For the purposes of this research, the benefits recorded from this are therefore sense of place, sense of belonging, and well-being/quality of life, which is a cluster term already introduced. What is important to note for my research is the observation that people already see heritage to have these impacts, asserting an existing connection with and appreciation of heritage that the IAHD does not acknowledge. However, despite this, the strategy uses what it calls a ‘cycle of understanding’, to which the organisation’s six aims for the strategy are linked, and which are reminiscent of the USNPS cycle that Tilden (Tilden 1957) evoked: Understanding, Valuing, Caring and Enjoying. The strategy aims to ‘help people develop their understanding of the historic environment’, which is expanded in priority B to include ‘appreciation’ not only of the historic environment but also its conservation ‘through education and training’ (Aim 1). With this, the strategy fully returns to the AHD. Aim 5 seeks to ‘stimulate and harness enthusiasm for England’s historic environment’, by increasing public awareness, broadening access and engaging with ‘diverse communities’, and stimulating ‘access, interest and enjoyment’. This aim specifically mentions ‘the benefits to everyone of enjoying the historic environment’, although it does not specify wherein these benefits lie. Enjoyment, although captured as a benefit in other legislation, cannot therefore be understood as such in this strategy, because it is presented as a *source* of benefits, rather than a benefit in its own right.

English Heritage's *Conservation Principles* (English Heritage 2008) state that the 'historic environment is central to England's cultural heritage and sense of identity' (p. 13). The latter may therefore be understood as a benefit of the historic environment. Conservation Principle 1 notes that the historic environment 'gives distinctiveness, meaning and quality' to places, thus 'providing a sense of continuity and a source of identity' and being a 'resource for learning and enjoyment' (p. 19). The three outcomes continuity, learning and enjoyment will therefore be recorded as further benefits. The second Conservation Principle speaks of the need to provide the opportunity for 'everyone…to contribute his or her knowledge of the value of places, and to participate in decisions about their future' (p. 20). Learning is further referred to as raising 'people's awareness and understanding of their heritage' (p. 20), which is somewhat in conflict with the previous paragraph that asserts people's knowledge of the heritage. Learning is also implicated in encouraging 'informed and active participation' (p. 20). Paragraph 2 under Conservation Principle 3 acknowledges the 'diverse…heritage values, that people associate with a place (p. 21), making it necessary to identify 'who values the place and why they do so' (p. 21) in assessing its significance. This is again important, as it challenges the notion in the IAHD of a conflict-free heritage, and the ethical implications of themes that privilege one view over another. It also places people at the heart of heritage, thus questioning the idea of sole expert knowledge of heritage, and heritage as fundamentally independent of people, as is the case in the current IAHD. The document identifies several heritage values (p. 28ff): evidential, historical (split into illustrative and associative), aesthetic, and communal (split into commemorative, symbolic, social and spiritual). Paragraph 46 links

aesthetic value to the ‘sensory and intellectual stimulation’ that people draw from places (p. 30). It is not clear what constitutes this stimulation or what, if anything, it produces. It would appear most closely connected to ‘enjoyment’, a benefit already asserted in the document. Communal value is linked to ‘collective experience or memory’ (p. 31), thus expressing the benefit that people derive from the heritage they value for this reason. I therefore record this benefit under the cluster term of ‘Collective memory/remembrance’. Commemorative or symbolic values, a sub-set of communal value, ‘reflect the meanings of a place for those who draw part of their identity from it’ (p. 31), thus reaffirming identity as a benefit. Paragraph 56 states that, ‘Social value is associated with places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence’ (p. 32). This adds the benefits of distinctiveness and social interaction/coherence. The latter is recorded under the cluster term ‘Social integration/cohesion’, while distinctiveness would appear sufficiently similar to the benefit ‘sense of place’ already established through English Heritage’s *Making the Past Part of Our Future* strategy to be recorded under this term. What is important to highlight here again with regard to this research is the notion of *existing* values for which the public claim something as heritage. It is these exiting values that the principles are concerned with under communal value, and which therefore interpretation can be expected to acknowledge and present. The *Conservation Principles* also note the need to identify all people and communities ‘who are likely to attach heritage values to a place’ and to capture ‘the range of those values’ (p. 36). The document further emphasises that, ‘Different people and communities may attach different weight to the same heritage values of a place at the same time’

(p. 36), which may be seen to further call on heritage interpretation to make these conflicting and diverse values visible in ways that current thematic interpretation does not allow for. However, it should be noted that the AHD is still evident in the document, and Waterton (2010, p.155ff) has argued that expert values are still given dominance.

English Heritage's *Corporate Plan 2011 – 2015* (English Heritage 2011) is included in this review as it was in force during the research period. The plan's foreword states that people have always told stories about the past (p.2), while the plan's main priority, 'to safeguard for the future the most significant remains of our national story' (p. 8), connects these stories to material remains. The plan also makes further connections, when it states that, 'The memories that these stories embody are the foundation of a people's world-picture and the root of many of its passions, preoccupations and beliefs' (p. 2), thus linking the remains of the past via memories and stories to people's present-day world-views. This also implies an existing involvement that people have with heritage. The foreword continues that today a heritage is needed 'in which different members of society are able to read different messages, suitable to their particular natures and needs' (p. 3). This would imply that practices are needed on site that transcend a division between people and heritage, and enable instead active interaction based on people's own selections. Through this, then, heritage 'makes a vital contribution to quality of life' (p. 3), which thus may be recorded as a benefit of heritage under the cluster term of 'well-being/quality of life'. History and historical landmarks, the foreword notes, 'can be the inspiration for successful and distinctive regeneration and cause people to cherish places more powerfully, and behave better in them' (p. 3), all of which represent

instrumental benefits of heritage, which are therefore not recorded for this study. While reasserting English Heritage's primary role as providing expert advise to others and managing the national designation system, the plan also refers to the publicly accessible sites managed by the organisation. Here, the plan, states, 'The enjoyment, education and inspiration of those people [who visit] is an important part of what we do' (p. 6). While inspiration and education may be read as benefits, it is not clear what either is meant to achieve. Therefore, only enjoyment is recorded as a benefit. The plan makes further statements about presentation of its portfolio of sites, citing 'improving the experience and understanding of visitors and providing educational services' as core purposes (p. 9), again without, however, providing further clarification. This clarification may be found later on, when the plan states that, 'From an understanding [through evidence, research, investigation, interpretation]…comes the ability of society to properly value its physical roots' (p. 10), implying that understanding framed in this specific, scientific way is the prerequisite to valuing physical, or material heritage. This, then, brings the plan firmly back to the AHD and its outcomes, which is interesting insofar as it contradicts the assumption of connections of people with heritage outlined previously in the plan. In this context, the plan also repeats the cycle of understanding that was introduced by English Heritage's 2005 strategy (p. 11). The purpose of education is therefore to help people 'properly value' (p. 10) heritage and thus to care for and help others enjoy it, which is again linked to understanding. In this, the plan's vision for presentation very much follows the IAHD, creating a tension to the benefits asserted earlier in the plan. The plan's associated corporate aim is to 'Help people appreciate and enjoy England's

national story', which gives the organisation 'a special responsibility to *introduce* people' to heritage (p. 12, my emphasis). This further emphasises the notion that heritage is not already known and meaningful to people, which might account for the comparatively weak assertion that heritage thus '*should* be a source of local pride and wider enjoyment' (p. 12, my emphasis). Pride is nevertheless recorded as another benefit of heritage in this study.

As noted earlier, in April 2015 English Heritage was split into two organisations, of which Historic England took on the statutory functions of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England as established by the National Heritage Act 1983 (Act of Parliament 1983). English Heritage is now the name for the charitable trust caring for the national portfolio of sites. Therefore, Historic England's Corporate Plan 2015-2018, *Valuing Our Past, Enriching Our Future* (Historic England 2015) is also reviewed. The plan notes that heritage has 'a profound effect on the way we feel and behave' and 'how we think about our past and our aspirations for the future' (p. 6), therefore suggesting, albeit vaguely, that heritage has a place in future-making. The plan goes on to say that heritage 'has the power to improve places and enhance people's lives' (p. 6). While all of these may be understood as benefits of heritage, only 'enhancing people's lives' provides sufficient clarity to be recorded as a benefit under the cluster term of 'well-being/quality of life'. Speaking of its aims, the plan specifically refers to the 'benefits' of heritage (p. 10). It states that, 'Our heritage is central to our success as a nation. It has inherent worth, engendering a sense of identity, history and place' (p. 10), while also acknowledging further instrumental benefits for tourism and the wider economy. Based on this, the benefits recorded for the study are identity,

continuity (history) and sense of place. A new strategy for English Heritage was not available at the time of writing.

The review of the context in England shows that in contrast particularly to the European legislation, the only clear benefit asserted in early legislation is, somewhat vaguely, ‘enjoyment’. Legislation does not make clear what the further outcomes of this enjoyment might be, leaving it open, perhaps, for individuals to define this further. English Heritage’s policies and plans reaffirm this benefit, but have considerably added to it since 2005, as shown in table 4.3 below. The *Conservation Principles* (English Heritage 2008) in particular emphasise the benefits of heritage for people, and overall, identity, continuity, sense of place and well-being/quality of life stand out in this and subsequent policy by the organisation. It is of note that these benefits are also directly linked to the values used for identifying heritage for national protection, which the *Conservation Principles* have expanded beyond material or scientific values to include the values held by the community. The *Conservation Principles* in particular raise challenges to the IAHD, as they acknowledge heritage as a process that is undertaken by people, as well as the existence of diverse and conflicting heritage values. The principles highlight the need to acknowledge and present these values, which is a central omission in the IAHD. Nevertheless, in comparison to international and European legislation, English legislation and policy is still very much based in the AHD, despite its affirmation of public benefits of heritage.

TABLE 4.3
BENEFITS OF HERITAGE
The National Context: England

Document	**Year**	**Identity** (sense of)	**Continuity** (sense of)	**Social Integration /cohesion**	**Collective Memory/ remembrance**	**Enjoyment**	**Sense of place**	**Sense of belonging**	**Well-being/ Quality of Life**	**Learning**	**Pride** (source of)
National Trust Act	1907					1					
National Trust Act	1937					1					
Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act	1979					1					
National Heritage Act	1983					1					
English Heritage 2005-2011 Strategy	2005						1	1	1		
English Heritage Conservation Principles	2008	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	
English Heritage Corporate Plan 2011-2015	2011					1			1		1
Historic England Corporate Plan 2015-2018	2015	1	1				1		1		

The National Context: Germany

The federal nature of the German political system means that individual states rather than the federal government set cultural policy and legislation. Therefore, only legislation and policy applicable to the state of Lower Saxony as the location of the case study used for this research is considered.

The *Niedersächsisches Denkmalschutzgesetz*, or Heritage Protection Act, of 1979 (Niedersächsischer Landtag 1979) establishes the principle that monuments (*Kulturdenkmäler*) are to be 'protected, maintained and scientifically researched'[1] (Article 1). Public access should also be granted where possible. Article 2 defines monuments as 'architectural heritage, archaeological heritage, movable heritage and geological heritage'[2]. Paragraph 2 establishes the values for which architectural heritage is protected. These are historic, artistic, or scientific interest, or having interest in terms of town planning. Overall, therefore, the act is focused on expert identification and study of heritage in the tradition of the AHD, merely calling for access for the public. The act also creates a list for protected sites (Article 4). Article 28 makes provision for the display of plaques that denote the protected status of a site, and presumably provide some information about its significance. Financial support may also be tied to displaying such plaques ('Hinweisschilder', Article 32). However, the act concerns protection only, and does not consider presentation of sites, or information about it. Benefits of monuments to the public are also not specified, suggesting that the act considers protection of expert-identified heritage to be a self-evident requirement.

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[1] ,zu schützen, zu pflegen und wissenschaftlich zu erforschen' (my translation.)
[2] ,Baudenkmale, Bodendenkmale, bewegliche Denkmale und Denkmale der Erdgeschichte' (my translation)

The *Kulturbericht Niedersachsen 2013/14*, or *Cultural Report Lower Saxony* (Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kultur 2014) is the strategy and policy paper compiled by the Ministry for Science and Culture of the state of Lower Saxony. Importantly, culture includes monuments, as defined in the *Denkmalschutzgesetz* (Niedersächsischer Landtag 1979), as well as cultural heritage (Kulturerbe) and museums, thus permeating the traditional divisions between these elements, and treating heritage and museums as an integral element of culture overall. This is the second cultural report, and reflects a further step in a process termed 'Cultural Development Concept'[3] (p. 13), which involves an active dialogue between all cultural actors, including policy makers, artists, and the public. The report highlights that cultural policy includes 'maintaining cultural heritage, supporting the arts and artists as well as increasingly strengthening cultural education as a necessary condition for cultural participation'[4] (p.12). Cultural participation is identified as a key focus in the ministerial foreword and placed specifically in the context of an increasingly international society (p. 7). This is particularly relevant when viewing heritage as part of this cultural context, as it suggests active shaping and re-shaping of heritage through participation of *all* members of society, independent of their origin. This is further emphasised when the report notes art, culture, and cultural education as 'important resources'[5] (p. 7): they 'secure tradition'[6], ''stimulate

[3] 'Kulturentwicklungskonzept' (my translation)
[4] 'die Pflege des kulturellen Erbes, die Förderung der Künste und der Künstler sowie immer mehr die Stärkung der kulturellen Bildung als Voraussetzung für kulturelle Teilhabe' (my translation)
[5] 'wichtige Resources' (my translation)
[6] 'sichern Tradition' (my translation)

new developments and modernization'[7] and 'facilitate dialogue with other cultures'[8]. All three aspects represent benefits of cultural heritage, which are therefore captured under the cluster terms of 'continuity' (tradition), 'creativity' (new developments/modernization) and 'dialogue between cultures/understanding'. Cultural participation across the broadest possible publics (p. 11) is identified as a key aim of the state's cultural policy, not merely as consumers but as practitioners (p. 7). The term *Breitenkultur* is used to encapsulate this concept, to mean participation by geographically dispersed populations across cities and the countryside, across generations, and across cultures (p. 15). The report stresses the 'potential and opportunities of cultural diversity'[9] (p.16), thus firmly bringing the concept of diversity into the policy, as was the case in UNESCO's *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* (2001) and also in European legislation, particularly the Faro Convention (Council of Europe 2005). The report highlights the need for cultural policy to act as 'diversity management aimed at integration'[10](p. 16). Although diversity therefore holds a central place in the state's strategy, it is not specifically explored as a *benefit* of culture or heritage. Social integration however is identified as a specific benefit of art and culture, since 'art and culture can form a connecting brace for an intercultural society'[11] (p. 29). It is recorded as a benefit accordingly. For heritage interpretation, the report raises the call to support *Breitenkultur* and cultural participation. The view of heritage as part of

[7] 'Impulsgeber für neue Entwicklungen und Modernisierungsprozesse' (my translation)
[8] 'Wegbereiter für die Verständigung mit anderen Kulturen' (my translation)
[9] 'die Potenziale und Chancen der kulturellen Vielfalt' (my translation)
[10] 'integrationsorientiertes Diversitätsmanagement' (my translation)
[11] 'Kunst und Kultur können eine verbindende Klammer für die interkulturelle Gesellschaft bilden.' (my translation)

culture that both preserves and develops tradition in an intercultural dialogue is an important challenge to notions in the IAHD of heritage as material and static. Crucially, while learning is seen as a prerequisite for participation, and thus shaping of heritage, it is *not* a concept of learning about heritage as a completed state that is to be understood. The implication is that consequently, heritage interpretation must find ways to both provide cultural education and opportunities for participation that changes heritage. Diversity and multiple cultures are also an important aspect of the report to which the IAHD with its focus on single narratives and messages currently offers no response.

The *Kulturbericht Niedersachsen* is mirrored in the policy paper *Perspektiven von Kulturentwicklung im Landkreis Osnabrück 2015-2020* (Landkreis Osnabrück 2015), issued by the Local Authority which financially supports the German case study site of Varusschlacht. Like the *Cultural Report Lower Saxony*, this document discusses cultural heritage and museums under the wider term of culture. The document asserts that culture has inherent worth and is evidence of a human need for creative expression (p. 6). The policy aims for broad participation through *Breitenkultur* to enable cultural activity (p. 6/7), a point that is made repeatedly, suggesting that through participation, culture is associated with the benefit of fostering creativity. Creativity is therefore recorded as a benefit for this study. Culture is also presented as fostering social contact and thus counteracting isolation (p. 7). This may therefore be recorded as a benefit under the cluster term of social integration/cohesion. Cultural education and cultural integration are also repeated as strategic aims of the policy, giving further emphasis to the suggestion that this can be delivered through culture, and thus heritage (p. 20). The challenges to, and expectations

of heritage interpretation are thus the same as outlined above for the *Kulturbericht Niedersachsen.*

While the earliest legislation on heritage, the *Denkmalschutzgesetz*, does not consider the benefits of heritage for the public, but rather assumes an inherent worth of heritage in its own right, it is noticeable that the two more recent policy papers for the state of Lower Saxony and the county of Osnabrück see cultural heritage not as separate from culture and the arts over all. Rather, cultural heritage, including monuments, is embedded in considerations of the wider cultural life within the state and county. Consequently, the benefits of heritage are intrinsically linked to the benefits of all culture, both in its offer and production, the latter being a point emphasized particularly by the *Kulturbericht Niedersachsen*. This applies an equally dynamic concept to cultural heritage as it does to other cultural resources and production, which constitutes a break from the original focus on preservation of the *Denkmalschutzgesetz*. Policy thus seeks a much greater active use of heritage in the cultural life of Lower Saxony, as well as an opening up to cultural participation by diverse publics. Cultural diversity is viewed as a social fact, which requires cultural policy and resulting management to be used actively for cultural integration. Integration emerges as a key policy aim, which must be supported by cultural management, including heritage management. The German policy context strongly mirrors developments in European policy, as well as the UNESCO declaration on diversity and on ICH. With this emphasis it noticeably differs from the English context, which, with the exception of the *Conservation Principles*, broadly continues to be much more reflective of understandings of heritage as material, as supporting national stories, and as requiring education of the public for the

purpose of preserving heritage as is. Table 4.4 below summarises the benefits that German legislation and policy claim for heritage.

TABLE 4.4 BENEFITS OF HERITAGE The National Context: Germany					
Document	**Year**	**Creativity** (foster; also respect for)	**Dialogue between cultures** (inspire)	**Continuity** (sense of)	**Social Integration/ cohesion**
Kulturbericht Niedersachsen 2013/14	2014	1	1	1	1
Perspektiven von Kulturentwicklung im Landkreis Osnabrück 2015-2020	2015	1			1

Conclusion

This chapter presented a critical review of key heritage legislation and policy to identify the public benefits of heritage asserted therein and to test my hypothesis that to date, heritage interpretation discourse has not sufficiently engaged with the aspirations in legislation and policy surrounding these public benefits of heritage. I argued in the previous chapter that these benefits in fact mirror the heritage processes and purposes that have been raised in challenges to the AHD from within critical heritage studies, and which, as the previous chapter in particular has shown, also are not considered in the IAHD. The review in this chapter has shown this latter point to be the case, and it has also highlighted that aspirations expressed in legislation and policy are in fact not considered in the IAHD.

In particular, the review of international, European and national heritage legislation and policy has shown that since early 2000, and particularly over the last decade, the benefits of heritage for the public that are mentioned have become more numerous in each individual act and policy paper. While early legislation either does not mention public benefit at all (Niedersächsischer Landtag 1979; UNESCO 1972), or is limited to one or two benefits (e.g. Council of Europe 1975), later acts and policies list between four (UNESCO 2003) and seven (English Heritage 2008) (fig 4.1). As Chapter 3 has shown, critical heritage studies also mirror this trend toward increased emphasis on intangible values, which can be understood as the benefits of heritage as expressed in legislation and policy, as I have suggested at the end of that chapter.

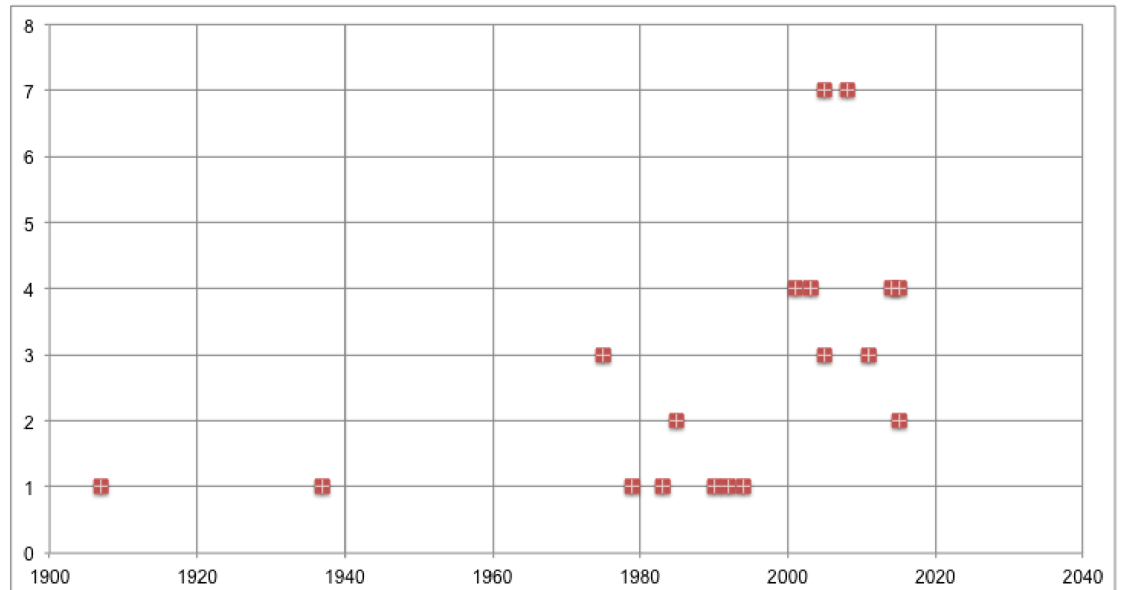

Fig. 4.1 Spread of number of benefits mentioned in heritage legislation and policy reviewed.

This increase in the mention of the public benefits of heritage mirrors an expansion of the values that are used in legislation to identify heritage for protection, which during the same time period have added intangible values such as social and spiritual importance to the traditional material and scientific values. Similarly, heritage legislation over this period has given increasing emphasis to the public and particularly heritage communities (Council of Europe 2005), both in terms of involving communities in identifying heritage (e.g. UNESCO 2003) and with regard to active participation in cultural heritage (Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kultur 2014). This suggests that at least nominally, heritage legislation and policy has moved away from concepts of heritage as solely based in the material, and toward notions of heritage that are defined and conceptualised around people's relationship with it, and the need for their continued and active participation in identifying, using, and managing heritage. As I have shown in Chapter 3, practice does not, however, always reflect these changes in legislation and

discourse. Structures of old remain in place, and along with associated thinking these can often take a considerable time to mirror evolving theory.

This is also evident when comparing the developments regarding public benefits of heritage in legislation and policy to the IAHD as discussed in Chapter 2. In particular, the IAHD, with its insistence on the need to translate heritage for the public and to *create* connections, omits to respond to assertions of the public's *existing* connections with heritage, and the deeply involved benefits such as identity and sense of belonging that legislation and policy claim. The IAHD's practice of *selecting* facts in order to create a persuasive theme that delivers the interpreter's and their organisation's messages with a view to prompt desired behaviours and attitudes is also directly opposite to the aspiration in legislation and policy to respect and represent diverse heritage values. This intention in the IAHD to *regulate* the ways in which people engage with heritage, focused in general on the overarching aim of preservation of the material, also contradicts the understanding of heritage as a process that is created and changed by people, and the aspiration particularly in European and German legislation and policy to ensure the widest possible cultural participation in an effort to respond to the facts of modern diversity.

However, the review in this chapter has also shown that the changed emphases in legislation and policy may not represent as radical a conceptual shift as it may at first appear. More specifically, it does not necessarily result in revised organisational structures that break from the emphasis on expert-led heritage management. For example, the newly created Historic England is firmly rooted once again in notions of expertise and leadership in heritage protection, with little room for public engagement beyond organised special

interest groups that share a similar expert outlook (Historic England 2015). Legislation with a more material understanding of heritage is still in place, as are the various lists, which, as an instrument of conservation, arguably may separate heritage from contemporary life and continued participative processes of heritage work (see for example Alivizatou 2006). More discursive engagement is therefore needed to fully realise the aspirations of heritage policy of the last decade, and to ensure heritage management practices deliver and unlock the various benefits of heritage that have been asserted. In this, the discourse of heritage interpretation can and must play a significant role.

The primary research question of my thesis is whether heritage interpretation delivers the public benefits of heritage as asserted in legislation and policy. I have noted that legislation and policy does not in fact offer evidence for the benefits of heritage that it claims. Overall, there is limited empirical evidence for these benefits directly, with studies showing benefits in relation to projects as part of evaluations (see for example BDRC 2009b; BDRC 2009a) or as they emerge indirectly as part of wider discussions on heritage, as the previous chapter has shown. For this reason, my research also tests whether 'the public' in fact specifically associate with heritage the benefits that are asserted in legislation and policy. The review has shown the following benefits of heritage in legislation and policy:

TABLE 4.5 BENEFITS OF HERITAGE Overview		
Benefit	**Frequency**	**Notes**
Creativity (foster; also respect for)	6	all but England
Enjoyment	6	England only
Identity	5	all but Germany
Continuity (sense of)	5	all
Social Integration/cohesion	5	all but Int'l
Well-being/Quality of Life	5	EU x2, England
Diversity (source of spiritual and intellectual richness; also respect for)	4	Int'l x3, EU
Dialogue between cultures/understanding	3	all but England
Collective Memory/remembrance	3	EU x2, England
Sense of place	3	England only
Personal Development (emotional, moral, spiritual)	1	Int'l only
(Identify) Humanity's roots	1	Int'l only
Sense of belonging	1	England only
Learning	1	England only
Pride (source of)	1	England only

The table shows that five benefits were mentioned by national (English) frameworks only. These are enjoyment, sense of place, sense of belonging, learning, and pride. These benefits will therefore not be applied to the overall study, but will be considered in the context of the English case study. England is also the exception in not having raised the benefits of creativity and dialogue between cultures/understanding. German policy on the other hand is the only framework that did not raise the benefit of identity, although this was a central benefit in the previous Culture Report of the state of Lower Saxony

(Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kultur 2010, p.7). It is not clear why this benefit appears to have been dropped, although an evident focus on cultural integration of migrants may have played a role in strengthening overall benefit of social integration above what might have been conceptualized as national identity. However, since the benefit of identity is part of the international and European context to which Germany is connected, the benefit will be applied to the Germany case study also. Similarly, since creativity and dialogue between cultures are part of the international context for England, these benefits will be applied to the English case study. This approach will also be used for the three benefits that are only raised in international and/or European legislation and policy. These are diversity, personal development, and understanding humanity's roots. Finally, two benefits were mentioned in European and English frameworks, but not in Germany. These benefits are well-being/quality of life and Collective memory/remembrance. Since they are included in European legislation, they will be applied to the German case study also.

In conclusion, the benefits that have been asserted in heritage legislation and policy, and which constitute the reference list used in this study as applicable to both the German and English case study are

- Creativity
- Identity
- Continuity
- Social Integration/cohesion
- Well-being/quality of life

- Diversity
- Dialogue between cultures/understanding
- Collective memory/remembrance
- Personal Development
- (Understanding) Humanity’s roots

5. METHODOLOGY

My main research question is whether heritage interpretation delivers the public benefits of heritage as asserted in heritage legislation and policy. In this, I am interested in exploring the impact of current interpretive philosophy and practice. I also want to examine whether people visiting heritage sites indeed seek the same benefits as those stipulated in heritage policy and legislation. I am also interested in understanding visitors' own expectations of heritage to reveal whether these match current interpretive discourse.

The central method to address these research aims is a comparative study of two sites in England and Germany. While examination of my research questions at one single site would have been possible, this would not have been able to reveal wider insights into public benefits and interpretation. It would also have placed additional limitations on the ability to generalise from the study and test the validity of findings. By using two case studies, datasets can be compared and further interrogated. In particular, two case studies also allow a comparison of different interpretive planning approaches. This serves to reveal how underlying philosophies and principles may impact interpretation's ability to deliver public benefits.

As explained in the introduction to this thesis, I chose England and Germany as the two countries for my case studies due to their differences in the field of heritage interpretation. The discipline is distinct in England and the United Kingdom and enjoys a considerable history. The British Association for Heritage Interpretation for example is the oldest professional body for interpretation, having been established in 1975 (Association for Heritage

Interpretation n.d). In contrast, interpretation as a distinct discipline does not exist in Germany. Aspects covered by interpretation are split into several fields and disciplines, such as Museums Studies (*Museology*), which, as in the United Kingdom, includes elements of object presentation, and *Museumspädagogik*, which currently strives to widen its sphere, but still tends to be defined in terms of educational programmes for children and young people. The professional body for *Museumspädagogik*, the *Bundesverband für Museumspädagogik*, is relatively young, having been established only in 1991 (Bundesverband für Museumspädagogik n.d.). Books on separate areas of interpretation exist, such as exhibitions (for example Braun et al. 2003). However, there is no single discipline and associated discourse, which, like interpretation in the English-speaking world, spans museums exhibitions, outdoor panels and trails, and live programmes. In addition, while in England interpretation-related roles increasingly require degrees and experience in interpretation, in Germany required qualifications are still primarily subject specific, as a look at the job listings on the website of the *Deutscher Museumsbund,* or German Museums Association shows. The fact that experience in what we would term interpretation is increasingly asked for, yet without reference to formal qualifications, is another sign of the lack of a coherent field of interpretation in Germany. As such, the hypothesis was that there would be some differences in the respective interpretive practices, which would provide an empirical basis that would support analysis of the different impacts of interpretation on public benefit delivery.

The case studies I chose are 1066 Battle of Hastings and Battle Abbey in England, and Varusschlacht in Lower Saxony, Germany. In my choice of case

study sites I am interested in ensuring comparability across several areas. First, as my primary concern is with public benefit as established in national and international legislation, I chose sites that are of national significance. The hypothesis is that such sites will be able to provide more widely applicable benefits than regional or local sites. Both the Battle of Hastings and Varusschlacht are considered to have influenced national history, and Wells (2003) compared the two with regard their relative significance. Secondly, it is important to find sites of a similar nature. This is based on the hypothesis that visitors' emotional connection with and response to a site is partly due to its character. Thus, findings from sites of vastly different character would not be comparable. Both sites I chose represent battles with considerable human losses, and a resounding victory that is widely considered to have brought about a change in the course of the country's history. Similarly, both sites incorporate areas of the original battlefield, archaeologically verified through related finds. And finally, in addition to access to original battle areas, both sites offer an exhibition and visitor centre. Thirdly, taking into account the cultural sovereignty of German states, it was important to find sites managed by comparable organizations. The Battle of Hastings site is managed by English Heritage, which at the time my study began in 2011 was still an executive non-departmental body of the British Government and thus funded directly by the government (it is now a charity). Varusschlacht is substantially funded by the county council as well as the *Stiftung der Sparkassen im Osnabrücker Land*, a state-wide cultural funding body with close ties to the state government. As such, both organizations may be expected to deliver national legislation and policy.

Before exploring in detail the methods I used in my case studies, it is worth highlighting that, since these relied heavily on research with staff and visitors, my proposed methods were scrutinized and approved by the Ethics Committee of University College London before the study commenced. Safeguards included information sheets that were provided to participants and which explained the aim of the study, the nature of the participation, and how data would be used. All participation was anonymous, with the exception of interviews with staff and funders. I explained at the onset that refusal to participate would have no implications whatsoever. I provided information sheets for interviews at the start, which included my contact information. Participants in visitor interviews were given a unique number, which they could quote if they wished to withdraw or alter their contribution up until October 2014. For reasons that I will explore further below only adults over the age of 18 were intended to be included in the study, and as such there were no concerns about working with children. It was agreed that vulnerable adults would only be included in the study if they particularly wished to participate and consent was given by a responsible carer, who would also remain present during their participation. None of the participants changed or withdrew their contribution, and no vulnerable adults were included in the study. Several visitors approached for interviews or surveys refused to participate, and there were no further issues concerning these refusals, which were, however, recorded. Overall, no ethical issues with the methods used emerged during the study, with the exception of visitor observation on the battlefields, which was dropped as a method as it was deemed intrusive during a trial, as explained below.

In examining how interpretation and the IAHD impacts on public benefit delivery, it is important to analyse the underlying interpretive planning approaches. Interpretive planning itself has received little attention in evaluating the effectiveness of interpretation (see also Moser 2010). Only Benton's (2009) study touches on whether interpretive planning principles are actually applied in practice and found the answer to be predominantly no. Therefore, there is a strong need to shed further light on both how interpretive planning is undertaken and how this might affect success in delivering public benefit. In examining the interpretive planning approaches at my study sites, I deliberately do not pursue a checklist approach that searches for evidence of best practice principles for interpretive planning. This would create a narrow focus that remains within the IAHD and that obscures the actual practices applied. Instead, I seek to record the processes as they are, and in a second step analyse these processes based on the critique of the IAHD (Chapter 2) and critiques from critical heritage studies (Chapter 3). My approach to examining interpretive planning practices uses two methods. Where available, I reviewed interpretive planning documents to chart approaches, methods and principles used. I also conducted open-ended interviews with key staff to gain insights into the interpretive planning process used, and the underlying philosophy. While I am not looking for specific elements of interpretive planning per se, I did inquire after any audience research and evaluation undertaken if interviewees did not mention this. This is to ensure that these aspects, which the critiques of the AHD and the IAHD consider central, are not merely omitted from the interview but rather are genuinely missing from the interpretive planning approach. At Varusschlacht, I spoke to three key people: the property manager, the museums manager, and

the council archaeologist. At 1066 Battle of Hastings and Battle Abbey, I spoke to the property manager, the then Interpretation Manager, and the Interpretation Manager London and South-East. As I am interested in the wider benefits expected to be delivered by these sites, I also spoke to representatives from the two funding bodies at Varusschlacht . These interviews were unstructured and centred on funders' expectations of the sites with a particular focus on benefits for the public. All interviews were recorded, and the majority were subsequently transcribed to support analysis. From the document review and staff interviews, the key elements of the interpretive planning process and its underlying philosophy were collated.

I am also interested in exploring the impact of interpretation on public benefit delivery, without suggesting that other practices do not influence the public's ability to derive benefit from heritage, as discussed in the Introduction. As noted there, isolating the impact of interpretation is difficult. Arguably, as emerged particularly in Chapters 2 and 3 on the IAHD and critiques from within critical heritage studies, interpretation is a heritage management practice that is directly linked to, and expresses and reinforces other practices such as listing and public management. On site, it is also clear that interpretation is only one aspect of wider practices that shape visitor experience, such as infrastructure and visitor services. However, while I will return to the implications of this discursive approach to interpretation as isolated in Chapter 9, in examining the impact of *current* interpretation practice on the delivery of public benefits, it is nevertheless important to treat interpretation as much as possible as separate when looking at its impact on public benefit delivery. To this end I used multiple methods. In a first step, I undertook an audit of the interpretation provided.

Skibins et al (2012) note that many empirical studies on interpretation fail to describe the interpretation in detail. Therefore, I recorded the interpretive medium and outlined the content conveyed. In this, I aimed to specifically mention key elements that were given as examples of best practice in the interpretation-specific literature reviewed for this study in Chapter 2. The elements and associated principles specifically noted in descriptions are as follows:

- Relates to visitor (use of personal pronouns; comparisons to modern life/experiences; relating visitors' location to place)
- Clear theme/message (including clear structure and design, use of header/sub-headers, introduction/main body/conclusion)
- Interactive (things for visitors to do/touch/solve/discover)
- Reveals content in easy-to-understand language

It is important to emphasise that this does not purport to be a full list of best practice interpretive principles as given in interpretation literature, nor indeed a succinct list. While I could have used the principles identified by Skibins et al (2012, p.30ff), their list poses several issues for my purposes. The principles as defined by Skibins et al are highly abstract and no longer refer back to the attributes that the original literature listed as examples. As Skibins et al noted, the articles they review do not describe these attributes in detail either, and it is not therefore clear how they relate to each individual principle. Some principles on the list presented by Skibins et al also mix intention with implementation, and it is not clear how such interpretive planning objectives are reflected in the interpretation provided. While this may not be a major issue for the study of

Skibins et al, it would add a premature layer of analysis to my study and prevent other researchers from assessing the interpretation provided at my case study sites based on their own categories, if they wish. It is therefore more important for me to be transparent about what it is that I observed in the interpretation provided, independent of the interpretive planning process or objectives, which I examine separately. Reference to the elements and principles I have chosen serves to provide a more systematic approach to describing the interpretation in detail. This description collates the basis from which I can determine the impact of the interpretation on visitors, and public benefit in particular.

In order to further understand this impact, in addition to the audit I undertook visitor observations to see how visitors used the interpretation, how they appeared to respond to it, and which interpretation appeared most popular. Although my initial intention had been to also observe visitors outside on the battlefields, the lack of interpretation here meant that standardised observations yielded limited results. Furthermore, as both outdoor areas are quite large, observing visitors required that I follow them, which in an initial trial proved to be impossible to do in a discreet way. Although none of the groups I observed in the trial showed signs of awareness that I followed them, I decided that this was not a suitable approach, as it might make visitors feel uncomfortable. It might also influence their behaviour, thus making the method less or not at all useful. Consequently, I focused formal observations on the exhibition areas. I split these into interpretive zones based on interpretive foci, which in all but one case corresponded with separate rooms. I spent three one-hour-periods in each zone, ensuring that these periods took place at different times of day to allow for potential shifts in visitor profile. Rather than focus on individual visitors, if visitors

arrived in a group (excluding tour groups), I decided to observe and describe their engagement with the interpretation as a group. This was because the social aspects of visiting heritage sites and museums, as well as heritage work have been highlighted in literature. Therefore, rather than artificially isolate visitors from their groups, I recorded how the group as a whole behaved. For this, I gave each group member a number. As soon as a visitor or a group entered the room while I was free, I began observing them. If it was a group, I recorded the number and gender of the adults and children in the group. I then recorded how much time visitors or groups spent in the zone. If it was a group, I began recording the time as soon as the first group member entered the space until the last group member left. I noted which interpretive elements they engaged with. Lacking specialised tracking technology, it was not possible to time their engagement with each interpretive element separately. Instead, I took note of visitors' engagement with the interpretation in general. For this purpose, I adapted and added to the three strategies that Falk et al (1998, p.108) identified as part of visitors' agenda. My categories were as follows:

- focused: visitors read or look at everything with great focus
- moderately focused: visitors read or look at part of the interpretation with moderate focus
- unfocused: visitors glance at the interpretation but without necessarily stopping
- not engaged: visitors do not look at the interpretation at all (my addition).

Since my observation was of a whole group, unless a visitor arrived on their own, this method of capturing engagement somewhat overemphasises the depth of engagement, for if any one individual in the group focused on the interpretation, the engagement of the whole group is reflected as 'focused'. While my notes of the observations record further details, the reporting on a group-level was nevertheless felt to be more useful, not the least because individual group members' engagement may not have been fully captured while the whole group was observed. In addition, the assignment of an engagement category is based on observation of behaviour. This method cannot differentiate between someone carefully reading and processing an interpretive text, and someone merely pausing in front of a panel while thinking of something else. However, in combination with the audit, visitor interviews and visitor surveys, the adapted categories from Falk's strategies still provide a useful indication. The visitor observations enabled me to identify the most popular interpretive elements, how elements were used, and how much time on average visitors spent in each zone. I also noted any specific behaviour by visitors as they engaged with the interpretation. In particular, where I observed a group of visitors, I noted any interactions among the group, and if/when visitors split up. It would have been helpful to also have access to visitors' conversations as they engaged with the interpretation. However, apart from using technology, which was out of reach of this study's budget, this would have required following them closely in order to listen in on their conversations, which for the same reasons as above with observations on the battlefield was rejected. In most zones, it was possible for me to remain stationary, and observe visitors from a fixed point. Only in one zone, in the Abbey Museum at 1066 Battle of Hastings and Battle

Abbey, was it necessary for me to move about in order to observe visitors as they moved through the space. I endeavoured to remain as discreet as possible in my observations. Only in one instance did a visitor approach me to enquire what I was doing. This was not, however, a visitor I was observing at the time. Therefore, I am confident that my presence did not alter visitors' behaviour and use of the interpretation.

Visitor interviews and questions in a quantitative survey also served to further identify the impact of interpretation on public benefit delivery. I will return to these in the sections below, but it shall be noted here that this combination of methods allowed me to approach isolating the impact of interpretation as much as possible. Nevertheless, there remained an element of uncertainty, which I highlight in the presentation and discussion of my findings at both sites in the following chapters.

My research also seeks to examine whether the benefits that visitors associate with heritage sites and their visits match those asserted in legislation and policy. Visitors' own estimation of the benefits of heritage and the impact of interpretation are therefore key. Consequently, it was crucial to use a responsive methodology that was able to uncover the unexpected rather than prove what is assumed to be known. Thus, in order to gain a fundamental understanding of visitors' own views of the benefits of heritage, and how interpretation on site impacts them in realising these benefits, I used narrative inquiry through face-to-face interviews. Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p.20) have described narrative inquiry as 'understanding experience'. They establish the concept of narrative inquiry space, which spans across the four directions of inward and outward, backward and forward, or which in other words is made up of interaction, the

continuity of past, present and future, and a particular place, or situation (Clandinin & Connelly 2000, p.50). Narrative inquiry is characterised by listening (Callahan & Elliott 1996; Sørensen 2009) and discovery (Sørensen 2009), which enables the researcher to uncover previously unknown dimensions of an experience. Narrative is understood as an analytical as well as a discursive process (Smith & Weed 2007). Importantly, narrative is central to creating meaning (see also Shankar et al. 2001). Narratives are social action, created within relationships as interactive performances that are at once personal and social. Like all discourse, narratives are a constitutive force, and 'selves and identities are constructed in and through narratives and storytelling, and are formed and transformed by narrative-inspired social relationships' (Smith & Weed 2007, p.259). Shankar et al (2001, p.438) note the importance of a dominant narrative that people have been 'socialized into' and add that due to this context 'our interpretations are often shared with others'. In narrative inquiry, it is therefore important to analyse the features of narrative and place them in the wider socio-cultural context of the individual, but also of the particular narrative inquiry space within which a narrative is used. Guthrie and Anderson (2010) have shown the usefulness of narrative inquiry in visitor surveys. They criticise the limitations imposed on potential research findings by answer options in quantitative surveys that have been pre-defined by the researcher's own assumptions. Instead, they used initiating questions to guide exploration and have found that this approach has revealed unexpected results. Similar unstructured, qualitative approaches have been proposed also by Mason (2003) and they have been successfully used in Basu's (2007) study discussed previously. Sørensen (2009) has highlighted the limitations of how interviews

have been used in heritage and identity studies. She argues that interviews should not be about finding evidence of how the speaker's thinking fits with the discursive framework of the researcher. Rather, the interview should be a process of 'discovery' (Sørensen 2009, p.166) outside of existing assumptions, but one that is guided by the researcher's focus on what is to be explored. Thus, the researcher is able to probe and clarify, while taking in body language as well as the social context of the interview (Smith & Weed 2007). Narrative enquiry therefore gives us an insight not only into people's thinking, but also into the ways in which they process and construct their experience and thus meaning in a particular social and physical place (Smith & Weed 2007; Frank 2000). This method therefore seems inherently suited to deconstructing the process of realising the public benefits of heritage and thus the impact of interpretation on this process. In particular, narrative appears an intrinsic part of heritage itself, as I showed in Chapter 3 particularly with regard to identity, memory, and future-making, and also emerges indirectly in interpretation literature where it is concerned with meaning-making. Following from the above, I therefore used semi-structured interviews with visitors and initiating questions that asked about visitors' motivation to visit, what they take from their visit to this or other heritage sites, their use of the interpretation offered and what they felt most helped them in getting what they wanted from their visit. In line with the view that meaning is constructed socially (Bruner 1990; Smith & Weed 2007), I spoke with visitors in their respective groups where they had come together and were willing to engage with me as a group. This expanded the narrative beyond the individual and shed light on how heritage and visits to heritage sites are constructed and organised as part of a social experience and within social relationships. As

highlighted in literature on narrative inquiry, I engaged with visitors conversationally and in collaborative exploration (Clandinin & Connelly 2000). Where they asked questions of me about my own background and relationship to my heritage, I responded. Where they raised points or shared stories that did not seem immediately relevant to my initiating question I explored their line of thought further with them. This highlights the often deeply personal nature of the conversations that I had, and the commitment and trust that was required of respondents. Consequently, I ensured that I explained at the outset what the interview was about and what type of information we would explore together. I offered them an information sheet that I had prepared, which also gave my contact details. I ensured visitors understood that they were under no obligation to participate. I recorded refusals along with reasons given. I included only visitors over the age of 18 in the interviews as interpretation for children, defined here in legal terms as under the age of 18, is considered to require a separate approach (Tilden 1957; Beck & Cable 2002), which is outwith the scope of my research. I also included only visitors that were native to or resident in the country, as the benefits stipulated in national legislation and policy may be understood to apply primarily to nationals or residents. After completing all visitor interviews, I transcribed these verbatim and then coded them. Coding was based on concepts rather than the terminology of professional discourse, as visitors' own words are unlikely to match the latter. This did require a level of interpretation on my part with regards to what concepts the words used by visitors described. In many instances visitors used similar words, thus ensuring that concepts were ascribed consistently and with a high level of confidence concerning visitors' intention. In other instances, this was not the case, and I

relied on my own judgment in determining similarities or the use of synonyms. A particular challenge lay in comparing concepts across both case studies, since interviews at Varusschlacht were conducted in German. Where translation from German into English was straightforward, concepts were matched accordingly. In instances where the concepts in German could not be translated easily, they were not matched but treated as separate. I also take this into account in the discussions of the following chapters, to explore and highlight the conceptual differences, and the nuances in how people appear to relate to heritage. The issue of identifying and matching concepts became particularly important for the questionnaires (see below).

During the interview process it began to emerge that there appeared to be a difference between responses in Germany and England. In Germany, interviewees appeared to somehow be guarded; their language appeared much less emphatic than in England and interviews were markedly shorter. It was not clear whether this was due to a genuine difference in how people in these two countries related to their heritage, or whether it was due to the particular site in Germany, and here especially the interpretation provided. To examine this further, I therefore undertook a small sample of interviews with 58 people at the Hermann's Monument in Germany. This site, a 19th century statue in a picturesque elevated location in the Teutoburg Forest, is thematically related to my main case study site, and was in fact the main site associated with the historic battle prior to the discovery of the battlefield in Kalkriese. I used the same method for undertaking and analysing these interviews as with the main study.

However, narrative inquiry is not without its own limitations. Interviews place great demand on researchers' time and thus limit the number of responses. There is also a potential issue with validity, as analysis depends on the researcher's own interpretation of the interviewee's narrative (Smith & Weed 2007). There are, however, measures that can be taken to counter-balance limitations. Validity of analysis can be addressed by a second researcher who codes the responses. This can then be crosschecked with the primary researcher's coding. As budgetary limitations would not allow this approach for my research, I instead chose to initially re-code interviews after a period of two months and compare codes from both sessions. I added another review of coding just prior to write up of the final thesis. This has led to re-coding of several passages and has thus served as a crosscheck. The final review also meant that the benefit of 'understanding where we come from' was reduced in overall frequency to less than the threshold that had been used for selection of answer options in the questionnaire, and explains its inclusion in the survey despite fewer than ten mentions in the interviews. All coding was done using HyperResearch software.

One of the main limitations of qualitative research is regards generalisation (Guthrie & Anderson 2010). However, generalisation can be achieved through the use of a multi-method approach. I chose quantitative surveys in addition to the initial visitor observations and interviews to gather quantitative data on visitors' views of the benefits they received from their heritage visit, the perceived impact of interpretation, and what they expected from the interpretation. Pekarik et al (1999) and Prentice et al (1998) used qualitative visitor interviews to arrive at categories which they subsequently tested

quantitatively in visitor surveys. I used a similar approach, whereby I derived answer options for a quantitative survey from the visitor interviews. All answers that were mentioned more than ten times at either site were included as options. In phrasing the answer options, I followed the phrasing used by most participants in the interviews. This was done to avoid abstractions that might express concepts in the manner of professional discourse, but which would be unintelligible to the public, and which would therefore undermine the benefits of my overall approach based in narrative inquiry. This did, however, require a further layer of interpretation in the final analysis concerned with comparing visitors' responses to professional discourse. I sought to make my rationale transparent in each case, to enable readers to judge for themselves whether they find my transference to be valid. An open-ended 'other' option was also given for respondents to provide their own answers if needed. Two questions that asked visitors to rate on a seven-point scale how much the presentation on site had met their expectations and how much it had contributed to why they valued their visit were also included. These again aimed at identifying the impact of the interpretation on public benefit delivery. The only open-ended question on the survey asked visitors for any comments on what they did not like or what could have been better. This question was specifically added in response to observations during interviews at Varusschlacht, to identify if criticism of the interpretation raised there was more widespread. Demographical questions and questions about group make-up were also included. The full survey is shown overleaf.

Visitor Survey

Are you over 18 and live in the UK?

Hello! I am a student at University College London. I'm interested in why visitors come to Battle Abbey, and what they take from their visit – thanks for taking part in this survey. It is completely anonymous and should take no more than two to three minutes.

This survey takes place with kind permission from English Heritage. For more information please visit the Admissions Desk.

Please leave your completed questionnaire at the Admissions Desk. Thank you!

Q1: I am a

□ UK Citizen □ UK Resident *(but not citizen)*
Other country? Sorry, this survey is with UK Citizens and Residents only.

Q2: Your gender:
□ male □ female

Q3: Your Age Group:

□ 18 – 24 □ 25-34 □ 35 – 44 □ 45 -54 □ 55 – 64 □ over 65

Q4: Place of residence (county):____________

Q5: How many adults are you visiting with today?

□ Just me □ 1 □ 2-3 □ 3+

Q6: Does your group include children?

□ yes □ no

Q7: What is the highest educational qualification you completed?

□ None □ Secondary □ Vocational □ Bachelors Degree □ Masters Degree □ Doctorate

Q8: Did you learn about the Battle of Hastings in school?

□ yes □ no ☐ I don't remember

Q9: I have already seen the (tick all that apply)
□ abbey exhibition □ battle exhibition □ battlefield

Q10: What was more important in your visit today?

□ the exhibitions □ the battlefield □ both equally

Q11: I want this from the information/presentation provided on site (please tick all that apply):

- □ Nothing. I don't use any information.
- □ Give the context to the battle.
- □ Mark the place where something happened.
- □ Not to give too many facts and details.
- □ Point me where to go/what to see.
- □ Help me imagine what happened.
- □ Illustrate what happened, e.g. through a model
- □ Help me physically engage with the site, e.g. through a sign-posted walk
- □ Provide a variety of different media, e.g. films, panels, computer interactives etc.
- □ Other:

Q12: How much did the presentation/ information on site meet your expectations?

□□ □ □ □ □ □

Not at all Exceeded

Q13: Was there anything you didn't like or which could have been better?

Q14: I valued my visit here today specifically because… (please tick all that apply):

- □ Nothing specific, it's just something to do.
- □ I was in the place where history happened.
- □ It's part of my/our heritage in Britain.
- □ I could imagine what it was like back then.
- □ I learnt something new.
- □ It showed how far back the buildings/place/people go and we're part of that continuity.
- □ It combined a museum with nature/walk.
- □ It's good for children to learn about our history.
- □ I enjoyed the ambience/beauty of the site.
- □ It helped me think about/understand another culture.
- □ I could see/understand how people lived in the past.
- □ It was something relaxing to do, with the added benefit of history/heritage/architecture/nature.
- □ It helped me understand where I/we come from.
- □ It made me think about history and what if the battle had ended differently.
- □ It reminded me of what I've learnt before.
- □ I learnt from the past.
- □ Other:

Q15: How much did the presentation/ information on site contribute to why you've valued your visit?

□□ □ □ □ □ □

Not at all A lot

All done! Thanks very much.

Please leave your completed questionnaire at the Admissions Desk

Visitors were actively approached to fill in a survey. No sampling method was used, rather, every visitor who passed was approached, as long as there were sufficient spaces available for them to fill in a survey comfortably. At Varusschlacht, this was done at tables in front of the exit. At The Battle of Hastings, clipboards were used in front of the exit. At Varusschlacht, an intern at the site gave out 59 of the surveys. At The Battle of Hastings, a market research company was responsible for 50 surveys returned. I obtained all other surveys myself. All surveys were entered into SPSS Statistical Analysis software for analysis. One statistical test was applied to the data using SPSS; this was the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson's r test), used to establish the strength of association between the most frequently mentioned benefits and the variables of age, educational attainment, and whether the respondent had learnt about the battle in school. Pearson's r test was used since the types of variable involved fulfilled its assumptions, but not those of other correlation tests.

6. CASE STUDY: VARUSSCHLACHT, GERMANY

This chapter presents the findings from the case study in Germany, Varusschlacht – Museum und Park Kalkriese. The chapter first outlines the history of the battle, followed by its reception. The next section describes the interpretive planning process, and the interpretation put in place. The final sections present the findings from the visitor observations as well as visitor interviews and the quantitative surveys.

A short history of Varusschlacht[12]

In A.D. 9, three Roman legions under the command of Publius Quintilius Varus were ambushed and decimated by an alliance of German tribes led by Arminius, a prince of the Cherusci tribe (for this and the following see Bendikowski 2008; Wells 2003; Seeba 1995; Sheldon 2001). Varus was governor of Germany, appointed only two years earlier by Emperor Augustus. Augustus himself had secured the Roman border along the Rhine River against attacks from German tribes. It was from these Roman bases that from 12 B.C. onwards Augustus' adopted son Drusus began military campaigns into German territories in the east. By the time that Varus was appointed governor, the area between the Rhine and the river Elbe was considered conquered. Varus' main responsibilities are likely to have been the consolidation of Roman administration, the collection of taxes, and the suppression of possible uprisings.

Varus' opponent in the battle, Arminius, was one of Varus' own commanders. Arminius was leader of a Roman auxiliary unit, of which there

[12] In English, the battle is generally referred to as the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest. However, the German term *Varusschlacht* will be used throughout.

were many in the Roman army. These units were made up of native people, who in conquered territories were drafted into the army, while in unconquered territories many joined voluntarily, attracted perhaps by the good pay offered or by the promise of adventure (Wells 2003, p.107). It is unclear under which circumstances Arminius became a Roman soldier. However, we do know that during his time in the Roman military he learnt Latin, received Roman citizenship in recognition of his service to Rome and was made a knight. Arminius served away from his tribal homelands until his return in A.D.7, the same time that Varus became governor.

In September A.D. 9, when Varus made ready to march from his camp at the Weser to his winter quarters in Xanten on the Rhine River, Arminius informed him of an alleged 'uprising' nearby. The area in question was only a short detour away from the main march route back to Xanten, and thus Varus set off to suppress the upraising. He sent Arminius, his trusted informant, ahead to gather further kinsmen into his unit. Instead, Arminius and his supporters set a trap for the Roman army. They led the three Roman legions through an already difficult passageway between the Kalkriese Hill and the Great Bog. For weeks, Arminius' men had further manipulated this terrain in their favour by erecting a tall wall along the foot of the hill. It is from behind this wall that the German tribesmen attacked the Roman army. Unable to form an orderly counter-attack, three Roman legions perished, while Varus committed suicide. Arminius led further successful campaigns against the Romans until he was killed by kinsmen in A.D. 12.

There is some disagreement between historians over the immediate impact of the battle on Roman policy toward Germany. Bendikowski (2008) argues that

Roman policy stayed the same, as Roman attacks on German territory east of the Rhine continued for some time. In A.D. 16 Germanicus is sent to Germany, where he visits the site of the battle and buries the dead that have been left on the field. However, later that same year, Germanicus is recalled to Rome, marking the end of Roman presence east of the Rhine. Lehmann (1995) concludes that the battle did in fact stop Roman expansion in Germany, with Rome reverting back to its policy of merely strengthening their Rhine border as they had done prior to 13 B.C. Wells (2003) arrives at the same conclusion. For him, the battle thus ended Roman occupation and becomes 'perhaps the most important battle in European history' (p. 18) because it shaped the linguistic and cultural map of modern Europe (p. 214). Sheldon (2001, p.2) highlights that the battle was important just for being the only successful native revolt against Rome. With regard to the two protagonists, Bendikowski (2008, p.50) notes that the negative Roman estimation of Varus in the years after the battle, which stressed his harsh and undiplomatic treatment of the conquered Germans, was a standard justification for native rebellions against Roman rule, suggesting that the sources may be unreliable in accurately portraying Varus' rule in Germany. Arminius is credited by several writers as being a capable and charismatic military leader (Bendikowski 2008; Wells 2003; Sheldon 2001), although no guesses can be made as to what motivated his actions that led to the battle.

Reception of the battle and of Arminius

There were several Classical writers who reported the battle, predominantly based on other sources (see Maurach 1995 for an in-depth review). Of these, Tacitus is most important to the reception history of the battle and especially

Arminius. In his *Annals,* Tacitus describes Arminius as ‘the liberator of Germany’[13] (Tacitus 1964, p.88), a description that became widely known in Germany through the first printed edition of the *Annals* in 1515 (Benario 2004). In 1517, Martin Luther called Arminius ‘Hermann’, a name under which Arminius is still popularly known today (Benario 2004). At this time, the tension between Germany and Italy, and the Catholic Church in Rome in particular, became more pronounced (Bendikowski 2008), creating an atmosphere in which Arminius/Hermann became a hero: the German that had defeated the Italians. Ulrich von Hutton subsequently wrote his *Arminius-Dialogue* in 1519, an update to Lucian’s *Dialogue* between Alexander, Hannibal and Scipio, to which von Hutton added Arminius (Benario 2004; Bendikowski 2008). From the 16th century onwards, Arminius and the battle featured regularly in literature, art and music, often, although not exclusively, in response to contemporary political circumstances. This is also the case with the famous Hermann’s Monument (fig. 6.1), which was completed in 1875 after the Franco-Prussian War and the unification of various German states in the *Reichsgründung* of 1871. Of interest is Roth’s (2012, p.32/3) observation that the monument’s association already changed from a symbol of the liberal ideals of the *Vormärz* at the time construction commenced in 1838, to a symbol of the monarchy by the time of its completion.

Overall, the key periods in the popular reception history of Arminius are the 16th and 19th centuries, during which groups of all political persuasions used or referred to the history of Arminius and the battle for various reasons. However, in light of later discussions in this chapter it is important to highlight here that

[13] ‘der Befreier Germaniens’ (my translation)

Adolf Hitler was less enthusiastic about Arminius and his story. His National Socialists rarely came to the Hermann's Monument (Bendikowski 2008), nor did Arminius and the battle feature widely in National Socialist historical narrative (Losemann 1995). A view of the 'historic Germans', however, was central to National Socialist ideology.

Fig. 6.1 Hermann's Monument, Detmold

It is important also to not only consider the popular reception of the battle and Arminius but also the response in scientific literature since the discovery of the battlefield at Kalkriese in the early 1990s. This gives us an insight into the context to how the battle is interpreted in the museum. Losemann's (1995) discussion of selected texts of the 20th century illustrates the key concern: he speaks of an on-going 'Arminius cult'[14] (p. 426), that celebrates Arminius as liberator and hero. In this discourse, Losemann writes, the many German tribes are merged into one single unit of Ur-Germans, from whom a straight line leads to modern Germans. Losemann sees in this a National Socialist ideology that in some circles continues to this day (p. 431). He welcomes a more recent approach that supports a 'dismantling of clichés'[15] (p. 431) and a focus on the Roman aspects of German history (p. 432). Engagement with Roman-German history is no longer viewed as a national task, he writes (p. 432). Wiegels and Woesler (1995) celebrate Dieter Tiempe for having 'exposed' and 'destroyed'[16] (p. 10) the 'myth' of a national uprising of Germans under Arminius, and they critique that Arminius was 'instrumentalized'[17] (p. 10) in German identity building, a use of history which they appear to reject. Their key concern is for historical accuracy, and as such their book is intended to make the discussion more objective (p. 11). Similarly, Seeba (1995) in his critique of the Hermann's Monument dismisses identity building indirectly as 'collective fantasy'[18] (p. 356) when he critiques the apparent need for 'places symbolic of [the nation's]

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[14] 'Arminiuskult' (my translation)
[15] 'Abbau von Klischeevorstellungen' (my translation)
[16] 'entlarvt' and 'zerstört' (my translation)
[17] funktionalisiert (my translation)
[18] 'kollektive Phantasie' (my translation)

origin'[19] (p. 356). Instead, he suggests that the Hermann's Monument should serve as a reminder of the 'murderous reality'[20] (p. 364) and what he calls the troubled history of Germany's strive for unity (p. 364). Similarly, Benario (2004) condemns what he calls 'the panoply of legend and blind hero worship' of Arminius (p. 93) and welcomes the focus on the historical Arminius that is brought on by excavations at Kalkriese. Roth (2012), in his review of activities on the occasion of the 2000 year anniversary of the battle, feels that national foundation myths no longer have relevance and calls them 'nationalistic romanticisation'[21] (p. 92). For Roth there are only two ways of looking at the battle: scientifically informed 'distance' (p. 73) or a continuation of nationalist ideology, as undertaken by right-wing groups (p. 73). In reviewing the changing public interpretations of the Hermann's Monument, Roth implies that this is evidence of the monument's irrelevance (p. 33). His view of German memory culture (*Erinnerungskultur)* is similar to Hewison's (1987) critique of the heritage industry: the past is turned into something exotic, which then is packaged for easy consumption by the public (p. 87/8).

In summary, the scientific literature since the 1990s has criticised and largely rejected popular reception of the battle and Arminius. Identity and identity building around the two are presented within a discourse about myth and manipulation. References are repeatedly made to National Socialism and modern right-wing views. Scientific examination and discussion of evidence are the preferred approach.

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[19] 'symbolische Orte seines Ursprungs' (my translation)
[20] 'mörderische Wirklichkeit' (my translation)
[21] 'nationalpolitische Verklärung' (my translation)

The Interpretive Planning Process

This section draws on personal interviews with the Museum's manager, Dr Heidrun Derks, undertaken face-to-face on 20 and 22 March 2012, unless otherwise specified. It is concerned with the planning process for what is currently presented on site, which includes the original presentation of the archaeological park, and the creation of the second permanent exhibition.

In 2002, the museum building and park infrastructure by Swiss Architects Mike Guyer and Annette Gigon was completed. A review of the original architectural competition (Archäologischer Museumspark 1998, p.2) summarises the brief to explain the excavations to visitors and make the finds accessible. The brief required the architecture to be unique and contemporary, and to work in correlation with the park. The ambition was to turn Kalkriese into a strong destination within Europe. An undated paper (Anon n.d.) explains that the project seeks to reveal the causes for the conflicts between the Romans and the Germans, and 'fight'[22] (p. 7) continuing myths. Section headings reinforce this project focus on addressing myths, for example 'Mutiny instead of fight for national liberation? Facts versus clichés'[23]. The paper reveals a strong rejection of certain interpretations of the battle, or what MacDonald (2009, p.147) called 'preferred readings'. The moral and intellectual rejection of the non-preferred views are evident: the paper describes these as 'exaggerated *patriotism'* and a 'wrong-headed *nationalist* world view'[24] (p. 7, my emphases), terms that in contemporary Germany are likely to evoke National Socialism and the actions of

[22] 'bekämpfen' (my translation)
[23] 'Meuterei statt nationaler befreiungskampf? Fakten gegen Klischees.' (my translation)
[24] 'übersteigertes Nationalbewusstsein' and ‚verquerten, nationalistischen Weltbildes' (my translation)

the Third Reich. The response is a focus on science: the historical fact of Arminius having been a commander in the Roman army is cited as 'evidence' against any possibility of the battle having been a liberation struggle against oppressors (p. 5), although, as outlined above, it is unclear under what circumstances Arminius joined the Roman army, or how he came to lead the attack on the Romans, which arguably weakens this supposed evidence. Beside history, the paper also highlights archaeology, and the project aims to illustrate and explain archaeology as an 'adventure'[25] (p. 9). The implication seems to be that only such scientific evidence is objective and trustworthy and able to guard against myth and the dangers of irrational nationalism as the undesired readings of the site.

The architects took a leading role in establishing the principles that guided the development both of the architecture, and both permanent exhibitions. The key principle is a rejection of reconstructions, which is seen as leading to further 'clichés'. These clichés, related to the reception history of the battle, are described as 'wrong, twisted, distorted'[26]. Instead, the focus is on scientific evidence, particularly archaeology, to present only that which is scientifically substantiated. This reiterates the desire to counter-act 'myths' as expressed in the undated paper discussed above. These principles led to a high degree of abstraction (see also Guyer & Gigon 2009, p.233) both in terms of materials and infrastructure provided. The proclaimed aim was to get visitors to find their own place within the spaces and presentations, and not to provide interpretations, a term that does not here refer to the field of interpretation as considered in this

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[25] 'Abenteuer' (my translation)
[26] 'falsch, verdreht, verzerrt' (my translation)

research. The suggestion is that visitors are meant to ask questions of the evidence and arrive at their own conclusions.

In 2009, a new permanent exhibition opened, which is the one currently in place. The layout of the museum building, as well as the key infrastructure established in the park in 2002, remained the same. The key motivation for changing the exhibition so soon after the first exhibition of 2002 was the anniversary of the battle, which made funding available. The team involved was the curatorial team of the museum, and a design consultancy. The client lead was the Museum's manager, who is trained in archaeology and early history. She was also responsible for the first exhibition. No formal interpretive planning process was followed, and there was no interpretive plan to guide the discussions or a concept. The only direction that had been set by the Supervisory Board was to target children and young people, since these groups were already heavily represented in the museum's existing visitor profile. No audience research or evaluation was undertaken; however, the first exhibition had been evaluated at the beginning through visitor surveys, and there is also a visitor book. The surveys could not be obtained for this study and it is not clear whether they went beyond testing the effectiveness of individual pieces of interpretation, and in particular whether they sought to establish visitors' relationship to the heritage. The Museum's manager asserted that through her experience with the previous exhibition she had gathered insights into what people liked and what they didn't like, and she felt that this provided a sufficient basis from which to develop the second exhibition. The lack of time was also cited as a reason for why no formal and documented interpretive planning process was followed. Consequently, the exhibition was developed on the basis

of initial informal presentations to the design team by the Museum's manager on what might be possible on the topic of Romans and Germans. From these discussions, content was selected and presentations developed. There was no further involvement from stakeholders, although it appears that for the overall project development bar content and presentation, representatives of the two main funders, the local authority and the *Sparkassenstiftung*, had been involved (Rottmann 2012). Exhibition load was a consideration, to ensure that visitors would be engaged throughout the entire exhibition, and that despite the focus on children and young people there should be 'something for everyone'. The overarching aim of the exhibition and presentation of the park emerges as education, or *Bildung*, which is achieved through visitors' engagement with the site. Although the intention of allowing visitors to engage with the site on their own terms was repeatedly reiterated, the Museum's manager also acknowledged that 'certain attitudes' were not encouraged, and the example provided was that of a national place of memory. She linked this notion to the reception history of the battle, which had already been critically rejected in the undated paper discussed above, and noted that the idea of collective memory, and alongside it that of identity, could 'misguide people'[27]. She expressed relief over the fact that, according to her, the museum had not been asked to deliver on either collective memory or identity to date, and she wondered whether thinkers purporting these concepts recognized the 'damage they did'[28]. She explained this expression with reference to the unsettling idea of 'politicians marching'[29] onto the battlefield and discourses that 'run the danger of becoming

[27] 'führen...viele Leute in die Irre' (my translation)
[28] 'was die da anrichten' (my translation)
[29] 'Politiker aufmarschieren' (my translation)

lofty and poetic exaggerations'[30]. She asserted that no one came to the battlefield for reasons related to identity, and made repeated references to 'historical museum', 'scientific research' and 'professional curiosity' as an apparent counterpoint. Following a brief discussion about the view of identity in England, she referred to a difference in perception in Germany, which is shaped by the 'more recent history' and 'questions of guilt and shame'[31]. The underlying fear became more crystallized when she noted that the number of complaints concerning the naming of the site after the loser of the battle rather than, as is customary, the victor, had dwindled, which she explained through the death of 'that generation' and the fact that 'new Right-wing supporters'[32] did not engage with the complexity of the history of the battle. In other words, views of the event and the site as part of a liberation struggle, and pertaining to a German national identity and patriotism, are effectively linked to the far right, and framed as wrong and misguided. Despite assertions that visitors are left to draw their own conclusions and engage with the site on their own terms, there is consequently in fact evidence of a very strong preferred reading. This preferred reading is not, however, made visible in the vision for the site (Varusschlacht im Osnabrücker Land n.d.), which notes the following relevant overarching objectives:

- to enthuse visitors for history, archaeology and natural sciences in an engaging and accessible fashion
- to help people value the cultural heritage of the site
- to provide education for sustainable development
- to provide a positive, memorable experience

[30] 'Gefahr laufend, pathetisch und poetisch überhöht zu werdenden Diskursen' (my translation)
[31] 'jüngere Geschichte' and ‚Fragen von Schuld und Scham' (my translation)
[32] 'die nachwachsenden Rechten' (my translation)

- to be accessible, relevant to target audiences, and service orientated.

The section further below on the actual interpretation provided seeks to establish whether the preferred reading is nevertheless evident in the implementation.

In summary, the interpretive planning process used shows evidence of certain aspects of the IAHD. Experts and scientific evidence were given the most prominent role, and non-expert values were not considered. In fact, the latter were viewed with suspicion, as part of the popular reception history of the battle, which was dismissed as wrong and misguided. There is also an underlying moral and intellectual judgment that ultimately links views shared in the reception history with those held by the far right. The idea of visitors' autonomous meaning-making is implied, however, there is clear evidence of a preferred reading, which may also be taken as the theme of the site. Education of the visitor is a key aim of the interpretation and this education is firmly based on exposure to and encounter with the material evidence of archaeology. In addition, the exhibition along with the site aims to engage visitors and provide a memorable experience, while being relevant to target audiences. Visitors are not seen as having a pre-existing, positive relationship with the site; as noted, visitors are rather thought to either have views that are objectionable 'myths', or that they come without a notion of identity or collective memory. For this reason, the exhibition and the site as a whole are intended to help visitors appreciate the cultural heritage.

Interpretation Audit: The Park

The site is entered via a separate Visitor Centre that contains the ticket desk and shop, as well as access to the special exhibitions space on the second floor. Audio guides for the park and the permanent exhibition are available for an additional charge. Guides are available for children and adults. The park audio guide for adults represents a conversation between Varus (who is the first to speak), a historian, and Arminius. Its context is the present day. It explains many of the principles used in the interpretive planning process and the resulting implementation, such as the irregular steel plates representing the path of the Romans. It also discusses the work and discoveries of the archaeologists, and how this informs understanding of the site. It does not address the visitor, nor does it provide clear instructions on where to go or what to look out for.

Upon exiting the reception space, one passes a children's play area and arrives at a T-junction in the path. There are no signposts throughout the park, and on numerous occasions I observed visitors discussing where they were meant to go from here. A souvenir coin machine to the right attracted a lot of attention, apparently because visitors expected it to provide information. Only few proceeded to have a coin stamped. To the left along the path are a number of buildings that were here prior to the site's development, as well as the museum building itself. Along this path is first a panel at a very low level above ground, providing an overview map of the general area where the battle took place, and short, clearly headed paragraphs on 'The Event', 'The Site' and 'The Landscape'. The area map is repeated on other panels in the park. The interpretation does not relate to the visitor, and the language is a mix of active and passive voice. It makes specific mention of the archaeological excavations

and scientific study of the site. Of note is that the event is introduced as an 'ambush' by the Germans, with the following sentences focusing on the Romans: they were 'annihilated', Varus 'committed suicide' and the 'tragic defeat' of the Romans became known as the Varusschlacht. Another low panel nearby provides clearly headed paragraphs on 'The Park', 'The German forest', 'The Wall' and 'The Path of the Romans', describing these features in the park. Again the language does not relate to visitors and uses a mix of passive and active voice. There is also a panel showing a map of the park; this panel is repeated throughout the park without further annotation.

A very prominent feature along this path toward the museum is the so-called *Friedenszeichen*, or peace symbols. They use an enlarged reproduction of the most famous find from the battlefield, that of a Roman rider's mask, mounted onto posts. An artist decorated each of the masks, which represent the 27 nations of the European union. The accompanying panel explains the project's intention to turn the masks into symbols for joint efforts toward peace in Europe. The panel refers to the event as a 'cruel warlike event'[33], and while it mentions Varus' name, does not mention that of Arminius. It merely refers to 'German warriors' who 'ambushed' Varus' 'elite troops' and caused them a 'crushing defeat'[34]. The panel then focuses on the archaeological excavations and scientific research of the site. The title of the sign includes the only emotional appeal in the exclamation 'For Europe!' Otherwise the language is consistent with the previous panels.

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[33] 'jenes grausame kriegerische Geschehen' (my translation)
[34] The full sentence reads, 'Jenes grausame kreigerische Geschehen des Jahres 9 n. Chr. bei dem germanische Krieger die Elitetruppend es römischen Statthalters Publius Quinctilius Varus in einen Hinterhalt lockten und vernichtend schlugen...' (my translation)

At the museum building the path continues and there is also a smaller path leading off to the right. Although museums staff asserted that there was no intended visitor route through the park, the key interpretation of the park has logic from this entry point. The key interpretation consists of steel plates laid into the ground. These represent the path of the Roman army through the area. Some plates contain original quotes from Classical texts relating to the battle, which are loosely organised in a chronological fashion from this end of the field. Other plates refer to excavated finds. Some of the plates roughly correspond to locations of relevant archaeological finds. Text is written in Capital letters without paragraphs, and words continue over line breaks. Plates were also covered with debris from the park grounds during my visits, such as leaves and twigs, which further made reading the text difficult. One of the steel plates explains what the steel path represents, as well as the excavations and the German Wall, and also cautions that the texts provided are from Roman authors since Germans did not leave written texts. This further suggests that there is in fact an inherent logic; the panel certainly is necessary to understand and contextualise the panels. This introductory panel is designed like the rest, but does address the visitor once ('you encounter'). Each panel has a short title in slightly larger Capital letters, which is not separated from the main text.

Further along this steel plated path, one comes upon steel poles, which represent the excavated or suspected location of the wall, which had been erected by the Germans. No further interpretation is provided here. A little further along is the so-called 'Landschaftsschnitt', effectively a recreation of the original level of the battlefield, its boggy landscape, and the German Wall. Upright steel fencing surrounds this area and serves to take visitors into the

main space, with small panels explaining the layering of the soil, and key finds from the excavations along the way on the fencing. Panels do not relate to visitors. The language sporadically is highly specialist. There is another low panel explaining the *Landschaftschnitt* and the agricultural methods that led to the changes in the landscape. Again, the language does not relate to visitors and uses a mix of active and passive voice.

The remaining notable features on the battlefield are three steel pavilions. The pavilion ‘Seeing’ uses a camera obscura to project an image of the battlefield. The pavilion ‘Hearing’ uses an oversized ear trumpet to capture sounds from outside. The trumpet can be manually moved in a different direction. There are various paired words suggesting actions by Germans and Romans, each on opposing walls, and creating a sense of tension and action. For example, words read ‘cautious Germans’ and ‘fleeing Romans’. The third pavilion is titled ‘Questioning’. It has several slits in the wall facing the battlefield. Text on this wall notes that the pavilion asks questions but doesn’t provide answers. Previously there was a video installation in this pavilion using contemporary news items concerning wars. The technology has since broken, and the monitors have been removed. No further interpretation is provided with either of the pavilions. The only remaining panel that is different from the others already discussed is a relief of the area, which closely mirrors the outline area map already on other panels throughout the park.

Interpretation Audit: The Museum

The following section describes the interpretation in the permanent exhibition in the museum. To correspond with the later visitor research, the descriptions are divided by the observation zones used. It should be noted that an audio guide is available for the exhibition for a fee. I only ever observed one couple with an audio guide. Visitors access content by entering numbers displayed throughout the exhibition. The narrator provides detailed information, which is presented in similar style to the text labels in the zone. In large sections, the text is readings from original Classical sources. In zone 1 the audio guide includes periodic atmospheric sounds in the background. The visitor is not directly addressed nor encouraged to look out for anything specific.

Upon arriving on the first floor level, which houses the exhibition, visitors are greeted by a member of Museum staff and invited to view two films. One film was part of the previous exhibition, the other is a marketing film initiated by the previous director of the museum. The exhibition itself starts with a short corridor using a moving 3D image, which shows the Roman army on the right, and a forest with hidden German warriors on the left. Visitors are encouraged to find the Germans on the left. At the end of this corridor visitors are confronted with an oversized replica of the rider's mask. The introductory text to the exhibition behind the mask starts is from the Roman point of view, noting that 'three Roman legions were ambushed' and reveals as the key questions of the exhibition 'How could this happen? Who were the Romans? What did they want in Germany? What opponent did they encounter there?' As in the park, the language does not relate to visitors, and introduces archaeology and scientific

research as the means to learn about the event. The text also makes reference to the Arminius exhibition in the tower.

Zone 1 is dedicated to the topic of 'Romans and Germans'. The Introductory text is written from a Roman point of view, noting the movement South of Germanic tribes in 113 BC. In trying to stop the Germans, the Romans lost 'thousands of soldiers', but eventually managed to defeat the 'invaders'. The panel notes that from this point on, Romans were afraid of the 'Teutonic fury'. A map shows the expansion of the Roman Empire. The room includes four islands with interactive elements, such as flaps to lift and drawers that can be pulled out. The information revealed generally consists of either text or illustrations/photographs. Each island focuses on an aspect of Roman and German life, which for each side includes a descriptive paragraph. The first island includes small models contrasting the social structures of both societies, while the second uses models to compare both people's architecture. The fourth island has small mannequins showing the equipment of a Roman soldier versus a German warrior. Particularly on the island relating to social environments, the German side often consists only of illustrations. Each island is accompanied by text on the wall. The texts start with the Roman situation, followed by that of the Germans. The visitor is not referred to, with very few exceptions such as on the third island, which notes that 'you'll find a selection [of materials] here'. The interpretation provided through wall texts and island texts repeatedly notes that there are no German primary texts of that time, and no archaeological evidence to support much of what Roman writers wrote. The final piece of interpretation is an animated map of the Roman campaigns into Germany, accompanied by an introductory wall text. It is of note that the distribution of Germanic tribes on this

territory is not marked on the map, nor is the impact of Roman invasion and occupation on these tribes mentioned in the text, beyond a reference that 'only two years before rebellions among the Germans were struck down forcefully'[35].

Zone 2 is dedicated to Arminius and Varus. There are only two pieces of interpretation: an introductory text on the wall, and an audio-visual display of 'talking heads' that is motion-activated as visitors approach. The wall text gives the facts as known to both Varus and Arminius. It does not raise the question of why Arminius was in the Roman army. It asks two key questions, 'What, then, prompted Arminius to conspiracy? And was Varus really incompetent as a governor and commander?'[36] The text notes that there are no clear answers, which is the reason for continued 'controversial discussions'. It then asks what would happen if Varus and Arminius met again. This relates to the audio-visual display, which is a fictitious meeting between Varus and Arminius in heaven. There are apparently three versions of this dialogue that visitors might hear; however, in my various observations in this space I have only ever heard two. The key difference is in the motivations of the two men; one version presents Arminius as a power-hungry upstart who was killed by his own family, while the other presents him as a freedom fighter. Varus too is both presented as merely doing his job, and as using excessive force. In observations I only ever saw visitors listen to one version, particularly as the second (or third?) version is not triggered until another approach.

The second half of Zone 2 is dedicated to 'The mystery'. An introductory wall text describes how the battle was forgotten until its rediscovery in classic

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[35] '..waren erst zwei Jahre zuvor Aufstände unter den Germanen blutig niedergeschlagen worden.' (My translation.)
[36] 'Was also veranlasste Arminius zum Komplott? Und war Varus als Statthalter und Feldherr wirklich unfähig?' (my translation)

texts found in libraries in the 15th and 16th century. It notes that from this point on, the search for the location of the battlefield had begun. In the centre of the room is a floor projection, which, as one steps into it, reveals ‘finds’, but without further explanation. I observed that many adult visitors avoided stepping into the projection. Another exhibit is a group of two display cases, one showing lead sling bullets that were found at Kalkriese, and another showing coins. The accompanying wall text explains the use of the slings, which is further supported by an illustration on the wall. The text does not relate to visitors, but uses narrative devices to create some drama[37]. There is also a bust of Theodor Mommsen, who was the first to argue that the battle took place near Kalkriese, in 1884. This is explained in the accompanying text. Along the final wall there are reproductions of title pages of key historic works relating to the battle and its location. Lecterns with reproductions of the books allow visitors to read more of these original texts.

Zone 3 deals with ‘The Site Kalkriese’. The introductory text relates to the archaeological excavations and emphasizes the insights thus gained into the battle. Further texts along the walls relate to settlements in Kalkriese prior to the battle, a description of the bottleneck in the landscape, the lack of substantial finds due to the time passed, the plundering of the battlefield following the battle, and finally Germanicus’ visit six years later. In addition, there are diverse exhibits in this room. Two display cases contain small models of the wall built by the Germans, and the layout of the land. Down the entire length of the room is a winding display case that shows the Roman army, using small models. There is also an interactive model that visitors can start by pressing a button, upon which

[37] ‘Man sah sie nicht, man hörte sie nicht, und wenn sie aufschlugen, war es zu spät.’

small marbles, representing the Roman army, are sent down a narrowing funnel that echoes the bottleneck in the landscape. As the marbles pass the bottleneck the majority fall through holes in the floor, to indicate the number of Roman soldiers that died. There is also a case of bone finds from the battlefield. Along the wall there are several in-set display cases with various finds set at different heights, including the Roman rider's mask. For both the Romans and the Germans large illustrations serve as backdrops to display fragments from, for example, horse harnesses. There are also magnifying glasses, again at different heights, through which one can see a rotating coin. Each display is accompanied by text. Throughout, text does not relate to visitors. However, questions are used, as well as the first person plural to refer to the museum, particularly to indicate when something is unknown or inconclusive. In sections, a lot of detailed information is provided. The tone of the text varies from passive voice to an engaging narrative style. Again the text makes reference to the lack of finds from the German side, and the subsequent gaps in knowledge about the Germans. There are also benches with headphones. The audio contains readings of original text from various sources. This is on a loop, and it is not clear what one is listening to.

The final Zone 4 deals with 'The Evidence'. This zone is exclusively dedicated to scientific examination of the evidence. It notes the contribution form various specialists, such as archaeologists, historians, natural scientists, and numismatists. Three two-sided displays then present the examination of coins, finds from the battlefield, the German wall, bones, humans, and mules. Visitors are able to open drawers with further objects. Again, the accompanying text here notes the lack of archaeological evidence for the Germans. A video screen

in the wall discusses the landscape. Finally, there is a holographic presentation, which is motion-activated, using the ‘ghost’ of a Roman soldier to discuss the role of archaeologists in uncovering the evidence of what happened on site. When it first starts, the hologram calls out to visitors; beyond that the interpretation here does not relate to visitors. The tone is chatty and conversational.

The final aspect of the permanent museum that remains to be described is the display on Arminius’ reception. This display is not part of the main exhibition. It is instead spread across two levels of the viewing tower. The only written reference to this display in the museum is on the introductory wall text behind the oversized rider’s mask at the very start of the main exhibition. The display can only be accessed either via a fairly strenuous climb up several flights of stairs, or using the lift. There is no sign promoting the display either at the lift door or the door to the staircase, nor inside the lift. Only the word ‘tower’ is printed onto the window by the stairs. On several occasions I observed Museum staff here mention the viewing tower to visitors exiting the exhibition. I only ever heard one member of staff mention the Arminius display. The display spaces are not enclosed; all levels, including the staircase leading up, are exposed to the elements. I only once encountered other visitors in one of the display spaces. I did not undertake formal visitor observations in these spaces, primarily because they were so rarely visited, but also because the display consists of panels only.

The introductory wall text identifies the topic of the display as ‘Arminius becomes Hermann’, the latter being the name under which Arminius has popularly been known. The first paragraph speaks of ‘Arminius worship’ based on Tacitus’ reference to Arminius as the ‘liberator of Germany’. Letters on this

text were missing during my site visits, the only time I noted signs of deterioration on the interpretation on site. The text does not relate to visitors, and bar the title there are no further headers. The display on this and the next level then is arranged as a continuous, weaving panel of text and annotated illustrations, generally on orange background. Several text-only sections on white serve as intermediary panels that contextualize the following sections. Sections are titled ‘Arminius – The role model’, ‘Arminius – The hope’, ‘Arminius – The hero’ and ‘Arminius – A hero resigns’. These sections correspond to time periods, from the 16th and 17th centuries to the Second World War. Text does not relate to visitors, and uses a mix of active and passive voice. Annotations to illustrations have titles that give an indication of their topic; no further division of text is made. Illustrations are contemporary to the period discussed. What is of note is that only if one climbs the stairs (several flights) does the display continue in a chronological manner. If one takes the lift to the next level of the display, upon exiting one is confronted with the end of the exhibition, and prominent images of the Hermann’s Monument, the swastika, and Adolf Hitler.

While in the main exhibition the text was narrative in style, yet remained largely factual-informative, in the final parts of the Arminius display there is a notable change in tone. The intermediary text on ‘Arminius – The hero’ notes that ‘the former liberal nationalist ideal turned into *aggressive* nationalism’[38] (my emphasis). The text continues that ‘Arminius completely *deteriorated* to an instrument of political propaganda’[39] (my emphasis). The final intermediary text on ‘Arminius – A hero resigns’ concludes, ‘Only one thing may be noted already:

[38] ‘…schlug der vormals liberale Nationalgedanke um in einen aggressiven Nationalismus.’ (my translation)
[39] ‚Arminius verkam vollends zum Instrument politischer Propaganda.’ (my translation)

Arminius can no longer serve as a political role model' and for the first time uses a direct appeal to visitors: 'and that's good, isn't it?'[40]. Intriguingly, it is here that I found the only noticeable sign of vandalism on the entire site including the park: underneath this sentence, somebody had written, 'No, he will forever remain our hero'[41].

The display ends with a further reiteration of the point that Arminius can no longer serve as inspiration, when in response to the question 'Arminius and us?' the text exclaims that 'These times are over!"[42]. These 'times' refer to the uses of Arminius in support of a '*threatened* German identity' (my emphasis) and the related 'spiritual, artistic and literary *mobilisation*'[43] (my emphasis). The final sentence of the display notes that history is written after the fact, and gives this as reason why Arminius and his character can 'probably' never be known.

Interpretation Audit – Conclusion

In the park, the interpretation provided by panels and steel plates is very basic. Text on steel plates is very difficult to read due to capitalization and words continuing over line breaks, in addition to being covered by debris from the surrounding vegetation. The position of steel plates flush against the ground makes them difficult to read and not accessible. Original quotes from classical writings may also be difficult for visitors to understand. The pavilions do not offer interpretation of the battlefield, but rather aim to provide experiences. The ear trumpet in the pavilion 'Hearing' is the only interactive element. There is no

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[40] 'Nur eines darf man schon jetzt festhalten: Als politische Leitfigur hat Arminius ausgedient (- und das ist gut so, oder?)' (my translation)
[41] 'Nein, er bleibt für immer unser Held.' (my translation)
[42] 'Diese Zeiten sind vorbei!' (my translation)
[43] 'die geistige, künstlerische und literarische Mobilmachung' (my translation)

discernible theme anywhere in the park. The German forest, to give a sense of the path networks that the Germans used in setting up their attack on the Roman army, has very limited interpretation. There is no sign posting throughout the park as a whole, leaving visitors to find their own way. Overall, the interpretation in the park does not meet the principles of interpretation set out in the literature.

In the main exhibition, the interpretation in general has limited interactive opportunities. Language is predominantly easy to understand. While text does not relate to visitors and their contemporary experience, the style is mostly narrative and pleasant. Occasionally, it contains a large amount of individual pieces of information. Text is short and includes clear topical titles. Each zone with introductory text and title makes its topic, if not theme, clear. Some wall displays in Zone 3 are at awkward heights both for adults and for children, and object text inside cases can be difficult to read due to the positioning of the case itself. Overall, the interpretation does, however, meet the principles set out in interpretation literature.

There are two key observations that will be further discussed in Chapter 8. Firstly, there is a very strong emphasis, communicated clearly to visitors, on experts and their scientific evidence. Several times throughout the exhibition, text notes the absence of evidence for the Germans, which on the one hand seems to justify the comparative lesser quantity and depth of information about the Germans than that about the Romans, while also making the German narrative appear less believable. In conversation, this lack of particularly archaeological evidence was also given as reason for the lesser space dedicated to the German story (Zehm 2013). The entire final section of the

exhibition is dedicated to scientific discovery of the battlefield and the reconstruction of the event on the basis of this evidence. Secondly, the display on Arminius is very obviously presented as less valued: it is not part of the main exhibition; it is not prominently promoted, thus visitors are not encouraged to see it; it can only be accessed either by climbing very steep and long staircases or by waiting for a lift that also serves the more popular viewing platform; it is exposed to the elements, and it does not appear to be well maintained. There is also a noticeable change in tone, which presents definitive statements against any continued engagement with Arminius as inspiration of any kind, with German identity specifically being singled out as what Arminius must not be used for. In this, both exclamations and direct appeals to visitors are employed. Both observations appear to stand in direct relation to the preferred reading identified during the review of the interpretive planning process. The focus is on scientific evidence, used particularly to discourage any associations with national memory and identity, or what was termed ‘myth’, ‘patriotism’, or a ‘nationalistic world-view’.

Visitor Observations

This section discusses the results of visitor observations that I undertook over a period of three days in May 2013. Observations took place in the four zones already mentioned in the Interpretation Audit of the museum above. These zones were:

- Zone 1: ‘Romans and Germans’
- Zone 2: ‘Varus and Arminius’
- Zone 3: ‘The Site Kalkriese’

- Zone 4: ‘The Evidence’

In total I observed 77 groups, which included 142 adults and 37 children. Table 6.1 below gives the number of groups observed in each zone, and the average time groups spent in that zone.

TABLE 6.1 TOTAL GROUPS OBSERVED AND AVERAGE TIME SPENT		
Zone	**Number of Groups**	**Average Time Spent (m:s)**
Zone 1	17	8:09
Zone 2	26	2:55
Zone 3	14	7:25
Zone 4	20	3:49

In each zone, I identified interpretive units, which correspond to those discussed in the Interpretation Audit. For Zone 1, these units were:

- Introductory wall text
- Map at entrance
- 1st island
- 2nd island
- 3rd island
- 4th island
- Wall text, empire
- Wall text, village
- Wall text, lifeworlds
- Wall text, superpower

- Animated Map at end

Table 6.2 below shows how groups used each interpretive unit in Zone 1. The average time per group spent in this zone was eight minutes and nine seconds.

TABLE 6.2 USE OF INTERPRETATION IN ZONE 1								
Offer	**Focused**		**Moderately Focused**		**Unfocused**		**Not engaged**	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Introductory text	7	41%	0	0%	0	0%	**10**	59%
Map at entrance	5	29%	1	6%	4	24%	7	41%
1st island	8	47%	3	18%	4	24%	2	12%
2nd island	6	35%	3	18%	4	24%	4	24%
3rd island	5	29%	4	24%	6	35%	2	12%
4th island	5	29%	4	24%	4	24%	4	24%
Text, empire	5	29%	0	0%	2	12%	**10**	59%
Text, village	3	18%	0	0%	0	0%	**14**	82%
Text, lifeworlds	5	29%	0	0%	0	0%	**12**	71%
Text, superpower	5	29%	0	0%	0	0%	**12**	71%
Map at end	6	35%	3	18%	1	6%	5	29%
Total groups observed in Zone 1: 17								

The wall texts providing interpretation for the islands were the least popular interpretation. It is of note that while the majority of groups ignored them completely, those that did engage with them did so in a focused manner. The same observation holds for the introductory wall text. The map at the entrance was still ignored by the largest overall number of groups; however, it was noticed by six groups who engaged with it either with focus, or moderate

focus. The islands were by far the most attractive interpretation, with the relative majority of groups engaging either with focus or moderate focus. The animated map at the very end of the zone also proved attractive. Only five groups ignored it completely, while nine engaged with either focus or moderate focus.

In Zone 2 the following interpretive units were identified:

- Introductory text
- Talking heads
- Interactive on floor
- Display cases
- Statue of Mommsen
- Reproduced books
- Text, The Mystery
- Text, Discovery

A total of 26 groups were observed in this zone, who spent an average of two minutes, 55 seconds. This zone is the second smallest of the four observation zones. This may partly account for the fact that groups spent the shortest time in here. Table 6.3 shows groups' use of interpretation in Zone 2.

TABLE 6.3
USE OF INTERPRETATION IN ZONE 2

Offer	Focused		Moderately Focused		Unfocused		Not engaged	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Introductory text	7	27%	1	4%	1	4%	**17**	65%
Talking heads	6	23%	5	19%	5	19%	10	38%
Interactive on floor	5	19%	7	27%	2	8%	12	46%

TABLE 6.3 USE OF INTERPRETATION IN ZONE 2								
Offer	**Focused**		**Moderately Focused**		**Unfocused**		**Not engaged**	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Display cases	8	31%	4	15%	4	15%	10	38%
Statue of Mommsen	2	8%	7	27%	2	8%	**15**	58%
Reproduced books	3	12%	1	4%	6	23%	**16**	62%
Text, The Mystery	5	19%	1	4%	1	4%	**19**	73%
Text, Discovery	8	31%	2	8%	1	4%	**15**	58%
Total number of groups observed: 26								

The majority of groups ignored the introductory text, the two wall texts, the statue of Mommsen and the reproduced books interactive. The other interpretation offered was still ignored by the relative majority of groups. However, five groups engaged with focus with the interactive on the floor, followed by seven who showed moderate focus. This engagement was usually shown by children, although some adults did show moderate focus. The talking heads of Varus and Arminius were the next most used interpretation; with six groups engaging with focus, i.e. listening to it in full, followed by five groups that showed moderate focus. Five groups took note of the dialogue, but did not stop to listen. I did not observe any group that listened to the dialogue more than once, which suggests that visitors only ever hear one version of the supposedly three that are played. The display cases proved the most popular interpretation in this zone in terms of depth of engagement. Eight groups studied them with great focus, followed by four groups that looked at these with moderate focus. It is perhaps of note that these were the first original artefacts from the battle shown in the exhibition. In addition, classification as ‘focused’ engagement

would also have required less time and commitment than a similar focus for the Varus/Arminius dialogue. The most popular interpretation in this zone was therefore the display case and the Arminius/Varus dialogue.

Zone 3 is the largest of the four zones and contains the bulk of the finds from the battlefield, distributed over a large number of small display cases. To facilitate observation, walls containing display cases were classed as one interpretive unit, which led to the following units identified for this zone:

- Introductory text
- Model of Roman army
- Model, German wall
- Model, land layout
- Display cases on right wall
- Display cases on centre wall (with mask)
- Top wall with commemorative marker
- Marbles interactive
- Display case, bones
- Audio islands

A total of 14 groups were observed. They spent an average of seven minutes and 25 seconds in this zone. Table 6.4 below shows groups' use of the interpretation in Zone 3.

TABLE 6.4 USE OF INTERPRETATION IN ZONE 3								
Offer	**Focused**		**Moderately Focused**		**Unfocused**		**Not engaged**	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Introductory text	2	14%	0	0%	0	0%	12	86%
Model of Roman army	8	57%	5	36%	1	7%	0	0%
Wall model	1	7%	1	7%	2	14%	10	71%
Model, land layout	0	0%	0	0%	2	14%	12	86%
Display cases on right wall	2	14%	3	21%	1	7%	8	57%
Display cases on centre wall (with mask)	6	43%	3	21%	1	7%	4	29%
Top wall with commemorative marker	4	29%	5	36%	1	7%	4	29%
Marbles interactive	9	64%	2	14%	1	7%	2	14%
Display case, bones	4	29%	3	21%	1	7%	6	43%
Audio islands	0	0%	0	0%	1	7%	13	93%
Total number of groups observed: 14								

The majority of groups ignored the introductory text, the model of the German Wall, the model of the layout of the land, the display cases on the right wall, and the islands with audio headphones. A relative majority of six groups engaged with the display cases along the centre wall with focus, followed by three groups that viewed these with moderate focus. This is the wall that also contains the most famous find from the battlefield, the Roman rider's mask. The top wall, which contains an original Roman commemorative marker, attracted the focus of four groups, while five groups engaged with this wall with moderate focus. In front of this wall is the display case with the find of bones, which four groups looked at with focus, while three engaged with moderate focus. The model of the Roman army was by far the most popular interpretation. Not a

single group ignored it, and only one group only glanced at it. Five groups engaged with this model with moderate focus, while the majority, eight groups, looked at it with focus. The second most attractive interpretation was the marbles interactive that illustrates the demise of the Roman army along the foot of the hill. While two groups didn’t engage with it at all, and one group only glanced at it, two groups engaged with it with moderate focus. A majority of nine groups looked at the interactive with focus, which was overall the largest number of groups engaging with focus with any of the interpretation in Zone 3.

In Zone 4, the following interpretive units were established:

- Introductory text
- Coin Display, Front
- Coin Display, Back
- Wall Display
- Display, Bones
- Display, Humans
- Display, Donkeys
- Video on landscape
- Hologram

A total of 20 groups were observed in this zone. They spent on average three minutes and 49 seconds here. In terms of floor area, this zone is the smallest of all four. Table 6.5 below shows groups’ use of interpretation in this zone.

TABLE 6.5 USE OF INTERPRETATION IN ZONE 4								
Offer	**Focused**		**Moderately Focused**		**Unfocused**		**Not engaged**	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Introductory text	4	20%	3	15%	3	15%	10	50%
Coin Display, Front	5	25%	5	25%	5	25%	5	25%
Coin Display, Back	2	10%	10	50%	1	5%	7	35%
Wall Display	4	20%	3	15%	6	30%	7	35%
Display, Bones	4	20%	4	20%	5	25%	7	35%
Display, Humans	5	25%	3	15%	4	20%	8	40%
Display, Donkeys	5	25%	2	10%	6	30%	7	35%
Video on landscape	2	10%	1	5%	1	5%	16	80%
Hologram	3	15%	3	15%	6	30%	8	40%
Total groups observed: 20								

Half of the groups ignored the introductory text, and the majority ignored the video about the landscape. The Hologram was the third, least attractive interpretation, with only three groups each showing focus or moderate focus. While a significant minority of groups ignored all remaining interpretation, all received a comparable spread of groups engaging with varying degrees of focus. The notable exception is the back of the coin display, where half of the groups engaged with moderate focus, while only two showed a focused approach. Overall, however, engagement was short, as the average time spent in this zone (3:49) shows.

In summary, the visitor observations revealed that by far the most popular interpretive units were the model of the Roman army and the marbles interactive in Zone 3. Engagement patterns are strikingly focused for both, with not a single group observed ignoring the army model, and a total majority of

nine groups engaging with the marbles interactive with focus. No other interpretive unit in either of the remaining zones shows a similar visitor engagement pattern and preference. The closest are the islands in Zone 1, which also attracted focused or moderately focused engagement, although a small number of groups also ignored them entirely or merely glanced at them. Zones 2 and 4 are marked by the short average times spent by groups. Taking this into account, the focused engagement of six groups, and moderate focus of five groups on the Varus/Arminius dialogue suggests that this is another piece of interpretation of interest, although a substantial minority of ten ignored it completely, while five groups merely glanced at it. What visitors take from this interpretation will also depend on which version they hear. The display case of sling shots in this zone emerges as the most engaging, although, as noted above, focused engagement would have required less commitment than, for example, the Varus/Arminius dialogue. Finally, the evidence displays in Zone 4 attracted focus and moderate focus, although the overall short time spent in this zone suggests that the depth of engagement is still limited. With regards to the intention of the interpretive planning process, the observations have shown that visitors most strongly engage with the Roman side of the event, through the army model and the marble interactive. While the islands in Zone 1 show both the German and the Roman sides, the former is presented with less information, and repeated reference to the lack of evidence of who the Germans really were and how they lived. The Varus/Arminius dialogue gives both sides, however, it does not present information, but is rather a fictionalised dialogue that presents two different interpretations of motivations and actions of these two key players in the conflict. Finally, visitors also engage with the

scientific exploration of the event, both through the objects on display and particularly through the evidence displays in Zone 4. Considering content alone, without regard to how it is framed, visitors therefore engage with Roman history twice as much as with German history, and they also engage with scientific evidence.

Visitor Interviews

This section presents data from visitor interviews that I conducted in May and August 2013. I spoke to 76 groups, totalling 149 adults (78 male, 71 female). Twelve people/groups I approached declined to participate. All but two respondents were German citizens. Figure 6.2 shows the age distribution of the sample.

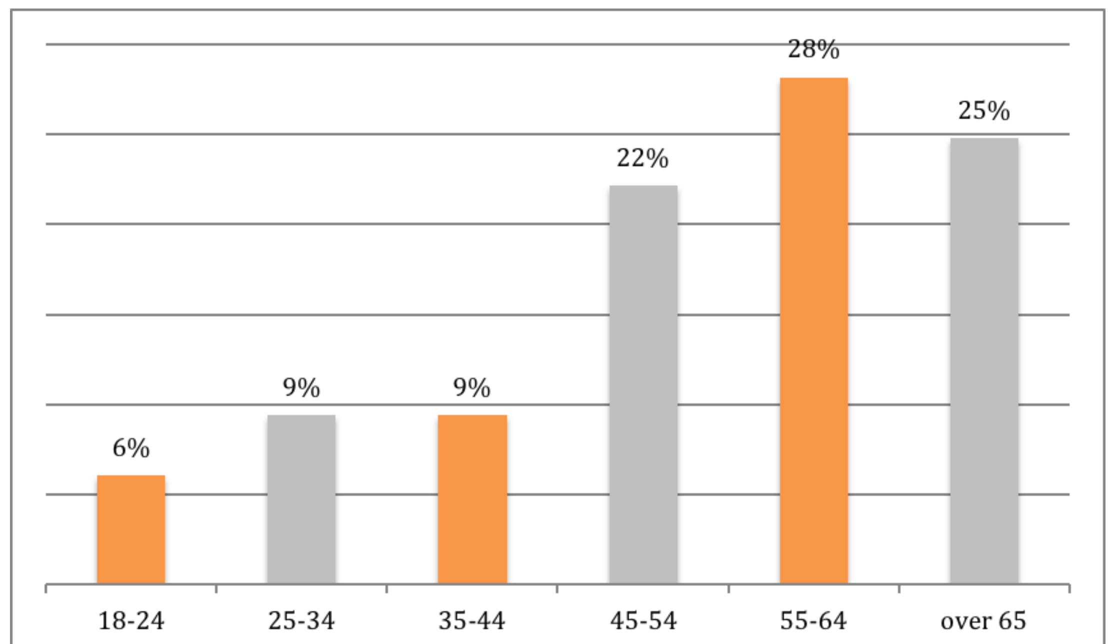

Fig. 6.2 Age distribution of sample (Varusschlacht interviews)

Table 6.6 below shows what benefits visitors associated with heritage and visiting a site. Some were mentioned in response to the visit to this particular

site, either as expected or as realised benefits. Frequencies for how often benefits were mentioned are also provided.

TABLE 6.6 VISITOR-REPORTED BENEFITS (Varusschlacht interviews)	
Understand or imagine what it was like	46
Being in the place where history happened	43
Part of my heritage (Identity)	25
Learn something new	22
Seeing real objects or old buildings	21
Thinking about history, or 'what if?'	13
Understand how people lived in the past	13
Reminder of what one has learnt before and memory	11
Learn from the past	10
Appreciation level of development	8
Making up own mind based on facts provided	8
Understanding evidence	8
Understanding where we come from	8
Understand or think about other cultures	7
Combination Museum and Nature	6
Continuity	6
Understanding the present	6
Going to heritage sites in other countries to learn about that country	4
Relaxation with added benefit	4
Understand European history	4
Understand history in general or of humankind	4
Understand region and its people	4
Compare then and now	3
Good for children to learn about our history	3
Pointer for future and moving forward	3
Getting you to think	2
Important for region	2
Place of remembrance and respect	2
Touching or connecting with history	2
Understand history of the country	2

The benefit most often mentioned related to understanding or imagining what the battle was like. It was noticeable that this was an active experience, or

action of imagining the past, but it also expressed or even created emotional connections to the people involved and the battle itself. Visitors said things like,

> *'How this played out here. That, and just to imagine how many Romans, these soldiers, how big that was, I couldn't imagine that before...' (KA8, F, 55-64)*
>
> *'One can really imagine what this might have been like here.' (KA11.2, M, 45-55)*
>
> *'You can imagine the men and women behind those walls, and in front, you can maybe empathise, and [how they] realised, they're in a tight spot here and they cannot escape and they really fought for their lives for the first time.' (KA13.1, F, 55-64)*
>
> *'You had to imagine, just how many people that is, who came through here, that's not just 40 or 50 people, that's hundreds.' (KA23.1, F, 18-24)*
>
> *'Under what conditions they lived, and what they carried around with them, and these fights, that must have been awful, really awful.' (KA34.1, F, 55-64)*
>
> *'That feeling, to perhaps feel after all what it was like, what might have happened.' (KA40.1, F, 55-64)*

The second most frequently mentioned benefit was 'to be in the place where history happened'. For some this was primarily a function of knowing that a location had been accurately established. For others, being in this place had further meanings that expressed a personal and often very deep connection with place. Visitors who raised this benefit said things like,

> *'Just to know where the battle happened…to see it.' (KA3.2, M, 55-64)*
>
> *'Just to be shown all this again at this truly deciding point of history, presented by scientists, and at the place, the objects that were found here…' (KA4.2, M, 35-44)*

'You walk this old place, where 2000 years ago history happened, and to me that is much more impressive than just to see it on TV, or in a museum.' (KA14.2, M, 35-44)
'To feel history. To experience it for me personally, that I can experience it personally, individually' (KA25.4, M, 25-34)

'Well that really happened, it's not just a fairly tale, but it's here.*' (KA27.2, F, 55-64)*

'This was a place that I've always wanted to visit. And now we've finally made it.' (KA50, M, over 65)

'Now I'm at the place of origin' (KA16, M, 55-64)

These two benefits were mentioned over 40 times each. The next benefit received just over half as many mentions. Interestingly, however, it is the benefit relating to personal or national identity, which was specifically rejected by museums staff both as a potential motivation to visit, and as a desired benefit of the visit. Visitors said things like,

'Our own culture that we have here, one can perhaps think a bit more intensively about that.' (KA6.2, M, over 65)

'For me, history is something that shaped people, a part of our own culture, our personality.' (KA11.2, M, 45-55)

'For us, Kalkriese is interesting because after all it is a part of Germanic, of German history.' (KA22.1, over 65)

'Self-image. It's important to know where we come from.' (KA25.4, M, 25-34)

'After all it is also our country or our home or whatever you want to call it.' (KA17.1, F, over 65)

'Our origins, our development.' (KA33.2, M, 45-54)

'Since all [of us] are descendent from the Germans it's historically interesting.' (KA49.2, M, 45-54)

In addition, visitors mentioned 'Understanding where we come from' eight times as a benefit, although the connection to identity wasn't as clear in these instances. The fourth most frequently mentioned benefit was to 'Learn something new', which is one of the key outcomes for interpretation in the IAHD. This benefit was only mentioned 22 times, which is less than half the number of times than the most frequently mentioned benefit, 'to Imagine what it was like'. For some, learning was important because of the children in their party, for others, learning was a general good. Visitors said,

'Just a bit of historical background, that's not a bad thing for the child either.' (KA32.1, F, 18-24)

'We've definitely learnt that this was a bigger event, it was more important, we hadn't really realised that before.' (KA5.1, F, 18-24)

'Much I didn't know and I've learnt that now, with the mask and such like.' (KA29.1, F, 45-54)

'In the end it's interesting to me to gain new knowledge.' (KA35.3, over 65)

'About the historical background, why did this happen, and yes, how did they decide that it was here of all places.' (KA38, F, 45-54)

Another benefit of note is to think about history and what if? Most visitors that mentioned this benefit had seen the introductory film dedicated to this question. Of interest in the following quotes is the underlying connection to identity, and the sentiment that history shapes who we are today:

> *‘It’s interesting, if this hadn’t happened in this way, we would be Italians now.’ (KA50.1, F, 45-54)*
>
> *‘If [these German tribes] also had been defeated, then, really, the question was left unanswered, what might have happened if Varus had won? You can’t answer that question, but it would be interesting, what might have happened to us then.’ (KA28.2, M, over 65)*

Finally, the benefit ‘to learn from history’, mentioned ten times, shows the connections that some visitors made to more recent history or contemporary events, often in unexpected ways:

> *‘If I may say so, the destruction of the environment happened already in the Roman Empire. And we are also on that same path…Then it was more localised, smaller, but today that’s done globally.’ (KA13.2, M, 55-64)*
>
> *‘Each generation makes its own mistakes, and one should look back…’ (KA19.1, F, over 65)*
>
> *‘…history is important for us humans, to know what happened and where something terrible happened, like the Holocaust, that it never happens again.’ (KA40.1, F, 55-64)*

As table 6.6 above shows, some visitors did also engage with the idea of other cultures, and specifically a sense of European history. This was established as a desired outcome most noticeably in the panel that accompanied the *Friedenszeichen* at the very beginning of the visit, as visitors enter the site proper. However, the benefits were only mentioned seven and four times, respectively, suggesting that this was not the key experience and connection that visitors had, or made, with the site.

Aside from the above benefits expressed by visitors, a key observation I made was of several instances when visitors’ behaviour or language suggested

that they were uncomfortable with being seen to identify with or be interested in the German side, even if they clearly were. KA14.2 (M, 35-44) for example was keen to point out that 'nothing was further from his mind' than suggesting this were a symbolic site, but his wife (KA14.1, 35-44) quickly pointed out that the Germans weren't 'totally uncultured people', that there 'must have been…a very big reason' for why they 'defended themselves' against the Romans. KA8 (F, 55-64) called Arminius a 'noble man', but visibly cooled to me when I asked her to explain, and told me firmly that she 'can't respond to this'. Since these respondents did not wish to explore their reactions further, it could not be established what their reasons were. It may in part be a case of what MacDonald (2009, p.23) noted as Germans fearing 'lurking repressions and unconscious drives that undermine their confidence in their own views of themselves'. It could also be that these interviewee's eagerness to qualify, justify, or not explain at all their appreciation of Arminius and the German defeat of the Romans suggests a fear of *others* making a judgment about their motivations. In addition, since the views that they expressed were in contrast to, or questioned the officially sanctioned narrative and preferred reading in the museum, it seems equally likely that their discomfort was at least in part due to the recognition that they were at odds with the view they were expected to have. One respondent (KA63.2, M, over 65) certainly expressed anger about what he felt was a one-sided presentation. He was trained in the Classics, and had a particular interest in Ancient history, especially the Romans and Germans, but also the Greeks. He called the exhibition a 'homage to the conquerors' and noted an excessive appreciation of the Romans overall, while the German accomplishment in this particular battle was not acknowledged. As

examples of this he gave the model of the Roman army, and the lack of a similarly attractive and engaging exhibit that would show the organisational skill and tactical planning that was required by the Germans to defeat the three legions. He acknowledged that the German actions were mentioned, but criticized that they received far less emphasis than do the Romans. In particular, he critiqued that certain facts were not further explored. As examples he gave the fact that the Romans fell into the German trap, which he felt was because of their 'arrogance' and their belief in being 'invincible'. He also raised that the interpretation mentions on numerous occasions that Arminius was raised in Rome, but fails to explore how Arminius, a German, came to Rome in the first place. He asserted that it was as a slave, due to the Romans' subjugation of peoples that could not defend themselves. He wanted the museum to 'give voice to both sides', and noted that without such 'objectivity' the museum needn't have opened, since a lack of objectivity was prevalent 'outside'. As the review of the planning process and the interpretation audit has shown, there is evidence of a preferred reading and a focus on the Roman side. His observations are all accurate in terms of facts that are not further explored. He is also correct in noting that apart very brief mentions, mostly in a Roman context, there is no examination of the impact of Roman occupation and conquest on the German tribes thus subjugated to Roman rule. While he was the only one to raise these points in my interviews, I found several similar comments in the site's visitor comments book:

> *'In my opinion, what is shown, told and written is too one-sidedly focused on the Roman 'good people'. Yet the Romans were the aggressors, the oppressors and the slaveholders. The liberation struggle of our ancestors is kept far too short. I have the greatest respect for our ancestors for fighting for self-determination and*

freedom. This exhibition is too ‘politically correct’ in my eyes.’ (H.M. from Saxony, 31.10.2009)

‘Why is this the only battle world-wide to have been named after the loser?’ (D. Bucholz, n.d. [2009])

‘Long live Arminius also, for without him we would still be a Roman province.’ (R. Ronau, M.A. (Historian), 10.09.2009)

In my interviews in England I did not observe neither such self-censorship as described above, nor such strong disagreement with the narrative presented.

Hermann’s Monument Control Study

Due to the observation of apparent self-censorship at Varusschlacht in comparison to findings at the Battle of Hastings, I decided to undertake sample interviews at the Hermann’s Monument, where interpretation of the battle is limited to a small, free exhibition in a hut, and a series of text panels along the path leading to the monument itself. There is also a small exhibition in the hut of the original builder of the monument, telling his story. I did not review the planning process; however, there was nothing in the interpretation that suggested a preferred reading. Facts are given in an informative way, without noticeable judgment or explanation. I therefore hypothesized that if visitors’ discussion of any sense of heritage at Varusschlacht were indeed influenced by the interpretation provided, responses at the Hermann’s Monument would be different. I subsequently undertook 22 interviews in June and July 2014, with a total of 58 people, of which 28 were men, and 24 women. All were German citizens. Figure 6.3 below shows the age distribution of the sample. The sample is less evenly distributed than the sample at Varusschlacht, with the majority groups being the Over 65s and those aged 35-44.

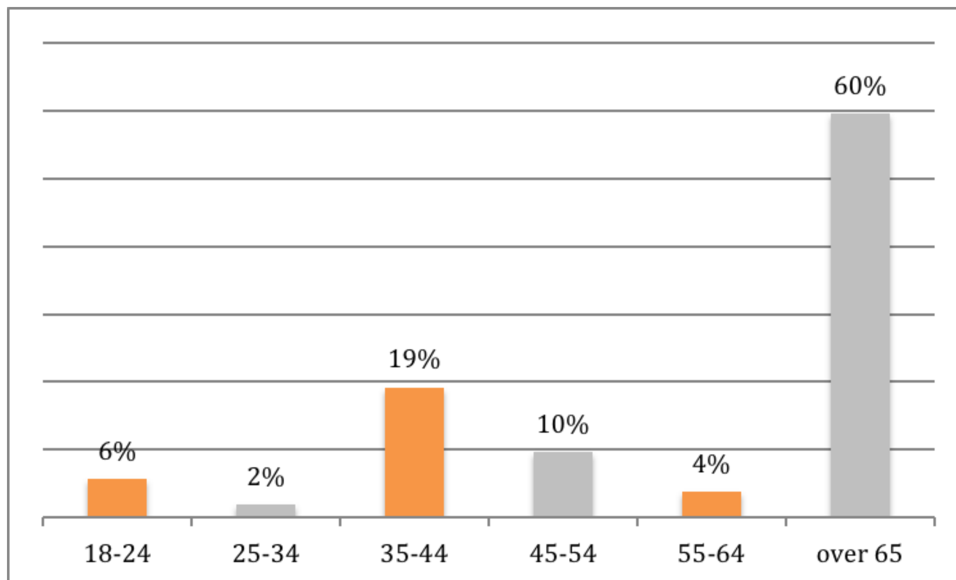

Fig. 6.3 Age distribution of sample (Hermann's Monument)

The benefit most often mentioned was personal and national identity (mentioned 9 times). With one exception this was expressed similarly as at Varusschlacht. For example, H2.2 (M, over 65) noted that this was about 'cultural heritage, what is part of us, of the Germans'. H7.1 (M, 45-54) observed that because of the battle, 'we stayed as we were'. A notable difference to Varusschlacht was H20.1 (M, 18-24) who noted as the specifics of this benefit the 'memory of the liberation struggle and Rome' and said that it 'expressed German national consciousness'. The second most often mentioned benefit was more loosely related to understanding Germany's history, but without the direct expression of a personal connection that marked those quotes coded as personal or national identity (mentioned 8 times). However, one person in this group identified the battle as 'a huge part of the history of the origins of Germany' (H6, M, 35-44). The third most often cited benefit was related to learning specifically about the history of the monument itself (mentioned seven times). All other benefits were mentioned only once or twice. It is thus certainly

true that, with regards to the benefits expressed, it would appear that visitors at the Hermann's Monument predominantly realize benefits related to identity and German history, although it must be noted that the benefits of 'understanding or imagining what it was like' and 'being in the place where history happened', which were mentioned most often at Kalkriese, would not have applied here as people were fully aware that the site was not historic in terms of the location of the battle. People also spoke about Arminius: H6 (M, 35-44) noted that Arminius had 'rediscovered his roots and really liberated the Germans'. H15.2 (M, 45-54) said for him, the monument was about 'the person', and not the battle, suggesting the importance of the person of Arminius himself. H19.1 (M, 35-44) also noted that 'he [Arminius] knew exactly how to attack'. There was also an intriguing ambiguity of whether people spoke about the historical figure of Arminius (or German 'Hermann') or simply the statue. H17.1 (M35-44) said they had come 'because *he* is here', to which his wife (H17.2, 35-44) added 'The Hermann'. Overall, the interviews at the Hermann's Monument do provide indication that where no preferred reading dismisses engagement with Arminius and the German side of the conflict, this emerges more readily. However, as we shall see in Chapter 7 and further explore in Chapter 8, the way in which interviewees here described their sense of identity and heritage still did not match the emotional connection that interviewees in England displayed. Words like 'pride' (*'Stolz'* in German), which were used in England, were not used at the Hermann's Monument either. It is also of note that at the monument, too, individual interviewees were quick to stress that their motivations were not 'patriotic' (e.g. H6, M, 35-44, who had also spoken about the battle as the 'origin of Germany'). Many also stressed that they would have come to this spot even

if the monument had not been here. When I tried to establish what importance the specific historic nature of the monument had on his decision to visit, one interviewee (H3.1, M, Over 65) mocked that he'd come out of 'manly' and 'militaristic' fervour before he went on to dismiss this suggestion. This may give further support to the observation made earlier, of interviewee's fear not of their own judgment of and relationship to history, but of the judgments made by others about their 'true' motivations. Perhaps the most uncensored expression of people's engagement with this site therefore lies in the observation that I made time and again, of visitors rounding the final bent in the path from which the monument can be seen for the first time, and exclaim with obvious pleasure, 'There is Hermann![44]' I will return to this again in Chapter 8.

Varusschlacht - continued

I also asked visitors (at Varusschlacht) about how they used interpretation and what they expected of it. Table 6.7 gives an overview of responses.

TABLE 6.7 VISITORS EXPECTATION OF INTERPRETATION (Varusschlacht interviews)	
'anschaulich'; graphic, illustrative	47
physical	26
media variety	17
giving context	15
marking place	9
providing orientation	7
more details	5
Tell facts	5
not too much text	4
different levels of information	4

[44] 'Da ist der Hermann!' (my translation)

TABLE 6.7 VISITORS EXPECTATION OF INTERPRETATION (Varusschlacht interviews)	
logical structure	4
not too many facts and details	3
putting you in the action or event	3
quickly accessible information	3
simple	3
present a balanced view	2
Telling a story	2

The most mentioned expectation was for interpretation to illustrate what happened so that visitors could imagine and better understand what was being interpreted. This directly corresponds to the main benefit mentioned at Varusschlacht, of wanting to understand or imagine what it was like. Visitors also wanted to be able to 'do' something physically. This wasn't just in the sense of interactives, although activities such as opening drawers were mentioned. This also specifically included walking/cycling in the space with purpose, for example along a way-marked path, and trying out armour. Again, this corresponds directly both to the main benefit, but also to the second benefit of being in the place where history happened. Marking place was mentioned separately nine times as an expectation of interpretation. Other key expectations were to provide media variety and importantly, to provide context. Orientation was also specifically mentioned, and both, a lack of context and a lack of orientation, were critiqued for Varusschlacht. It is also of note that not to provide orientation had been a specific decision by those responsible. In terms of interpretation they had enjoyed on site, people mentioned the marble interactive, the model of the Roman army, and the dialogue between Arminius

and Varus. The drawers on the islands in Zone 1 were mentioned also, as was Zone 4 for its explanations of how evidence was interpreted to understand what happened. This corresponds to the findings from the visitor observations. The marketing film, which asked 'What if?', was also mentioned.

Visitor Survey

The survey took place between June and September 2014. In total, there were 227 valid returns. All but two respondents were German citizens as opposed to residents. 52% (n=118) respondents were male, 48% (n=108) female. Figure 6.4 below shows the age distribution of the sample. As with the interview sample, the majority of respondents were over the age of 45. However, the number of those aged over 65 is lower for the survey. The survey also has a higher percentage of those aged 35-44 (16%, n=36).

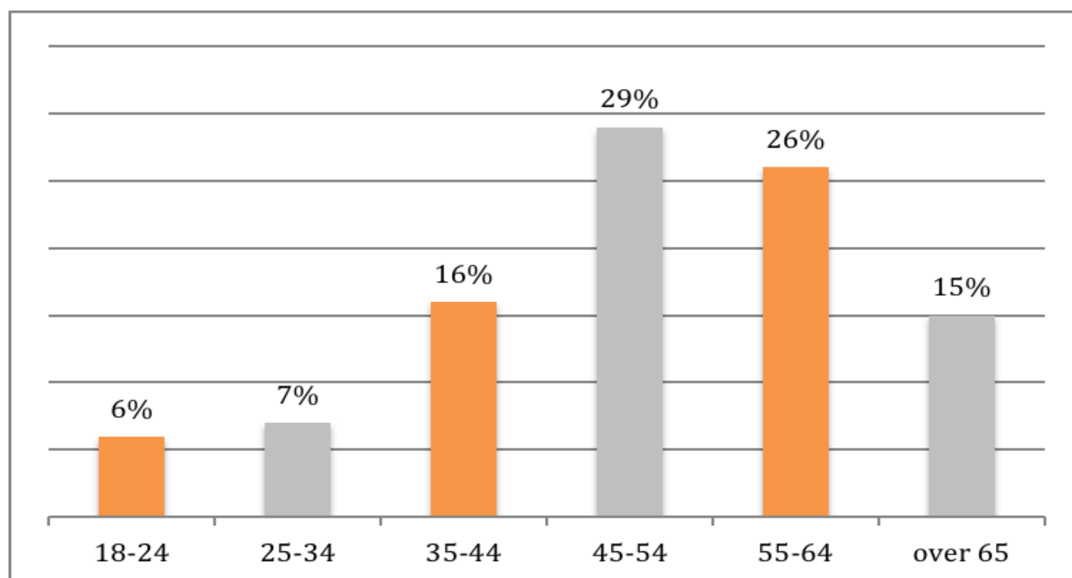

Fig. 6.4 Age distribution of sample (Varusschlacht survey)

A relative majority of respondents (41%, n=92) were from Lower Saxony, the state in which the site is located, followed by 25% (n=57) from the adjoining state of North-Rhine Westphalia (see table 6.8 below).

TABLE 6.8 VISITOR ORIGIN (Varusschlacht)	
State	**Frequency (%)**
Lower Saxony	92 (41%)
North-Rhine Westphalia	57 (25%)
Bavaria	13 (6%)
Baden-Württemberg	12 (5%)
Hessen	8 (4%)
Thuringia	7 (3%)
Brandenburg	6 (3%)
Bremen	6 (3%)
Rhineland-Palatinate	6 (3%)
Berlin	5 (2%)
Hamburg	5 (2%)
Mecklenburg- West Pomerania	2 (1%)
Saxony	2 (1%)
Schleswig-Holstein	2 (1%)
Saarland	1 (1%)

The majority of respondents visited with one other adult (53%, n=121), followed by 30% (n=67) who visited with two or three other adults. 11% (n=24) visited in a group of 4 or more adults. Only 7% of respondents (n=15) visited alone. The majority of respondents (62%, n=140) visited in adult-only groups. 38% of respondents (n=87) had children with them. Figure 6.5 below shows the educational attainment of the sample. The German educational system is not directly comparable to the British, and German titles are therefore retained where no British equivalent exists. Roughly, Hauptschule, Realschule and Gymnasium may be considered secondary schooling. Nearly half of respondents (47%) had received higher education.

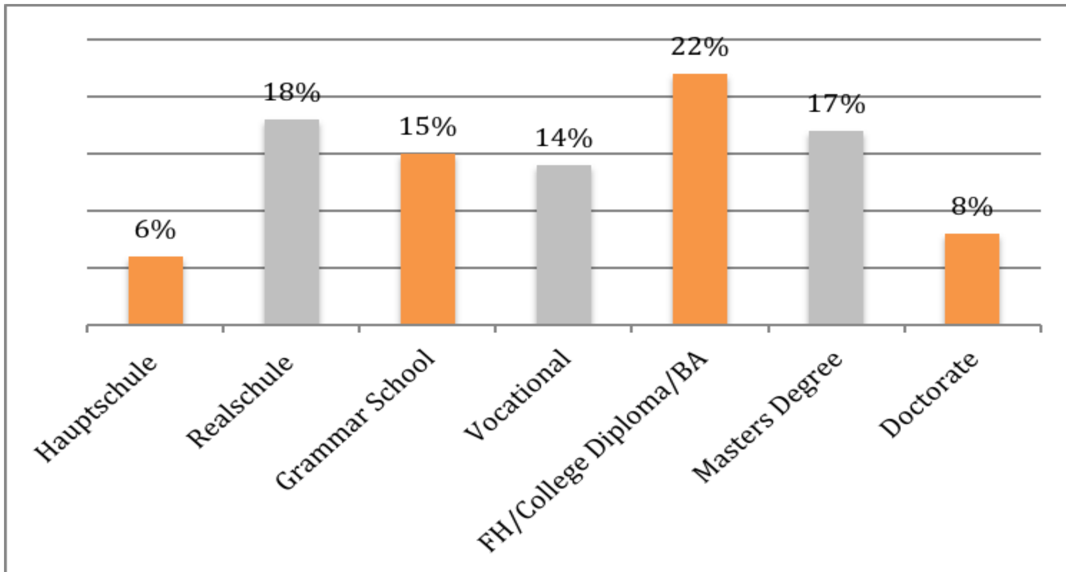

Fig. 6.5 Educational Attainment (Varusschlacht survey)

Half of respondents (50%, n=114) had learnt about the battle in school. 19% (n=43) could not remember. The majority of respondents had already seen the battlefield at the time they filled in the survey (82%, n=179), and 94% (n=205) had seen the exhibition. When asked which of the two was more important in their visit, the majority (64%, n=144) said both equally. 27% (n=60) thought the exhibition was more important, while only 9% (n=21) felt the battlefield was more important.

The question ‘I valued my visit here today specifically because…’ served to establish the benefits that respondents gained from their visits (table 6.9). Multiple answers were possible. 73% of respondents (n=165) selected ‘being in the place where history happened’. ‘Part of my heritage (Identity)’ was the second most frequently mentioned benefit, although by markedly fewer respondents (55%). Half of respondents mentioned as a benefit ‘Learn something new’, followed by ‘Good for children to learn about our history’ (mentioned by 48% of respondents). ‘Imagine what it was like’ was in fifth place, mentioned by 47% of respondents.

TABLE 6.9 VISITOR-REPORTED BENEFITS (Varusschlacht survey) *(multiple answers possible)*			
Response	**Frequency**	**% of respondents (n=227)**	**% of responses (n=1249)**
Being in the place where history happened.	165	73	13
Part of my heritage (Identity)	125	55	10
Learn something new	113	50	9
Good for children to learn about our history.	108	48	9
Imagine what it was like.	107	47	9
Combination Museum and Nature/Walk.	92	41	7
Understand how people lived in the past.	85	37	7
Reminder of what one has learnt before	76	34	6
Thinking about history, or ‘what if?’	74	33	6
Relaxation with added benefit	71	31	6
Ambience/beauty of site	58	26	5
Continuity	52	23	4
Think about/understand other cultures.	44	19	4
Learnt from the past	38	17	3
Understand where I/we come from.	30	13	2
Nothing Specific	11	5	1

Note: Answer options were statements expressing the above benefits as answers to the question ‘I valued my visit here today specifically because…’.

Pearson’s r test found no correlation between the five most frequently mentioned benefits and age, educational attainment or whether the respondent had learnt about the battle in school.

The following chart shows respondents’ rating of how much the presentation on site contributed to why they received these benefits, with 1 = ‘not at all’ and 7 =’a lot’ (n=224). Most respondents appeared to agree that the

interpretation contributed to the benefits they received, but only just above average (Mdn=5, IQR=1).

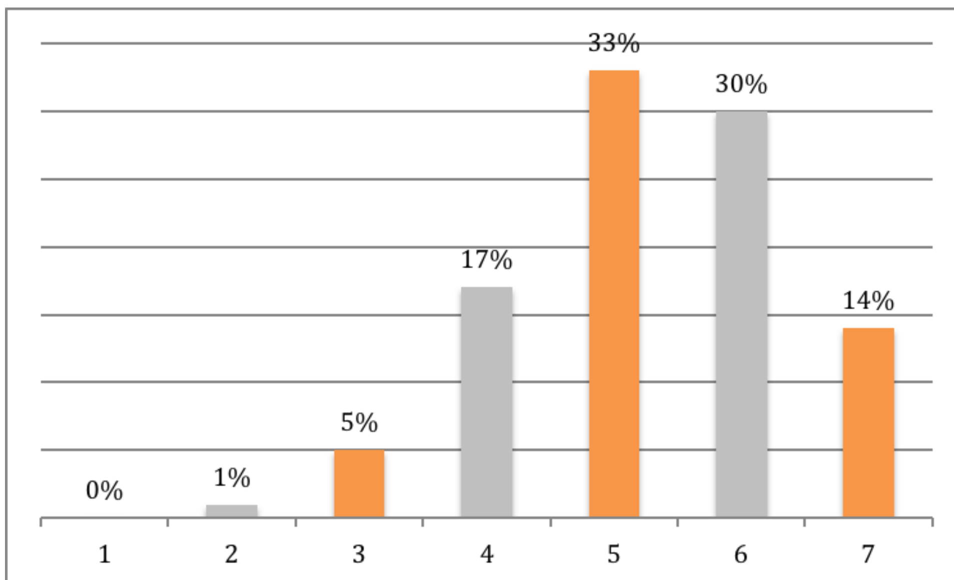

Fig. 6.6 Rating of how much the presentation contributed to benefits reported. 1= not at all, 7 = a lot (Varusschlacht visitor survey)

Table 6.10 below shows respondents' expectations of interpretation. 77% of respondents selected 'help imagine', followed by 68% who selected 'illustrate'. Half of respondents selected 'mark place', while 48% selected 'Provide context'. 37% of respondents selected 'provide direction/orientation'.

TABLE 6.10
EXPECTATIONS OF INTERPRETATION
(Varusschlacht survey)
(multiple answers possible)

Attribute	Frequency	% of respondents (n=219)	% of responses (n=771)
Help imagine	168	77	22
Illustrate	148	68	19
Mark Place	110	50	14
Provide Context	104	48	13
Provide Direction/Orientation	81	37	11
Media variety	72	33	9
Help physically engage	65	30	8
Not too many facts	18	8	2

TABLE 6.10 **EXPECTATIONS OF INTERPRETATION** **(Varusschlacht survey)** ***(multiple answers possible)***			
Attribute	**Frequency**	**% of respondents (n=219)**	**% of responses (n=771)**
Don't use it.	5	2	1

Note: Answer options were statements expressing the above benefits as answers to the question 'I want this from the information/presentation provided on site…'.

Pearson's r test found no correlation between the five most often mentioned attributes of interpretation, and age or educational attainment. Interestingly, there also does not appear to be a relationship between the benefits of 'being in the place where history happened' and 'understanding or imagine what it was like' and the interpretation attributes of 'mark place' and 'help imagine'.

Respondents rated how much the interpretation provided had met their expectations (fig. 6.7). Most respondents appeared to agree that their expectations had broadly been met, although there was some disagreement (Mdn=5, IQR=2). 40% of respondents (n=89) rated this question at 6 and 7 (exceeded). Clustering ratings 3-5 as about average gives a majority of respondents (58%, n=129).

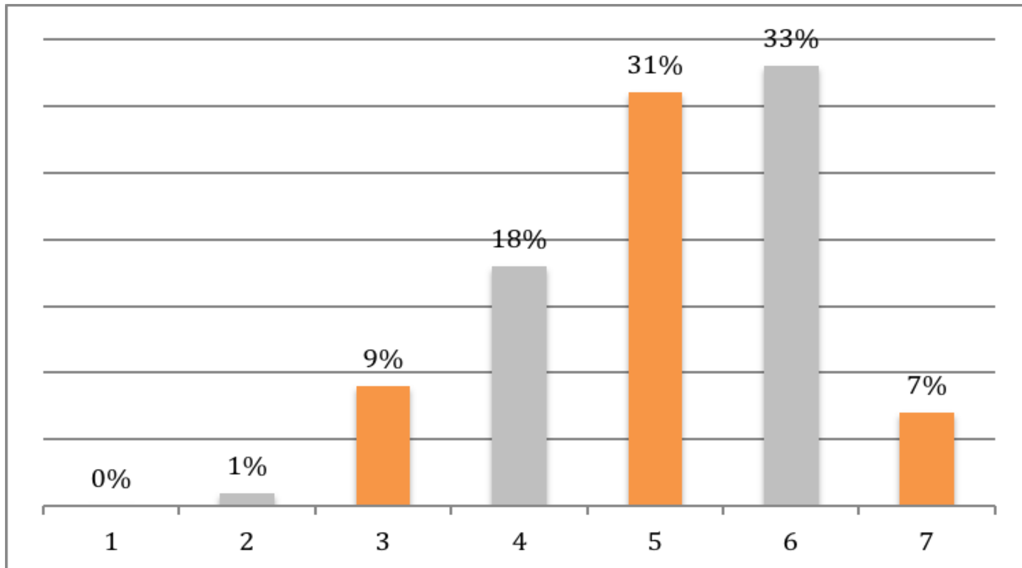

Fig. 6.7 Rating of how much the interpretation met expectations. 1= not at all, 7 = exceeded (n=222; Varusschlacht visitor survey)

Respondents were also asked what they hadn't liked or what could have been better. The following word cloud represents keywords from responses that described what respondents had not liked. The size of words corresponds to frequency.

Fig. 6.8 What respondents did not like in the interpretation.

The park was mentioned most often as an area that respondents didn't enjoy. In particular, they wanted more orientation and interpretation that illustrates what happened. Respondents did not feel the pavilions added anything to the site, and one respondent directly questioned their relevance to the battle. The steel plates were mentioned with regard to their illegibility. The following word cloud illustrates what respondents would have liked to see.

Fig. 6.9 What respondents thought could be improved in the interpretation.

The above findings regarding orientation reaffirm what emerged in the visitor interviews. Again this is of interest considering the deliberate decision not to provide orientation. The level of abstraction that was particularly pursued by the original architects in their presentation of the park also emerged as the key criticism. Respondents in fact wanted more illustrative media and (informed) reconstructions, or simply more 'information'.

Conclusion

The case study at Varusschlacht shows evidence of several elements of the IAHD as outlined in Chapter 2. The assertion was that visitors did not already have existing connections to the site, either related to memory or identity. The interpretation aimed at education. There was a very strong focus on expert

evidence, and here particularly the material evidence of archaeology. It can be argued that the presentation was used as ‘translation’ between experts and the public, a key defining factor of the IAHD, for example most obviously in Zone 4. The proclaimed aim of the interpretation was to allow visitors to draw their own conclusions, which we may take to be the ‘meaning-making’ of the IAHD. However, certain meanings were very strongly discouraged, and these related almost exclusively to ‘popular’, or what we may call non-expert values associated with the site. These ‘preferred readings’ share clear characteristics with the themes and messages of the IAHD, although they were not described as such by those responsible, or in the documentation. Specifically, there was a relatively narrow focus (the battle) and a structured approach to content in support of this focus (such as cultural comparison, main characters).

Visitors appeared to notice the existence of the preferred readings, and there is evidence, further supported by a control study at Hermann’s Monument, that it disturbs to some extent their engagement with the heritage on site, or at least the way they respond to it in the context of formal research, and here particularly in face-to-face interviews.

The site does bring clear benefits to people, and it is of note that the benefit of identity, mentioned by more than half of survey respondents, is in fact in direct opposition to the preferred reading, and the expressed understanding of the site by its management and those responsible for the interpretation. A comparison of these benefits in general to those in legislation and policy will be undertaken in Chapter 8.

With regard to interpretive best practice, the park falls far short, while the exhibition lacks on the use of language that addresses the visitor directly and

relates to their contemporary experience horizons. Visitors' own expectations of interpretation correspond broadly to the benefits they receive, but do not readily match interpretation's own principles. This will be further examined in Chapter 8.

7. CASE STUDY: 1066 BATTLE OF HASTINGS AND BATTLE ABBEY

This chapter presents the findings from the case study in England, 1066 Battle of Hastings and Battle Abbey, managed by English Heritage. Following the structure of the previous chapter, this chapter first gives a brief account of the history of the event, followed by a description of the interpretive planning process and an audit of the interpretation provided. The concluding sections report on the findings from the visitor observations, the visitor interviews and the visitor quantitative survey.

A short history of the Battle of Hastings

The Battle of Hastings is *the* key event in the Norman conquest of England. It took place on 14 October 1066, and it is in this battle that Duke William of Normandy defeated the Anglo-Saxon King Harold, thus marking the beginning of Norman rule in England.

The events leading up to the battle begin to unfold when King Edward the Confessor dies childless in January 1066. On his deathbed, Edward named Earl Harold of Wessex as his successor. Harold was both Edward's brother-in-law, and head of the royal army. But there were two more rivals: King Harold Hardrada in Norway, and Duke William of Normandy. Harold Hardrada based his claim to the English throne on a treaty made between his own father and King Edward's predecessor, King Harthacut. Duke William, in contrast, was distantly related to Edward, whose mother was the great-aunt of William himself. In addition, it is possible that Edward, who had lived in exile in Normandy before becoming king, had promised the throne to William. To add further complexity,

Harold of Wessex had once been William's hostage, and Norman sources claim that during this time, Harold swore loyalty to William, promising to support his succession to the English throne upon Edward's death. It is this supposed oath that would later be used primarily by William to support his claim.

Harold of Wessex was consecrated king in January 1066, and defeated an attempted invasion by Harold Hardrada in the Battle of Stamford Bridge on 25 September 1066. Shortly thereafter, Duke William set off from Normandy to England, landing in Pevensey near Hastings without facing opposition. King Harold rushed south with his forces, and was met near Telham Hill by William. Estimates suggest that both armies were of similar strength between 5,000 and 7,000 men. This was a pitched battle, with Harold's forces taking up position on top of the hill, while William attacked from below. The main difference between the two armies was the use of cavalry and crossbows by William, while Harold relied on infantry, and, due to his forced march south, did not have the usual contingent of archers. The battle continued for the entire day, with both sides taking heavy casualties. The turn came during the third Norman attack at the end of the day, when King Harold was killed, most probably by an arrow through the eye, which pierced his brain, and further wounds inflicted as he fell to the ground. With their king dead, the English forces fled and were pursued by the Normans.

Edgar Ætheling, great-nephew of Edward the Confessor and still in his teens, was proclaimed king by the English, but never crowned. Duke William of Normandy was crowned king of England on 25 December 1066. This did not bring immediate peace. English revolts continued for several years, and were often suppressed harshly. To further his legitimacy as the new king, William was

crowned by papal legates in 1070. It is also likely that it was the papal legates that induced William to build Battle Abbey as an act of penance for the bloodshed of the battle. The abbey's high altar was placed on the spot where King Harold had been killed, by wish of William himself. It is through founding of the abbey that the surrounding town developed, and the abbey itself has a subsequent ecclesiastical and social history, which does not concern us here.

Reception of the battle

Almost immediately after the battle, two Norman accounts of it were written. William of Jumiège wrote the *Deeds of the Dukes of the Normans* in the 1070s (for this and the following see Chibnall 1999, p.3ff). William of Poitiers, Duke William's chaplain, wrote *The Deeds of William, Duke of the Normans and King of England* in ca 1071. Neither writer was personally present at the battle. However, subsequent writers drew on these two sources, for example Orderic Vitalis in his *Ecclesiastical History.* On the English side, events were recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, a series of separate manuscripts recording events from the time of the Roman conquest to some time after the arrival of the Normans. Other histories include *The History of Recent Events* by Eadmer, and the *Deed of the Kings* and the *Deeds of the Bishops* of William of Malmesbury. Another key source not only for the battle but the events leading up to it is the *Bayeux Tapestry*. The tapestry was likely commissioned by Duke William's half-brother Bishop Odo of Bayeux, who was present at the battle. It depicts events from 1064 up to and including the battle of Hastings itself.

During the Middle Ages, engagement with the battle and the Norman Conquest was primarily concerned with the question of legitimacy (Chibnall

1999, p.9ff). While William as the ruler was widely accepted, the impact on the English was seen more critically, noting particularly the harsh measures of the conquerors, and the loss of lands by the English. As time passed, the conquered and the conquerors mingled, creating a new generation that increasingly identified as English. Chibnall (1999, p.19) notes that ‘a tendency persisted in popular writings to describe all oppressive or wealthy rulers and administrators as Norman, and all poor and oppressed people as English’. At this time, the English language was primarily indicative of lower status, as it was only one of two or three languages spoken by the wealthy. A view of the Saxons as heroes and the Normans as oppressors also re-emerged in the 19th century (Chibnall 1999, p.53ff), although it appears intermingled with a sense of ‘English’ stability that started with the conquest. The two key proponents of these positions are Augustus Freeman, who celebrated the emergence of an ‘English nation’ rooted in Anglo-Saxon institutions, and John Horace Round, who maintained the focus on continuity since the Norman Conquest, but shifted it slightly onto the changes brought by the Normans. Round’s idea included the notion of a ‘strong, purposeful monarchy’ (cited in Chibnall 1999, p.62). In subsequent periods, the focus in academia shifted to questions of feudalism and law, and here particularly the rights of women. Structures pre- and post-conquest are examined to establish the extent and speed of perceived changes introduced by Norman rule, and there appears to be general agreement that while changes did indeed take place, these are not as radical as previous writers may have thought. Crucially, the overarching popular narrative appears to agree that 1066 is a central date in the history of England as a nation, and as such the battle is a statutory item in the history curriculum for England (Department for Education

2011). In addition, there is a prevailing notion of continuity in terms of institutions and particularly the monarchy from 1066 onwards. This was most recently asserted as an argument for Britain's difference from Continental Europe by a group of historians chaired by a history professor at the University of Cambridge (Abulafia 2015).

Interpretive Planning Process

The following is based on a face-to-face interview with the then Interpretation Manager for English Heritage, Dirk Bennett, undertaken on 28 February 2012, unless where otherwise noted. The planning process refers to the project of redeveloping the site, which included the creation of a new Visitor Centre, and redevelopment of the battlefield interpretation. The existing exhibition in what is referred to as the Abbey Museum was reviewed and refurbished in parts, but remained largely the same. The new Visitor Centre opened in 2007.

At the start of the project a feasibility study was undertaken, followed by the creation of a business plan. This was followed by a sequence of research, which included historical research and significance assessment. For the latter, communal value as outlined in English Heritage's *Conservation Principles* (2008) was also established. In a short discussion of what were the communal values associated with 1066 Battle of Hastings and Battle Abbey, the Interpretation Manager included the status or position of the battle for the English community. The research undertaken was then collated in the Conservation Plan. This research, alongside the feasibility study and business plan, served as the starting point for the interpretive planning process. This is the general approach taken by English Heritage for projects of this scale.

However, neither of the pre-planning documents could be obtained for review for this study.

The core interpretation team was made up of the Interpretation Manager, who is a historian and archaeologist, a historian, a curator, and a conservator (English Heritage 2005a, p.4). Staff from other departments such as education, visitor services, marketing and events were invited to contribute at various stages of the planning process. No specific audience research was undertaken; rather, existing data was reviewed and analysed. This provided insights into first time/repeat visits, group make-up (adults/children), visitor origin, motivation, information sources used for visit planning, time spent on site, and satisfaction with different aspects of the visit (English Heritage 2005a, p.21). This information was subsequently used to inform the development of the interpretation plan. A detailed audit of the existing interpretation was also completed, and the interpretation team visited other battlefield sites in the UK and Europe.

Consultation on the planned interpretation was also undertaken. The Interpretation Plan (English Heritage 2005a, p.16) notes that during the planning application for the Visitor Centre the Battlefields Trust and Battle Historical Society frequently contributed to discussions, with the Battlefield Trust continued to be in communication with the interpretation team subsequently via a representative. Throughout the interpretive planning process, the team gave presentations to the local community. The latter also seems have been represented on the steering group for the project. Workshops with existing visitors were held to test aspects of the computer interactives that were to be part of the interpretation, as well as for a film.

The Interpretation Plan notes that it will contribute to the objectives of the project, which are to

- 'Improve the visitor experience and enjoyment
- Increase visitor dwell time
- **Increase the understanding of the historical, cultural and architectural context** (original emphasis)
- Enhance the site management
- Increase visitor numbers
- Increase the level of local awareness and support
- Provide local economic incentives to support EH
- Link regional, national, and international-level tourism
- Promote the sharing of experiences and best practices.'

  (English Heritage 2005a, p.4)

The plan summarises as its aim to 'reaffirm the historic importance of the site' and to 'communicate' this to the public, as well as 'modify standard perceptions' about both parties involved in the battle (ibid). The plan identifies the following areas to be addressed specifically:

'The Battle

- Remoteness of the event
- No physical remains of the event
- Its causes and context – cultural, political, religious and social
- Background and motivation of the involved parties

The Abbey

- Understanding and interpretation of the physical remains
- Reasons for its foundation
- Choice of location
- Role of an abbey
- Monastic life
- Links to the Town

Country Estate

- Circumstances and causes of its establishment
- Lack of remains
- Architectural development
- Links to the Town.'

(ibid, p. 25)

The plan outlines the concept of the interpretation and the areas of the visit. These are the Visitor Centre as the key focus, the battlefield, the Abbey (ruins) and the Abbey Museum. At the core is a chronological journey, which unfolds as follows (ibid, p. 34):

Entrance, Visitor Centre	*Build-up to the battle and historic context*
Visitor Centre, Battlefield, Abbey	*The events of the year 1066*
Battlefield, Abbey	*The battle*
Abbey, Abbey Museum	*The battle's immediate and long-term aftermath*

The intention is for each element to stand alone if necessary, but to complement each other. The plan (ibid, p. 36) identifies the main theme for the interpretation, supported by 5 sub-themes. These are detailed in the following table. The plan notes that these themes should also serve as criteria for evaluation to 'measure the level of knowledge' of visitors (ibid, p. 51).

TABLE 7.1 BATTLE OF HASTINGS INTERPRETIVE THEMES[45]		
Theme/sub-theme	**Theme**	**'Essence'**
Main theme	The importance of the battle	Battle is the site of one of the most decisive & significant events in Western Europe & in English history.
Sub-theme 1	The way to the battle.	The background, actions and motivations of contenders and followers.
Sub-theme 2	Sat, 14th October 1066	The events of the day and how they unfold.
Sub-theme 3	The Norman conquest	The establishment of the Normans, first actions
Sub-theme 4	The transformation of England	England created through assimilation of Norman & Anglo-Saxon elements
Sub-theme 5	Monastic Life	Monasteries provide framework of medieval life, in social, religious , cultural terms
Sub-theme 6	Later history	400 years of private ownership

The plan specifies the theme that will be covered in each area of the visit. Importantly, it also specifies the tone to be used (ibid, p. 37). Beside 'informative' and 'lively' this also includes 'emotional'. The Interpretation

[45] Please note that according to current definitions of interpretive themes, all but the first main theme 'essence' would be classed as topics, rather than themes.

Manager explained that this was due to the fact that the battle was ‘a very emotional event’, due to its importance to the ‘historical identity of the British’ and its place in ‘British psyche’, but also because of its nature as a battle. In reference to audience reactions to the annual battle re-enactment (where the French re-enactors are booed) he noted a ‘quite unreasonable, but emotional link’ to the battle, a ‘connection’ that should be ‘acknowledged’. An emotional tone is therefore suggested for sub-themes 2 (the battle, alongside an evocative tone) and 3 (the aftermath, also informative). The interpretation plan takes note of a ‘traditional view’ (English Heritage 2005a, p.41), according to which Anglo-Saxon culture was ‘introverted’, while Norman culture was ‘outward-looking’ and able to ‘adapt external influences’. The interpretation aims to ‘break this up’ after first ‘seemingly’ confirming this view, according to the plan (ibid, p. 42). The Interpretation Manager noted specifically that at the time, there was no notion of ‘the English’ or even ‘the Anglo-Saxons’, nor were the Normans French. He explained that one aim therefore was to ‘strip back all these layers’ of traditional understanding and ‘showing as near as possible…who we’re dealing with’ on both sides. He noted that in order to do so, the interpretation team pushed the historians to look at ‘all possible angles’.

Overall, the interpretive planning process followed a broadly structured approach based on audience and scientific research, limited formative evaluation, and public consultation on, as it appears, broad principles and general approaches. The Interpretation Manager pointed out that despite a degree of formalisation of the process, it was still iterative, allowing room for creative inspiration and changes as details were developed. The planning process does show evidence of the IAHD. Experts led on historical research, as

well as the assessment of significance. However, it appears that non-experts were involved, and that their values were acknowledged to a degree, for example regarding the event's place in English, or British identity. This is also reflected in the deliberate plan for an 'emotional' tone, and the related explanation by the Interpretation Manager. There is, however, a suggestion of wanting to address inaccurate 'traditional' views, although in a soft approach, and the belief that this can be done through focus on 'facts'. The process does appear to have recognised an existing connection of people with the site; nevertheless, creating 'understanding' is still specifically mentioned as an aim of the project. The process established themes and sub-themes as promoted by the IAHD, although only the main theme can be said to follow the accepted convention for themes as full, descriptive sentences.

Interpretation Audit: The Battlefield

The site is entered through the Abbey's 14th century gatehouse, which now houses the reception and shop. An audio guide is included in the admissions price. Upon exiting the shop, visitors step onto a path that leads in two directions. Along the right, there is an interpretation panel. Although I have observed some visitors taking a moment to orient themselves, most almost immediately spotted and approached this panel. The panel provides an overview of the site in its modern layout, and of the history of the battle. The sign has a title in large letters, followed by a short paragraph summarizing the key information. Two more paragraphs are clearly separated, and tell more about the battle and its impact, and the abbey. The final paragraph directly addresses the visitor and makes suggestions for the visit. On the right is an

annotated map, including the key site facilities, routes around the site, and the visitor's location. There is also a number that corresponds with the audio tour, which is reviewed separately further below.

Subsequent panels follow the same layout and approach, using a title, summary (theme) paragraph, and further content paragraphs. Each sign is also accompanied by a captioned illustration. The visitor is addressed as 'you', and the panels point out what to look out for. Panels are placed in locations relevant to their content, and make reference to this, e.g. 'where you are now standing.' Where visitors' progress from a panel is not obvious, the last paragraph addresses them with instructions or suggestions on where to go next. The language of the panels is easy to understand, without the use of jargon. Depending on the theme of the panel, it changes from informative to narrative/evocative. For the latter, present tense is used. For example, the first panel on the battle is summarized as,

> *Early on the autumn morning of Saturday 14th October 1066 two great armies are preparing to fight for the throne of England.*

Importantly, each panel reveals part of the story, often ending on a note of suspense or a cliffhanger that encourages visitors naturally to move on to the next panel. For example, another panel at the start of the battle ends simply with, 'The battle is resumed'. Where panel text steps outside the story of the battle, the tone changes back to informative. This is usually done to describe the current layout of the landscape.

There are two routes around the battlefield. One is an accessible route that follows along a terrace below the abbey ruins, providing an outlook over the battlefield below. Another leads in a circle around the battlefield. The

interpretation panels are written such that the short tour gives an overview of the events, while the long tour explores its different stages in greater detail. Some panels on the tours are the same. The style of the panels remains as described above for both tours. The panels cover both sides of the battle, but are written from a Norman point of view, largely in terms of Norman actions, which were countered reactively by the English.

Panels are also provided to interpret the abbey ruins. The overall layout of these panels is the same as the battlefield panels, including a title, a summary sentence, distinct content paragraphs, and captioned illustrations. The language here is informative, and does contain some specialist terms, particularly referring to architectural details. These panels do not address visitors, or specifically relate content to their location.

The other key means of interpretation of the battlefield and the abbey ruins is through the audio tours. I observed that most visitors use these. The tour has a narrator, who addresses visitors directly, while using the first person to refer to himself. This, from the start, approximates a conversation and relationship with an actual tour guide. Visitors operate the guide by selecting numbers or pressing other buttons to access additional content. The narrator clearly explains this at the start of the tour, which also describes how the tour is organised. At the end of each section, the narrator explains to the visitor where to go next. In certain sections, there is also content that can be accessed while visitors are walking. The narrator makes it clear that there are ‘two stories, depending on who [sic] you talk to’, and some content is consequently clearly given from the Norman or English perspective. This introduces visitors to the key points of contention, such as for example the claim to the throne. Once the

guide reaches the events of the battle, ambience sound is used, and the narrator describes the battle in evocative language. For example, at the beginning of the long battlefield walk, he describes how ‘the last of the mist rises off the earth’ on the morning of the battle. The narrator makes reference to the visitor’s location and invites them to look at the landscape, imagining the armies: ‘But today, on your left, at the top of the hill, stand thousands of men.’ Beyond the stops on the field, visitors can access further content. Both sides receive similar exposure, although some sections are described primarily from a Norman point of view as the side using direct action. The guide acknowledges the strengths of both armies and their leaders, and uses apparently historical accounts in descriptions. Harold, for example, is described as ‘tall, handsome, strong, courageous, eloquent, funny, confident, open and diplomatic. And that’s just what the Normans say about him.’ This subtly reaffirms the notion of sources, while still using them to paint a contemporary picture of the actors involved. The guide also explores academic controversy over whether Harold could have won the battle, by outlining opposing arguments. The tour of the battlefield ends with this commentary, reaffirming the popular notion of the battle being the beginning of the English nation and continuity:

> *‘Not only is this the last invasion of England and the beginning of a new era of Norman rule. But out of this battle arises the England that we know today. Our language, our laws, our politics and our culture would be very different if William hadn’t made it to the top of this hill.’* (English Heritage n.d.)

The audio guide offers further content relating to the abbey itself. This is no longer organised as a tour; rather, visitors simply move from space to space and access content by pressing the numbers given on the outdoor panels

throughout the ruins. Visitors are still addressed and encouraged to look at certain aspects in the environment around them. The language is less evocative, but still narrative in style.

Interpretation Audit: The Exhibitions

There are two exhibition spaces: the Visitor Centre, and the Abbey Museum. The Visitor Centre contains only one room, and as such was not split into zones. The Abbey Museum is technically spread over two rooms, however, since in an initial trial I found that visitors moved back and forth between these, I decided to treat them as one zone.

In the Visitor Centre, the corridor leading to the exhibition includes a reverse timeline, showcasing key events from today back to the 12th century. This ends at the head of the stairs/at the lift leading down to the exhibition itself. Upon descending the stair or exiting the lift, visitors are faced with a panel stating simply, ‘It is the year 1066’. Spears acting like arrows on the panel both give the impression of a battle, and provide orientation to direct visitors to the left and into the exhibition. To the right is the exit onto the battlefield. Turning left, visitors see the introductory panel to the exhibition.

The panel has a clear and prominent title, ‘1066 The Battle for England’, followed by a very short paragraph of two sentences outlining what happened. Notably both parties are mentioned in the first sentence. Smaller text underneath this addresses visitors directly with information about what they can do in the exhibition. The panel also explains that the English and Norman armies are explored in greater detail on the left and right of the exhibition, respectively. A subtle suggestion of where to start seems provided by the

background illustration in this panel, of a man that points to the left, and the English side. However, the exhibition is logical from whichever side it is approached. Both sides follow exactly the same structure. Wall panels first focus on the respective party and their context, clearly indicated by topical titles in large letters, such as ‘The English and Their World’. As with the outdoor panels, this is followed by a short paragraph summarizing the content, or theme, of the panel, in bold letters. Two more paragraphs, clearly separated, provide further details on this theme. The tone is informative. Visitors are not addressed, although there is the use of the first person plural on the English panel (‘artefacts that we can still see today’). The text on the panels in the exhibition does not relate to visitors’ experiences. Illustrations, such as reproductions of contemporary maps, pictures and artefacts, related to the topic are provided. These are very large, and marked by clear titles. Short paragraphs provide further explanation on each illustration. The wall panels then continue on the topic of the Kings of England and the Dukes of Normandy, respectively. These use the same layout of title, thematic summary, and short explanatory paragraph, as well as illustrations with titles and explanations. The sections on English kings and Norman dukes on either side are adjacent to walls that contain replicas of the weapons and armour of the respective army. Each wall is headed by a clear title, for example ‘The Norman Army’, followed by a short description of the army and an explanation of what the displays along the walls are. Visitors are able to touch and feel them, and with some exhibits can also lift them to gain a sense of their weight. The weapons displays provide the bridge between the two sides, as visitors naturally move from the equipment used by one army on to the other.

In front of both wall displays are two computer interactives each. Content is similar, but slightly different for the two sides. On the English side, visitors can explore names, The Year 1066, Invasions, Kings and Dukes, Precious Things and What if, an exploration of who might be king now if William had not won the battle. On the Norman side, the content is divided into Names, The Year 1066, Expansion, Kings and Dukes, and Castles and Churches. The additional content is not extensive, but adds another layer of information.

On the Norman side, and what would be the end of the display if visitors start their exploration on the English side, there is another interactive. This is a low, circular table that invites visitors to choose one of the two armies to trace their movements in the run-up to the battle. Visitors use a joystick to move the armies along a pre-determined path. At each stop, there are images allowing visitors to access further content relevant to the army and location in question. On the march, the interactive notes how many kilometres the army has covered in how many days, connecting visitors' interaction via the joystick to a real-world scenario. The final content is the same for both armies and ends just before the battle. The intention appears to be for visitors to exit out onto the battlefield at this point, which can in fact be done from this level of the Visitor Centre. As visitors exit, a panel titled 'Heroes and Warriors' alerts visitors to the opportunity to hear excerpts from two poems contemporary to the battle, 'The Song of Roland' and 'Beowulf', each in their original language. A paragraph each describes the poem, and visitors can sit on a bench underneath unidirectional speakers to listen to the poems.

The central part of the exhibition is a cinema, which can be accessed from either the English or the Norman side of the exhibition. A time clock on the

weapons display wall alerts visitors to when the next film starts, although sound from the film can also be heard in the exhibition when it plays, as there are no doors. The film uses the strapline, ‘The Battle for England’, and has a main narrator telling the story. It starts with images in black and white and atmospheric music. The main narrator introduces the fact that some eyewitness accounts that will be used are from a Norman point of view. The film uses animations of the embroidered depictions of the battle in the Bayeux tapestry, as well as computer animations to explore battle formations, and real-life images. The narration is engaging and in a storytelling format, using evocative language such as ‘hack’ and ‘slash’ to give a sense of the impact of the action, and the human experience. Both sides are represented, and the overall tone is highly emotional, while also providing information. At the end, the film illustrates the bloodshed of the battle by noting that at the time, a large town had a population of about 2,500, while the casualties of the battle numbered 7,000.

The Abbey Museum is envisaged to be viewed at the end of a visit. The entrance and exit to the museum are via fairly steep, historic staircases leading up into two large rooms in the gatehouse of the abbey. As such, the museum is not accessible to visitors with mobility impairments. It is possible that visitors enter the museum through what is intended as the exit; however, layout and interpretation are such that the two rooms each form a self-contained whole. Following the intended route, upon exiting from the staircase visitors are faced with an introductory panel and interactive model of the abbey in front. Similar to the outdoor interpretation panels, this and subsequent panels have a clear title, followed by a sentence summarizing the focus, or topic, of the panel. The panel uses artist illustrations of the rooms that house the displays, with an explanatory

paragraph. This paragraph addresses the visitor, and relates them to their location: 'You are now standing in the Great Chamber of the Gatehouse of Battle Abbey…' The panel is in both English and French, as are all others in the museum. The model in front is a reconstruction of the Abbey through successive phases of expansion. Visitors can press different buttons, which illuminate the model to show, for example, the elements of the building that are still visible on site.

Two panels along the wall opposite of the introductory panel deal with the battle and its immediate aftermath. One panel provides background and uses a family tree to show the family connections between Edward the Confessor, Harold, and William the Conqueror. The panel incorporates an illuminated section of the Bayeux tapestry, as well as other pictures of original artefacts. The panel has a clear header, and one main descriptive paragraph. The other panel on this wall uses a tabular comparison of England 'before 1066' and 'after 1066'. Each row of the table looks at a distinct topic, e.g. 'castles', and uses images of original paintings or architecture alongside text. The language here is clear and easy to understand. The text does not relate to visitors.

The centre of the room is divided by a wooden frame, which on one side provides two panels on "The Foundation of the Abbey'. The style and elements of these panels are the same as those before, using mostly photographs of artefacts, other sites, and illustrations with annotations. Of note is the direct challenge to an existing belief. The panels begin with, 'There is no truth in the old story of how William vowed to build an abbey on this site if God granted him victory…' These panels neither address nor relate to the visitor. On the other side of this structure are cases with window and tile pieces that were found on

site. The text is informative, but does not address or relate to visitors. An illustration of the abbey floor plan indicates where tiles may have lain, thus linking the artefacts to the building. An adjacent display has sample stones used in the building of the abbey. These have labels explaining what they are and how they were built. Visitors are able to touch them. Opposite this is a roped off, larger display of masonry from the site. An accompanying panel explains how the abbey was built, using a topic header and short paragraph, again supported by reproductions of original drawings and an artist's impression of the abbey.

Entering the second room, visitors immediately see two panels. The panel on the left has a topical title in large letters, 'Life at Battle Abbey', which attracts visitors' attention. A brief paragraph further explains the topic of this room. Again there are illustrations and reproductions of original artwork. Panels arranged to the right and in the centre of the room detail the different roles within the abbey, starting with the abbot. Each panel is accompanied by a display case with original finds from the site, which relate to the role described. Along the outside wall, there is a panel describing the wealth of the abbey, supported by four models in a case that illustrate further the sources of income for the abbey. This panel also provides a map that shows the 15 richest religious houses at the time of death of William the Conqueror, including Battle. Many of these, such as Glastonbury and Winchester, will be familiar to visitors, thus providing a reference. Next to this panel is a video loop on life in the Abbey, using a documentary style and re-enactments. Music can also be heard, and benches are provided in front of the screen for visitors to sit while watching. Further along the wall and opposite the display about the roles in the abbey are

four panels detailing the sources of information for what is known about Battle Abbey. These predominantly use reproductions of, for example, original maps and images, but also a case showing archaeological finds and their modern counterparts, such as a pair of scissors. Following along and in the centre, there are three panels about the abbey in private hands and when it became a school. As with the other panels, each has a topical header in large, bold letters, followed by a brief summary sentence. There are illustrations, and cases with original artefacts relating to the topic of the panel. In all of these panels, visitors are not addressed, nor is the content related to their own contemporary experience. This is the end of the Abbey Museum exhibition.

Interpretation Audit – Conclusion

The interpretation in the park and the Visitor Centre follows the best practice principles identified for this study. Guidance to visitors is provided throughout, making suggestions for the visit and what to do next, which provides reassurance in what is otherwise a very complex site. If followed as intended, the route naturally completes a chronological picture of the site and mixes the different facilities on offer, from the entrance experience of the Abbey, through the battle exhibition, out onto the battlefield and concluding with the Abbey Museum. Language in the park and the Visitor Centre addresses visitors, relates their location to the historic events that took place there, and is easy to understand. In the Visitor Centre, both sides receive equal attention, which is reflected in the design and layout of the space. A connection between the two armies is seamlessly created through the display of weapons and armour. This display also provides opportunity for interaction, as do computer interactives

and the ‘battle table’. The film further supports visitors’ immersion in the events leading up to and including the battle, and an appreciation of the battle’s immediate outcome. In the Abbey Museum, which was not redesigned as part of this project, not all interpretive principles are met. Language of panels does not relate to visitors in any of the ways envisaged by the principle. However, there are opportunities for interaction, for example through the model of the Abbey, which relates to what visitors can still see on site. Visitors are also able to touch stones that were used in building the Abbey. The interpretation in this exhibition is clearly designed and structured, and it is easy to understand what each space is about.

Visitor Observations

This section provides details of the visitor observations that I undertook at The Battle of Hastings on three days in March 2013, and one additional day in October 2013. The two observation areas are the Visitor Centre and the Abbey Museum. In total, I observed 37 groups, including 84 adults and 23 children. The table below gives details of how many groups I observed in each area, and the average time spent.

TABLE 7.2 TOTAL GROUPS OBSERVED AND AVERAGE TIME SPENT		
Area	**Number of Groups**	**Average Time Spent (m:s)**
Visitor Centre	23	15:20
Abbey Museum	14	8:48

In the Visitor Centre, the following interpretive units were identified:

- Panel, The English and Their World
- Panel, The Kings of England
- Interactive: The English
- Weapons Display 1 (England)
- Weapons Display 2 (Both)
- Weapons Display 3 (Norman)
- Panel, The Dukes of Normandy
- Panel, The Normans and Their World
- Interactive: The Normans
- Interactive 'Battle Table'
- Poems Audio
- Film (ca 5 minutes)

The table below gives details of how groups used these interpretive units. For the film, I recorded whether groups watched the film in full, partially, or not at all. 13 groups watched the film in full, while three watched it in part. Seven groups did not watch the film at all. This makes the film the most popular interpretation offered in the Visitor Centre.

TABLE 7.3
USE OF INTERPRETATION IN VISITOR CENTRE

Offer	Focused		Moderately Focused		Unfocused		Not engaged	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Panel, The English and Their World	10	43%	3	13%	4	17%	5	22%
Panel, The Kings of	7	30%	4	17%	5	22%	6	26%

TABLE 7.3 USE OF INTERPRETATION IN VISITOR CENTRE								
Offer	**Focused**		**Moderately Focused**		**Unfocused**		**Not engaged**	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
England								
Interactive: The English	4	17%	1	4%	8	35%	9	39%
Weapons Display 1 (England)	8	35%	7	30%	6	26%	2	9%
Weapons Display 2 (Both)	9	39%	6	26%	6	26%	2	9%
Weapons Display 3 (Norman)	8	35%	6	26%	6	26%	3	13%
Panel, The Dukes of Normandy	4	17%	5	22%	6	26%	7	30%
Panel, The Normans and Their World	5	22%	3	13%	4	17%	10	43%
Interactive: The Normans	4	17%	6	26%	4	17%	9	39%
Interactive 'Battle Table'	8	35%	5	22%	3	13%	7	30%
Poems Audio	0	0%	2	9%	3	13%	**18**	78%
Total groups observed in Visitor Centre: 23								

The panel on 'The English and Their World', which is the first panel when turning left into the exhibition, was used by nearly half of all groups with focus. The weapons displays were used by over a third of groups with focus. Combined with those using these offers with moderate focus, this makes the weapons displays the most popular following the film. The interactive 'battle table' also was used with focus by just over a third of groups, while five groups engaged with it with moderate focus. A third of groups ignored the table

completely. This is also the case with the computer interactives on both sides, which were completely ignored by over a third of all groups. Only four groups each engaged with focus. The remaining panels in the room attracted focus or moderate focus by just over a third of respondents combined, with the second English panel on ‘Kings of England’ appearing slightly more popular than the Norman panels. This, however, may also be a factor of most people appearing to turn left as they entered, thus possibly losing attention once they arrived at the second side. I also observed that where visitors went into the film as they had gone half way around the exhibition, many did not further engage once they came back out from the theatre. The audio of the two historical poems was the least popular piece of interpretation, ignored by the overall majority of groups.

In the Abbey Museum, I identified the following interpretive units:

- Introductory Panel 1: Battle Abbey Museum
- Panel, Genealogy
- Panel, Before and After
- Panel, Foundation and Abbey Church
- Display, Window pieces
- Display, Tile pieces and stones
- Display, Masonry
- Introductory Panel 2: Abbey Life
- Panel, Wealth
- Video
- Panel displays, Roles in the Abbey
- Panel displays, Archaeology

- Panel displays, the Abbey as a private house

For the video, as with the film in the Visitor Centre, I recorded whether groups watched the video in full, partially, or not at all. Most groups did not watch the video at all, while five watched it in part. None of the groups watched it in total. That makes the video the least popular interpretive offer in the Abbey museum. The table below gives details of how groups used the other interpretive units.

TABLE 7.4 USE OF INTERPRETATION IN ABBEY MUSEUM								
Offer	**Focused**		**Moderately Focused**		**Unfocused**		**Not engaged**	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Introductory Panel 1: Battle Abbey Museum	6	43%	3	21%	1	7%	4	29%
Panel, Genealogy	4	29%	3	21%	5	36%	2	14%
Panel, Before and After	5	36%	2	14%	4	29%	3	21%
Panel, Foundation and Abbey Church	2	14%	3	21%	5	36%	4	29%
Display, Window pieces	3	21%	3	21%	3	21%	5	36%
Display, Tile pieces and stones	4	29%	1	7%	3	21%	6	43%
Display, Masonry	4	29%	5	36%	1	7%	4	29%
Introductory Panel 2: Abbey Life	0	0%	4	29%	3	21%	7	50%
Panel, Wealth	1	7%	4	29%	3	21%	6	43%

TABLE 7.4 USE OF INTERPRETATION IN ABBEY MUSEUM								
Offer	**Focused**		**Moderately Focused**		**Unfocused**		**Not engaged**	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Panel displays, Roles in the Abbey	4	29%	3	21%	3	21%	4	29%
Panel displays, Archaeology	5	36%	2	14%	1	7%	6	43%
Panel displays, the Abbey as a private house	5	36%	4	29%	2	14%	3	21%
Total groups observed in Abbey Museum: 14								

Engagement with the different interpretation in the Abbey Museum was fairly evenly spread. The first introductory panel overall received the greatest focussed attention, but only by a margin of one group. No group engaged with the second introductory panel with focus, and this panel was ignored by the greatest number of groups overall. Looking at combined engagement with focus and moderate focus, the most popular interpretive units were the first introductory panel, which included the model of the Abbey, the masonry display, and the panels about the Abbey in private use, used by nine groups each.

In summary, the visitor observation thus revealed that the most popular interpretation in these two exhibitions were, in the Visitor Centre, the film about the battle, the weaponry displays, and the interactive ‘battle table’, and in the Abbey Museum, the introductory panel with the interactive model of the Abbey, the masonry display, and the panels on the Abbey in private use. However, for the Abbey Museum preferences were very slight, and do not enable conclusion on whether the preference was due to media or content. In terms of content, in

the Visitor Centre visitors therefore engaged specifically with interpretation that either mixed both sides (the film), directly compared them (weaponry displays), or allowed visitors to choose their own side to follow (‘battle table’).

Visitor Interviews

In this section, I present the data gathered in visitor interviews between March and May, and October 2013. I interviewed 61 groups, which included a total of 150 adults (76 male, 74 female). Eight groups that I approached declined to participate. All but five respondents were British citizens. Figure 7.1 below shows the age distribution of the sample.

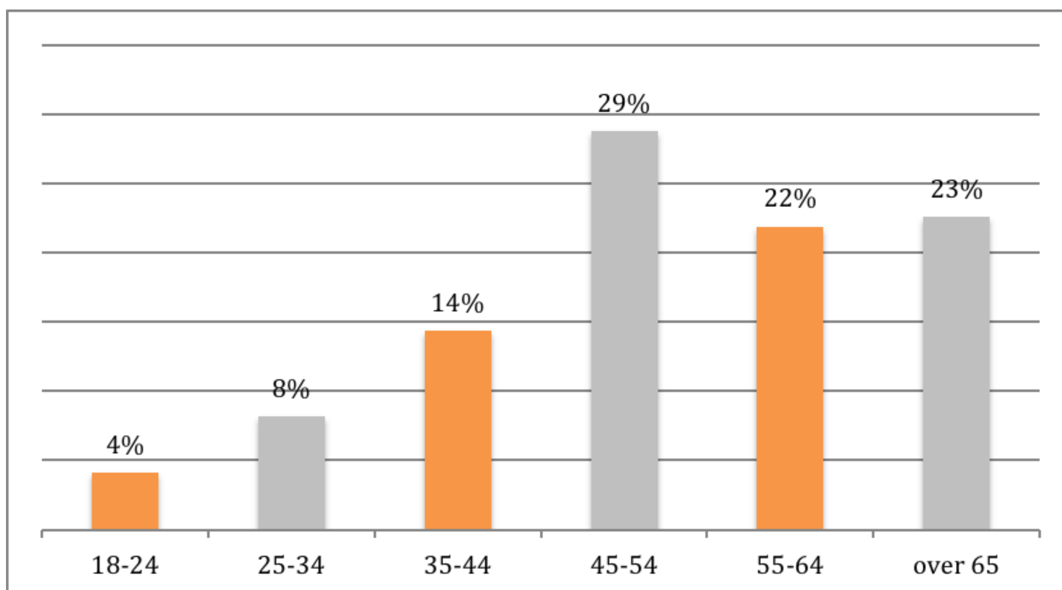

Fig. 7.1 Age distribution of sample (Battle of Hastings interviews)

The table below shows the benefits that visitors mentioned in relation to visiting this particular site and other heritage sites. The table details how frequently each benefit was mentioned. Only benefits mentioned more than once are recorded.

TABLE 7.5 VISITOR-REPORTED BENEFITS (Battle of Hastings interviews)	
Being in the place where history happened	67
Part of my heritage (Identity)	48
Learn something new	25
Imagine what it was like	16
Continuity	15
Combination Museum and Nature	14
Good for children to learn about our history	13
The beauty or ambience of the site	13
Understand or think about other cultures	13
Understand how people lived in the past	12
Going to heritage sites in other countries to learn about that country	11
Relaxation with added benefit	11
Understanding where we come from	11
Understanding the present	9
Reminder of what one has learnt before and memory	8
Understand history of the country	8
Appreciation level of development	5
Compare then and now	5
Enjoyment	5
Learn from the past	5
Thinking about history, or 'what if?'	5
Touching or connecting with history	5
Realize how lucky we are today	4
Understand region and its people	3
Getting you to think	2
Learn the truth of an event	2
Sense of gratitude for what forefathers have done for us	2

'Being in the place where history happened' was the benefit mentioned the most by interviewees. For some, this expressed the ability to see and appreciate for yourself the landscape of which they had read or heard about before, while for others it was a more emotional connection both with the people

who had participated in the battle and with a sense of history and identity.

Visitors said things like,

> *'Well I get quite nostalgic about things too, and I felt really, really a special moment knowing that that's where it all happened.' (EH4.1, Female, 45-55)*
>
> *'I think it makes it more real, when you are at this place. I mean, we all read these things in our school books and everything, you might never think about it again, but when you're there it brings it to life.' (EH6.1, Female, 55-64)*
>
> *'It's nice to have stood on the hill and realised how steep it was and felt cold there, and maybe they did as well. (EH16.4, Male, 18-24)*
>
> *'…it's just that sense of magnificence and history that's gone on before we set foot on this land, and I think it's quite a privilege in a way to be there and kind of experience the site.' (EH16.1, Female, 45-54)*
>
> *'It's quite humbling that experience knowing that somebody thousand or two thousand years ago, depending where you are, stepped on this piece of stone you're looking at or fought on this field that you're looking at, it's just, it gets you, it's weird to say being there gets you closer to history, but that's exactly what it is.' (EH28.2, Male, 25-34)*
>
> *'And when you think you look out there that was the area where the battle took place. And that one battle decided the future of this country.' (EH32.2, Male, Over 65)*
>
> *'It's always talked about, the battle of 1066, just coming, wanting to see the size of the field and just envisage it, really.' (EH35.2, Male, 45-54)*

The second most often mentioned benefit was personal and national identity. It is striking here how strong this identification is, as expressed by possessive pronouns and long deliberations, and how visitors elaborated on a sense of pride in this identity. They said things like,

> *I think what happened here nearly 1000 years ago makes us very much what we are as British and English people today. And that's why*

I believe it's one of those seminal points in our history. This is really the start of the history we've got.' (EH7.2, Male, 35-44)

'If there's one date that every school child knows it's 1066. It's part of our culture, it's part of our history.' (EH8.1, Female, 45-54)

'I think for me it's more about this is where I come from, this is my heritage, this is to do with me involved with the nation. We spend some of our time now in Switzerland so to be here reminded us of being British.' (EH16.1, Female, 45 – 54)

'For me I'm proud to be English, so... I like to know how it all happened and what happened and how we came here really.' (EH27.3, Female, 18 – 24; grew up in the United States.)

'It gives you a warm feeling, it's part of my past.' (EH29.2, Male, Over 65)

'It's seeing how our country's evolved, it's knowing your own country's history and being part of that history. And coming here you are part of it.' (EH30.2, Male, 45-54)

'And it's history that has shaped our future in a way … with the abbey and the battle, they're all fundamental to the way we've been shaped… So that's what I enjoy about it, is to see how things took place and how you can relate to it with our life now really.' (EH47.1, Female, 55-64)

'What is means to be British.' (EH56.1, Female, 35-44)

Interestingly, for some this identity related simultaneously to the 'English' that fought in the battle, and to the society subsequently created by the Normans – both understood as 'us', as is evident in this exchange within this group:

'I meant the English. We weren't very intelligent were we?' (EH36.2, Male, Over 65)

'We weren't. We didn't realise the arrows came from the Normans, we were so good as archers.' (EH36.1, Female, Over 65)

'In some way it was a good thing that the Normans won because it made us stronger, having lost the battle, if we hadn't lost we might not have been in such a good state for the rest of the history.' (EH36.3, Male, 35-44)

Some also reflected on the nature of Britain as a multicultural society and as part of the wider world, and the role history and heritage play in forming identities in this context:

'I don't think as a nation in particular we're not as proud of our heritage as we ought to be, and I think not enough is made of it…I teach at a very, very multicultural school, and a lot of the children are far more aware of their heritage and their religion and their practices than the English children are, and I just don't think we do enough to engender that.' (EH20.3, Female, 55-64)

'I think it helps you appreciate what you've got. I'm an Englishman, first, second I'm British… I think this is a great country and I think it's partly because of things like this, we've got Scotland and the Welsh and the Irish all together, and I think it's why it's a great country. There is a lot of criticism about Great Britain in the world, but this country has done a lot of good as well. If you think about it the greatest empire the world has ever known. So there's go to be something about the history that's created that situation. It's changing, sadly.' (EH31.2, Male, Over 65)

It is noteworthy that there was no visible hesitation as visitors spoke in these terms about heritage, history, and their identity. Pride and considerations of 'British' or 'English' culture alongside or, as may be argued in the last two quotes, in contrast to other cultures were expressed freely and without apparent self-censure, as that which I observed in Germany.

The remaining benefits were expressed less frequently than the first two of 'being in the place where history happened' and 'identity'. 'To Learn something new' was the next most often mentioned benefit, which, where specified,

appeared to mean learning facts in addition to what one had already learnt about the battle. The benefit of ‘understanding or imagining what it was like’ was the fourth most often mentioned benefit. Often this expressed the act of making a connection with the people of that time, and for some, it appeared to be an expression of participating in that past. Visitors said things like,

> *‘We try not to live in the past, but you do need the past to know what life was like.’ (EH11.2, Male, 55-64)*
>
> *‘To see that, to stand at the site, trying to imagine what it must have been like, must have been brave men, it must have been terrible.’ (EH31.2, Male, over 65)*
>
> *‘Imagine the monks, and the soldiers. Wonderful.’ (EH36.1, Female, Over 65)*
>
> *‘It’s more that I find everything comes to life more, you can imagine how it was for them.’ (EH58.1, Female, 18-24)*

Continuity was also mentioned several times as a benefit. For some, this was a sense of the present having been built on the past, with the physical remains acting as a reminder, while for others it was a connection to other human beings that have gone before. Visitors said,

> *‘Time does change and all of that, but the buildings have stayed the same and the scenery has changed very, very little so to speak. And it’s good to know that the history is still there of what actually went on and happened on those sort of dates so to speak as well.’ (EH26.4, Male, 25-34)*
>
> *‘It just makes you feel quite small in the whole chain of human events. It makes you feel important at the same time, it’s a strange feeling. You’re really tiny, really connected to all these people.’ (EH28.2, Male, 25-34)*
>
> *‘I don’t know, I guess the people are the same, people have been the same as other people, being the same but different.’ (EH51.1, Female, 55-64)*

Of particular interest in the context of this study and with regard especially to international and European legislation and policy is how interviewees spoke about the connections they made between their own and other cultures, or their own experience and that of other people, through heritage and visiting heritage sites abroad. One woman (EH31.1, over 65) expressed it like this:

> *‘If you delve into the history of any piece of land really, the poor were the poor, the rich were rich, and the dogs bodies was the very poor people and it didn’t matter from what country you come from, that is it, isn’t it?’*

Many also reported having seen the Bayeux tapestry, and they appreciated a different perspective on the story they were now experiencing on site. A number of people also separately spoke about visiting heritage sites abroad as providing access to understanding that culture. In many cases, the connection was made directly between maintaining heritage sites in Britain as an expression of British history, identity and culture, to provide similar opportunities here, both for visitors and for natives.

The table below shows interviewees’ responses with regard to their expectations of interpretation. ‘Giving context’ was mentioned most often. ‘Marking place’ and ‘providing orientation’ were also mentioned several times, and both appear to be linked to the benefit mentioned most often, of ‘being in the place where history happened’. ‘Not too many facts and details’ was mentioned ten times, however, ‘more details’ was also mentioned (five times). ‘Enable imagination’ and ‘graphic, illustrative’ were also mentioned and are linked to the benefit of ‘Imagine what it was like’. The two aspects described slightly different expectations, with ‘graphic, illustrative’ being more specifically focused on design and the provision of illustrations.

TABLE 7.6 VISITORS' EXPECTATION OF INTERPRETATION (Battle of Hastings interviews)	
giving context	17
marking place	12
not too many facts and details	10
providing orientation	10
enable imagination	8
physical	7
putting you in the action or event	7
Telling you what happened here	7
'anschaulich': graphic, illustrative	5
create authentic feel	5
more details	5
not too much text	4
logical structure	2
media variety	2

When talking about the interpretation that they had particularly enjoyed onsite, the audio guide was mentioned repeatedly. The boards on the battlefield were also mentioned, as were the film and the weaponry displays in the Visitor Centre. This corresponds with the visitor observations of the most used interpretation.

Visitor Survey

The survey at The Battle of Hastings took place between August and October 2014. In total, I received 223 valid returns. Ten respondents were UK residents rather than citizens. Over half of respondents were female (59%, n=131), and 41% (n=92) were male. Figure 7.2 below shows the age distribution of the sample. It is similar to the age distribution of the interview sample, with those aged 45-54 and over 65 being the largest groups, closely followed by those aged 35-44 and 55-64.

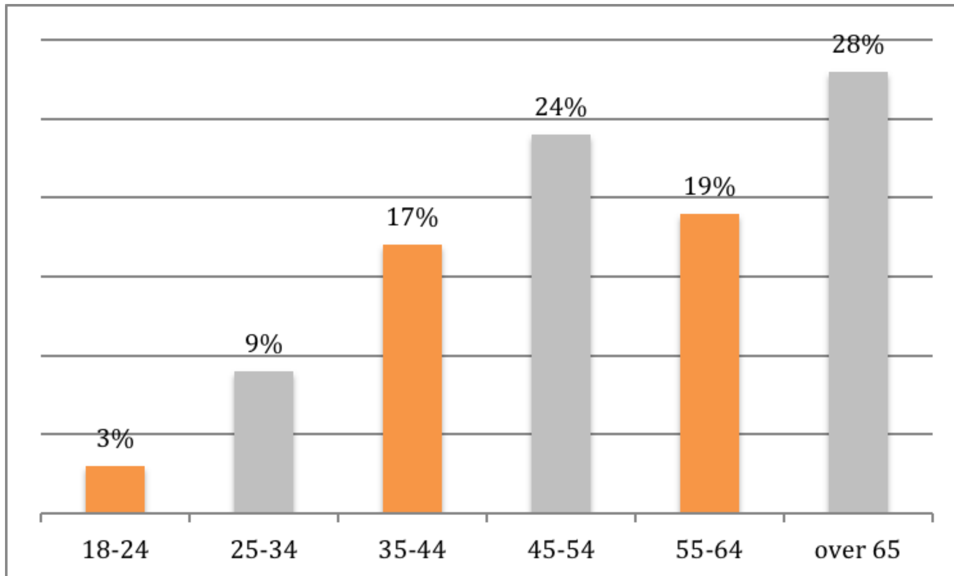

Fig. 7.2 Age distribution of sample (Battle of Hastings survey)

The table below shows the origin of respondents. This shows a wide spread, with only a small relative minority coming from Kent. The site itself is located in East Sussex, however, only 7% of respondents (n=15) were from that county.

TABLE 7.7 VISITOR ORIGIN	
County	**Frequency (%)**
Kent	26 (12%)
Essex	19 (9%)
East Sussex	15 (7%)
Surrey	14 (6%)
London	12 (6%)
Hampshire	10 (5%)
Norfolk	9 (4%)
Buckinghamshire	7 (3%)
Suffolk	7 (3%)
Oxfordshire	6 (3%)
Sussex	6 (3%)
Yorkshire	6 (3%)

TABLE 7.7 VISITOR ORIGIN	
County	**Frequency (%)**
Devon	6 (3%)
Hertfordshire	5 (2%)
West Midlands	5 (2%)
Bedfordshire	5 (2%)
Berkshire	5 (2%)
Cambridgeshire	5 (2%)
Lancashire	4 (2%)
West Sussex	4 (2%)
Wiltshire	4 (2%)
Middlesex	4 (2%)
Bristol	4 (2%)
Nottingham	4 (2%)
Worcestershire	3 (1%)
Derbyshire	2 (1%)
Dorset	2 (1%)
North Somerset	2 (1%)
Shropshire	2 (1%)
South Gloucestershire	2 (1%)
Staffordshire	2 (1%)
Cheshire	1 (1%)
Gloucestershire	1 (1%)
Gwent	1 (1%)
North Yorkshire	1 (1%)
Northampton	1 (1%)
Northern Ireland	1 (1%)
Somerset	1 (1%)
South Gloucestershire	1 (1%)
Warwickshire	1 (1%)

Nearly half of respondents (49%, n=109) visited with one other adult, followed by 39% of respondents (n=86) who visited with two to three adults. 7% of respondents (n=16) visited with three or more adults. The smallest

respondent group was those who visited on their own (5%, n=12). The majority of respondents did not have children in their group (82%, n=182). Figure 7.3 below shows the educational attainment of the sample. The majority of respondents did not have a higher education degree. 33% (n=72) had vocational education, followed by 32% (n=70) with secondary education. 25% of respondents (n=54) had a Bachelor's degree, while 6% (n=14) had a master's degree. Only four respondents (2%) had a PhD. Six respondents (3%) had no formal education.

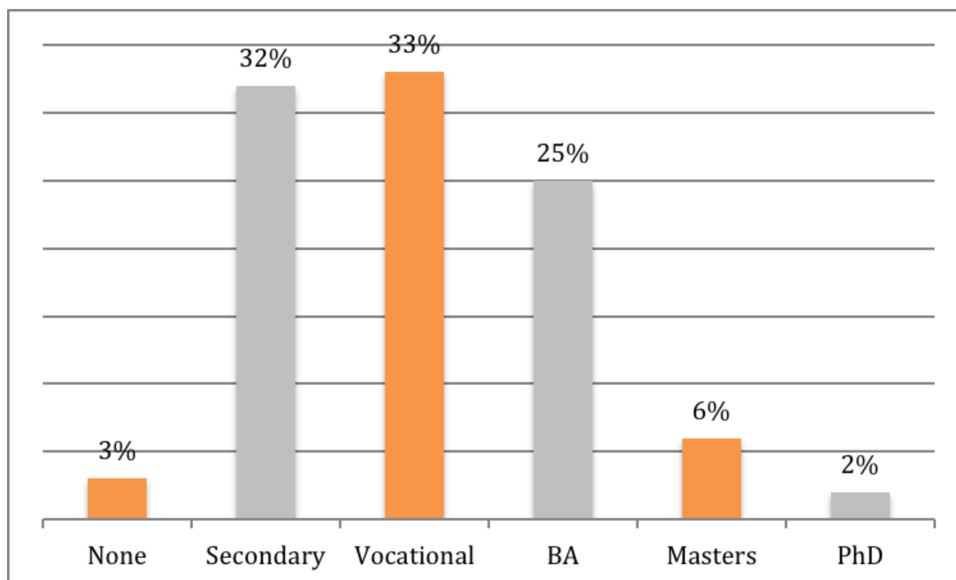

Fig. 7.3 Educational attainment (Battle of Hastings survey)

The majority of respondents had learnt about the battle in school (85%, n=189). 8% (n=17) could not remember.

At the time of filling in the survey, the majority of respondents had already seen all areas of the site. 82% (n=176) had seen the Abbey Museum, 89% (n=191) had seen the exhibition in the Visitor Centre, and 87% (n=186) had been to the battlefield. When asked whether the battlefield or the exhibitions were more important in their visit, the majority of respondents indicated that

both were equally important (76%, n=167). 18% (n=39) thought the battlefield was more important. 6% (n=13) felt the exhibitions had been more important in their visit.

The table below shows respondents' answers to the question, 'I valued my visit here today specifically because…' This question was aimed at determining the benefits they received from their visit.

TABLE 7.8
VISITOR-REPORTED BENEFITS
(Battle of Hastings survey)
(multiple answers possible)

Response	Frequency	% of respondents (n=223)	% of responses (n=1553)
Part of my heritage (Identity)	165	74	11
Being in the place where history happened.	164	74	11
Think about history, and 'what if?'	123	55	8
Ambience/beauty of the site.	121	54	8
Relaxation with added benefit.	117	52	8
Combination Museum and Nature/Walk.	112	50	7
Learn something new.	110	49	7
Imagine what it was like.	102	46	7
Continuity.	98	44	6
Reminder of what one has learnt before	95	43	6
Understand how people lived in the past.	91	41	6
Good for children to learn about our history.	83	37	5
Understand where I/we come from.	75	34	5
Think about/understand other cultures.	42	19	3
Learnt from the past.	42	19	3
Nothing specific.	13	6	1

Pearson’s r test found no correlation between the six most frequently mentioned benefits and age, educational attainment or whether the respondent had learnt about the battle in school.

The majority of respondents (74%, n=165) cited Part of my heritage (Identity) as a benefit. Nearly the same number of respondents mentioned ‘being in the place where history happened’ (74%, n=164). There is then a drop to just over half of respondents (55%, n=123) who mentioned ‘thinking about history, and ‘what if?’. Also just over half of respondents mentioned enjoying the ‘ambience/beauty of the site’ (54%, n=121), and ‘relaxation with added benefit’ (52%, n=117). Similarly, half of respondents (n=112) mentioned enjoying the ‘combination museum and nature/walk’. Slightly less than half of respondents mentioned ‘learning something’ as a benefit (49%, n=110), and ‘Imagine what it was like’ (46%, n=102).

When asked how much the presentation had contributed to why they had valued the site, most respondents appeared to agree that the contribution was significant, although there was some disagreement in favour of a higher rating (Mdn=6, IQR=2). Combined, a majority of respondents (71%, n=159) rated the contribution at 6 and 7 (a lot), while a combined 27% (n=61) rated this at average (3-5 rating) (fig. 7.4).

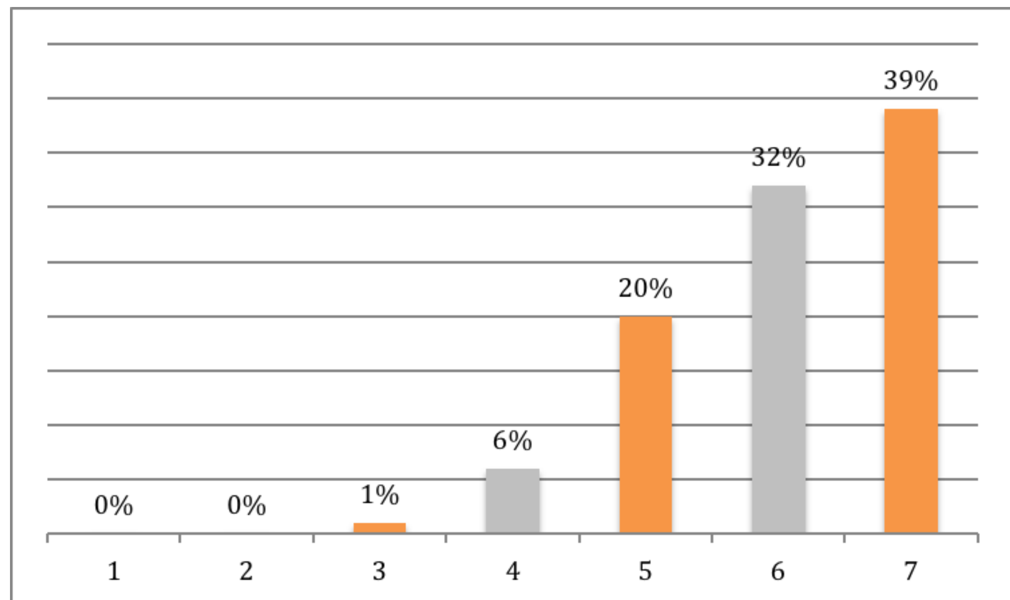

Fig. 7.4 Rating of how much the presentation contributed to benefits reported. 1= not at all, 7 = a lot (Battle of Hastings survey)

The table below shows responses to the question, ‘I want this from the information/presentation provided on site’. Over two thirds of respondents mentioned ‘help imagine’ (81%, n=178), ‘mark place’ (72%, n=157), ‘provide context’ (68%, n=149), ‘provide directions/orientation’ (67%, n=147) and ‘help physically engage’ (64%, n=139). These criteria are arguably all related to the benefits of ‘being in the place where history happened’ and ‘identity’, which were the most often mentioned benefits. ‘Media variety’ was important to just under half of respondents (49%, n=107). Pearson’s r test found no correlation between the five most frequently mentioned preferences for interpretation and age, educational attainment or whether the respondent had learnt about the battle in school.

TABLE 7.9 VISTITORS' EXPECTATION OF INTERPRETATION (Battle of Hastings survey) *(multiple answers possible)*			
Attribute	**Frequency**	**% of respondents (n=219)**	**% of responses (n=1000)**
Help imagine.	178	81	18
Mark place.	157	72	16
Provide Context	149	68	15
Provide directions/orientation.	147	67	15
Help physically engage.	139	64	14
Media variety.	107	49	11
Illustrate.	97	44	10
Not too many facts.	19	9	2
Don't use it.	7	3	1

The figure below shows how much respondents rated the interpretation provided as having met their expectations. Most respondents appeared to agree that the interpretation significantly met their expectations (Mdn=6, IQR=1).

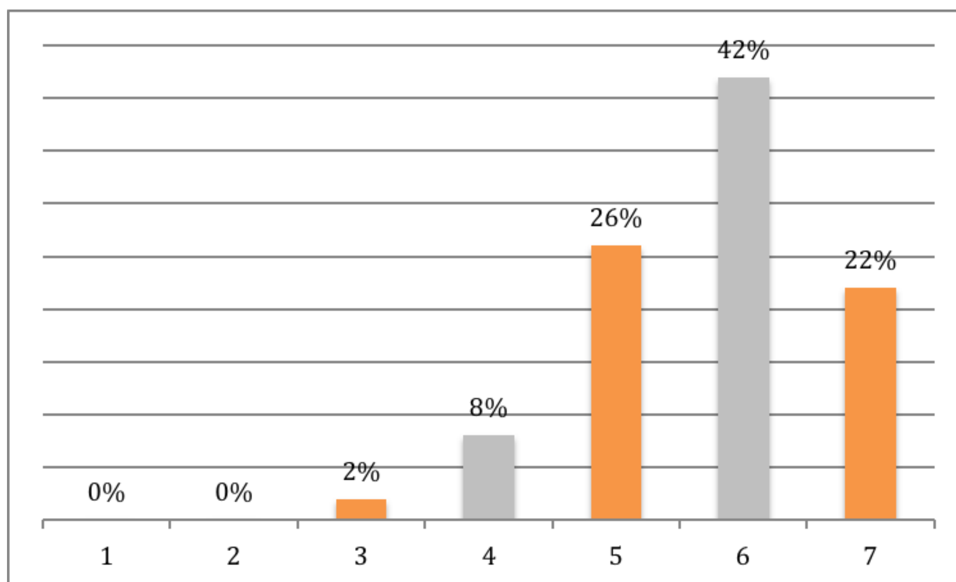

Fig. 7.5 Rating of how much the interpretation met expectations. 1= not at all, 7 = exceeded (n=222; Battle of Hastings survey)

Respondents were also asked to indicate if there was anything in the interpretation that they didn't like or which could have been better. The key criticism, repeated by several respondents, was the directional signage. Two respondents felt that the interpretation in places was 'vague', with one respondent particularly noting the use of words like 'probably', and suggesting that only facts should be included. Most other points were raised by individual respondents only and included visuals (video, demonstration), a guided tour of the battlefield, with the suggestion that this might be done by a costumed guide, and more child-friendly provision. Of particular note is that one respondent requested 'more of a memorial…to celebrate our Anglo-Saxon heritage', while another felt the interpretation did not have enough 'balance', and that more was needed about Harold as well as a mention of 'William the Bastard'.

Conclusion

The case study of 1066 Battle of Hastings and Battle Abbey has shown a fairly structured approach to interpretive planning that follows the IAHD in key areas. Interpretation was seen as communication and education. Knowledge about the site's historical significance was intended to be 'communicated' to visitors, and knowledge gain was established as criteria for evaluation. The process was led by experts, although there is both evidence of non-expert involvement, and the acknowledgement of non-expert values as well as of pre-existing connections to the site, particularly with regard to British identity and 'psyche'. However, there is also clear evidence that the source of these connections were felt to be inaccurate and thus in need of correction, notably with regard to the equation of the Anglo-Saxons with 'English', and the Normans with 'French', as well as

ideas about the characteristics of both parties involved. Historical research was used to provide objectivity. This did not, however, appear to strongly influence the interpretation in terms of 'preferred readings'. In fact, there appeared to be an effort to stretch historical research across both sides of the conflict in equal measure, and the subsequent interpretation presents similar amounts of interpretation from both sides on precisely the same topics in the exhibition, while also exploring some controversy in academic debate in the audio guide. Despite this apparent lack of 'preferred readings' in terms of the intention to challenge preconceived notions about the two parties involved, the interpretation does not make much of the violence of the conquest beyond the battle itself, which had been highlighted by other accounts throughout the ages. In contrast, the interpretation does clearly state the notion of the battle as the start of English nationhood and the suggestion of continuity, which is both a popular and an officially sanctioned account, if curriculum guidance may be understood as such. Themes and messages are at the core of the interpretation plan. It is also of note that while there are slight differences between the plan and the interpretation ultimately implemented, and details not included in the plan that emerge in the final interpretation, there is broad overlap, showing the structured approach to the planning process and subsequent implementation that was taken.

The interpretation itself follows best practice principles in terms of clear structures, design and messages. With the exception of the Abbey Museum, interpretation relates to visitors by addressing them as 'you' and referring to their actual location, but it does not make a direct effort to relate the historical events to visitors' own experiences. Language is easy to understand

throughout. On the battlefield, a storytelling structure across the interpretation as a whole is very noticeable, and this applies to the audio guide as well. In the Visitor Centre and in the Abbey Museum, several interactive elements are provided.

The site very strongly delivers benefits to visitors, particularly related to identity, and connecting to a historical event in the place where it happened. These will be further compared to the benefits listed in legislation and policy in the next chapter. The interpretation appears to make a positive contribution to visitors' ability to gain these benefits, and their expectations of interpretation were largely met by the provision on site. When detailed, however, these expectations do not necessarily match the best practice principles established by the IAHD. This is further explored in the next chapter.

8. DISCUSSION

The case studies served to provide data for the examination of the central research question of this study, which is whether current interpretive practice delivers the public benefits enshrined in recent heritage legislation and policy. In particular, the data was intended to show what benefits, if any, visitors take from heritage and specifically from a visit to a heritage site or museum, and how these compare to those asserted in legislation and policy. In addition, the case studies sought to identify what role interpretation plays in delivering the benefits that visitors seek from heritage, and what visitors' own expectation was of interpretation. Turning first to the benefits of heritage, Chapter 4 identified the following benefits in legislation and policy to be considered in this study:

- Creativity
- Identity
- Continuity
- Social integration/cohesion
- Well-being/quality of life
- Diversity
- Dialogue between cultures/understanding
- Collective memory/remembrance
- Personal development
- (Understanding) Humanity's roots

In interviews with visitors, the following emerged as the benefits they took from visiting the case study sites, or other heritage sites. These were

subsequently tested further through surveys specifically in relation to the case study sites:

- Part of my heritage
- Being in the place where history happened.
- Think about history, and 'what if?'
- Ambience/beauty of the site.
- Relaxation with added benefit.
- Combination Museum and Nature/Walk.
- Learn something new.
- Imagine what it was like.
- Continuity.
- Reminder of what one has learnt before
- Understand how people lived in the past.
- Good for children to learn about our history.
- Understand where I/we come from.
- Think about/understand other cultures.
- Learnt from the past.

As discussed in Chapter 5 on Methodology, the words used to express these benefits represent the words used by visitors in the interviews and not the often more abstract concepts used in legislation and policy. I will therefore now further examine where benefits expressed by visitors appear to overlap with those in policy and legislation, and where they do not.

Some concepts show clear correspondence. 'Continuity' in policy and legislation matches the 'continuity' that visitors felt in seeing old buildings,

places and hearing of the people associated with both – a sense of temporal depth of which they are part. Visitors also talked about other countries in relation to visiting a heritage site, both at home and abroad, and made clear connections between the different peoples. This was expressed as the benefit of ‘think about/understand other cultures’, which can be directly linked to the official benefit of ‘dialogue between cultures/understanding’.

‘Identity’, which is a benefit that emerged very strongly in all legislation and policy except for the most recent German policy, is also expressed strongly in visitors’ reported benefit of ‘part of my heritage’. Visitors spoke about notions of both personal and national identity, and a collective sense of ‘our heritage and history’ and ‘our personality’ as a people, much in the same way as policy described the benefit of identity.

The official benefit of ‘well-being/quality of life’ also corresponds to the sense of well-being expressed by visitors when they spoke about enjoying the beauty and ambience of the site. Quality of life also seems to be at the heart of the benefit of ‘relaxation with added benefit’ of history, heritage, architecture or nature. One may also argue that visitors’ benefit of ‘Combination Museum and Nature/Walk’ is an aspect of their quality of life, which has been enhanced through their visit. As such, these three benefits reported by visitors may be said to correspond to the official benefit of ‘well-being/quality of life’.

‘Personal development’ was asserted as a benefit in international policy, although this was not specifically defined. We can therefore argue that visitors’ benefit of ‘learn something new’ may correspond to this official benefit, as visitors expressed it in terms of widening their horizons, and deepening their understanding. Similarly, visitors’ benefit of ‘reminder of what one has learnt

before' may also be understood as an aspect of personal development, as it represents the reactivation of previously acquired knowledge. 'Learnt from the past' may also be linked to 'personal development' in a similar fashion to 'learn something new', particularly regards to the moral dimension that interviewees expressed, of avoiding similar mistakes and particularly wars for the future.

Other benefits asserted in legislation and policy do not as clearly correspond to those expressed by visitors. Fostering and cultivating respect for 'creativity' was a key benefit in policy and legislation. It was not sufficiently defined to narrow down the meanings of creativity. Visitors' benefit to 'imagine what it was like' may be seen as an expression of a creative act, as interviews made clear the immersive experience and connection sought. It is not, however, a strong correspondence, if we are to view creativity primarily as the production of a tangible output. As such, the two benefits cannot be related with any confidence. '(Understanding) Humanity's roots' was raised as a benefit in international legislation, which appears primarily linked to the development of humankind as a whole. Visitors did not express this as a heritage benefit, although 'Understand where I/we come from' carries a notion of wider roots than simply the benefit related to identity. However, this correspondence cannot be asserted with sufficient reason. 'Understand how people lived in the past' in contrast may be argued to relate to a notion of understanding humanity's roots, as visitors expressed a universal interest in human development through how people lived their lives. 'Social integration/cohesion' was viewed as a specific outcome for the national society itself within legislation and policy, with a clear underlying notion of integration of people with different backgrounds. While one may on the surface interpret visitors' benefit of 'part of our heritage' as an

expression of national cohesion, in England particularly visitor interviews showed that this was rather expressed *in contrast* to a multicultural society. The Battle of Hastings, and a visit to the site, was an expression and affirmation of *English* identity against a multitude of other identities present in Britain. In Germany also the emphasis was on 'German' culture, history and identity, and there was no specific indication that fellow citizens from migrant backgrounds were included in this concept of identity, or that it was understood as (a process of) integration and cohesion. The benefit of 'diversity', asserted in policy and legislation as a source of spiritual and intellectual richness, respect for which heritage can foster, also cannot be linked to benefits reported by visitors. Visitors did not express a view of diversity neither in terms of cultural diversity or any other, such as architectural styles. The following table illustrates the correspondences that have been established between the official benefits of heritage as asserted in legislation and policy, and those reported by visitors.

TABLE 8.1 CORRESPONDENCES OFFICIAL VS VISITOR-REPORTED BENEFITS	
Visitor reported Benefits	**Official (Legislation and Policy) Benefits**
Continuity	Continuity
Think about/understand other cultures	Dialogue between cultures/understanding
Part of my heritage	Identity
• Ambience/beauty of the site. • Relaxation with added benefit. • Combination Museum and Nature/Walk.	Well-being/quality of life
• Learn something new. • Reminder of what one has learnt before. • Learnt from the past.	Personal development
Understand how people lived in the	(Understanding) Humanity's Roots

TABLE 8.1 CORRESPONDENCES OFFICIAL VS VISITOR-REPORTED BENEFITS	
Visitor reported Benefits	**Official (Legislation and Policy) Benefits**
past.	
	Diversity
	Social integration/cohesion
	Creativity
Understand where I/we come from.	
Imagine what it was like.	
Good for children to learn about our history.	
Being in the place where history happened.	

The study therefore provides evidence that visitors at least to the two case study sites do indeed share most of the benefits of heritage as asserted in legislation and policy. The examination has also shown that there is vagueness in two of the official benefits, notably 'well-being/quality of life' and 'personal development'. As discussed above, the visitor reported benefits related to these official benefits in contrast were quite specific, noting for example the beauty of the site, and the combination of nature with a museum. With regards to the study, this does raise potential questions about the robustness of the correspondences made in these instances. I argue, however, that these benefits as asserted in legislation and policy are made up of contributors and aspects that are specific to individuals and emerge in their relationship and interaction with heritage, and that the benefits reported by visitors and linked to the official benefits above are an expression of that. Although my study provides evidence of very specific benefits under these categories, it seems premature and unnecessary to therefore argue that the official benefits should be further specified also, or indeed split into several distinct benefits. It is

entirely possible that at sites of a different nature, these benefits may also be different, while still corresponding to the overarching well-being and personal development categories. For example, at a historic house with adjoining landscaped park, well-being may be expressed as a sense of tranquillity and separation from the cares of daily life and modern conflicts. At a sculpture gallery, well-being may consist in a sense of proportion and balance. It is important to capture and understand these well-being benefits on an individual level in order to establish the corresponding aspects of the heritage in question that appear to generate these benefits for visitors.

The benefits of diversity, social integration/cohesion and creativity, raised in legislation and policy, could not be related to any benefits reported by visitors. The study does not provide data on which a robust analysis of underlying reasons for this can be based. It is feasible that at a site of particular artistic value, for example, visitors would report benefits related to respect for creativity, or inspiration to be creative themselves. Similarly, sites associated with diverse communities may prompt visitors to experience benefits around the appreciation of diversity, and integration of people from varied backgrounds. Absence of these benefits in the data collected by this study does not therefore constitute sufficient evidence to assert that visitors categorically do not share them. Nevertheless, the fact that visitors in this study did not report these benefits does provide reason to ask whether these benefits in legislation and policy are in fact benefits of heritage, or whether they are rather political aspirations for which the existing heritage (as opposed to that which may yet be developed by diverse communities together) is to be used as a delivery mechanism. Social integration/cohesion, for example, is currently a very

pressing item high on the political agenda, as mass migration changes the status of countries to new immigration countries, as is the case with Germany (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 2015). In this scenario, social integration/cohesion is not, however, an element of people's heritage per se, but rather an *instrumental value*, as management measures external to heritage itself seek to create the outcome of integration/cohesion, similar to how heritage may be managed to bring economic benefit to a community through generating increased tourism income. Waterton's (2010) critique of this as assimilation, rather than inclusion might be applied. However, there is also a potential lack of acknowledgement that such integration happens through diverse communities coming together and changing and influencing each other, thus creating *new* heritages that bring them closer together. This highlights again the question of the role of heritage management, and particularly heritage interpretation, beyond managing heritage as something *static*. At the same time, and perhaps for the same reason, absence of these benefits of diversity, social integration/cohesion and creativity from those reported by visitors may also be attributed to the specific management and interpretation of the sites. In the case of diversity and social cohesion/integration, the Norman Conquest beyond the Battle of Hastings certainly is an example of two diverse cultures and people coming together and forming a new nation. As we have seen in the previous chapter, however, this did not feature strongly in the interpretation. Instead, the interpretation ultimately represents most strongly the prominent, unifying narrative of Englishness, as it is seen as beginning in 1066. It may be argued that within this narrative there is no space for (non-English) diversity, and the interpretation therefore expresses, and reasserts, the mono-cultural view of this

heritage that is also responsible for the associated benefits that visitors reported. I will return to this potential tension between public aspiration and heritage value in the next chapter. However, it is important here to emphasise that the study has shown that visitors raised several benefits of heritage that also were not represented in the interpretation. A lack of representation in interpretation is therefore not predicative of absence of the associated benefit. On the contrary, the study gives rise to the suggestion that benefits of heritage are realised independent of interpretation, and on occasion even in direct opposition to it, as appears to be the case at Varusschlacht (below).

Four benefits were reported by visitors that could not be related to any benefits asserted in legislation and policy. One of these, 'being in the place where history happened', was in fact the most often mentioned benefit at Varusschlacht, and the second most often reported benefit at the Battle of Hastings. Another benefit, 'imagine what it was like', was mentioned by over a third of respondents at Varusschlacht, and nearly half of respondents at the Battle of Hastings. Both benefits may be understood as expressing people's deeply personal and emotional connection to historical events, through their physical presence at the place where they happened, and through the act of imagining the experience of the event. This is not the more abstract sense of continuity, which visitors also reported as a benefit. Rather, there was an element of personal participation, or what others have called heritage work (Smith 2006, p.1), and it is of note that at both sites, the benefit of 'place' was preceded or followed in frequency by the benefit relating to identity. Place and identity thus appear interconnected, as does the act of imagining, of immersing one's self in the event and participating in the experience. This sense of

personal and emotional connection is not captured in the official benefits of heritage, which does suggest that here lies a central divergence between the views of visitors, or the public, and official discourse in legislation and policy.

The examination of the benefits of heritage as reported by visitors to heritage sites served to identify whether these benefits correlated to those in heritage legislation and policy. However, it has also revealed the nature of the reasons for which visitors valued heritage. A central aspect of the critique of the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD) is its focus on materiality, which prompted Smith (2006, p.3) to state that 'all heritage is intangible'. In my study, it is certainly the case that none of the benefits reported by visitors relate directly or solely to the material values of the sites, neither in terms of archaeology nor in terms of architecture. One of the key benefits visitors gave is related to identity, which, as we have seen in Chapter 3, is itself not a given attribute of a person, but rather one that is constantly negotiated in a social context, and created and re-created on the basis of current need and ambition. When visitors raised this benefit, it was related to a chronology of historical events to which they felt connected in their present lives. They formed from these events an explanation about who they were as individuals and members of a community and a nation. This sense of being part of a larger community, much in the way that Anderson (1991) described, played a central role in how they constructed their own identity, and that of their nation. Importantly, in my study as in Basu's (2007) study, historical accuracy was not a key factor. At the Battle of Hastings identification shifted between the 'English', or Anglo-Saxons defeated by invading Normans, and a less critically defined sense of a subsequent, amalgamated 'English' people since the conquest, of which they also were a

part. At Varusschlacht, visitors combined the multiple Germanic tribes involved in the battle into a united people of *Ur-Germans* from which the current German people are descendent. This shows that historical value, in the sense of facts validated by scientific research, are also not the basis for this benefit of identity. In fact, none of the respondents at the Battle of Hastings raised any of the issues that are still debated about the Norman Conquest in academia; their understanding was far less complex, and yet no less deeply and meaningfully felt. This gives further support to the critique of the focus on expert assessment within the AHD made by other writers (e.g. Smith 2006; Waterton & Smith 2009).

Smith (2006) and others have also noted the active aspects of heritage, and here particularly the relationship to place. Although declaring all heritage as intangible in her primary argument against the material focus of the AHD, Smith (2006, p.44) also acknowledges that place plays a facilitating role in this with regards to sites. The importance of place emerged particularly strongly in the heritage benefits that visitors reported in my study. At Varusschlacht, 86% of those that cited the benefit of 'identity' also listed the benefit of 'place' (76% at the Battle of Hastings). The visit to the site became a central factor in exploring, but also expressing identity. The specific connection made to 'history' here was a physical connection through place to those events that, leading up to the present day, formed people's identity. Coming on site may indeed be described as a performance, and 'identity work' as Rounds (2006) has defined it. Visitors at both sites spoke about the importance of their visit in 'feeling' their identity, or being reminded of it, which, we may argue, also serves to strengthen that identity, and to express it to others. In visitor interviews, this also emerged as an

aspect of representing identity to people from other countries: just as visitors went to heritage sites abroad to get a sense of that culture, they felt that heritage sites at home served to express British (and to a lesser extent German) identity to visitors from abroad. Importantly, however, it was not the sites themselves that carried this significance in their material aspects, as preserved expressions of *the past*. Rather, it was their nature as representations of the events that defined and expressed, and which gave visitors a space to define and express, *contemporary* identity that gave the sites meaning. In my primary case studies, place was not arbitrary. The assurance of evidence that this was indeed the location where the events had taken place was important to several people. However, the control study at the Hermann's Monument, like Pretes' (2003) example of Mount Rushmore, showed that place in this sense can also be created, for example through the erection of a monument. This suggests that *place* cannot be universally defined and placed in relation to heritage and heritage work. Place can be an inspiration and as such play a role in the creation of heritage, as was the case with the hill that inspired Ernst von Bandel to build his Hermann's Monument there, and which no doubt continues to play a role in the monument's popularity and place in German identity at least in the region. This gives greater importance to place than does Smith's (2006, p.46) description of it as 'culturally correct or appropriate contexts and times', and as such Harrison's (2013, p.229) ontology of connectivity, in which all elements of the natural/cultural 'collective' influence each other, may be a more appropriate concept to understand the ways in which place comes to influence heritage and heritage work.

The other benefits raised by visitors provide further reason to conclude that the 'benefits' of heritage actually express the intangible values for which heritage is valued and experienced as such. 'Thinking about history, and What if?', 'Imagine what it was like' and 'Understand how people lived' all express an intangible engagement with the past, that is marked by its deep intellectual and imaginative, as well as *active* involvement by the individual. It is through this involvement that people seek to deepen their connection to the events and the people of the past. I argue that these benefits are also interconnected. While visitors expressed them as separate, I believe they can be linked together to express if not strictly speaking identity, then an existing connection and engagement with events and people that visitors viewed as related and of interest to themselves, to who they are and who they want to be in the future, and how they, and society at large, arrived at this particular point in time and how they may continue to move forward. Other benefits, while at first glance prompted more directly by the material aspects of sites, still express intangible values. 'Ambience or beauty', 'Relaxation with added benefit', or 'Combination museum with nature/walk' all require the physical presence of sites, but go further, to a secondary level of value that goes beyond even aesthetic value, to having an impact on people's feelings, their sense of well-being and enjoyment. It is that secondary level that visitors expressed as why they valued their visit, rather than the specific material attributes of the sites with regard their layout, architecture or artistry. In fact, in the case of both battlefields, which lack visible original remains, it may be argued that even the appreciation of the ambience and beauty of the site arises out of the imagined history that took place there, and when asked why visitors had preferred to come here for relaxation, a walk,

or for an experience of beauty, rather than other nearby beauty spots, many specifically gave this historical connection as what made the difference. This, therefore, may be an indication that again, these benefits, while at first glance more based in material attributes than the others, are also connected with those other benefits, and relate to associations that reach beyond the material. If, as I argue, we therefore understand the benefits that visitors reported as the intangible values that makes heritage for them, we can also conclude that materiality plays a secondary role, and should not therefore receive the focus it receives in the AHD, and particularly in the IAHD with which this research is primarily concerned. It also lends further support to writers that have argued that while there is a particular *Western* Heritage Discourse that focuses on materiality, this is predominantly an expert, rather than public discourse (Waterton 2010), and by the latter I also mean the discourse of current legislation and policy as reviewed in Chapter 4. While the critiques of the Western AHD have emerged from Non-Western indigenous understandings of heritage, my study along with others provides evidence that the Western *public* share an intangible understanding of heritage when research designs allow them to express their relationship with heritage outside the confines of existing professional discourse. Although my study was not concerned with questions of heritage protection, where this emerged in visitor interviews it did become clear that many used a discourse that sought to protect the sites themselves, in other words, they applied the AHD. This should not be surprising, however, or be taken as support for the AHD. The most visible structures of heritage management that people in both Germany and England are familiar with are underpinned by the AHD, and this is particularly the case at the two study sites

used. In England, visitors were very much aware of the role of *protecting* national heritage played by English Heritage, which at that time combined both the management of sites and the wider statutory protection of heritage (which now lies with Historic England). However, as I noted in Chapter 3, the German *Heimatvereine* do protect and manage heritage outside of professional structures. As I outlined in Chapters 2 and 3, this non-expert understanding of heritage is not, however, acknowledged in the AHD or the IAHD, and is in fact either excluded entirely or made invisible by established professional practices. Underlying this is the emphasis on expert knowledge, and the assumed superiority of professional heritage management practices. My case studies have shown several expressions of this, as well as impacts. To stay with the example of German *Heimatvereine,* it is of note that both of the key funders of Varusschlacht in interviews highlighted the importance and contribution of these associations (Schormann 2012; Fromme 2012), including the need to involve them in any publicly managed sites. And yet, when talking about *Heimat,* the Museum's manager appeared weary and linked it to a 'rhetoric of the displaced', referring to the displacement of ethnic Germans from Eastern territories after the Second World War. These Germans were popularly known as *Heimatvertriebene* ('those displaced from their *Heimat*', or home). She called *Heimatvereine* 'lobbyists' that were concerned simply with ensuring that people 'feel at home and well' where they live, thus dismissing any deeper meaning both of '*Heimat'* and the work of *Heimatvereine*. Moreover, any pre-existing connection to the site, particularly regards identity, was categorically denied. No effort was made to establish people's heritage values in relation to the site before interpretive planning began. Instead, Varusschlacht showed an extreme

emphasis on expert knowledge, and here particularly archaeology, to the point where lack of on-site archaeological evidence was cited and used as a reason for not giving equal emphasis to certain perspectives in the interpretation (Zehm 2013). Expert knowledge was further emphasized by constant reference to related professional practices in the exhibition, and indeed an entire section dealt with expert examination of the site (Zone 4). This effectively reiterated the superiority of expert knowledge over any other connections or views that visitors might have. And yet, the benefit of identity was raised by over half of respondents, the second most often given benefit after 'being in the place where history happened' (73%). If we accept, as I argued above, that place and identity are interconnected, the strength of the identity benefit of Varusschlacht may be even more than the reported 55%. This, then, shows a clear disconnect between public heritage values and benefits on one hand, and the professional views and resulting approaches on the other. In contrast, at the Battle of Hastings, the site's intangible value in terms of its importance to what the Interpretation Manager called British 'psyche' was both acknowledged and represented in the interpretation, and the benefit of 'identity' unsurprisingly emerged as the most often mentioned benefit (74%, n=165), closely followed by that of 'being in the place where history happened' (74%, n=164). The management furthermore enables other expressions of connection to the site; it facilitates an annual wreath-laying ceremony at the Harold Stone, which marks the place where King Harold is said to have fallen, and it provides opportunities for people to sponsor benches. One such bench for example carries the inscription, "…A True Anglo-Saxon Warrior". All these opportunities provide for expressions of public connections to the site, at the site itself and thus visible to

other visitors. While it was not part of this study to examine the impact of these interventions on other visitors and their experience on site (in fact, they were not mentioned in visitor interviews at all), the connections expressed through these surely contribute, where noticed, to a sense of on-going relevance of and engagement with the battle. It gives a signal that such engagement in modern times is if not encouraged, then certainly accepted and accommodated. The long-term impact of the battle, and to some extent its reception history, was given similar importance in the interpretation at the Battle of Hastings as was the event history itself, not necessarily in terms of quantity of information provided, but in tone and quality. There was acknowledgement that the battle itself *continues* to play a central role in modern Britons', and certainly English people's, education and identity, as well as a sense of nationhood. This may explain also why the benefit of 'Think about history and what if?' was the third most mentioned (55% of respondents), as people tried to imagine how their lives and identity, and their entire nation may be different had the battle resulted in a different outcome.

In contrast, at Varusschlacht such on-going engagement with the battle is actively dismissed, as illustrated by the quote from the exhibition given in Chapter 6, which stated that there was no place for Arminius in modern times. While this is undoubtedly primarily due to the intended preferred reading of the site, which largely excludes Arminius from the narrative, it also reasserts various elements of the AHD: a notion of heritage as fixed and completed in the past, as independent of people, and as primarily understood and defined by experts. From this point of view, heritage can indeed be captured solely by

expert examination, and, once researched, be presented to the public as a fait accompli based on expert's scientific evidence.

I want to argue that, while perhaps an extreme example, the preferred reading evident at Varusschlacht is also an expression of an interpretive theme, and illustrates sharply the issues with the latter, which have not sufficiently been addressed in interpretive discourse, as I have highlighted in Chapter 2. The development of the preferred reading at Varusschacht, albeit not traditionally and methodologically following interpretive best practice, was guided by expert input, from an archaeologist (the Museum's manager) and a designer, alongside other museum curatorial and scientific staff. This is in line with current interpretive philosophy. As in this philosophy, the view expressed was that only expert evidence provides access to a sort of 'truth' behind the event and what visitors can see, and thus its real 'meaning'. In particular, at Varusschlacht the desire was not to add to the 'clichés', by which were meant the various responses to the battle throughout history and which, we can argue, represent a public, non-expert connection to the site, or its public (communal) heritage values. A focus on expert evidence therefore simultaneously served to exclude non-expert values: since the favoured expert specialisms of history and archaeology, as they dealt exclusively with the event of the battle itself, were not concerned with nor captured public heritage values, this provided a 'scientific' justification for not considering these values. Furthermore, as remaining evidence from the battle, and the reliability of historical sources were (seen as) limited, this further served to marginalise non-expert values. This is a mechanism of the AHD, as other writers have highlighted: to undermine public understandings of the past by exclusive focus on specialisms that deal with

material evidence of a particular kind. In the case of Varusschlacht there is indication that this expert evidence itself was, however, selectively deployed to support the preferred reading. On one hand, the focus was on archaeological evidence *on site*, which, regards a more than 2000-year-old battlefield that was raided after the battle and subsequently heavily farmed, appears a curiously restrictive approach to scientific examination that, if it were adhered to outside of the provision of on-site interpretation for visitors, would seriously limit the ability to understand the battle itself, and its context (and this is in fact not an approach pursued in academic literature about the battle). On the other hand, existing evidence, while referred to, was dismissed as unreliable in the exhibition, for example the writings of Roman authors about the Germans, and here particularly Tacitus'. The impression is that even expert evidence was selectively chosen to support the preferred reading, and specifically, to exclude certain perspectives from the narrative.

This is an important point. The exclusion of alternative perspectives does not emerge in interpretive philosophy as a serious concern when determining interpretive themes. Through reference to expert evidence an illusion is created that this evidence will both be in agreement with other expert evidence and with any other reliable views, providing a uniform narrative that is inclusive as much as conclusive, and above subjective selection. The case study at Varusschlacht shows that this is not the case, although the matter here is somewhat obscured, as no theme statement was defined, and the preferred reading emerged not through assertion of a statement in the positive, but rather through a rejection of any positive engagement with or view of Arminius and the achievements of the Germans. The intended *positive* reading of the site, or its theme, as it emerged

in interviews with staff, can probably best be paraphrased with reference to the *Friedenszeichen* panel as, ‘Varusschlacht is a symbol of a shared European history toward peace and European integration’. This theme statement has nothing to do with the event itself, or its reception in subsequent centuries, but these are also not requirements for developing themes in current interpretive philosophy. The key requirement for a theme, according to Ham, is to be ‘the main point or idea’ (Ham 2013, p.20) that is to be communicated. What is less openly debated in interpretive philosophy is the fact that themes, like the hypothetical theme statement for Varusschlacht, are in fact *preferred readings.* Ham himself acknowledges that themes are meanings, but only in a footnote. Here, he writes that, ‘A theme is a *meaning*, regardless of whether it’s small, big, restrictive, or inclusive’ (Ham 2013, p.119 footnote 3). And yet, interpretive philosophy, and here particularly Ham (Ham 2013) asserts that interpretation is *not* about determining the meanings that visitors ‘make’. Staff at Varusschlacht asserted this point also. Again, reference was made to expert evidence, which was supposedly presented to ‘enable visitors to make up their own minds’, just like interpretive philosophy suggests that interpretation enables visitors to ‘see for themselves’ through presenting expert evidence, organised in a theme that helps visitors understand the experts’ language. This is an inherent contradiction, which interpretive philosophy has not sufficiently acknowledged, much less resolved. Varusschlacht may have used a rather blunt approach in the exhibition on the reception history of Arminius and the battle, where visitors were directly called upon to agree with the preferred reading. In the main exhibition, however, the approach was marked by *exclusion* of information, which is in fact also a function of themes: to help interpreters ‘see what to

include, what to exclude, what to emphasize, and what to deemphasize' (Ham 2013, p.20). The argument that interpretation that uses themes seeks to enable visitors to make their own connections and meanings (see for example Ham 2013, p.7) therefore cannot be convincingly maintained. Anytime that information is manipulated or withheld from visitors in order to promote a preferred reading, visitors are *not* empowered or even encouraged to create their own meanings. Thematic interpretation in fact adds another layer of exclusion to the already exclusive practice of focusing on expert evidence. The case study at Varusschlacht suggests that where themes are not in line with visitors' own values, thematic interpretation may even have a direct and negative impact on visitors, and their ability to engage freely with a site, in line with their own values or meanings that they associate with it. This emerges particularly in the comparison to the data obtained at the Battle of Hastings. Here, the stated main theme, 'Battle is the site of one of the most decisive & significant events in Western Europe & in English history' appears to coincide with visitors' own estimation of the importance of the event. Where the reception history of the site is concerned, the interpretation strongly expresses the views that visitors themselves raised regards the site's impact on their country and identity. This sense of identity was acknowledged before the interpretive process began, and is openly, and with much impact, reflected by historical quotes reproduced in the café, which affirm, in similar language, what visitors said to me in interviews about this battle marking the beginning of the 'English' nation. At the Battle of Hastings, too, there was some concern by management about some of the popular beliefs held, for example regards the notion of 'the English'. This was touched upon in both the planning process and in the

resulting interpretation, but did not lead to suppression of the ‘English’ narrative in the interpretation. While it may certainly be argued that certain aspects of history receive less or almost no mention in the interpretation at the Battle of Hastings, such as the loss of lands and influence by the English nobility, and the violence of the conquest in the years following the battle, this was not something that was critiqued by visitors. Inclusion of these facts, which I would argue is important, may merely strengthen visitors’ existing identification with ‘the English’, but their absence did not represent a rejection of this identification in the interpretation. Harold, who for many clearly continues to be an important figure stirring strong emotions, was described in highly positive tones in the interpretation, based on contemporary Norman accounts, and as already mentioned, the site where he is said to have fallen is both marked and made available for ceremonies. At the Battle of Hastings, visitors spoke at length and without inhibition about the strength of their connection with the site, its importance to their personal and national identity, and sometimes even their ‘pride’ in this history. Interviews were about a third longer than in Germany (despite doing 15 more interviews there than in England) and throughout interviewees seemed perfectly at ease in talking to me about the heritage values they associated with the site.

At Varusschlacht, on occasion there was noticeable self-censorship during interviews. While visitors did speak about the site’s importance to their identity as Germans, this was more guarded than in England. To some extent, I observed this in interviews at the Hermann’s Monument as well, which might suggest that this behaviour is not a response to the interpretation provided, but constitutes instead a more fundamental difference in German’s relationship to

heritage, particularly concerning aspects of identity. At the Hermann's Monument in particular there emerged evidence that people are aware of the potentially fascist motivations that may be assigned *by others* to their positive associations with the event and Arminius. They were quick to emphasise that the roots of their views were not, for example, *patriotic*, a disclaimer that respondents in Britain did not even feel necessary to make when talking openly about their 'pride' in being British. Further examination of the causes of this weariness of others' potential misconstruction of their motivations, and the need to justify them, was outside the scope of this research. However, it seems entirely plausible that to some extent, respondents were aware of the kinds of equations that were expressed for example by the Museum's manager, of identity and pride in a German achievement with fascism. It is not an isolated view in Germany, and discussions about 'patriotism' and 'national identity' continue to play out with reference to the country's Nazi past. On one hand, the majority of respondents, as well as staff, will have either directly or indirectly be influenced by Germany's engagement with this past during the 1960s and 70s, where critical re-examination of even family members' actions during Nazi rule created a heightened awareness and self-reflection (see for example Fischer & Lorenz 2009). On the other hand, many observers have noted the shift in Germans' engagement with symbols of national identity and unity, such as the national flag since the 2006 Football World Cup in Germany. Jürgen Krönig commented in the *Die Zeit* newspaper on 19th June 2006 that this was a 'normalisation', but made this argument in direct response to critiques fuelled by similar equations with, and fears of, fascism as were made at Varusschlacht (Krönig 2006). I therefore argue that German respondents' guardedness when

talking about the identity value of Varusschlacht as their heritage is not in fact due to a difference in relationship to this heritage compared to England, but rather a response to historical and contemporary discussions within the country and even abroad. The underlying connection to heritage, and its identity value, is undoubtedly strong, as is evident also in the widespread *Heimatvereine*. While awareness or fear of equation of their positive identification with Arminius and the historic Germans with fascism in general may explain the guarded responses in interviews, I argue that observational data from the Hermann's Monument, and comments made at Varusschlacht, do in fact also provide evidence that the interpretation itself *does* contribute to the guarded reactions of visitors, and that it *does* appear to negatively impact their engagement. At Varusschlacht, there was a noticeable underlying disagreement by some with the 'official' narrative provided in the interpretation. The most obvious example for the latter is the direct rebuttal of the call for agreement in the reception history exhibition that Arminius no longer has any relevance: in the only vandalism I observed, someone had written onto the panel that Arminius would forever remain 'our hero'. Another example is of the gentleman who strongly objected to the exclusion of information, which illustrates the fact that visitors both noted this manipulation of evidence, and also the sanctioned reading of the site which, they felt, was to be promoted through this approach. Other interviewees too made comments about the achievements of the Germans, and observed that key questions concerning the German experience had not been addressed in the exhibition, such as the nature of Roman dominance in their occupied territories. Visitors clearly were aware of the preferred readings of the site, and for some it was obviously at odds with their own views. I argue that this

not only contributed to their guardedness as well, but more widely inhibited their ability to engage with the site freely. This is based not the least on my observations of visitors at the Hermann's Monument. As outlined in Chapter 6, the (limited) interpretation there does not promote a preferred reading, but rather provides a loosely connected mix of information about the original battle and its context, the monument's construction and its builder, and the reception history of the monument after its completion. The focus is not on providing interpretation, as this site is not a museum or the location of a historic event, a fact that respondents noted. The focus is on the monument itself as the key feature, and interviews revealed a layering of identification of the historical figure of Arminius with the statue, a sense of a historic, but not necessarily articulated symbolism, and an understanding of the statue itself as part of German history and a (heritage) destination in its own right. Here, I observed visitors being visibly joyful as they approached the monument, with one after the other exclaiming delightedly, 'There is Hermann!' as they caught their first glimpse of the statue. This is an open and uncensored expression of enjoyment, and the multiple associations they made and which stirred such emotion in them – although they did not choose to articulate these in detail while speaking to me. At Varusschlacht, there arguably is no comparable feature to which visitors might respond in this way, nor does the nature of the site as a battlefield lend itself to a similar expression of joy. However, the observation at the Hermann's Monument does suggest that the interpretation at Varusschlacht, which was directly and indirectly criticised by some visitors, does impact on how openly visitors feel they are able to express a positive appreciation of Arminius, and the German achievement at that particular site. In

respondents’ comments at Varusschlacht it was clear that they made associations that link to Arminius’ achievement to unite divided tribes, and overcome an oppressive force. In themselves, there is nothing in these associations that can objectively justify the fear expressed by those responsible at Varusschlacht of misuse of the site by Neo-Nazis. On the contrary, we may argue that these associations could indeed be a source of positive future-making, for example in the context of European integration: a focus on *unity* and shared *liberties*, which is in fact the context in which the Hermann’s Monument was originally conceived. Its builder, Ernst von Bandel, like others of his contemporaries in the 19th century, supported the idea of a German nation state based on civic liberties, a concept that after the Napoleonic Wars seemed ever further out of reach with the nobility once again regaining power over separate German kingdoms (Wiesekopsieker 2014, p.5ff). For Bandel, the Hermann’s Monument thus was a unifying symbol, and like-minded citizens supported initial building stages through public subscription (ibid, p. 7). Strikingly, it is precisely this reading of the monument as a *unifying* symbol that is expressed on a commemorative stone placed beside the monument in 1950. It reads, ‘On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Hermann’s Monument, German women and men unanimously commit themselves to the unity of all peoples through peace.’[46] However, such a contemporary response relies on people’s ability to re-contextualise, and to adapt, the meaning of the Varusschlacht and Arminius to their own contexts, and their ambitions and hopes for the future. The preferred reading at Varusschlacht, however, aims to

[46] ‘Deutsche Frauen und Männer bekennen sich anlässlich des 75jährigen Bestehens des Hermansdenkmals [sic] einmütig zur Einigung der Völker durch den Frieden.’ (my translation)

suppress any such on-going and contemporary engagement with Arminius. And yet, as at the Battle of Hastings, one of the two most often mentioned benefits is ‘identity’, a connection that is intrinsically linked to people’s contemporary lives, and their aspirations for the future, an element of heritage that has emerged in the review of alternative views of heritage in Chapter 3 (see for example Butler 2006; Zetterstrom-Sharp 2014).

This raises serious questions about the ethical and moral legitimacy of the practice of themes and thematic interpretation. Ham (2013) briefly touched upon this in his discussion of acceptable ‘zones of tolerance’ of interpretation, i.e. the idea that only those meanings generated by visitors that fall within each respective zone (unrestricted, wider, or narrow) are acceptable if interpretation is to be ‘successful’. He did not, however, go on to fully explore the implications, but rather focused his entire book on how to make interpretation successful in achieving its outcomes, or messages. As Ablett and Dyer (2010, p.214) have noted, he is not the only one to do so. I argue that a key enabler for this rather casual dismissal of a serious ethical issue is the assertion in interpretive philosophy that visitors either do not have existing connections to heritage and sites, or that their connections are effectively of lesser value than those expressed by experts. Central to this is the idea that interpretation is in fact required to *create* connections between visitors and heritage. My case studies have shown that visitors *do* have existing connections to heritage and sites, and that these connections are strong, personal, and often deeply emotional. Other studies as reviewed in Chapter 3 have shown this to be the case for other sites also, although it is likely that the nature of these connections will be different depending on the nature of the site in question. Stonehenge, a site more than

four thousand years old, for example, clearly engenders very strong identifications for contemporary visitors, as the annual midsummer solstice celebrations show. The key point to note is the importance of not dismissing the possibility and likelihood of existing connections, and as I will argue later in this chapter, to build on these rather than ignore them. The fact that the existing connections are not necessarily based in expert evidence, as interpretation would have it, does not make them less valid. Taking the example of identity, it may be true that both at the Battle of Hastings and at Varusschlacht the identification with an imagined ancestor as 'English' or 'German' cannot withstand historical scrutiny, and thus historically speaking neither can be called upon in the creation of a modern sense of identity of being 'English' or 'German'. But this is to fail to understand the meaning of heritage, not the least in the creation of identities. As Chapter 3 has shown, historical accuracy is not a necessary foundation for identity. Heritage and identity are discourses that create and re-create our place in the world. While the interpretation at the Battle of Hastings has taken account of these existing connections, that at Varusschlacht has not, or has dismissed them. This is entirely permissible within current interpretive discourse with its emphasis on expert evidence and themes, without breaking any established principles. As has been shown, this can, as is the case at Varusschlacht, not only create a disconnect between the narrative provided in the interpretation, and reasons for which visitors value a site, and why they consider it heritage; it can also inhibit visitors' ability to openly and freely engage with it according to their *own* meanings. I argue that this is entirely unacceptable for a practice like heritage interpretation, which is asserted to exist primarily on the basis of its service to visitors and the public.

Without this service, and the connections it claims to make, interpretation would not be required even by its own current account.

The Varusschlacht case study also provides an opportunity to consider another aspect of the IAHD, which sees interpreters and interpretive messages as inherently moral. At Varusschlacht, staff presented the motivations behind the preferred reading as opposition to right-wing interpretations of the site and event. This is a stance based on all the right, moral reasons: no-one could argue that a Neo-Nazi colonisation of the site was desirable. And yet, this approach creates the illusion of a black and white juxtaposition, in which the preferred reading is the only alternative to an objectionable viewpoint. This mechanism applies to other examples of interpretation as well: pro-conservation messages for instance are juxtaposed to behaviours that will lead to ultimate destruction. What this stance fails to consider, however, are the shades of grey of other alternative options, and opinions. As became clear at Varusschlacht and at the Hermann's Monument, visitors who appeared minded to embrace a meaning different from that included in the preferred reading were not in fact subscribing to a fascist view. Far from it, the German perspectives they were interested in appeared to inspire ideas of unity and peace, not the least peace in contrast to oppression. My data does not provide insights into whether inclusion of this German perspective, and associated emphasis on the achievement of (temporary) unity and liberty by the German tribes would have strengthened these associations, and perhaps widened them to inspire thoughts about international peace and European integration, as desired by the site's supposed theme. What *is* of note, however, is that although this was in fact the message that visitors were intended to take from the site, peace and

international integration did *not* emerge as a benefit in visitor interviews. Even the benefit of 'Thinking about other cultures' was merely at the same level as it was at the Battle of Hastings (19% of respondents), where no such message was intended by the interpretation.

This brings me to consider the other aim of the case studies, which was to reveal what role interpretation plays in delivering the benefits that visitors seek and gain from heritage. This question was posed specifically in the questionnaire, asking about the contribution that interpretation made to why visitors had valued their visit. Responses revealed a slight difference between Varusschlacht and the Battle of Hastings. At the Battle of Hastings, most respondents appeared to agree that the contribution of the interpretation to why they valued the site had been significant (Mdn=6, IQR=2), with a tendency to the highest rating at 7. At Varusschlacht, most respondents appeared to agree on a '5' rating (Mdn=5, IQR=1), suggesting the contribution was rated just slightly above average by most. The difference between the two sites appears to indicate that visitors at Varusschlacht felt less supported by the interpretation provided there in why they valued the site than visitors at the Battle of Hastings. A similar difference emerges when survey respondents rated how much the interpretation had met their expectations. At the Battle of Hastings, most respondents appeared to agree that the interpretation significantly met their expectations (Mdn=6, IQR=1). At Varusschlacht, respondents appeared to agree that their expectations had been broadly met, but with some disagreement (Mdn=5, IQR=2). Clustering of 3-5 ratings as average returned a majority here (58%). Again this appears to suggest that at the Battle of

Hastings, the interpretation more strongly met visitors' expectations than at Varusschlacht.

The data does not provide insights into the causes for these seeming differences. For this, we must turn to the other findings the study revealed. At Varusschlacht, the key benefit that visitors reported, that of *identity* and its associated benefits, were contrary to the preferred reading intended by the site's management and presented in the interpretation. Furthermore, the benefits were very similar to those reported by respondents at the Battle of Hastings, where identity was recognised in the interpretation as a central aspect of the importance of the site and event. This suggests that certainly at Varusschlacht, benefits were realised *in opposition to,* or despite the interpretation provided. This therefore gives further grounds to the suggestion that at Varusschlacht, visitors did indeed not feel that the interpretation supported their reasons for valuing the site as much as visitors at the Battle of Hastings did regarding the interpretation provided there. Another approach to better understand interpretation's impact on the benefits that visitors obtained is to turn to the expectations that visitors themselves reported having regards interpretation. The attributes visitors described as desirable in interpretation during interviews were:

- Help imagine.
- Mark place.
- Context
- Directions/orientation.
- Help physically engage.
- Media variety.

- Illustrate.
- Not too many facts.

In the surveys, at both sites the most often mentioned attribute was ‘help imagine’, mentioned by the majority of respondents (77% at Varusschlacht, 81% at the Battle of Hastings). I argue that this is directly related to several of the benefits reported by visitors, and which are clustered around the key benefit of personal or national identity. The most obvious link is to the benefit of ‘Imagine what it was like’, but also to one of the two most often mentioned benefits, that of ‘being in the place where history happened’. In wanting ‘help to imagine’, visitors are expanding on what they’ve already expressed in these and related benefits: to explore their *existing* connections to this heritage, and actively participate in it. Unlike ‘Illustrate’, another attribute of interpretation desired by visitors, ‘help imagine’ is active: in interviews, visitors described this as a desire to immerse themselves more completely in the events, and to experience on a highly emotional level for themselves what the people at the time experienced. It was described as wanting ‘to feel the place as it was’ (EH2.2, M, over 65), ‘to feel like they did back then’ (KA58, F, 35-44), and to connect with the ‘trouble they had’ (EH58.1, F, 18-24). Implied in this is a sense of identification with the people of the past, and a desire to better understand who they were and what their lives were like. This, I argue, is an intrinsic element of visitors’ sense of identity, the other of the two most mentioned benefits. Visitors want interpretation to ‘help imagine’ because it allows them to personally ‘touch’ those who they perceive to be their ancestors, and the experiences that they believe are ultimately a part of their own experiences, and

their own lives. I also want to argue that as expressed by other writers in both critical heritage studies and Identity Studies, this act of imagining is an element of the heritage work (Smith 2006) and identity work (Rounds 2006) that visitors are doing on site. In imagining, visitors not only strengthen (not create!) their existing connection with their heritage, they also reaffirm it, and express it, both to themselves and to others. One couple at the Battle of Hastings particularly expressed this by relating their desire to become members of a re-enactment group that represented the particular historical period of the battle. This is arguably the ultimate immersion in the experience of the past on one hand, and a visible expression of that experience on the other. In their case, the identification with the people of the time, and the desire to live their experience, was particularly strong. While not every respondent who expressed this expectation of interpretation may have had participation in re-enactments in mind, it does capture the nature of 'help imagine' as an interpretive structure that enables visitors to actively *do* something that brings them closer to the people and events with which they *already* identify, and which they feel are *already* part of their own personal and national identity.

At Varusschlacht, 68% of respondents noted 'illustrate'[47] as another expectation of interpretation, right after 'help imagine'. 'Illustrate' was included in the survey because it had been raised more than ten times by interviewees at Varusschlacht. It appeared somewhat less important to survey respondents at the Battle of Hastings, where just under half (44%) wanted this attribute from interpretation. There, it was in fact the second to last attribute mentioned. The data does not reveal if there is a genuine difference between English and

[47] The German expression that was used was 'anschaulich machen'.

German visitors' expectation of interpretation in this regard. When interviewees described this attribute, they mostly talked about features on the battlefield, and models. Visitors wanted to be able to 'see' what remained largely invisible on the battlefield, which was of course a deliberate decision by the site's management – not to use reconstructions of any kind except for the small section of the *Landschaftsschnitt*, the recreated landscape and German Wall. Visitors also mentioned models as examples of what they meant by 'illustrate', such as the marbles interactive in the exhibition that showed the bottleneck and demise of the Roman Army.

At the Battle of Hastings, the second most often mentioned desired attribute of interpretation was 'mark place' (72%). This was also mentioned by half of the respondents at Varusschlacht. In interviews, 'mark place' was about letting visitors know that *here* is where something happened. It is evident that this expectation of interpretation to mark the place where history happened is intrinsically linked to one of the reasons why visitors valued the sites: to *be* in the place where history happened. In this sense, what visitors appeared to be looking for through the interpretation are increased opportunities to make the experience of the site as a historical place more intimate and precise. They were not only interested in the site as a historical whole, but also wanted to have a sense of tracing that history through individual points across the site. To some extent, this may be understood as connected to the attribute of 'illustrate', as discussed above. The awareness of a specific spot, and knowing the history that happened *right here*, may also contribute to visitors' ability to imagine what it was like, another benefit mentioned, and the main attribute that respondents at both sites appeared to have expected of interpretation. Place and

imagination are arguably connected, as are place and identity. Knowing the place therefore also supports visitors' identity work, as the place becomes the key focus of their actions. This is perhaps best illustrated through the Harold Stone at the Battle of Hastings, one example mentioned by many interviewees that talked about this attribute of marking place. Knowing where Harold is said to have fallen was important to them, although they accepted, and did not mind, that this location cannot be proven to be in fact the exact spot. Nevertheless, the stone marker identifying the place becomes a main focal point, not only for visitors that I observed stopping there, and interviewees that commented about it. Each year, the stone is also the centrepiece for the commemorations of the battle, and it is here that participating groups lay their wreaths. The stone therefore, independent of its archaeological or historical credentials, is a key component of what enables visitors to perform their identity here, if we accept that their wreath laying is part of that identity work. It is also worth highlighting that in this aspect the Harold Stone potentially shares the characteristic of a 'created' place with the Hermann's Monument, and Mount Rushmore.

To 'provide context' was mentioned by 68% of respondents at the Battle of Hastings. It was also the fourth most often mentioned expectation of interpretation at Varusschlacht, although it appears to have been somewhat less important to respondents there, with only just under half (48%) selecting it. When interviewees talked about wanting interpretation to 'provide context', they looked for information beyond the event itself. At both sites interviewees talked about the years leading up to the battle, to which at Varusschlacht they particularly added the desire to put into context the two cultures and what had led to the battle. At Varusschlacht, many interviewees also described 'context'

as more than just an object or artefact. Again, the implication was that visitors wanted the context of people: their motivations and experiences, and how events through time led to another event, until eventually, they formed part of visitors' own experience and identity. Considering the comments that several interviewees made regarding the absence of information about the German side, this attribute may also refer to the desire to have all context provided, rather than a one-sided selection. To be told a 'balanced story' was in fact mentioned by some interviewees as an expectation. At the Battle of Hastings, interviewees also moved 'context' forward in time, expressing an interest in what happened to people and the country at large *because* of the battle in its aftermath. In 'providing context' interpretation therefore arguably is expected to again further visitors' ability to deepen their connection with this heritage. Through the context of the years before and after, visitors seek to further explore their own identities, and understand the ways in which they came into being. This also expresses an understanding of this heritage as going beyond the narrow geographic confines of the site, or the brief moment in time of the event itself. Rather, both become part of a larger narrative that creates, explains and refines visitors' own narrative of self. It is important to note that this seems to shift visitors' understanding of what makes the heritage of this site, and what therefore they are looking for from the interpretation, away from the event history and toward the reception history of the site. The latter, as we have seen, was explicitly marginalised in the interpretation at Varusschlacht. It could also be argued that in expecting interpretation to 'provide context' visitors are looking to learn something new. This is not, however, how interviewees described this expectation, although this is also not evidence that 'learning something new'

was not how survey respondents understood this attribute. ‘Learn something new’ was a benefit mentioned at both sites, and as such it is feasible that in wanting context from interpretation, visitors sought support in learning new information for its own sake as a benefit of heritage.

At Varusschlacht, all other expected attributes of interpretation were endorsed by just around a third of respondents, while at the Battle of Hastings, two received mention by over 60% of respondents, and two by just under half. ‘Provide Direction/Orientation’ was selected by 67% at the Battle of Hastings, and 37% at Varusschlacht. The latter is somewhat surprising, as the lack of orientation was mentioned specifically by interviewees at Varusschlacht as an issue of the site, and here particularly in the park. When describing this expectation, interviewees at both sites spoke about wanting guidance in where to go to see the main features of the site. In this, this attribute is connected to ‘mark place’: visitors wanted to be directed to those specific spots on site where something important happened. Visitors also wanted suggestions for organising their visit, which included an overview of what there was to see and do, and how to best navigate the site to make the most of it. At Varusschlacht, some interviewees specifically linked this expectation to their own experience on site of not knowing where to go, as the site does not provide sign posting, neither to the museum, nor to key sites on the battlefield. The intention by the management had been to encourage visitors to ‘find their own way’, and the implication of this expectation of interpretation is that visitors do, in contrast, want orientation. Another expectation of interpretation was to ‘help physically engage’ with the site. This was selected by 64% of respondents at the Battle of Hastings, but only 30% at Varusschlacht, where in fact it was the second least

often mentioned attribute. Again this is surprising, as this attribute was included in the survey only because of the numerous mentions by interviewees at Varusschlacht. They described this attribute two-fold: in relation to what we may call mechanical interactives, and the opportunity to walk the space. In the first understanding, what visitors described were, at the most basic, drawers that could be opened, as is the case in Zone 1 of the exhibition at Varusschlacht. Here, interviewees noted that such physical engagement with the interpretation helped them understand what was being explained, suggesting that the physical act lent itself more to their style of learning. At the Battle of Hastings, interviewees also mentioned the weapons displays in the Visitors Centre. At both sites, interviewees described this aspect of the attribute also as being able to 'touch' something, and try it out for themselves. In this, they seemed to look for an opportunity to experience for themselves some of what the people at the time had experienced, for example through feeling the weight of the chain mail in the weapons displays at the Battle of Hastings. The other element of this expectation to 'help physically engage' emerged particularly at Varusschlacht, where interviewees described the desire for trails that enabled them to meaningfully walk the site to see the main spots where things happened, and gain a first-hand, physical understanding of how people may have experienced the environment at the time. In this second aspect, therefore, 'help physically engage' appears again connected to place, and thus also to the attributes of 'mark place' and 'help imagine'. Like these, 'help physically engage' as an expectation of interpretation therefore appears to seek to support the benefits of place, identity and imagining that visitors reported.

‘Media variety’, was mentioned by just under half of respondents at the Battle of Hastings (49%), and 33% of respondents at Varusschlacht. In interviews at both sites, respondents primarily spoke about provision of a mix of media, ranging from guided tours to text to multimedia. Some respondents specifically noted that such variety helped them better engage with the content, as otherwise they would become exhausted, particularly if the main interpretation provided were in the form of text panels. One respondent at Varusschlacht (KA55, F, 35-44) highlighted the advantage of being able to pick which medium they preferred if several are offered. It may be argued that ‘media variety’ is therefore linked to the way that visitors learn, and thus to the benefit of ‘learn something new’.

Finally, that interpretation ‘not [give] too many facts’ was the least often mentioned expectation at both sites (8% of respondents at Varusschlacht, and 9% at the Battle of Hastings). This is insofar interesting as this may potentially suggest that visitors are not too concerned with interpretation providing a substantial amount of facts, and that visitors actually welcome a certain amount of facts in interpretation. As highlighted above, information appears to be exactly what visitors want as they look to interpretation to ‘provide context’, and this may also be related to the benefit of ‘learn something new’. This conclusion cannot, however, be satisfactorily substantiated just from the response rate against this attribute.

When we compare the above expectations that visitors have of interpretation with the actual interpretation provided on site, we find some discrepancies, which may help further assess the likely impact that interpretation has had on the delivery of benefits for visitors. This appears a

reasonable approach, since, as I have sought to outline above, visitors' expectations of interpretation appear to reflect a link to why they value a site. It must be acknowledged, however, that the data did not reveal any direct correlations between visitors' expectations of interpretation, and the benefits they received. It is not therefore possible to strictly isolate the impact of interpretation, and particularly not on individual benefits. While visitors were looking to interpretation to provide opportunities to engage actively with the heritage, through opportunities to imagine, the interpretation at Varusschlacht specifically avoided any such aids. Context was also limited, as the focus was on the battle, i.e. the event history itself. Orientation was not provided. This therefore suggests that in the absence of these attributes of interpretation, the interpretation at Varusschlacht could not significantly contribute to the benefits that visitors received, where these were concerned with identity, place, and imaging. The interpretation at Varusschlacht did, however, provide media variety, and to some degree it provided the types of mechanical aspects that made up elements of the attribute of 'help physically engage', suggesting therefore that the benefit of 'learn something new' was supported by these aspects of the interpretation.

At the Battle of Hastings, the interpretation does appear to have the attributes that visitors expected. As described in the interpretation audit of the site in Chapter 7, the battlefield panels and audio guide both used evocative language, describing scenes and inviting visitors to imagine the historic events within their contemporary surroundings, which they explored through a trail around the site and battlefield. Place was clearly marked, both through physical markers and through the audio guide. The film in the Visitor Centre too provided

opportunities to imagine the event and the impact on the people involved, both at the time and beyond. At the Battle of Hastings, the interpretation provided some context to the battle both before and after, although the key focus remained on the event of the battle itself. There were clear directions and orientation, and media variety, with opportunities to touch and interact with objects. Overall, therefore, this would suggest that indeed at the Battle of Hastings, interpretation contributed to the benefits that visitors received and reported, as the expectations of interpretation related to these benefits, were in fact met. Further research would however need to be undertaken to substantiate these indications. In particular, a research design seeking to specifically link particular interpretive attributes with individual benefits would need to be devised.

Finally, in comparing visitors' expectations of interpretation with current best practice principles of interpretation, we find that while some overlap, there are differences in others. A clear overlap is in terms of the desire for media variety. Visitors described this in similar terms as does interpretation literature, even to the point of implying that it helps them better engage with and understand the information provided. The aspect of visitors' attribute of 'Help physically engage' that referred to engaging with the interpretation, rather than the site, also overlaps with the principle in interpretation literature that calls for opportunities for visitors to *do* something, for example through hands-on, multisensory activities and audience participation. In terms of engaging with the site itself, visitors' description of this attribute was slightly more complex than what is found in interpretation literature. Here, the emphasis is on encountering 'the thing itself', and ensuring that visitors can see what is being interpreted to

them. For visitors, the physical engagement they wanted was more in-depth, as outlined above, going above merely being in the space to wanting a bodily experience in that space that allows them to explore the layers of history of the event and its reception, and notions of identity and place. Visitors separately mentioned the attribute of ‘mark place’, which is included in interpretation’s principles in terms of relating the visitor’s current location to history. However, this principle appeared as one of the most important to visitors, being the second most often mentioned at the Battle of Hastings, and the third at Varusschlacht. ‘Provide direction/orientation’, while not part of interpretation’s own best practice, is recognised in interpretation literature as an important prerequisite for visitors to be open to interpretation and its messages. For visitors, however, this attribute was quite important, and again connected to place: to be told where to go to find the main places that already had importance to them. Together with ‘mark place’, this also begins to show that visitors’ expectation of interpretation was much more about providing information, not the least about place, than interpretation’s own self-understanding as creating first and foremost connections between the heritage and visitors, and communicating messages. Information appeared also as an aspect in visitors’ expectation for interpretation to provide context. Interpretation literature does not specifically include context in its best practice principles, but context emerged as quite important to visitors (68% at the Battle of Hastings, 48% at Varusschlacht). In interviews, context also related to being told a balanced story, which, as has been discussed, runs against interpretation’s principle of themes. Visitors’ apparent desire for information may also be a part of their apparently limited concern with interpretation providing too many facts.

This, however, is one of the key principles of interpretation: to go beyond facts, and provide only those that are relevant to the theme. Visitors' expectations of interpretation to 'illustrate', and also to 'help imagine' do not emerge in interpretation's best practice principles in their own right, but are again summarised under the principle of 'relating to the audience'. The emphasis is on relating the past to visitors' own, contemporary experiences, which is more narrow than how visitors described this attribute. However, interpretation literature also talks about media, models and illustrations, as well as reconstructions, although not as principles but rather in their implementation. In so far it covers how visitors themselves described their desired attributes of 'illustrate' and 'help imagine' in interpretation. What is of note is that 'help imagine' was the most desired attribute of interpretation for visitors at both case study sites.

Conclusion

The case studies at the Battle of Hastings and Varusschlacht have allowed me to answer my secondary research questions of what benefits, if any, visitors take from heritage, and what role interpretation plays in delivering these benefits. The case studies have revealed some overlap between visitors' self-reported benefits, and those asserted in legislation and policy. The official benefits of continuity, dialogue between cultures/understanding, identity, well-being/quality of life, personal development and understanding humanity's roots all were reflected in benefits that visitors reported. Of these, identity appeared particularly strongly, along with well-being/quality of life, personal development, and continuity. Other official benefits were not reported by visitors, however.

These were diversity, social integration/cohesion and creativity. Equally, visitors reported benefits that were not included in legislation and policy: understanding where they come from, imagining what it was like, for children to learn about their history, and being in the place where history happened. That latter aspect was one of the key benefits reported by visitors at both sites. All of these aspects, however, appeared connected to visitors' sense of identity.

The case studies showed that certainly at Varusschlacht, interpretation did not appear to play a significant role in delivering these benefits. In fact, it appeared that the benefits visitors reported were in direct opposition to the preferred reading, or theme of the site. This theme was in contrast to the reason why visitors appeared to value the site, which was related, directly and indirectly, to their sense of identity and history as a nation.

The case studies also highlighted issues regarding key concepts of the IAHD. The benefits that visitors reported showed their existing connections to the site, discrediting the assertion in the IAHD that interpretation must first create such connections between visitors and the heritage. The benefits visitors reported also expressed the intangible nature of those connections, showing that heritage to them is not primarily material as the IAHD predominantly defines it. The reasons for why the sites, and associated events, were valued by visitors as their heritage were not necessarily based on historical accuracy. The focus on expert evidence as promoted in the IAHD is therefore not directly relevant to what makes these sites heritage for people. Furthermore, the review of the interpretive planning process at Varusschlacht has also shown that such expert evidence can be and is selectively deployed to support a preferred reading, or theme. The ethical implications of this are neither considered

sufficiently in interpretive philosophy, nor are their sufficient safeguards through best practice guidance on developing interpretive themes. In fact, the latter actively promote such selection. Visitors at Varusschlacht appeared to resent the preferred reading, and they noted the exclusion of one aspect of the story, which was in fact the one that related specifically to why many valued the site. This shows that preferred readings, or themes, can actually have a negative impact on visitors. Visitors' estimation of interpretation at Varusschlacht suggests that this limits how much value they assign to it. Results from the Battle of Hastings indicate that what is required is alignment between interpretation and the reasons why visitors value a site or event as heritage in order to increase the support that interpretation gives to the realisation of benefits of heritage.

The benefits that visitors reported can also be understood as the outcomes that they wanted from their visit. However, only one of these, 'Learn something new', can be directly linked to an established outcome of interpretation, although in interpretation, the outcome of 'learning/knowledge gain' is geared toward the outcome of conservation, rather than general knowledge which visitors may use as they wish. Interpretation's outcome of 'enhanced experiences' has some overlap with the visitor outcomes relating to well-being and quality of life; however, the latter for visitors were again part of a sense of a deeper, existing connection that centred on identity. This highlights that the motivations for providing interpretation as established in current interpretation philosophy and practice are not intrinsically related to visitors and their heritage values, but to interpretation's own objectives. The interpretive planning processes at both study sites also showed this, for even at the Battle

of Hastings, where visitors' values in relation to identity were noted, supporting and enabling these was not a stated intended outcome of the interpretation. This also shows that currently, interpretation is not concerned with the outcomes, or benefits, that heritage legislation and policy assert for people, even where these benefits are also included in funders' policies, as was the case for both study sites.

The case studies have also highlighted that the issues do not lie with interpretive media and design. Principles of media variety, opportunities to become active, and easy to understand language were all applied at the study sites, and were shown to be successful in visitor observations as far as attraction and holding power go (see also Ablett & Dyer 2010, p.215). Instead, it is the underlying, fundamental principles of the IAHD that are at odds both with the policy context for contemporary heritage practice, and the heritage values and associated expectations for interpretation of visitors themselves. The case studies have underlined where the IAHD has not engaged with critiques raised by critical heritage studies as reviewed in Chapter 4. I argue that it is ultimately this failure to engage with critical heritage studies, and the public policy context for heritage management, that is already beginning to make interpretation with its current philosophy and discourse irrelevant. How this might be changed through a critical Heritage approach to interpretation is the topic of my concluding chapter.

9. TOWARDS A CRITICAL HERITAGE APPROACH TO HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

I began this thesis with reference to Ferguson, the town in Missouri, USA, where in August 2014, 18-year-old African-American Michael Brown was shot dead by a white police officer. For Jennings (2015b, p.97/8), Ferguson has marked 'a turning point…in our profession's reluctance to address the tricky question of race as it affects our cultural spaces'. Brown's (2015b) misgivings nearly a year after the events in Ferguson, about entrusting the history, symbolism and contemporary impact of the Confederate Flag to a museum and, ultimately, to the professional practice of heritage interpretation following yet another attack on black lives in June 2015, are an expression of the fact that the process of professional change that may have begun with Ferguson is far from being completed. I argued in the introduction to this thesis that Ferguson has highlighted concerns over heritage interpretation as a practice that supports and perpetuates representations of museums, heritage and 'the past' as conflict-free and separate from contemporary negotiations about culture, memory and identity. In the chapters that followed I have shown that the concepts of the Interpretive Authorized Heritage Discourse (IAHD) in fact leave unresolved questions about their ethical and moral legitimacy, and promote practices that privilege certain narratives over others. In this I believe I have provided further fundamental justification for Brown's doubt that heritage interpretation as it currently stands can be part of the solution to Ferguson.

While Ferguson formed the backdrop to the conclusion of my fieldwork for this thesis, events closer to home created an equally poignant context for its completion throughout 2015. In Germany, over the winter of 2014/15, an anti-

Islam movement emerged in the city of Dresden by the name of Pegida ('Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident'[48]), staging weekly demonstrations there and in other German cities over several months, which prompted large counter-demonstrations (Die Zeit 2015) and heated debates about the best response from civic society and political leaders (Greven 2015). On 7 January 2015, a terrorist attack hit at the heart of Europe in Paris. Following this, and other attacks in the Western world, there has been increased scrutiny and exclusion of Muslims, evident for example in the UK in increased negative media coverage (Ahmed 2012), a counter-extremism strategy by the government targeted in greater part at the Muslim community (HM Government 2015; also Cameron 2015), and a feeling of British Muslims of having been singled out and alienated by their own country (Iqbal 2015; also Hasan 2015). And finally, starting in Spring 2015 and continuing throughout the year, Europe saw an unprecedented number of refugees arriving at her shores, with an 85% increase in first-time asylum applicants in the second quarter alone compared to the same quarter in 2014 (Eurostat 2015). By October 2015, Germany had received more than 331,000 new asylum applications (BBC 2015), and how to integrate refugees successfully has become an urgent topic across all areas of German society, prompting even the German Museums Association to issue guidance on museums and migration (Deutscher Museumsbund 2015). At the same time, the pressures of this mass movement are viewed by some to threaten the very survival of the European Union as a political vision, having revealed rifts and disagreements between member states about how best to meet the challenge (Spiegel 2015). These are all immediate

[48] In German, 'Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes'.

and pressing social, political and economic concerns in a world that is fast changing and re-forming. It is these types of challenges that throughout this thesis I have argued heritage interpretation as it currently stands is unable to meet.

I have shown that the field of interpretation has not engaged sufficiently with developments in other heritage disciplines, particularly critical heritage studies, nor with its wider political and social environments. I argued that because of this, the discipline of interpretation is in danger of becoming irrelevant. The pressures and changes that have become starkly apparent in 2015 now make that danger imminent. Writing about Ferguson, Jennings (2015b, p.104) noted that 'Museums–whose foundations penetrate the soil in our cities, towns, and rural areas, whose buildings occupy civic space, whose boards and directors are influential and respected citizens, whose members and visitors make up our communities – cannot stand to the side and let this sad national story repeat endlessly.' I want to adapt this and pose that heritage interpretation too cannot stand to the side of all that is happening in our societies and the world around us, not only but also particularly here in Europe. Taking specifically the refugee crisis, societies are faced with the immediate challenge of integrating diverse cultures, values and heritages. Museums and heritage sites in the countries concerned have an acknowledged role to play in this process (see for example Deutscher Museumsbund 2015) in order to support mutual understanding, peace, and shared futures. In this context, it is not sufficient for interpretation to continue treating heritages as static, material and separate, and using an approach that is based on education about the heritage of those who thus remain 'the other'.

As I will show in the remainder of this concluding chapter, I do not in this advocate another version of moral superiority of interpretation, applied and adapted through various techniques to better influence others to follow our way of thinking. Rather, I argue that given the developments of 2015, which look set to continue into the foreseeable future and change our world permanently far beyond, a new paradigm of heritage interpretation is required that in fact rejects notions of authority, objectivity and neutrality, and seeks to facilitate rather than educate and communicate. This needs a radically new foundation that is not based on views of heritage as static and separate from people, and interpretation as an inherently benign and ethical practice that serves to bring people into knowledge, which will in turn create connections and a shared community, at the heart of which heritage sits as the one remaining constant and moral compass. I argue that the foundation of this new philosophy of heritage interpretation must instead be rooted in key concepts that have come out of critical heritage studies which I have highlighted in Chapter 3, and out of policies such as the Faro Convention (Council of Europe 2005), which, although still requiring further widespread implementation, is a decided step toward people-centred heritage and its management.

The changes that are necessary

The most fundamental change that is required is to move away from the central understanding of interpretation as communication. At the heart of this understanding lies Tilden's idea of interpreters as 'middlemen' ([sic] Tilden 1957, p.4). As middlepeople, or 'translators', as other interpretation writers have described it, interpreters rely on 'communication techniques' (Staiff 2014, p.9).

These have become the central concern of interpretation discourse: the identification of the most effective methods that should be used to organise and present content to people in order to achieve a certain communicative aim. This is the reason why every single interpretation textbook that was reviewed for this study includes large sections on practical advice based on communication techniques: how to write panels, how to lead guided tours, how to arrange exhibition labels. It is the underlying notion of interpretation as communication that has expanded interpretation discourse into learning theory, education, and psychology, as these are seen to enable interpretation to further perfect its communicative abilities. In a drive to also make interpretation more academically founded, these secondary theories have been explored further and applied so that interpretation may *predict* its outcomes. As Ham's book (2013) makes clear, 'good' interpretation is based on a theory that prescribes practices which, if followed, can if not guarantee, then at least make considerably more likely a certain interpretive outcome. A key outcome is the communication of a *message*, or the 'significant idea' about a place. As Ferdinand de Saussure has shown, however, language is based on arbitrary links between a word (the signifier) and a concept (the signified), which together form the meaning, or sign (Hall 2013c, p.17ff). Successful communication of an idea can therefore never be guaranteed, even among speakers of the same language. Communication can never ensure that its recipient will produce the same links between signifier and signified as did the originator of the communication. This applies to all means of communication, not merely written or spoken language, but also illustrations, photography, film, or any other form of media. And yet, the focus on communication has reduced interpretation to

the largely ‘technocratic discourse’ (Staiff 2014, p.25) described above. This discourse of interpretation as communication dominates all other potential ways of thinking about interpretation. Ironically, though, despite the great care that many writers, including Tilden, take with ensuring that interpretation is understood to be distinct and separate from other disciplines, this focus on communication as the key defining characteristic of interpretation makes it nearly undistinguishable from other disciplines that are concerned with communicating messages. Marketing, for example, can be described in precisely the same ways, focusing, as does current interpretation, on communicative techniques that are best suited to achieve a certain attitude or behaviour, and one that should be favourable to the product to be sold, or the company’s objectives. Creative writing, graphic design, and even journalism, to name but a few disciplines, are all equally concerned with organising content in such a way as is most likely to produce a desired impact on the reader, or viewer. Interpretation as communication is therefore no different from these other disciplines, and offers no justification why interpreters should be considered better prepared for a heritage context than, for example, trained journalists.

A second key characteristic of interpretation in the current IAHD that needs to change is its description as an *educational* activity. The communicative techniques discussed and promoted by interpretive discourse and best practice are centrally concerned with *teaching* visitors something, and thus creating knowledge, which in turn is responsible to produce other key outcomes of interpretation, as per Tilden’s progression from understanding to protection. To distinguish interpretation from education is a key concern of

nearly all interpretive textbooks reviewed, and yet, as with communication, interpretation does not emerge as fundamentally different from other educational activities. The mechanisms used are borrowed from modern education and learning theory, as well as psychology. In its current discourse, interpretation fails to acknowledge the advances that have been made in formal education based on these very same modern theories. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence for example has for nearly a decade promoted self-selected learning for pupils, based on their interests and skills (Education Scotland n.d.). It seeks to provide a comprehensive learning environment, in which pupils can explore an idea through various means and across distinct subject areas, which is a far cry from the rigid teaching of pure information in isolation, which for Tilden was a key attribute of formal education. On this basis, therefore, interpretation cannot be asserted as different from other education.

However, this is only one aspect of interpretation as an educational activity that is questionable and must change. At the core of seeing interpretation as education is a particular understanding of heritage: as material, as unchanging, as having no existing connections with people and as removed from and playing no immediate role in their everyday lives. This understanding must change, and with it the main goal of interpretation to which it leads and which Tilden, confirmed by subsequent writers, has specified to be conservation. This is conservation of the material, the ‘Thing Itself’, the ‘treasure’. Current heritage interpretation maintains the material understanding of heritage that was dominant in early legislation of the 19th and early 20th century, but which has begun to change in the 1970s. And yet, interpretation’s primary concern

remains the conservation of material objects and places. This is an end in itself; current discourse does not consider how such objects and places may have been created by people, how people may still be connected with them, how they may interact with them for their own purposes and independent of any 'scientific' significance of place, object, and heritage, or how indeed places and objects may lose their importance over time. Like the earliest legislation, interpretation discourse presents conservation of the material as an end in itself. There is no attempt to identify how this conservation serves people: the assumption that emerges is that by mere conservation, a greater good has been achieved. As I have shown in Chapter 3, within critical heritage studies, understandings of heritage have emerged that challenge this sole focus on materiality. Studies, including my own, have shown the importance of the interplay between place and people. They have also shown the deeply emotional connections that people already have with heritage – sometimes tied to a historic place, sometimes in creation of a symbolic place, sometimes not related to place and objects at all. Some places and objects act as a conduit between imagined and selected histories and deeply personal ideas of self and community. Place can give shape to the embodied performance of those ideas: place gives a destination to a pilgrimage, it is a focal point for the associated imaginings, and it provides a stage and a framework for the performance of the ideas, hopes, and meanings we bring to it, and further develop in our interaction with it. Place provides a social space: even where we encounter it on our own, it presents a connection to what Anderson (1991) called our 'imagined' communities. In other words, heritage cannot simply be reduced to the material. It is that on-going use and interaction that creates heritage in what Smith (2006,

p.1) called ‘heritage work’. Selection of facts that suit current needs and aspirations is an important aspect of this, not the least in future-making on the basis of (recreated) heritage, as some writers have pointed out (e.g. Zetterstrom-Sharp 2014; also Butler 2006; Harrison 2015). While in some cases conservation of the material may be desirable and necessary, it must be understood that in many other cases the material only concerns *one* aspect of what is heritage. There is also a strong argument therefore that in creating barriers to heritage work, for example through a focus on conservation *as is*, or a strictly structured heritage experience on site through interpretation (Staiff 2014, p.55ff), even the material aspects of heritage may be deprived of their relevance, for just as people may need place and objects to create heritage, place and objects also need people to become part of heritage (see also Harrison 2013; Harrison 2015). The barriers that are therefore currently created by a single-minded focus on conservation of the material in interpretation may in fact hinder that heritage work which creates heritage in the first place.

Heritage furthermore is not eternal, as the IAHD suggests. The places, objects and practices that today are considered heritage by some may tomorrow change their meaning through on-going engagement with this heritage in our contemporary lives. What we may wish to conserve today, may have lost its importance tomorrow. Heritage can cease to be heritage, and as many writers have argued, must be allowed to change or disappear (see for example Harrison 2013; Harrison 2015). Conservation of the material *as is*, in perpetuity, unchanged for future generations, is neither sustainable, nor is there a universally shared understanding of the concept and best approach to conservation. Soane (2001) observes for example the differences in

approaches to historic building conservation in England and Germany within urban townscapes, a point that is echoed by Ripp and Rodwell (2015), who highlight the widespread adoption of urban morphology as an approach to urban planning in Germany but not the UK (p. 251), and the shift in Germany toward management of *continuity* as opposed to management of *change* (p. 254), an activity that featured prominently in the National Heritage Protection Plan Framework 2011 – 2015 for England (English Heritage 2011). The idea of change in heritage must become part of a new paradigm of heritage interpretation, which is one reason for why the understanding of interpretation as education about a material, separate and everlasting heritage is untenable.

The concept of heritage as material also gives rise to the role of expert and their counterpart, the 'visitor', as discussed in Chapter 2, and these two subject positions also need to shift within a new philosophy for heritage interpretation. In the existing IAHD, the expert alone is in possession of the skills and knowledge to understand the significance of the (material) heritage, which is seen to lie in scientific values. Experts and their specific kind of value are therefore given primacy in interpretation, despite the accounts of heritage that have shown their independence of these facts, for example in my study regards visitors' identification with 'the historic English' or 'the historic Germans'. The (expert) significance, or as it is often called, the meaning or 'larger truth', is locked within the material. To unlock it, according to the IAHD visitors not only need experts, but they particularly need interpreters, as the 'translators' between the language of experts and that of the visitors. There are multiple layers here of ignorance that are assigned to visitors. Visitors are seen as effectively unable to understand and decode expert language, which is why

they must rely on interpreters. This ignores the fact that audience research at many sites, including in my case studies, reveals a large proportion of visitors with high levels of educational attainment. There is no evidence that visitors would be inherently unable to understand interpretation provided by experts – in fact, there is no reason to assume that some visitors are not themselves experts of some kind, with knowledge and experience that may apply to the scientific study of the sites themselves. Whether visitors would be interested in a highly specialist presentation of a site is a different matter. Such lack of interest is not proof, however, that they would not be able to understand it. Secondly, this concept of visitors requiring experts and interpreters to understand heritage assumes that they lack this understanding in the first place. As I have shown repeatedly, this notion of heritage is not reconcilable with what studies have found about the dynamic process of heritage creation. If, as I have argued above, heritage is created by people in the interplay between people and place and objects, and between each other according to their needs and aspirations, then the notion of visitors as requiring education to gain knowledge about heritage becomes superfluous. Only in portraying heritage as having *inherent* significance that can only be understood through a scientific understanding of the material fabric can visitors be viewed as needing to *learn* about heritage in order to understand, appreciate and value it. A dynamic notion of heritage leads this goal of interpretation ad absurdum. Similarly, many studies about heritage, including my own, have shown that visitors' primary interest in coming to a heritage site is not in fact to learn something. While it may be true that audiences at sites are open to learning, as Ham (2013, p.1/2) suggests, this potential openness is not an indication of their primary motivation to visit.

Neither is it evidence that visitors are interested in the type of learning that interpreters provide, based on expert values and toward a specific outcome. What my study has shown is that interest in learning appears directly linked to visitors' more immediate reasons for coming to a heritage site, and in my study this was particularly their sense of identity. Where the information offered does not match that motivation, it appears to be of lesser interest and use.

The current framing within the IAHD of 'visitors' has already emerged as problematic in several of the points discussed above. At the most basic level, it expresses the utter separation of sites and people. People are not the makers of the heritage, they are merely 'visitors' to it. And where there is a visitor there is a host: the interpreter, who either personally or in proxy leads visitors around the site so that they may make sense of it, and learn about it. The concept of 'visitor' does not make room for the idea of people as creators of heritage, who come on site to continue that process of heritage making, and all that is associated with it. A visitor will always have fewer rights to do as she chooses: this, to remain with the analogy, is not 'her house'. It is the interpreter, and the managing organisation, who set the rules, which ultimately govern visitors' behaviour. In so doing, the concept of 'visitor' sanctions parameters of engagement as set by interpretation. Any autonomous action of visitors is limited to 'manipulat[ing] what is on offer' (Staiff 2014, p.50), or ignoring it altogether in order to have an unencumbered experience of, and engagement with the site. Other, alternative concepts that have been used in interpretation discourse in place of 'visitor', particularly more recently, do not provide more room for people to engage on their own terms, but rather reflect the increasingly narrow focus on interpretation's goal of communicating messages to achieve a

certain outcome. The concept of the ‘client’ or ‘consumer’ (Knudson et al. 2003, p.81ff) is based on the idea that their desires must be understood in order to ‘get these subjects [of the special, interesting, and key values of a place] across effectively’ (ibid, p. 81). Like the concept of ‘visitor’, the client or consumer is not viewed as having a role in *making* heritage, or having an existing relationship with it. Rather, it emphasises the need to create a more successful interpretive product: the content of the product is still set by interpretation, but its packaging is orientated at what may most appeal to ‘the consumer’. This concept of the client or consumer also resonates with the idea of interpretation as part of a heritage industry, an increased professionalization that, while aiming to maintain its (conservation-based) integrity, seeks to add value to heritage sites and museums as businesses faced with commercial pressures, and which are viewed as part of a market place in which heritage competes with other products for the favour of the ‘client’ or ‘consumer’. Another concept often used is that of the ‘audience’, which perhaps more even than all others casts people in a passive role. An audience is made up of spectators or listeners at a performance or display, and the goal of interpretation to ‘enhance experiences’ is often particularly evident in relation to this concept. An audience encapsulates that free choice environment that is often claimed in interpretation discourse; an audience must be entertained, it must be provided with a good experience, and only then, when its expectations are met, can the other aims of interpretation be achieved. An audience does not, however, determine neither content nor form. It may be invited to participate within set structures, but it has no autonomy, and remains ultimately without decision-making power other than the decision to leave. Visitor or audience research, independent of whether

people are seen as visitor, client, consumer or audience, is often promoted in current interpretation literature, in order for interpreters to better understand where the visitor stands in relation to the particular interpretive goal. This may mean research into visitors' prior knowledge on a certain subject, or their attitudes toward a certain idea. This information about the visitor then serves to determine the most appropriate communicative approaches. While the information thus uncovered may inadvertently reveal the underlying reasons for why a site is heritage for people and why they choose to come, this is not the purpose of this research, however. Visitor or audience research understood thus is not about understanding people's heritage values, and thus heritage itself, but rather about more efficiently focusing interpretive techniques so that they may best manipulate visitors toward interpretation's desired goals. For a new paradigm of heritage interpretation, neither of these subject-positions of visitor, consumer, client or audience work, nor does the position of 'the expert' as it currently stands.

This finally brings me to the notion in the IAHD of constructivist meaning-making, which has been asserted particularly strongly in recent interpretation literature. There are many unresolved tensions that are evident in the way this concept relates to and sits within the wider IAHD. Far from constituting a 'casual' (Ham 2013, p.7) reading of Tilden, the critique of interpretation as aiming to *determine* meaning emerges directly from analysis of the conceptual foundation presented in Tilden's account and subsequent writings, as Chapter 2 has shown. Interpretation at the moment is rooted in the core assumption that visitors do not already have meanings associated with heritage. Not only that: current discourse asserts that visitors *require* interpretation and experts to arrive

at meaning. All current interpretation principles and practices are aimed at purposefully (Ham 2013) and successfully achieving interpretation's desired outcomes, which are to change visitors' behaviours and attitudes, enhance their experiences, support management objectives, or achieve visitors' endorsement for conservation measures. Themes, the backbone of most best practice in current interpretation, exist as meanings (Ham 2013, p.119). They serve to select facts that will support that particular meaning and thus achieve the desired outcome. Sometimes, but not always, visitors will notice the inherent exclusion of facts, as was the case at my study at Varusschlacht. At other times, however, the exclusion may not be evident to visitors, who are therefore deprived even of the opportunity to critique it. Interpretation currently is therefore far from supporting *all* meaning-making, as some writers claim it does. As Staiff (2014, p.105,107) highlights, interpretation's narratives, or themes, give a (false) sense of closure and the possibility of conclusive explanations. Interpretation at the moment therefore is as, if not more likely to close rather than open up diverse meanings.

This then creates the mechanism whereby the future-making potential of heritage is severely stifled by interpretation. As Chapter 3 has shown, such future-making relies on visitors' own selection of facts for the purpose of providing inspiration to create a future that reflects their contemporary aspirations. This process relies on the creative arrangement and rearrangement of ideas, and an active dialogue between people, and between people and heritage. Themes are not concerned with facilitating such a process and instead aim, through ordering and selecting facts, to channel such a process toward a desired message. Notions of 'zones of tolerance' (Ham 2013, p.149ff) make

sense only in relation to such themes and to the objective of interpretation to ensure that within each zone – narrow, wide, or unrestricted - visitors arrive at the particular meaning desired and deemed acceptable by the interpreter. The fact that other disciplines have shown that any such meaning can only ever be co-constructed by the subject changes nothing about interpretation's aim to get visitors to endorse a certain, desired meaning, and one that ultimately leads to a specific outcome and finally, to conservation. This emerges as the current raison d'être of interpretation. This should, however, be considered manipulation and ethically unacceptable, particularly given the dynamic and creative concepts of heritage that I have reviewed in Chapter 3. Meaning-making in the sense that it is currently applied in the IAHD has therefore no place in a new philosophy of interpretation.

As the above has shown, current interpretation philosophy requires radical changes in its fundamental concepts and ensuing practices to enable it to respond to the challenges brought from within critical heritage studies, and to those posed by contemporary events such as Ferguson, terrorism, exclusion, integration, refugees, and tensions in Europe. In the next section, I aim to outline how a critical heritage approach to heritage interpretation may provide an alternative discursive structure that is better equipped to meet contemporary needs and thinking. This is not intended as a comprehensive discussion of what I call Critical Heritage Interpretation, detailing minutely its philosophy and particularly, its proposed practice. Rather, following my discussion in this thesis I aim to show what its key pillars and main purpose may be, and what this may mean broadly for its practice. This will require further development to provide guidance for application in specific situations.

A Critical Heritage Approach to Heritage Interpretation

There is one central pillar of a critical heritage approach to heritage interpretation which has emerged in this thesis and which I have outlined again in the previous section of this final chapter: that pillar is an understanding of heritage that is not fixed in the material. A critical heritage approach to heritage interpretation has a concept of heritage that allows room for creation, negotiation and change. It considers not only the input into heritage making from material places and objects, but crucially also from people and other non-human actors. It acknowledges the processes of heritage making *in the present* and their focus on assembling futures. A critical heritage approach to heritage interpretation embraces diversity, both of heritages in the plural, and of groups, presents and futures that make selective use of those pasts that are deemed relevant and valuable to their needs and aspirations. In this, Critical Heritage Interpretation accepts that it has no claim to greater knowledge or authority, and consequently what it offers is never a required prerequisite for neither understanding of nor engagement with heritage, but rather support where desired for further heritage making. Fundamentally, this new paradigm of heritage interpretation continually engages in the on-going critical examination of what is heritage, and re-considers its philosophical and theoretical foundations and ensuing practices accordingly. The study of heritage has not yet, and may never be completed, if we accept its constantly changing nature in response to a changing world. For this reason, Critical Heritage Interpretation is firmly rooted in examination of and engagement with heritage as the only object of heritage interpretation. Without heritage, there is no need for heritage

interpretation. Without understanding heritage, heritage interpretation has no positive contribution to make.

Critical Heritage Interpretation also acknowledges its inevitable power in its function as a professional practice and discourse. Like heritage designation and the creation of national heritage narratives by nation states, heritage interpretation can never be neutral. It can also never be entirely independent of its wider context. In rejecting ideas of authority, objectivity and neutrality, Critical Heritage Interpretation therefore embraces as its key responsibility continuous research on its relationships to other professional heritage management practices and its impact on the processes of heritage. It constantly monitors policy developments in wider society and evaluates its own practice against these where relevant. This further contributes to the on-going development not only of the discourse of Critical Heritage Interpretation, but also its resulting practice. This continued and critical self-analysis is the requirement for avoiding a slip back into an authorizing heritage discourse that naturalises interpretation's own use of power and the consequent manipulation of heritage.

Acknowledging its impact as a professional practice and discourse also enables Critical Heritage Interpretation to consider ways in which it may *openly* exert influence on today's world. This new paradigm of heritage interpretation is rooted in the acknowledgement of heritage as a process in the present for the future, of which professional heritage management practices such as heritage interpretation are part. Silence concerning contemporary developments in our societies and the wider world, presented in the guise of professional neutrality, does in fact represent a powerful message due to the role that professional practices play, not only within heritage but within culture more widely. Critical

Heritage Interpretation recognises this. Freed from misleading notions of neutrality and impartiality, Critical Heritage Interpretation is empowered to take an active role. The key is transparency and the recognition that in this, heritage interpretation is but one voice among many, and by no means in any way authorized by greater knowledge or morality.

This leads me to a more practical consideration of Critical Heritage Interpretation. While the above presents the key pillar of this new paradigm of heritage interpretation, and a positioning as a professional discourse with real consequences for the processes of heritage, what may this Critical Heritage Interpretation look like on the ground? If it is to be neither education nor communication, what then is its ultimate purpose? How may practitioners begin to revise their practice to become *Critical* Heritage Interpreters?

In considering this it must first be stressed that heritage interpretation is a representational practice (Hall 2013b, p.218; see also Staiff 2014, p.30/31). It is a representational practice not by choice or aspiration, but by its very nature as a text (Hall 2013c, p.21) and a cultural practice. Heritage interpretation cannot escape its nature as a representational practice. Hall (2013a, p.xvii) writes that representation is 'one of the central practices that produced culture'. Culture, Hall explains, is made up of 'shared meanings' (ibid). Representation is therefore also an element and function of discourse; cultural meanings, Hall writes, have practical consequences, as they 'organize and regulate social practices [and] influence our conduct' (p. xix), just as discourse does (Hall 2013c, p.29). Cultural meanings are shared through language (Hall 2013a, p.xvii), and other representational systems. Heritage interpretation as a representational practice is thus part of this wider process. It is a discourse that

is both determined by culture and engaged in (re-) producing it, along with the meanings and consequent practices and behaviours that it encourages.

Importantly, representation is not God-given, and therefore neither are meanings. The processes through which meanings are created and conveyed through representation (and discourse) highlight the key purpose of the new paradigm of heritage interpretation that I propose. To explore this further, we must first return to Saussure and Barthes. Saussure's greatest contribution to the understanding of language and by extension of representation was his argument that the links between the word and the concept, which together create the meaning, or sign, are arbitrary. There is no natural, scientific connection between the *signifier*, the word or the image, and the *signified*, the concept that is invoked through use of the signifier. Barthes (1957, p.113) provided the example of roses that, given to a beloved, express our passion for them. The roses themselves are mere objects: as a signifier, they are what Barthes calls 'empty'. What they signify, however, is passion, a concept wholly unrelated to roses. Only by bringing the two together, the signifier (the roses) and the signified (passion), do we create a new entity. This then is the sign: 'the sign is full, *it is a meaning'* (ibid, my emphasis). The code which creates the link between the signifier and the signified, and which thus creates meaning, is based on social conventions (Hall 2013c, p.7ff). It is these social conventions, the unspoken agreements between a group of people, which govern and create meaning.

This is a constructivist understanding of representation (Hall 2013c, p.11ff). It makes several observations about meaning that are central to the new practice of heritage interpretation that I propose. Firstly, meaning 'can never be

finally fixed' (Hall 2013c, p.9). As social conventions change and become adapted to new realities and ways of thinking, so do meanings. Social conventions furthermore are not universal: a distinct group, sometimes in deliberate opposition to other groups, produces them. Conventions may differ between groups, potentially leading to diametrically opposed meanings.

Barthes highlights that there is yet another level to representation, which further illustrates the complexity of the underlying mechanisms of producing meaning. Barthes identifies what he calls *metalanguage* (Barthes 1957, p.115). Metalanguage builds on the sign produced by the first level signifier and signified connected by code through social convention. This first level *sign*, which in fact represents a meaning, becomes the signifier, or *form*, of the second level. In this mechanism, the signifier of the second level is no longer empty, as Barthes had noted for the first level of language, or the 'language-object' (ibid). On the level of metalanguage, the signifier already has a meaning attached, and yet this existing meaning of the signifier is obscured: it is the characteristic of what Barthes calls 'myth' (ibid, p. 109). Barthes observes, 'It is this constant game of hide-and-seek between the meaning and the form which defines myth' (ibid, p. 118). Therefore, as Hall (2013c, p.17) notes, these pre-existing meanings 'might modify or distort what we want to say' as we enter language, and they may also '"naturalize" and make "innocent" what is profoundly motivated' (Lidchi 2013, p.154).

I argue that currently, heritage interpretation works particularly on the level of metalanguage. It naturalizes and presents as 'innocent' meanings that are in fact based on social conventions that pre-date that which is being 'revealed' by current interpretive practice. In other words, much of current heritage

interpretation deals in myth without neither conceptualizing nor making visible these layers of pre-existing and constitutive meaning. What is required is a different approach that analyses and makes visible myth and meanings in heritage, not the least because heritage processes themselves function much the same as representation has emerged in this review. This is therefore the key purpose of Critical Heritage Interpretation. I argue that this approach is the only way in which heritage interpretation can do justice to the diverse processes of heritage making, the diverse actors involved, both human and non-human, and the diverse presents and futures for which heritage is created. It is an approach that gives the necessary flexibility to accommodate the underlying dynamics of change.

For Barthes, the way to approach the analysis of myth is to focus on the second-level signifier and to ‘clearly distinguish the meaning and the form, and consequently the distortion which the one imposes on the other’ (Barthes 1957, p.128). In doing so, ‘I [the mythologist] undo the signification of the myth, and I receive the latter as an imposture’ (ibid). For Critical Heritage Interpretation, this means that the myth, or any one existing meaning, cannot merely be taken forward as form, as a signifier that is treated as if it were ‘empty’, or ‘natural’. Rather, like the mythologist, Critical Heritage Interpretation seeks to faithfully decode and make visible all the diverse meanings that have already been produced by different groups over time through the connections they have established between the material and the concept as heritage, and show the layers of representations that have created and re-created these meanings and related ways of being. This approach enables those using the interpretation to untangle and follow these processes of representation themselves, and to

engage with meanings that may not be their own. Critical Heritage Interpretation therefore presents *all* meanings to be perused by people as they see fit, facilitating engagement with the actors involved without a desire to structure and control that engagement on the basis of its own interpretive goal. I argue that in so doing Critical Heritage Interpretation is also more likely than current practice to empower people to realise from heritage the benefits they seek, as envisaged by legislation and policy, while also supporting those who may more closely resemble what Poria et al (2003, p.248) called 'tourists at heritage sites', i.e. those people for whom a site is not their own heritage.

As a representational practice itself, Critical Heritage Interpretation also acknowledges the layers of representation, and thus meaning, that it adds itself. It reflects on and makes visible its own discursive positioning also and is mindful that such positioning exists even where it is not intended. Critical Heritage Interpretation recognises that as a representational and constitutive professional practice it is not and can never be value-free. Its actions always carry meaning within its socio-political context. Silence on issues that are of importance and concern to our contemporary societies are in fact a message and a representation with practical discursive impacts. Critical Heritage Interpretation therefore reflects on its representations, and where necessary takes a deliberate stand beyond merely making visible its own discursive positioning. As I noted earlier, transparency is of the utmost importance here: where an interpretive voice is specifically added *as one amongst many*, this must be made obvious, along with the process through which this particular meaning or opinion was arrived at (see also Tyradellis 2014). This does constitute an intervention with moral and ethical implications, and in practice,

institutions may wish to anchor this as an approach in their vision and mission statements, their codes of practice, or their organisational values. However, this should not take the form of a pre-emptive representation or political positioning. In order to ensure continued relevance and a dynamic practice that stays in touch with its context, it is instead desirable to engage with and respond to developments and other social players as matters arise. Critical Heritage Interpretation thus not only permits opinion and intervention, it encourages it. In so doing, I argue that this approach responds to the challenges raised by Ferguson and the developments we saw in Europe throughout 2015. Through this, it also gives a different justification for the use of the term 'interpretation' for this particular practice, which, not the least to maintain the continuity of the field and its achievements to date, I propose should be kept. As highlighted at the beginning of this thesis, there have been continuous debates about the suitability of the term itself (for example Tilden 1957, p.4; Veverka 1994, p.1). However, while the term interpretation may indeed be mistaken for language translation, it is also often used in an expressed or implied plural sense of 'ways of explaining' (see for example Oxford Dictionary 2016). This sense captures the layers of representations and interpretations discussed above. The difference is that Critical Heritage Interpretation does not set out to narrowly present *one* interpretation - its own - but rather make visible *all interpretations*.

If making visible the diverse representations and meanings of heritage, as produced and held by different groups, is the key purpose of Critical Heritage Interpretation, then the necessary foundation must first and foremost be to understand what these diverse representations and meanings are. These, it must be stressed again, are *existing* meanings. Research for practical

implementation of heritage interpretation must therefore be concerned with discovering these meanings, and identifying the component parts of the representations that have created them, as well as the aspirations that they serve. Respect and equality are central, as no one meaning, including that of specialists, can be elevated above that of others.

This points to another important element of Critical Heritage Interpretation. Although it may not be able to ever entirely surrender the position of power of the interpreter, Critical Heritage Interpretation does not assign subject positions to people, or indeed to non-human actors. In particular, it considers everyone an expert in heritage where they claim the heritage as theirs, as everyone is involved in its making. People traditionally considered experts such as archaeologists and historians have a role to play insofar as they participate in gathering a full picture of the diverse values and meanings that make the heritage, but their views are but a piece of the puzzle, and do not in themselves describe, or indeed *make* heritage. Interpreters too have an expert role to fulfil, but only in the sense that they are charged with making visible the representations and meanings that people may not already be aware of, and providing the information and infrastructure that people require to continue their own process of heritage making. People do not in general *need* heritage interpretation in order to connect with or make heritage; if they *want* it, it is to support the heritage, or identity work (Rounds 2006) that they wish to undertake. This is where the heritage actor *place* becomes important for the practical considerations of Critical Heritage Interpretation. While place does not itself make the heritage, it is often an important element, providing for example the environment in which heritage can be physically expressed and explored.

For many, although a site might be full of existing personal, and emotional meanings for them, they may never before have visited. Critical Heritage Interpretation thus provides that guidance across a physical site, including orientation and information, to enable people to find the places that they may have heard about, or that may be of apparent relevance based on the meanings that diverse groups attribute to these places.

The above does not seek to imply that the achievements made by current heritage interpretation practice, as opposed to its philosophical foundations, are dismissed as unhelpful. Best practice principles of hands-on activities, opportunities to become involved, creating ways for visitors to physically engage with a site, as well as an understanding of communication and design, have been shown by several studies to increase visitors' satisfaction. They have also been identified in my study as desired ways of supporting the benefits that visitors seek. What is fundamentally different in the approach that I suggest is that, in using these particular methods, heritage interpretation is not aimed at achieving a specific outcome in visitors, such as learning, or attitudinal change. Rather than constitute the goal of 'persuasive communication', in this approach these methods serve to support visitors in continuing their own heritage making, and make visible all representational regimes that have been and continue to be involved. It is not so much the practical methods that I want to call into question, but the *principles* that govern their application in current interpretation discourse.

Conclusion

In this thesis I have shown that there currently exists an Interpretive Authorized Heritage Discourse (IAHD), which has not engaged with challenges to the AHD raised from within critical heritage studies. I have argued that sanctioned practices leave unresolved questions of legitimacy and ethics. I have found in my case studies that some of these key practices appear to hinder rather than support people's ability to realise the benefits that they seek from heritage, and many of which are at the heart of aspirations of public decision-makers as expressed in heritage legislation and policy. I have argued that for these reasons, current interpretive practice is also not equipped to respond adequately to such contemporary socio-political issues as those embodied in Ferguson, or the events of 2015 in Europe. Therefore, I pose that heritage interpretation is in imminent danger of becoming irrelevant. Further research will show whether the benefits that people associated with heritage in my case studies hold true in other contexts, along with the apparent connection to their expectations of interpretation (see also Poria et al 2009). In particular, it will be important to compare responses from what Poria et al (2003) have called heritage tourists, which arguably is the category into which respondents in my case studies fall, and non-heritage tourists. Finally, will also be necessary to undertake studies of interpretive projects that have followed a critical heritage approach to heritage interpretation, and evaluate their impact on public benefit delivery across all categories of people, or visitors.

This final chapter of my thesis sought to highlight what the key attributes are of such a critical heritage approach to heritage interpretation, which in my view is able to address the above issues. In summary, this approach to heritage

interpretation is based on an understanding of heritage as a dynamic process between various actors, including people but also what Harrison (2015, p.32) called ‘other-than-humans’, such as place, objects, plants and animals. In this process, diverse meanings are constantly produced, negotiated, and re-created. Heritage is understood as a discourse and representation, which forms a key part of how people construct their identities and communities, and the behaviours that are appropriate to perform and communicate these senses of belonging. Critical Heritage Interpretation therefore sees heritage not as separate from people, but as fundamentally created by them, and as an intrinsic part of their daily lives and of who they are. To make visible the diverse meanings of heritage is the key purpose of Critical Heritage Interpretation. Critical Heritage Interpretation therefore begins with in-depth research of the meanings that diverse groups attribute for example to a site, and builds on this and contextual scientific knowledge to provide further information. The ensuing insights are further used to facilitate people’s encounter with the physical place, which, despite being imbued with meaning, may be unfamiliar to them. In combination, this contributes to the key *outcome* of heritage interpretation: to support people in continuing their own heritage practice. Rather than limit a conversation to one preferred theme, as is the case in current interpretation philosophy, in Critical Heritage Interpretation people are supported in continuing to use heritage in their presents to shape their futures. As people’s views for example of a particular site change, so does the heritage interpretation provided.

This is an approach to heritage interpretation that is crucially based in transparency. Notions of messages and zones of tolerance have no place in

this new paradigm. Here, heritage interpretation is *not* about communication, nor about education. The approach to heritage interpretation that I propose acknowledges that heritage interpretation itself is a representational practice that places great responsibility on the interpreter. It does not assign to the interpreter a distinguished morality, or sanctions his or her position of power. Rather, it seeks to neutralize heritage interpretation's own representational mechanisms and to use them instead as an analytical tool to make visible the structures that have created heritage meaning. In this, there is no value judgment. Scientific evidence is used for context, but understood to be neither required as proof nor validation of people's meanings.

It is through its fundamental orientation to the meanings that people create and negotiate, and the ways in which they use material objects and spaces to perform and express their heritage and identity, that a critical heritage approach to heritage interpretation can reflect contemporary issues such as those raised by Ferguson. Making visible the varied meanings and how they have been constructed is a central aspect of doing justice to all who are affected by heritage practice, which, as has been shown, can be and often is also exclusive. As a representational practice and a discourse, heritage has a direct impact on the experience of everyday reality by members of our societies, and those groups in particular who are not part of the mainstream conventions that govern meaning and their associated social structures. Critical Heritage Interpretation thus gives a voice to all and tells what people in my study have called a 'balanced story'. Importantly, this 'balanced story' is more than a critical and balanced appraisal of meanings before one 'balanced interpretation' is arrived at and presented. This 'balanced story' presents all interpretations within

their respective discursive frameworks, opening up interpretations rather than reducing them to one, albeit one that may be carefully considered. It also makes it possible to take a stand, as museums and cultural institutions have done in Germany in response to Pegida (Kagermeier 2015), for it is transparent, showing how a meaning, an opinion, or an interpretation was arrived at. This becomes part of, and supports an on-going social debate, and it is clear that this is a moral-ethical, and sometimes a political statement. This requires self-reflection and open debate within organisations, but also with others outside it, and it may be something that organisations might wish to anchor in vision and mission statements, their codes of practice, or their organisational values. In making visible its own representations and positioning, Critical Heritage Interpretation may in fact have a wider impact, possibly contributing to examining and revealing institutional structures and practices that lead to undesired results, such as for example the lack of diversity in museums staff despite targeted measures over recent years (Museum Consultancy 2015).
This, I believe, is a sound philosophical and practical foundation from which professional heritage management organisations can live up to their responsibility as actors in social space, and from which heritage interpretation can support people in realising the benefits they seek from heritage, as envisaged by legislation and policy, by facilitating people's own heritage making for their own and diverse purposes.

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