Heritage Interpretation Training Manual

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Contents

Introduction

This training manual will address the use of heritage interpretation to measurably **improve the visitor experience** at a HERA trademark heritage site. The manual will capitalize on results and training materials of the projects already implemented in the EU and other countries, particularly on the HERA project.

The manual will address skills shortages in the heritage tourism sector and provide an overview of the possibilities of local intervention for **capacity building in heritage interpretation**. The courses developed with the help of the training manual should target heritage site managers and planners, heritage staff, tourist guides, tourism staff, educators and curators working at monuments, sites, museums, natural protected areas etc.

The project partners will have the opportunity to test the training manual by organizing and delivering train-the-trainers introductory courses, allowing learners to understand the **heritage interpretation approach**.

The main goal of the course is to help participants develop the necessary **competences** for successfully using the concept of heritage interpretation in their own working context. Courses should be delivered at a location where a heritage site can be easily accessed and included in the practical part of the agenda.

Competences the course aims to increase are related to research, planning, personal delivery and media delivery areas. The topics tackled will include identification of compelling features and stories; interpretive potential of a site; basic interpretation principles applied to the practical task; conceptualisation and planning of the tour; visitor orientation; text and

visual contents of promotional materials; presentation skills with appropriate use of supporting media; evaluation of visitor experience and optimisation of delivery.

The manual includes **two teaching modules** which can be used separately. Module 1: Interpretive Principles and Planning will help trainers and heritage interpreters understand the backbone of heritage management and heritage interpretation planning. Module 2: Interpretative Presentation Skills will help trainers and heritage interpreters develop professional skills necessary to interpret heritage.

Module 1 - Interpretive Principles and Planning

Definition and Evolution of Interpretation

The fundamental objective of interpretation is to **communicate a message** that is supported by facts, and its final aim is conservation and valorization of heritage. There is a difference between providing information on a heritage site and providing interpretation of a heritage site.

Interpretation is an **action of cultural transfer**. It is as old as humanity, developed in all societies and all around the world. Remembering the legends, knowing if a plant is edible or not, or passing on traditional crafts is a natural state of heritage interpretation. People have always told stories, trying to understand and explain the world around them. The stories have translated into oral traditions, art, crafts, writing and dance. Heritage interpretation is part of this **tradition of storytelling** used to explain the world around us.

The development of interpretation such as we know today has started with development of tourism. Informed guidance was an integral part of the European sightseeing tours of Europe and the Middle East in the 19th century.

The 'Grand Tour' to the renaissance places of Europe was very similar to a special interest academic expert-led tour of today. The **evolution of interpretation** is most visible in various museums. The collections of specimens and artefacts were explained by basic facts, but now museums creatively present rich background stories associated with their treasures.

Interpretation of heritage was **initially associated with natural heritage** resources and dates back to the late 19th century. The term "Environmental Interpretation" was applied to different environments (national parks, folk heritage parks etc.), and in practice it turned into a useful management tool, both for natural and cultural heritage. The concept of "Heritage Interpretation", the term including all kinds of heritage, started to be used in 1980s.

According to Jorge Morales and Sam Ham (2008), interpretation takes place at three levels. These levels are related primarily to the **identification of meaning of the heritage resource**, to the **elaboration of messages** and to the **visitors** who need to **generate** these **meanings** by themselves.

- The **information** is based on scientific knowledge. It is the raw material for the elaboration of the message.
- Interpretation happens by **translation of information into the message** that is to be communicated. The message sent and the message received by the audience will likely not be the same.
- The **meaning** of the message developed in the mind of the audience establishes the basis for the transmission of heritage values to the visitor. Just thinking about the heritage resource is likely creating positive attitudes and positive behaviours, even if the audience has not developed the same meaning as the interpreter intended.

In order to understand the meaning of the interpretive activity, we will consider a number of **definitions of interpretation**. The interpretive activity goes far beyond of providing information on cultural and natural heritage.

The Association for the Interpretation of Heritage (AIP) defines interpretation as follows:

"Heritage Interpretation is the **"art" of revealing** on the spot the meaning of natural and cultural heritage to the public visiting these places in their leisure time."

Freeman Tilden has defined it (1957): "Interpretation is a recreational activity, which aims to **reveal meanings and relationships** through the use of original objects, either by direct contact with the resource or by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information."

Don Aldridge emphasizes the role of human beings (1975): "Interpretation is the **art of explaining** the role of human beings in their environment in order to increase people's awareness about the importance of this interaction, and awakening in them the wish to contribute to environmental conservation."

National Association for Interpretation concentrates on the communication process (2000): "Interpretation is a **communication process** that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the inherent meanings of the resource."

These definitions have many aspects in common; they concentrate on a **communicative process** which is supposed to help people to **establish emotional and intellectual connections with the cultural or natural resource**.

Most of the work on development has been done in the US, and most of the US authors base their work on Tilden's principles. Only in **the last 20 years** has this field **developed** more intensely in **Europe**. Tilden illustrates the principles of heritage interpretation in his book 'Interpreting Our Heritage' (1957). Prominent **keywords** have been derived from his work, and they are frequently used in multiple contexts to explain heritage interpretation and its principles: **'provoke', 'relate' and 'reveal'**.

Through interpretation, understanding; through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection.

— Freeman Tilden —

AZ QUOTES
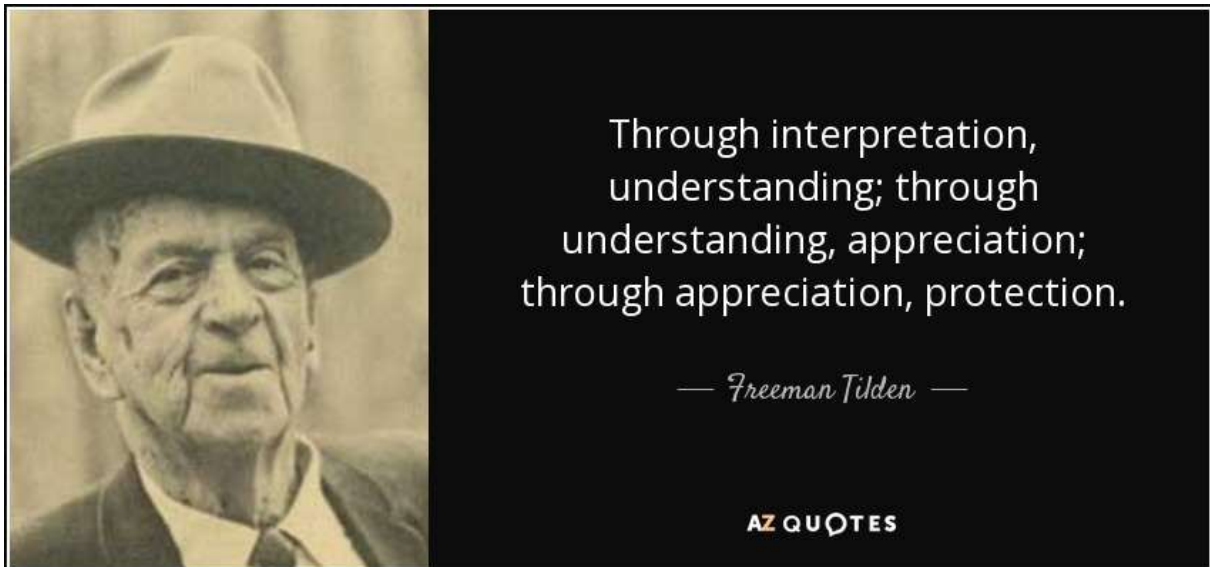
The last two decades have been characterised by the **improvements** in the field of **new media** and by the question what role they should play in the preparation of interpretive processes. One other reason for improvements in the field of heritage interpretation was the **United Nations' call for sustainable development** and UNESCO's request that all stakeholders dedicated to learning should **contribute** to that worldwide **goal**. The most recent international document with significant outreach is the **ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites**, the so-called ENAME Charter. Including the demands of sustainable development, this document underlines the relevance of communities connected with a heritage site.

The idea is not to reduce heritage interpretation to visitor services planned by experts, but to **develop heritage sites together with their stakeholders**. The ENAME Charter from 2008 was strongly influenced by European organisations.

In the 1990s, **the most advanced training programme** on heritage interpretation worldwide was the Interpretive Development Program (IDP) of the **US National Park Service**. In Europe, several non-formal learning concepts had already been established, mostly in the area of museology. Pierre Mayrand, one of the main protagonists of the **new museology** (development of eco-museums etc.), uses the model of **"creativity triangle"** in which the interpretation of heritage obtains a key role. It is an interdisciplinary approach applied to a specifically defined space, established by natural or cultural borders, which implies the inclusion and permanent cooperation with the local community that participates in planning, work and management of the environment (space). **The local population is able to interpret itself and define the guidelines of its development.** This innovative approach is based on the methodology of interpretation of the environment defined by Freeman Tilden.

Based on these developments, it became necessary to point out why interpretation was needed in **heritage management**. Freeman Tilden has provided us with the basis to the innovative approach in the methodology of interpretation. The methods based on his work have helped the development of heritage interpretation as an independent field. These methods, as well as techniques of modern treatment of heritage, are increasing the importance and the effects of interpretation in heritage management.

The **definition** of Heritage Interpretation, as well as the discipline itself, is **still evolving**. Despite many ground-breaking achievements, the **professionalization of heritage interpretation** is still a hard task.

„Interpreters and guides usually worry too much about content. You can look that stuff up in a book or talk to someone who knows more about it than you. What really separates accomplished interpreters and guides from the rest of the pack is their ability to get inside their audiences heads and leave something worthwhile there. It is their ability to communicate in compelling ways." (Sam Ham, 2000)

Photo: Ivan Cvek for Istra Inspirit

Principles of Interpretation

„Interpretation is not information. It is not a visitor centre, a sign, a brochure or the pointing out of attractions as they pop into view. It is not a slide show or a role play. These are merely techniques by which interpretation can be delivered. Interpretation goes beyond focusing on the oldest, the largest or the rarest... It leaves people moved, their assumptions challenged and their interest in learning stimulated. Good interpretation is still thought about at breakfast the next morning, or over the dinner table the next week. If properly delivered, interpretation not only enriches a tourism experience, it provides the foundation for remembering and reliving it..." (Simon McArthur, 1998).

The **principles of interpretation** that Freeman Tilden, one of the fathers of interpretation, formulated in his book "Interpreting Our Heritage" are still valid:

"1. Any form of interpretation that does not **relate** the objects displayed and described to something **within the experience or personality of the visitors**, will be totally sterile.

2. Information, as such, is not interpretation. It is a **revelation based on information**. They are two different things. However, every interpretation includes information.

3. Interpretation is an **art** that combines many arts to explain the presented subjects; and any form of art, to a certain point, is **teachable**.

4. Interpretation does not pursue instruction, but **provocation**.

5. It must be the **presentation of the whole** and not the parts isolated, and must be directed to the individual as a whole and not only to one of his aspects.

6. Interpretation **addressed at children** should not be a mere dilution of what is given to adults; it requires a **radically different approach**. In the best of cases it will need specific programmes."

These principles can be summed up in three ideas which form the basis of heritage interpretation. These three ideas are found in most of the heritage interpretation work since Tilden's time.

Provoke

Interest and curiosity of our audience must be provoked. The established links in the minds of visitors can be enriched by introducing new ideas, something out of the ordinary.

Relate

The **experiences** of the visitors, and what they already know, must be put into **relation** to the **concepts** we want to introduce them to.

Reveal

What do we want our visitors to remember and take with them? What is the message we want to send? The interpreter must reveal a **memorable message** to the audience.

Compared to other concepts of **learning from first-hand experiences**, the most significant characteristic of heritage interpretation is that it **actively encourages participants to interpret their experience**. The participants search for deeper meaning behind facts, or as Tilden put it: "Interpretation is the revelation of a larger truth that lies behind any statement of fact". This is why 'the theme' is at the centre of the interpretive triangle. **Statements of theme** help to express such truths or meanings. This term is sometimes replaced **'meaningful experience'**.

We tend to use the words theme and topic interchangeably, but themes need to be clearly distinguished from topics: while **themes** try to **extract meaning**, **topics** are more means of **factual classification**.

In different works on heritage interpretation (e.g. Sam Ham's TORE approach: Thematic, Organised, Relevant, Enjoyable), the idea to **focus heritage interpretation on themes** is playing a major role. To be relevant for many different individuals, themes offered to participants are often **based on universal concepts**, i.e. ideas that concern almost all people. Themes also **help to organise and to remember information**.

As neuroscience teaches us, **people learn more through narratives than by facts**. People tend to **think metaphorically**, connecting facts to images that have meaning for them. Themes (as well as metaphors or narratives) are connected to **values**. Whether (and how) people relate to heritage is defined by values. The degree to which ideas or products are accepted by people mainly depends on how they are framed (connected to a specific theme).

The **themes** are not final: they should be seen as **offers for interpretation**. The main aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation. The interaction of participants with heritage and interpretive media will likely result in **meanings** that are **different** from what an interpreter suggested.

Heritage interpretation becomes relevant when it connects heritage to the daily lives and decision-making of people. Especially at **"delicate" heritage sites** which can be easily destroyed, or which can be interpreted in conflicting ways, **framing** in themes can easily get a **political dimension**. As heritage interpretation often intends to encourage people to take over stewardship (management and protection of heritage) it makes sense to frame values in common-interest themes which can trigger positive values.

The most controversial debate in heritage interpretation is the decision on how to deal with themes and the meanings they express. A recent study published by *Interpret Europe* on heritage interpretation trends (2014) suggests that two out of the five **current key trends** defined in the study are linked to the **search for purpose** – and this is what themes intend to do, help us find the **purpose of heritage**.

Roles and Benefits of Interpretation

Significant development of tourism creates **new heritage sites** which recognize interpretation as a means that provides the **added value**. The values and meanings of heritage are „recognized" by experts, and heritage interpretation is a means to transmit this value and meaning to the **potential customer**. There is a systemic **lack of discussion** of the role and meaning of interpretation in the overall **concept of heritage management** which will hopefully be addressed in the years to come.

The importance of heritage interpretation has direct or indirect influence on heritage valorization and conservation, including its **possible limitations**. „Through interpretation, understanding; through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection." (Tilden, 1957)

Tourism and culture play an important role in **shaping the environment** to **meet the needs of consumers (visitors and tourists).** The posibility of **cultural consumption** (local/international art, food, fashion, music) combined with image of a location built on **physical assets** (heritage structures) strives to provide visitors with experiences, **„living culture"** and the **atmosphere** only to be experienced at a certain location.

Many places have **redefined** themselves as **cultural and historic centres** in order to use this **trend**. As more cities and regions compete in promoting themselves for tourism, they tend to employ the **same formula**. Their **ability to create „uniqueness" diminishes** in this competition. As structures get **replicated** (castles, museums, open air parks...) and the **novelty effect** begins to **wear off**, the initial growth in visitor numers becomes replaced by financial problems. As the novelty and nostalgia **potential** of the raw „cultural and historic capital" embodied in fixed structures becomes **exhausted**, increasingly **sophisticated technology** has to be employed to dig still deeper into the cultural resource (light shows, animation, virtual reality, digital resources...) The unfortunate effect is to produce a growing series of relatively **sterile**, **inflexible** cultural tourism spaces, dominated by **passive consumption by the visitors**.

In contemporary heritage policies, **local residents** play an **important role**. They might have their own view on the particular heritage. European heritage sites are very rarely isolated from their social surroundings and the community. There is often concern in heritage management, will the sites be used by the local community or not? Interpretive planning therefore involves community and other heritage stakeholders who are seen not just as

visitors, but as empowered people who **use heritage for their daily life**. This is what heritage interpretation intends to achieve.

Photo: Index

Heritage interpretation is not a one-way communication, nor is it only a means of controlling visitors. The need to include the **experience of the user** is a necessary **precondition** and an **integral part** of any form of heritage interpretation.

There is an increasing **role for tourists as co-producers** of their **own experiences**. Skilled consumption will grow as consumers become increasingly dissatisfied with short-term, unskilled experiences included in visiting and viewing heritage. **Creativity** is becoming as **fundamental** as culture was in the latter years of the 20th century. It is important that the **tourists are engaging their creativity in the experiences they consume**.

The requirement to use the creative resources of a particular location requires the destination to stimulate creative proceses and creative production in the community. The individual tourist is able to **produce** their own **experiences** with the **creative raw materials** provided. This in turn gives local people more of a stake in tourism, becoming active producers of the tourism experience rather than extras in a show of staged authenticity.

Photo: Viator

Heritage interpretation that is well planned can help **consolidate and maintain traditional activities** (crafts, trades, etc.), as well as invite the **creation** of **new companies** (cooperatives, catering companies, transport companies, etc.). All these heritate interpretation planning **consequences** can turn into interesting **benefits** - factors of local economic boost and employment promotion, with special relevance in economically depressed areas.

Interpretation forms a **part** of a large range **of heritage-related communication**. It is closely related to **marketing, visitor information and orientation**. These forms of communication often **use the same media** as interpretation, but there are crucial differences between them. **Marketing** materials aim to **sell a heritage product** and **bring visitors** to a certain **area**, while **visitor information** tells people **what there is to do and see**, and **orientation** helps people **find their way around**. So, just because a heritage site has some information panels does not mean it is being interpreted.

Jorge Morales (2008) summarizes in a practical manner some of the basic features of **heritage interpretation**. He defines the following list as "the great crib for interpretation". According to him, interpretation is an **effective managerial tool** which must be addressed to the general public. It is a **voluntary activity** taking into account the **recreational context** of the visitors. Heritage interpretation is inspiring, motivational and provocative, suggestive and persuasive, and stimulating to the use of the senses. It must encourage **active participation** by **stimulating criticism**, **revealing meanings and connections**, and giving **clear and concise messages**. This will contribute to **public awareness**, and keep **heritage conservatio**n, which is the subject of interpretation, as the main goal.

People have always tried to get **intellectual access to places and objects** in whose development they had no direct part. They have taken advantage of individuals and institutions to support them in their search for meaning. Even the **decision to value and to preserve** something as an inheritance **requires** an act of **interpretation**.
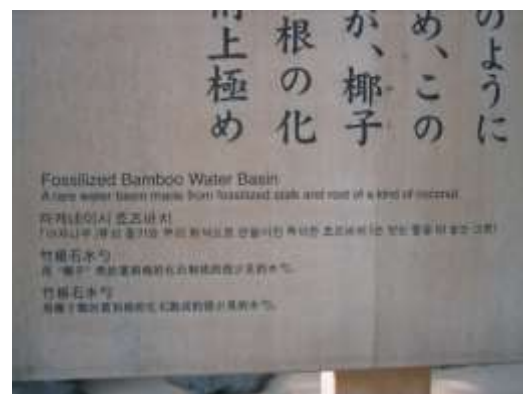
Heritage interpretation is **connecting** people with the **legacy** of their **past**. It turns experiences into sources of inspiration and creativity. To do so, it relates to people, it **provokes their curiosity**, it includes narratives that might be relevant to them, and it **encourages reflection**. Participating in heritage related experiences is a question of interpretation: of the way that we link the actual experience to our own personal history in order to give it a **deeper meaning for ourselves**. How people can be encouraged and enabled to make this link is what heritage interpretation is all about.

The Professional Interpreter

People that **visit** cultural and natural heritage places do so **in order to enjoy heritage**. They must be able to **feel** it, to **understand** it and to **appreciate** it. Only in that way will they be able to **enjoy** it and to **contribute to its conservation**.

The **task of the interpreter** is to show the visitors the **meaning** of specific heritage elements when they are enjoying their leisure time. The **attention level** of the visitor will not always be high, as it is a **leisure activity**, and the environment will be relaxed and not academic. Interpretation therefore does **not** search the **instruction** of the visitor, **but** the **provocation**, something **more than** the sole **learning**. In Heritage Interpretation the fundamental objective is not to present facts, but to communicate a message that is supported by those facts. Heritage Interpreters have an **important task**: to elaborate and **deliver impacting messages** able to **connect** the visitors and the meanings of the places they visit **intellectually and emotionally**, **in order to achieve highest visitor satisfaction**.

"Heritage Interpretation is the art of revealing on the spot the meaning of natural, cultural and historical heritage, to an audience that visits a given place in their leisure time" (Spanish Association for Heritage Interpretation).

It is necessary to provide **training** to the interpreter that bears in mind the **advances of this discipline** and gives the opportunity of **generating employment**, as well as contributes to **conserve the cultural and natural heritage**.

The heritage interpreter must have certain **competences**. The interpreter must have a good **knowledge of the resource**, **know the local population** feelings about the resources and interact with them (or be a part of the local population), analyse the **profile of the audience** and **adapt the activity** and the interpretive media to them. The interpreter must be able to **communicate** the message **efficiently**. In short, "the heritage interpreter is a person able to use the Heritage Interpretation as a communication tool in such a way that visitors of an area, location or element of heritage interest feel interested in the heritage they are visiting and develop attitudes of appreciation and custody towards it" (Several authors, Seminary of Heritage Interpretation, National Centre of Environmental Education. 2011).

It is a quite **complex job**, and usually developed as a **team work**, to enable the most outstanding qualities of each member of the working group to be exploited. The tasks of interpreter go **far beyond those of a simple tour guide**. The basic features of an interpreter, his/her professional and personal profile is well presented in the document "Proposal of professional competence for natural and cultural heritage interpreters" by several authors from the Seminary of Heritage Interpretation. This group of competences is not related only to the person of Heritage Interpreter, it relates to all activities of the stakeholders which are related to development of tourism product at a certain location.

"The necessary professional competences are:

1. To evaluate the **theoretical basics** of Heritage Interpretation, from its origins to date, to develop the professional tasks on the basis of it.
2. To **organize communication** around the three basics of Heritage Interpretation: **knowledge of the resource; knowledge of the audience and knowledge of the interpretive techniques**.
3. To **formulate messages** for interpretive activities applying the methodological principles of the discipline.
4. To create messages and programmes **forging connections between the values of the heritage resource under interpretation and the interests of the audience**.
5. To **evaluate** the basic aspects of different **interpretive activities**."

The expert with skills in Heritage Interpretation can come from **different professional backgrounds** (Tourism, Fine Arts, Biological Sciences, Environmental Studies, History, etc.). The **interpreter** is the **link** between the resource and the visitors, whether directly, acting as a **guide** throughout the visit, or indirectly, through the **design** of information panels, leaflets, etc. Heritage **interpreters** should **help people understand and value the natural, cultural and historic heritage of the area**. It is a blend of the tourist guide profile with other disciplines, which enable the interpreter to **create enjoyable experiences** for visitors.

It is a hard task to turn the **heritage interpretation capacity of the local stakeholders** into professional skills, despite the fact that professionals already exist in this field (tour guides, concierges, museum curators, etc.). It is necessary to **elaborate training** itineraries that promote the official recognition of this **professional qualification**.

Being a good interpreter includes some of the **knowledge prerequisites** such as:

- Understanding the discipline of heritage interpretation.
- Up-to-date knowledge of the resource.
- General cultural level. Keeping up-to-date regarding important events.
- Language and communication skills.
- Knowledge of basic psychology and group dynamics.
- Knowledge of tourist services and the area.

There are some **skills** that are necessary to be able to interpret heritage and communicate the message to the visitors.

Heritage interpreter should be **professionally committed** to the work. The interpreter should be committed to the conservation of the resource. He should be able to **recognise** the distinct **economic, natural and social problems** that come from **tourist activities** and to **promote sustainable tourism**, taking into account the point of view of the local population.

He should understand the **difference between orientation, information, education and interpretation**, as well as the distinct roles that each element plays in reaching the expected results. The interpreter must apply his skills to all interpretive environments, and choose the **appropriate method and media of delivery based on professional judgment and not personal preferences**. In order to do that, the interpreter should **constantly work on development** of communication methods and other professional skills.

The interpreter should be aware of the many **intangible meanings** present in the resource. This is a sensitive person, able to approach the public from **different viewpoints**, and able to act as a **facilitator and intermediary**. This is a person skilled in teamwork and communication, with **high expressive capacity** and deep **knowledge of interpretive techniques**. The interpreter is a good **problem resolver**, **pays attention** to visitors' suggestions and **mediates in disputes** if necessary. Of course, a **good memory** and **research skills** are necessary in order to keep up-to-date and to evaluate the validity of information.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of programmes, the interpreter should have **analytical capacity**. This is a **flexible** person, adaptable to change, able to adapt the programmes

while maintaining professional approach. The interpreter should have aptitude for expressing the **importance of respect for the site's rules and regulations**.

How will the interpreter be perceived by the visitors depends on his professional as well as his personal qualities. The **positive attitude** towards his work and towards visitors is **essential for success**. Basic personal characteristics of a good heritage interpreter include determination, assertiveness and organizational ability. The interpreter should be a good-natured and good-humoured person, being able to **smile** and treat the participants in a **friendly** way, paying attention to everyone in the group. Not all visitors will be agreeable, but the interpreter should be **patient** with visitors regardless of that. This is a person with **initiative**, interested in working with the public, showing passion and love for the work he is doing. The heritage interpreter should have **self-confidence** based on his **knowledge** and abilities to achieve good professional results.

Personal abilities and professional competences like these can be learnt just as knowledge of the resource and its history can. **The abilities can be developed** and will evolve over the course of time. Motivation is the key element in developing the capacity for learning from experience and turning failures into abilities to learn. Heritage interpreters can face up to and resolve problems developing **creative potential**, opening their minds to find new perspectives and solutions; taking risks and breaking routines, innovating and going a bit further, which will be reflected in **successful results**.

Audience-based Interpretation (Including Children)

Communication is a **critical process** in the interpretive process. It is essential to know who our visitors are, so we can make this process as effective as possible. Visitors to places with heritage interest can be divided according to their psychological attitude in two large groups with distinct features – **captive and non-captive audience**. **Captive** audience visits a heritage resource out of **duty**, looking for **external rewards**, such as for educational purposes. This group **must pay attention** in order to pass an exam, obtain a title etc. The atmosphere will be more **academic** and will require a **didactic programme design**. Usually the visitors are grouped by age with similar levels of experience. A **non-captive** audience goes **voluntarily** to a heritage resource. The interpretation takes place in their **leisure time**, when their objective is to **enjoy** themselves. They are not looking for instruction and are **not obliged to pay attention**. Their motivation is **recreation**, and they will not appreciate academic atmosphere. This group usually consists of families, with different levels of experience and knowledge. They will require **interpretive programme design**.

Heritage interpretation is addressed to the **non-captive audience**, but the techniques used will help improve communication and will also be **effective for captive audiences**. Heritage interpreters need to **understand the different target public**. Advance knowledge of the audience helps interpreters identify interests and needs of visitors.

When **planning** an interpretive **programme**, it is essential to take into account who the visitors will be. If possible, we should study the **visitors' profiles** and take into account aspects needed to develop an appropriate programme such as **size of the group**, their **age**, place of **origin** and point of departure, previous **knowledge** and **physical/mental ability**, their **cultural, ethnic, racial and religious differences**, their **reasons** for travelling and their **level of interest** and expertise.

The number of people that form a group will help us plan to adapt the activities. A **large group** will be approached differently than a **small group** as it takes more time to involve a large group in certain activities. It is also important to know how much material we will need.

Knowing the age of the group will be essential in **planning the pace and route** of the visit, as well as **adapting the programme** to the needs of children if they are present. It is more difficult to keep their attention for a longer period of time, and they will lose interest with an excessive concentration of information.

Interesting data will be provided by knowing the **nationality of visitors**, as this might point us to their previous knowledge. The more different their place of origin is, the greater the **contrast and the impact of interpretation** may be. The **language of communication** is a key factor in organizing the appropriate information for the visitors. Visitors tend to be more demanding if it has taken them long to reach the place, as their **expectations** are usually **elevated**, given the **high level of intentionality of their visit**. Previous knowledge of the visitors is an important factor which must be taken into account when planning. Interpretive programmes must satisfy varied interests.

Interpretive programmes have to be designed based on **accessibility** so they could be enjoyed by a larger number of people. Knowing the physical and mental demands of visitors in advance can help plan for the increased accessibility. General guidelines should be taken into account for tailored interpretation for **special needs visitors** (such as multi-sensory experiences, audio options, tactile information etc.)

Exhibit for touching

This exhibit is designed to allow visually impaired visitors to enjoy the museum, Exhibited objects include the following.

- Reliefs of *ukiyo-e*
- Relief map of Edo
- Tapes: "Sounds of various occupations," "Modern sounds"

Please handle objects carefully.

The **expectations** of visitors can be **high**, and good planning will help us achieve higher satisfaction with the visit. The objectives and **activities** of heritage interpretation must be **appropriate to the available time**. It is better to have brief activities in order to keep the interest at a higher level. Repetition of the same or similar activity is to be avoided.

If possible, the **distribution of visitors** and visits at a heritage site must take into account the **crowdedness** of visitors at the site. The activities can be alternated corresponding to the expected crowd.

There is no such thing as „**Typical Visitor**". It is essential for the Heritage interpreter to learn how to **adjust to various audiences** and **modify interpretation approach** based on communication with visitors. **Understanding visitor needs** can help determine a range of desirable experiences.

There is a need to create a **totally different interpretation experience for children** rather than to simplify the interpretation planned for adults. Children **process information, learn, and participate in experiences** in a **totally different way than adults**, and we will learn how to best create experiences that will suit their needs best.

Small children live in the **here-and-now**. It is very hard for them to understand a past beyond their personal experience, which is a reflection of their **immediate environment**. If we are aiming interpretation on small children, we need to rely on their understanding and experience of **events that happen regularly**, for instance every week (no kindergarten on Saturdays) or every year (birthday, Christmas). Younger children love **repetition and predictability**, but those of age five to six years are already keen to **learn new things** beyond their immediate surroundings. At that age, children begin to **understand measurement and comparison** and getting a feeling of past and future. This is a precondition for any interpretation of cultural heritage that explores how the past is meaningful.

This ability to compare helps them marvel and understand what other people have done. They can then grasp meaning from interpretive stories about past events or people that **relate cultural heritage to their own life experience**. This ability helps them develop curiosity. **Heroes are important** in their world, and they admire actions of others, new things they have not yet experienced.

Once the go to **school**, they meet others from **different backgrounds**. This is an opportunity for them to experience something new in their social environment. Interpretation should capitalise on their curiosity and support their genuine interest in the richness and

diversity of the world. **First-hand experiences** and **real phenomena** in their **familiar environment** can be used to interpret heritage.

Teenagers and young people will understand cultural heritage interpretation when it is **connected to beliefs and values that are meaningful to them**. Interpretation should open questions that **provoke interaction**, **debate and food for self-reflection** rather than providing simple answers. The interpreter must **respect the autonomy** of the young **individual** and his/her sometimes provocative opinion, and must show coherent behaviour based on well-founded beliefs.

"**Certainty** about one's meaningful place in the world leads to **happiness** while **uncertainty** leads to **disquietude**." (Tilden 1957). Nevertheless, fully aware of the poor conditioning which a visitor may bring to a heritage site, Tilden urged heritage interpreters "to put your visitor in possession of at least one **disturbing idea that may grow into a fruitful interest**".

Disturbing ideas resulting from encounters with cultural heritage can trigger people to **question firm beliefs and fixed identity constructs** they may hold, and it can help **overcome stereotypes and clichés**. Finding new interests in the cultural diversity can lead to increased self-esteem through positive engagement with heritage.

The **elder citizens** also need stimulation that provokes reflection. They should not be neglected by the interpreter. They can **contribute with their rich life experience**, and can be valuable **eye-witnesses of recent history**. Elder citizens are very **likely to volunteer** with cultural heritage roles.

Enjoyable and/or Interesting Interpretation

> „When a person buys an experience, they pay to spend time enjoying a series of memorable events that a site or facility stages to engage them in a personal way." (Pine and Gilmore)

Heritage inerpretation requires **careful planning** in order to achieve the **total experience package**. Before we finalize our plan, we must understand the value of entertainment and creation of the total experience.

We will learn how to **harmonize impressions** and how to **eliminate negative cues**. This chapter will show how to mix in **memorabilia** (create memorable experiences and prepare „memorable" opportunities/souvenirs); and how **to engage the five senses** in creation of the total experience package.

To make an experience enjoyable and interesting, we need to adhere to some **simple principles** related to the way people receive, organize and store information.

The interpreter should be aware that **people generally forget information**, figures, etc. such as dates of battles, centuries, and population numbers. In order to appreciate that kind of information, it needs to be set in an **understandable and interesting context**. The interpreter should not tell us everything he/she knows, but combine information, make a selection, form an interpretive message, and give it structure that will make it interesting to the audience.

In Heritage Interpretation the fundamental objective is not to present facts, but to **communicate a message that is supported by those facts**. If the interpreter **limits** the **references to information**, without explaining and interpreting them, **people stop paying attention**.

The audience for heritage interpretation is not a captive audience. They are people in their leisure time who have no external validation to participating in the activity. If the information does not succeed in **catching the visitors' attention**, they will not make an effort to sustain their interest.

They will they will want to learn something and **have a good time**, without having to invest large amounts of energy and time in following the thread of the message. They will prefer **short activities**. The interpreter should **find and interpret things of interest to the visitors**, not only of interest to the interpreter. People take in information more easily when it is organised, has a good simple script and follows a central organising idea (theme). It is important not to over-interpret the resource, delivering too much information to the visitors.

People need both sides of the brain, both the emotional and the logical sides, to process information, so the **message should be aimed equally at the brains and hearts of visitors**. In heritage interpretation, effective communication between the interpreter and his audience is basic for the transmission of the message. The interpreter needs to **know the audience and the context**, as well as **use a good communicative strategy** and **evaluate the message** in order to **modify and correct** it should that become necessary.

The message should **stimulate the attention and curiosity** of the visitor. If we cannot attract their interest, we will not be able to communicate. The message should be **related to their lives and experiences**. The interpreter can use examples they are familiar with and make reference to the whole picture. **Unified message presentation** (colours, style, design) should support the presentation.

According to Sam Ham, the **model that summarises the qualities of the discipline** of Heritage Interpretation is the model **EROT (TORE),** and these qualities set it apart from other types of communication. **Heritage interpretation** should be **enjoyable, relevant, organized and thematic**.

Enjoyable

Good communication is **entertaining** and keeps the audience's attention. If we do not succeed in grabbing the visitors' attention, regardless of the interpretive medium, we cannot expect them to remember any message. Good design also plays its part in making the communication more enjoyable.

Relevant

The message should **have meaning and be personal**. If something is significant to us, it means that we understand the message the other person wants to get across. The more we can relate with other previously learnt concepts the more our understanding will be improved. The interpreter needs to "build that bridge" so that information can be retained.

For the message to be personally relevant, it should have something to do with the life and interests of the audience. To transmit the message we can use, whenever possible, **universal concepts** such as love, death, family, food, etc. This guarantees the interest of the audience, regardless of their nationality, culture, sex, or age, since these concepts are important to everyone.

Organised

The audience should not have to make a great effort to follow the thread of what we are saying. Using **chronological order** will make it **easier** for the audience **to understand**.

Thematic

Studies confirm that people are able to **retain up to 3 new ideas in an activity**. It is recommended that the interpreter uses only three main ideas, since this would be the average that the majority of people can follow.

To make information more enjoyable and to build bridges between what our audience already knows and the new idea we want to show them, we can use some **examples** indicated **by Sam Ham** in his book "Interpretation: a practical guide for people with big ideas and small budgets" (1992):

- "Go **from the familiar to the unknown**: to understand a new piece of knowledge we need it to rest on something else we already know. For example, "I am sure that you have all seen cows grazing some time, well sea urchins do the same on the rocks, although in this case the seaweed is the grass".
- **Use examples**: to explain how we borrow ideas from nature in the design of everyday objects (bio mimesis) we could say: "Velcro is a good example of an idea that came from looking at nature, in this case plants that stick to your clothes".
- **Use metaphors**: for example, to explain the way a marine bird is adapted for underwater fishing, we could say, "This bird is always wearing its diving gear".
- **Use analogies**: showing the similarities between what we are talking about and things our audience know. For example: "To understand how the gold is distributed in this mountain, we can imagine a three layer cake, with sponge on the bottom level, cream in the middle and strawberries on top. Well then, if the gold was the layer of cream then to get at it they had to remove a whole layer of strawberries and what we can see here today is the sponge.
- **Use comparison**: showing the principle differences and similarities between two things. For example, "These two clams may look the same at first sight, but if you look

carefully, this one has darker lines on its shell. What is more, if you touch it, it is rougher. But more than anything else you will notice the flavour when it has been cooked!"

- **Use similes**: when we compare two things using the word "like", to give a sharper idea of one the two. For example: "The roots of these trees are like hands grasping the small handful of earth that supports them".

And we can also use these two pieces of advice to make our communication more personal, to relate it directly to our audience:

- **Use self-reference**: this is when we make our audience think about how their own experience relates to what we are telling them, for example: "How many of you have been to another National Park?" or "Think for yourselves what you would choose if you had to live on this island".
- **Use classifications**: when we create a kind of "team", so that people can identify themselves with it. For example: "I am sure that you are not the sort of people who throw rubbish away in the countryside". We should be careful with these classifications since, at times, they can have the opposite effect and people will feel excluded."

Heritage interpretation is **focused on communication**. To make communication more enjoyable, an interpreter should smile. **Natural smile shows welcome and gives off positive feelings.**

The interpreter should encourage people to **use all their senses**: people receive information from the world around them through all of the senses, not just hearing and sight. If there are disabled people in the guided group, it is even more important not to base the communication on the use of only one or two senses. The interpreter needs to encourage people to smell, touch etc., always keeping in mind the conservation of the resource in question. People can be **invited to take part**: this usually surprises people because we are more used to "Don't Touch!" and listening with no **personal involvement** to the information given by a guide.

Diagrams and illustrations can be used: whenever possible, it is a good idea to use diagrams to express ideas that, any other way, would be more complicated to explain. The interpreter should try to **avoid technical vocabulary**. If it is absolutely necessary to use technical jargon, the meaning should be explained in an interesting way. **Images** also communicate ideas clearly. The interpreter can **exaggerate the size or the timescale** to explain the context of information and to **demonstrate cause and effect**. It is easier for people to understand their actions when their effects are demonstrated.

To explain the context, the interpreter can **use an imaginary situation** which involves the audience. **Personification**, or giving human qualities to objects (for example, the ability to talk), can help **understand the historic context**. Focusing on a **single story teller** (one person, fictional or not) who is a part of the context, can help the audience understand the causes and effects better.

Photo: Scottish Whisky Experience by Istra Inspirit

Using humour in appropriate situations improves communication and makes it more agreeable.

If the interpreter includes recommendations such as the above while planning and delivering a guided visit or in the text for an information panel or leaflet, a **successful result is practically guaranteed.**

Learning

Even though interpretation is considered as an **enhancement to your visitors' enjoyment** and the meaning of their visit, **high-quality interpretation** can help people to **learn about heritage**. Heritage interpretation can **support formal education** and help visitors **learn new skills**.

Interpretation is not just about facts and figures, it is the way in which the **interest, value, significance and meaning of heritage is communicated** to people. Heritage interpretation is a learning activity which communicates the stories and ideas behind the heritage and provokes the audience to think for themselves, coming to their own understanding about what its subject means to them.

The **heritage interpreter** must have a **very broad knowledge** of the resources and must be knowledgeable about past and contemporary issues and the condition of the interpreted area and its resources. Interpreter must be **able to identify the intangible and universal meanings** that the resource posses for the different kind of public.

The most significant feature of heritage interpretation is that it actively encourages participants to interpret their experience themselves in searching for their own meaningful context behind the facts. To support this **search for meaning**, interpretation must provide **first-hand experience with original heritage**. It requires active involvement and exchange of ideas with visitors. It might not always be possible to achieve the ideal situation in interpreting heritage, but the combination of the attention needed for learning, the connection with own experiences and its relevance are key for good heritage interpretation.

The **learning needs of different audiences vary**, and there is the need for the message to be understandable, well organized and interesting.

All heritage phenomena embrace stories, and to make the experience of heritage meaningful, interpretation helps to express the essence of such stories. **Storytelling** had been introduced into heritage interpretation at a very early stage ("The story's the thing", Tilden, 1957). People tend to think metaphorically, connecting facts to whole images that touch them and that make sense for them; **stories help organize and contextualize experiences and information.**

Dealing with meaning and not just transferring facts is always a **challenge**. Heritage is not always about sites and objects however. Interpreters often use **the word 'phenomenon'** to **summarise tangible and intangible heritage representations** (such as poetry or music) that can all be a subject of first-hand experience. The visitors can relate to the particular example they can see, to its specific history, stories and specific qualities, and they aim to reveal its hidden secrets in an engaging and rewarding way. **First-hand experience** links the heritage with a **visitors' sense of reality**. Being **personally connected** with the real thing makes a different and a much **deeper impact**, as it can be an individual and emotional event, involving the whole person.

What people can empathise and relate with, and what they experience for themselves helps them to **absorb the experience more deeply** than just hearing or seeing it. It is hard to

expect a text on a panel to relate a certain heritage phenomenon to the participant's own world.

Compared to formal learning, non-formal, experiential learning at heritage sites has significant advantages in achieving these demands.

Participation is a key word in the current debate on **education and learning**. Real participation means that participants should also have the **opportunity to determine the progress of an activity**. At its best, participants are successfully encouraged to interpret heritage on their own and the **interpretive media are mainly aimed to trigger and to facilitate** this process.

One of the principles of heritage interpretation says that phenomena need to be related to the personality of participants. Participants start to become **fully involved** if they **personally resonate** with the heritage. Participation **benefits from dialogue** so it is more effective in personal than in non-personal interpretive services. One of the **challenges** of real participation is that **neither the course nor the actual outcome** of an interpretive activity **can be predicted**.

Heritage interpretation can be a valuable approach for schools, as it **complements formal education**. Education in the classroom is often **based on texts and media**. It focuses on **generic** knowledge, skills and attitudes considered significant for a country. Larger scale **historic developments are illustrated through selected, ideal-typical examples**.

On the other hand, interpretation is connected with first-hand experience of real heritage sites. They refer to concrete **local heritage** which is part of the **local environment** in which children live. Local heritage **rarely fits completely** into ideal or typical concepts and ideas. It can be framed in ways that reveal many shades and colours of particular things and individual people. It can be visited again and it can be **interpreted from different perspectives**.

In personal development of Europeans **the teenage years and early twenties** are the period of most intense **search for deeper meanings**. This is a time period when **individual value preferences are shaped**. These basic beliefs, value preferences and identity constructs will then often last for decades.

Cultural heritage can play a very important, even if largely underestimated role during these years of secondary school and tertiary education. **Meaningful interpretation of cultural heritage from multiple perspectives can provide food for thinking**. The achievements of historical personalities, their struggles, their beliefs, their innovations that overcame traditions and conventionalism, all this can help to **articulate deeper questions** in a more meaningful way. Some young visitors might keep identity constructs that have been passed on to them by **parents and peers**, some may broaden their sense of belonging to **new socio-cultural groups** and some reject what has been passed on to them and **seek something entirely new**. But even then cultural heritage and historical figures can **provide inspiration** to try out **new identity constructs**.

The criteria which are relevant to young people remain important for adults. The processes of **lifelong learning** includes **shaping and reshaping beliefs, value preferences, attitudes and identities,** but the intensity of such deep questions diminishes or completely fades away during the busy years of professional careers and caring for children.

Deeper questions of meaning often surface again after the family phase when seniors have more time for themselves – provided their beliefs and identity constructs are still open for personal development. **Senior visitors are a good heritage interpretation audience**, as they are interested in learning first-hand and addressing deeper questions.

Authenticity

Authenticity in heritage is very important, as visitors are looking for a **genuine and distinctive experience** they **share with the locals**. Accessing these real experiences together with locals and in local setting is an important element of the **overall satisfaction level** of visitors.

Interpretation embraces a discussion of human values, conflicts, ideas, tragedies, achievements, ambiguities, and triumphs. **Heritage interpretation is not limited to "official" or "true" version of the resources and their meaning**. Multiple points of view should be accommodated in interpretation in order to provide authentic experiences to visitors.

There is a need to rely on **accurate information** when developing interpretive material and to **avoid the tendency to exaggerate** in interpretation. It is essential to know the **relationship between the people and their environment**, the local history and culture, the traditions, legends, etc. in detail. These aspects form the **essence of the place** which can be captured and transmitted through interpretive techniques. This **interpretive "touch"** is what makes the place be remembered, as this is what makes it be known and understood.

The **influence of local community and visitors on each other** is an important asset in creation of authentic heritage experiences and interpretation. The locals play a key role and we have to try to make them feel identified with the interpretive activity being planned. **External influences** over areas with touristic potential have **not always** been **positive**, and in the past, in many cases, this interaction was translated into a mere **exploitation of the resources,** without this providing the locals with any development or well-being. The interpretive activity will always be richer if the **local community participates actively** in the conservation and interpretation of the resource.

Objectives and Outcomes

Heritage interpretation is supposed to accomplish a number of **objectives**. The objectives set by an interpretation plan need to be **specific and measurable, appropriate and realistic**. The plan should include objectives which will have these characteristics and which will be achievable in certain time limits. The **success** of any interpetive program cannot be **evaluated** without first understanding what were the objectives of the program.

The objectives can be **marketable**. The **cost effectiveness of the interpretive program and returns on investment** can be measured if the objectives were set with this aim in mind. The benefits to the resource, to the agency managing the heritage site, and to the visitors can be measured only when the objectives were set with **quantifiable indicators**.

Involving local people in presenting a heritage site to the public can foster a **sense of community ownership and stewardship**; one of the objectives can be promotion of conservation ethos and encouragement to local people and visitors to support your work. At a strategic level, interpretation can benefit the your region's competitiveness in the international heritage tourism market.

Interpretive planning requires a **mission, clear goals and objectives**. It is necessary to determine what the objectives are for presenting the heritage site and the community. We need to establish what visitors should take from the experience, and what the community will gain from the programme.

The **financial objectives** of the plan need to define **who will benefit financially**. How will the programme be funded? Will it be self-supporting or will it need public funding to operate. The objective can define the need to secure capital through public-private sponsors, or the need to finance the interpretation through entrance fees.

The **preservation objective** will define how interpretation can enhance heritage preservation. The **educational objective** will define what local and visitor heritage education goals will interpretation fulfil, such as providing free or subsidized access to heritage resources for schools, or educating visitors and residents on the importance of valuing heritage resources.

A **master interpretation plan** needs specific objectives as far as **what information** visitors should learn, **how they should behave**, and **how they should feel** after visiting the community. This type of objectives is often considered to be the **outcome** of the interpretive services.

The final aim of Heritage Interpretation is conservation and valorisation of the heritage. Therefore, we want to **influence the receptors of our interpretive message**; influence their **knowledge** as much as their **feelings and behaviour**.

Theme Statements

Stories provide the **basis for the development of themes**. Many stories can be told about each and every heritage site, building or object. The different people who have been involved at different times will have a range of different perspectives. It is the task of the interpreter to make sense of all these possibilities, and create a enjoyable learning experience for visitors. This can be done by **selecting one or more appropriate themes before selecting specific stories.**

When referring to the **Theme** in interpretation, Sam Ham says that it is the **central idea of the message** that we want people to remember after a guided visit, or having read an information panel, etc. It is important to communicate thematically because:
- People remember Themes and forget isolated facts.
- Having a Theme helps us to be prepared and focussed.
- Thinking in Themes unleashes our creativity.
- Having an interesting Theme helps us achieve success in communication.

We have seen that setting the Theme is one of the differentiating characteristics of heritage interpretation, but what is a Theme? A **Theme** is a **phrase that contains a simple, complete and brief message**. It contains only one idea and is specific to the heritage site we are interpreting. It shows the **overall goal of our heritage presentation**. It must be **interesting and motivating**.

Thematic interpretation consists in the presentation of information based on a single key idea, and this produces a central message. As we said before, interpretation is not merely the transferral of information. A **good interpretive Theme** does not only express a fact, but also **has an emotional effect on the visitor** and grabs his attention by a combination of knowledge and feelings.

Sam Ham gives us **three basic steps** in the preparation of Themes:

- Describe the Topic: "I want to talk to my audience about …"
- Describe the Specific Topic: "Specifically, I want to talk to my audience about…"
- Write the Theme: "After doing the activity, I want my audience to remember that…"

An example of this would be:

- Describe the topic: "I want to talk to my audience about… plants".
- Describe the specific topic: "Specifically I want to talk to my audience about… the medicinal uses of plants".
- Write the Theme: "After the visit, I want my audience to remember that… before their eyes, there is a veritable chemist shop which could improve their quality of life".

Considering this more closely, the **Topic refers to the subject** we are going to deal with: that is to say, what our guided visit or information panel, for example, will be about. Of all the things we could talk about concerning this Topic, we chose one, and this is our Specific Topic. We can take many Specific Topics from just one Topic: in this last example, we could have chosen reproduction, flowers, etc.

The **Theme** is the complete phrase with subject, verb and object which develops an idea, and which is the **definitive message that we want our audience to remember**. Equally we can take many Themes from one Specific Topic; in the previous example, and for the flower in the picture: "This plant produces a substance that can kill you, but can also help your heart." We should not confuse the **Topic** with the **Theme** - they are **two separate concepts**.

How can an interpreter reach his audience in the most effective manner? Interpretation facilitates the **personal connection** of visitors with the site of heritage interest they are visiting. It creates a **potent meaning** they will remember for longer than, for example, the dates of important events or the names of the natural species in a given place.

The guide should ably make connections between the tangible resources of the Heritage site and the intangible meanings it represents.

Tangible attributes are represented by the physical characteristics of the heritage site, which can be perceived with the senses. People, events, dates, measurements, names, etc., are also considered to be tangible attributes.

Intangible concepts are abstract ideas that arise from tangible attributes: that is to say, processes, relationships, feelings, values or beliefs. Thinking about them is often a subjective process since the same concept can represent something tangible for some people and something intangible for others.

Universal concepts arise from the intangible concepts and are more **relevant** to the great **majority of visitors**. The heritage site becomes more relevant and meaningful to visitors when we help them to connect its tangible resources with its intangible meanings.

Jose Morales gives us an **interesting example** of this connection: "An example of the use of tangible elements, intangibles and universal concepts: Some of the tangible concepts of the unique tree "Tejo de San Cristóbal (St Christopher's Yew-tree)" are the following: species, diameter, perimeter, height, age, wood, poison... And some of the intangible concepts of this same tree are: longevity, wisdom, tradition, fiestas and celebrations, death, life, love, legends, culture, health, superstitions... From these last, we can arrive at some universal concepts such as: death, life, love, happiness, family, health..."

Each theme contains the possibility of an **emotional connection** which should come over when we are transmitting the message to the audience. It should in some way touch people's hearts, so that the visitors have an **emotional response**.

Our audience should understand the new idea that we want to get across; if they do not understand it, they will stop paying attention and the idea will be lost.

The theme is a **stimulus to learn more**. This is one of the most difficult "ingredients" to achieve, since after communicating our message to the audience, it should have the ability to motivate them enough to go looking for further information.

An interpretive Theme should be written in such a way that it reaches the greatest number of people possible and touches the audience. We should not forget that this is a message that we want to get across and that we want our audience to take it away with them when the interpretive activity is over.

In order to have the Theme we have chosen reach the greatest number of people, regardless of their tastes, experiences, interests etc., we can use universal concepts that are relevant to everyone. Everyone can adapt them to their experience, culture and traditions etc. A Theme is **like the headline of a newspaper: if it is interesting, we will continue reading the news**.

The audience does not need to know the discipline of heritage interpretation in order to enjoy it and to understand an effective piece of communication. We never need to specifically mention the discipline in our guided visit, information panel or leaflet, just as a painter does not describe how he has painted the picture we admire. We just enjoy the work of art. By the same token we are in a certain sense making art when we put into practice a well-formed interpretive programme; **visitors can enjoy it without having to learn about the inner workings of the message and how it was put together**. But we do need to know how to express our Theme - that message we want to transcend the interpretive activity- in the best way possible, so that we can succeed in bringing it to our audience's attention.

In the case of **guided visits**, we should bear in mind that, when we begin the visit, in **first moments our audience's attention will be at optimum.** This is the **time to introduce the interpretive Theme**. We should express it clearly, suggesting by our intonation that what we are saying at that moment is very important. To introduce the Theme we should follow this procedure:

• When the visit is over, you will understand why...

• When we come back to this point, you will agree with me that...

• When we finish this visit you will understand how...

Sam Ham suggests the **model** in which the **Theme** is **communicated** to the audience at the **beginning of the visit**, and **repeated at the end**. In the case of written texts, it is advisable to have the **Theme integrated into the title** of the information panel or leaflet, and it is then known as a Themed Title.

Program Planning: the Steps

It is necessary to **strategically approach** the ways of achieving the connection between various elements of the tourist offer. It is obvious that cultural tourism **product** cannot exist if there are no cultural heritage **attractions**, if they are not **accessible**, if they are not **connected by infrastructure**, if they cannot be found or visited. **Visitor centres** cannot **inform** the tourists about the non-existent product, and product cannot exist if there are no people who work on its **establishment and promotion**. Promotion cannot happen if there is no product. All of this happens in the local community, as cultural heritage is as much a part of the material surroundings as it is of the immaterial character of a certain location.

To carry out the interpretation of a place of heritage interest, it is recommended to elaborate a **reference document** which integrates its management objectives in the possible interpretive programmes

Interpretive **planning** is a **key element** for the interpretive programmes to be effective, be coherent and show the resource as a whole. It is not enough to simply know the place and to show it to a group of visitors; there must be a **clear connection between the elements**, and the way in which we establish this connection is as important as the content we communicate. The planning process implies an **analysis of the interpretive needs and opportunities.**

There are several levels of interpretive planning, depending on the scope we want our interpretive programme to reach: large scale plans, for example at regional level, imply larger planning phases and more elements to consider in decision taking.

To start the planning, we must ask ourselves what the **objectives of interpretation** are. The answer to this question represents our general objectives and needs, or the origin of the interpretation plan. It is important to **detail the results and benefits we expect to achieve**, that are usually a combination of local and touristic development, improved quality of life for the local population, education and raising of public awareness about certain issues related to heritage, and conservation and management of a determined resource.

If we do not have a **clear idea** about what our objective is, we cannot establish either the **criteria** upon which the reminder of the interpretive programme is based, or the **indicators** needed for the future **evaluation** of the plan.

Once the ultimate goals of the planning have been established, the needs that motivate the interpretive plan, we can continue posing further questions which will lead us through the phases of the process.

Resources analysis: What are we going to interpret?

At this point it will be necessary to carry out a **study in depth** about the resources we are going to interpret. In addition to its more obvious attractions, we can also include other less obvious elements in the plan that will enrich the interpretive activity. It is advisable to ask the local people, as to **catch the essence** of a place, books and data do not give all the information we need. However, we will need to make sure that the information obtained is

rigorous. Once the information about the area is compiled, we can **select the resources** we are going to interpret within the **potentials** we have detected. For this, several factors need to be born in mind, like security or access, visits impact, the resource's attractiveness or if it is subject to seasonality, etc.

Due to different causes (staff available, duration of visits, budget, resource fragility, area extension, etc.) we will **not always be able to interpret everything that has interpretive potential,** and at the time of taking the right decision about an issue, it is necessary to have specific criteria. Some of these factors may be used as indicators for decision taking in relation to the interpretive importance of the potential resources. The **interpretive plan** is a **"live" document** which must be **open** through time to **relevant modifications**.

Audience analysis: Who is the interpretation addressed to?

In some places with heritage interest, studies for **characterization of the visitor** are carried out. These studies give us an idea of what is the profile of the people the interpretive programmes will be addressed to. Some of the criteria to take into account at the time of elaborating this visitor profile have been already indicated: whether it is local population, foreigners, whether they know the country's language, age, whether they have been in the area before, what their interests are, visit duration, etc.

Photo: Ethnography Museum Zagreb

Following our pathway towards effective interpretation, the next step would be to analyse the available media to transfer the contents to the audience.

Media and programmes: How, when and where are we going to interpret?

We have to decide how, when and where the visitors will establish contact with the interpretive message. Once we have a clear idea of our objectives, the elements or resources we are going to interpret, as well as the audience we are going to address, we need to **focus on the media** we are going to use. These are **the communication channels** the interpreter uses to communicate with the receptors and send them the message.

Interpretation Settings, Types and Media

According to Stewart (1981) there are **two types of interpretive media**: personal and non-personal. The difference lies on whether there is **interaction** between the audience and the interpreter or not.

Non-personal media

- Signalling and marks.
- Publications: booklets, flyers, guides and maps.
- Communication media: radio, television, press, internet, social networks.
- Self-guided routes.
- Automatic audio-visual mechanisms.
- Interpretive shows and exhibits.

Personal media

- Guided routes and tours.
- Audio-visual mechanisms attended by the staff.
- Specialised staff (exhibits, activities, conferences).
- Animation (in all its varieties).
- Other non-typified services (spontaneous help, information and greetings, etc.).

In order to choose those which media are most appropriate for our interpretive programme, we need to bear in mind the **best option is generally a combination of several types**, as this will result in a more complete plan.

No interpretive medium is, a priori, better than any other. The ideal is to **use the medium most appropriate to the context**. As a reference, we can bear in mind the following variables when we come to select the most appropriate medium:

- The average **cost** and the available budget.
- The possibilities for **updating and maintaining** the resource.
- The **message** we want to transmit.
- Possibility of **access** to this medium at different times of year.
- How the programme will be **broadcast** and accessed.
- The **environment** in which we may find ourselves.
- **Possibilities for use** by many people at a time and people with different levels of ability.
- The **kind of public** it will be addressed to.
- **Aesthetic** considerations.
- The **environmental impact** this medium could have.

There are advantages and disadvantages to the use of both non-personal media and personal media. In this case, we will generally look at those concerning **interpretative media** where there is a **human interpreter**.

Advantages

- They are **flexible** and adapt to the public and circumstances.
- They can **respond** to doubts or questions.
- There is a **direct** contact with the interpreter.
- **Personal** treatment is always more welcoming.
- They allow for an **interaction** between the interpreter and the audience.

Disadvantages

- Its effectiveness depends on the **ability** of the interpreter.
- The interpreter is not always **available** for the public.
- One must take into consideration **working conditions** and possible substitutions due to time off or sickness in the staff.
- Visitors cannot view the site at their own pace.
- It is important to **limit the number** of participants, so that the guide can offer higher quality and personalised attention.

There are many **interpretive techniques** (passive involvement techniques, active involvement), none of which is inherently better than any other. The interpreter should never choose a technique without first identifying the theme, goals, and objectives and the prospective audience to determine if it is an appropriate "fit". Interpreters must know the **advantages and disadvantages of each interpretive technique**. The chosen technique must be the **most convenient for the audience** (including access criteria), and be the one that best fits to the environmental circumstances and to the interpreter. Whichever technique is chosen, interpreters should ensure that it addresses the tangible/intangible/universal linkages of the resource.

Interpreters must **stay current on communications and delivery techniques** and new media possibilities, and use them as appropriate. Interpreters must regularly evaluate the

effectiveness of the techniques used, and **replace and update** them when they no longer achieve the desired outcomes.

Interpreters must have **communication abilities,** in case of personal media (looking into the eyes, different voice intonation, facing the group, etc) or non-personal media (structure the information in a panel according to its importance, use the right size of the text, use appropriate context between fonts and background, etc).

Structuring Programs

Programs can be structured on the context – the "**story behind the story**." One way to develop a context for your resource is to ask a series of "**why?" questions**, helping you **link a simple fact to a much larger chain of events**. By making that link, you're helping to explain why your resource is significant – why people should care about it.

> „Any good storyteller knows that you have to know the point of the story before you can tell it well. Knowing why you are telling the story is the key to organising the narrative. Likewise, in interpretation youmust know what you want to communicate before you can turn it into a visit experience. So before you begin thinking about all the exciting media you can use to tell your story, take some time to reflect on what you really want people to take away from the experience. Identify the core of your story, i.e. your message. Then plan your interpretation to tell that story in the best way you can." (Sharing our stories, Failte Ireland)

In order to **design a guided itinerary**, we should follow these steps:

- Choice of area.
- Inventory of resources; definition of the Topic and the Theme.
- Definition of the specific objectives.
- Analysis of features with interpretive potential and selection of features to interpret.
- Design of the itinerary.
- Design of the evaluation system.
- Control and maintenance.

1. Choice of the area.

The area our visit will run through will more than likely be **pre-determined**, but this is not always the case. We need to ensure that the guided visit runs along an accessible pathway. If the route is accessible we are offering the chance to participate to people who otherwise would not be able to take the guided visit: wheelchair users, families with pushchairs, etc. We should also consider the possibility of choosing a path where there is outdoor furniture which will allow visitors to rest. We will choose an area in which there is a rich selection of features with interpretive potential. We should also consider that circular routes, starting and finishing in the same place, are more to be recommended than linear routes.

Photo: UNESCO Cultural Heritage Dubrovnik

2. Inventory of Resources; definition of the Topic and Theme.

We should make an **exhaustive inventory** of the resources and get all the relevant information. This **information should be checked and truthful**. Even though this work can be almost invisible to the eyes of the end-user of the interpretive products, the collection of information is a task of enormous value and fundamental to the process.

Good interpreters should know much more than they tell in their visit, to be able to reply to the doubts and queries their visitors might put to them.

Once this has been done, we should **define the Topic, the Specific Topic, the tangible and intangible elements and the universal concepts** that derive from them. Finally, we should **elaborate the message**, that is to say, the **Theme** that we want our audience to remember.

3. Definition of the specific objectives.

We should define the objectives we want to achieve when we complete our guided visit.

- **Conceptual**: what we want people to understand.
- **Emotional**: what we want people to feel.
- **Attitudinal**: what specific behaviours we want people to engage in or not.

4. Analysis of the features with interpretive potential and their selection.

Having made the inventory of resources and located them on the map, we should select which of them will be used to develop the Topic. We should bear in mind that visitors' attention is greater at the beginning of the itinerary than at the end, so it is best for those features to be located closer together at the beginning and more separated as we come to the end of the route.

5. Design of the itinerary.

Once we have clarified the objectives, the Topic, the general Theme of the visit and the selected features along the route, we should **write the script** that will follow a specific itinerary. Good guides have scripts they work on before the first and subsequent visits. There should be a main Theme of the visit (the idea we want our visitors to take away with them when the guided visit is over) and some sub-themes that relate to each of the stops along the way.

6. Design of the evaluation system.

Evaluation is a fundamental part of the process. **Evaluation** should be mainly **focussed on three aspects**: the **assimilation of the idea** we want to put over, the **attitude of the guide** and the **physical route** our guided visit took. It is very important to take on board criticisms or recommendations with a positive spirit of wanting to **improve our work** every day. That is why it is important to be receptive to the possible suggestions or conclusions we can extract from our own experience and include them in the visit.

On the other side, we should also evaluate our **impact on the resource**, the social impact of the activity, safety, accessibility, conflicts with other media, etc. We should define what the

evaluation system will be and have everything prepared for it: filling a questionnaire, using stickers, using pictures or diagrams, etc.

7. Control and maintenance.

Whenever possible, the guide should **inspect the route** before making the visit with the public, especially when we are talking about changeable elements such as nature, in which there may be a fallen tree, roadwork on one of the paths, etc. Visitor **health and safety** should always take priority so that, in some cases, it may be necessary to divert the route or cancel the visit.

Risks

The **conservation** of heritage and local diversity in an area is a great advantage when compared with areas where the **modernisation and homogenisation** processes have taken place to a much greater extent. The involvement of local inhabitants in the re-valorisation of heritage will be the key element in **the awakening of social awareness** of the importance of the preservation of heritage.

When a community's heritage is at the core of what you offer visitors, it is **essential to protect that heritage**. You want to make sure that increased tourism does not destroy the very qualities that attracted tourists in the first place. **Tourism has an impact on the resources and puts stress and strain on infrastructure** such as roads, airports, water supplies, and public services. By protecting the historic landmarks and places, unique qualities, and special traditions that attract visitors, you are **safeguarding these resources**, and the **future and vitality of your community**.

Develop a **resource management plan** that includes preparing, protecting, and managing your historic resources and is focused on producing tangible improvements. If your assessment of visitor services has revealed major omissions or difficulties, include **remedies** in the management plan. Plan to **improve all aspects of the infrastructure** that affect—and are affected by—tourism.

A well-managed heritage tourism program is one that balances competing considerations. **Balancing the "carrying capacity"** of your area—its ability to host visitors without compromising service or overstraining resources—**with the demands visitors make on it** is one important consideration.

Your plan should **utilize key planning tools** such as zoning codes and ordinances, which can designate detailed protective measures and offer incentives for appropriate improvements and investment in the community. Tourism management is important to both visitors and residents, especially in the provision for adequate parking, transit, traffic circulation, signage, and marketing.

There are several expected impacts of tourism based on heritage interpretation, depending basically in the different groups or collectives that are affected.

The impact that interpretation is expected to cause in visitors is in their relationship with the environment. The interpreter will help them to **understand local life**: different customs and values, different ways to live and understand the world. This understanding will **bring about respect** as well. An inclusive methodology, that encourages the participation of local people and visitors, is one of the most powerful tools the interpreter has in order to achieve these goals.

Local population needs to go through the valorisation process; they may know every inch of the place or share traditions, but this does not always mean that they appreciate it in its full value. **Local people need to understand their environment and the resources that make it so special and appealing to others.** The way to participate in this process includes an appropriate interpretive plan, which includes the promotion of local products, gastronomy, tourist servies.

Photo: Ethnography Museum Zagreb

The expected impact on resources includes the modernisation and creation of new infrastructures that respect the environment and protect heritage.

The interpreter must plan and develop the interpreting activity **preventing unwanted external influences** on the part of visitors, assuming at the same time the above mentioned changes as **part of a natural process of modernisation of the environment**, and considering the **multiplier effect** of heritage interpretation.

Evaluation

The **principles** adopted by the International Council on Monuments ad Sites (**ICOMOS**), an organization dedicated to conserving the world historic monuments and sites, and its Ename Charter principles (access and understanding; information sources; context and setting; authenticity; sustainability; inclusiveness; research, training and evaluation) should be **applied in assesing our interpretation strategy**. To do that, we can **request feedback from visitors**, and gather the quantitative and qualitative information in order to analyze and evaluate our interpretation program.

Interpretive evaluation is, in essence, the process of collecting and analysing information that will allow us to **discover the quality or values of interpretive programmes**. By assigning a value to the interpretive actions we perform we in some way give them significance, since evaluation has to do with a deep understanding of the thing being evaluated.

By assigning values to what you have done, evaluation gives an orientation to interpretive action at the same time as it makes possible and favours decision-making. An interpretive action that has not been evaluated is a **missed opportunity for improving** our work. Without the evaluative gaze, our actions have neither sense nor continuity and condemn us to blindly repeat the same mistakes. Evaluation allows us find out if the interpretation we have made works.

Creating interpretation is a dynamic process that requires an ongoing commitment to maintain visitors interest in your resource. We need to **continuously update** our interpretation program with new material, new media and fresh perspectives. Evaluation is a **critical quality assurance measure** in interpretation management. It should be undertaken during the project to assess the effectiveness and easily **correct mistakes** before we **waste resources.**

The methodology we will use for evaluation will be articulated around two types of indicators:

1. **Quantitative methods**: which provide numerical and statistical data.
2. **Qualitative methods**: which give information about more subjective aspects, such as opinions, attitudes and feelings of the visitors or the local population.

These data can be collected and processed through several **techniques**:

- **Visitors attitude** can be observed and evaluated through aspects such as the time they take to read an interpretive panel, which contents call their attention most, whether they have any specific difficulty to do or understand any activity, etc. will be taken into account.
- A person, even one of the workers, gets **"infiltrated" into a group of visitors**. This way they can access comments the audience makes; comments that, almost certainly, they would not express to the guide directly.
- It is useful to run a **follow-up of the visitors movements**; where they go to, what itinerary they follow, how long they stay in the area, how they contribute to the total route, etc.
- **Questionnaires**, which can include quantitative and qualitative information, are an excellent tool to value the audience's opinion and level of satisfaction.

- A particular aspect can be analysed through **direct questions (interviews)** to different groups of people.
- The analyses and critique of interpretation professionals **(expert group)** will contain very valuable information to improve or modify the plan if needed.

Each of these techniques has its advantages and disadvantages, so it is advisable to **use a combination** of all of them.

The evaluation of the interpretive plan will serve to check that once it is running, it is being effective; and that it will achieve the established objectives. There are several appropriate moments to run evaluations of our work:

In the phase of **identification of interpretive objectives** we carry out a **complete evaluation,** which will help us adapt our objectives to the interests and potential knowledge of the audience.

The **training evaluation** has the aim of testing the different activities and analyse their impact on the tests we carry out on the visitors. We will also be able to **check if the message we try to transmit appropriately reaches the audience**.

The **remedial evaluation**, through which we will carry out little adjustments, to ensure a balance of all the parts of the plan, and check everything is ready (illumination, accessibility, etc.).

The **summary evaluation**, which will take place once the interpretive plan is running, and will consist on checking that the objectives we have suggested are met through the plan.

Review and Helpful Hints

Learning styles go beyond how we prefer to **receive information (modalities)** and the different **types of learning (domains).** They look at how we perceive and process information, in abstract or concrete form, and whether we prefer to **observe or experiment** with information.

Effective interpretation should **address different learning styles** according to Lisa Brochu and Tim Merriman in their 2002 Certified Interpretive Guide Training Workbook:

- **Visual**—seeing the information
- **Auditory**—hearing the information
- **Kinaesthetic**—doing or interacting
- **Verbal**—reading the information

Educator Howard Gardner identifies the **diversity of visitors** in his book Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences (1993). Gardner **defines learning criteria** that can be helpful in developing an experience that will be enriching and rewarding for each traveller.

- **Verbal learners** like guided tours, guidebooks, storytelling, oral histories, and living histories.
- **Logical learners** enjoy hands-on problem solving, such as figuring out how a machine works.
- **Spatial learners** benefit from imagining things, sensing changes, working with mazes or puzzles, and reading maps and charts.
- **Auditory learners** enjoy background sounds, music at exhibitions, musical events, and concerts.
- **Kinaesthetic learners** appreciate the chance to participate in period dances, games, debates, acting, and craft making.
- **Visual learners** and those who learn best on their own enjoy self-guided tours and interactive exhibits.

There are as many learning styles as there are visitors to our heritage sites. We need to accommodate the various needs by providing them with a **variety of interpretation methods**:

Active learning

- design and construct a planting project.
- learn by doing
- discuss it, try it out

Reflective learning

- stop and reflect to digest new information
- have quiet space to think about meanings

Sensing and intuitive learning

- experience the place
- discover relationships of things

- learn facts

Visual and verbal learning

- listen to talks and instructions
- look at images and displays
- watch demonstrations
- read material

Sequential and global learning

- follow steps/stages
- skim information to get the big picture or read the beginning and end
- read pamphlets and restoration guides
- visit websites.

Learning styles are also influenced by **left or right side brain dominance**. Research has identified that our brains are divided into two distinct yet connected hemispheres. The **left hemisphere** functions by processing information in an analytical, rational, logical and sequential way. The **right** recognises relationships, integrates and synthesises information and arrives at intuitive insights.

The **right hemisphere** tends to perceive the world and other people in a global mode: instantaneous, intuitive, usual, synthesising, emotion and expressive. It finds solutions through sudden and spontaneous intuition, leaving to the **left hemisphere** the job of proving them in a logical, analytical and scientific manner. The left hemisphere breaks everything down into different elements; the right hemisphere considers the global whole and looks for connections, analogies and similarities. We each have a **quadrant** which is **dominant** in our thinking style.

Communication is **easiest** between people who **share the same thinking style**, or when information is presented in the manner which represents the style we prefer. We cannot hope to tailor our interpretation to the thinking styles of individuals, but we can and should present information in a variety of ways to reach and satisfy a **wide audience**.

Learning continues long after the initial contact. At best, the 'story' should enhance a visitor's experience, and provoke reaction and participation.

Module 2 - Interpretive Presentation Skills

Introduction to Interpretation

HERA region target consumers are looking for **active involvement in heritage experience**. They want to engage with a destination's heritage through learning, interacting and doing, rather than simply observing it. For them, a **satisfying experience** can include linking heritage sites to contemporary life, participating in festivals or arts performances, visiting atmospheric towns and villages, visiting places associated with famous people or other aspects of contemporary culture (e.g. locations of movies), trying local wines and eating local food.

Authenticity in heritage is very important to visitors who are looking for a **genuine and distinctive experience**. They particularly value aspects of a culture and heritage that are supported by the local population. Accessing 'real' experiences, which are enjoyed by the locals and connect to the local area, is important in their overall satisfaction levels with their holiday.

Well-planned interpretation creates the active, engaged and authentic interaction with heritage sites that these consumers want and expect. The visitors need easy access, both physical and intellectual, to the local culture and heritage and they need interpretation to make that visit worthwhile, meaningful and memorable.

It is not enough to present the tourist with the information or instruction related to the local cultural or natural heritage and HERA cultural routes. The task of the interpreter is to show the visitors the meaning of specific heritage elements when they are enjoying their leisure time.

This situation implies that the attention level of the visitor will not always be high, as it is a leisure activity; at the same time, the environment in which the action is developed will be relaxed and not academic. Thus, interpretation does not imply the instruction of the visitor, but the provocation, something more than the sole learning.

Heritage Interpreters have an important **task to elaborate and deliver impacting messages** able to connect the visitors and the meanings of the places they visit intellectually and emotionally, in order to achieve highest visitor satisfaction. "Heritage Interpretation is the art of revealing on the spot the meaning of natural, cultural and historical heritage, to an audience that visits a given place in their leisure time" (Spanish Association for Heritage Interpretation)

Planning Interpretive Experiences

Good interpretation does not happen by accident. It involves careful planning. Based on the the four Ps in **planning interpretation (people, purpose, place and projects)** discussed in Module 1, we develop an **interpretaton plan** which will include communication with visitors pre-visit, on arrival, during the visit and after the visit.

Pre-visit – Promotion

This is probably the first communication from you that your visitors see. They read it before they set off on their visit, probably even **before** they have decided to embark on the visit. It needs to tell them that your place exists and persuade them that they would enjoy visiting. The promotion raises visitors' expectation of a good visit.

Promotion should answer questions like:

• Is this a place we would enjoy? Where is it?

• What will we do there? What will we do if the weather is bad?

• How long should we plan to stay? Where can we get food/accommodation nearby?

On arrival – Welcome and orientation

As soon as they **arrive at the site** people need:

• reassurance that they made a good decision in coming here and that the expectations raised by the promotion will be fulfilled.

• to be able to find what they are looking for and plan their day.

The **welcome** is the single most important piece of communication – and is best achieved by a **warm and genuine smile**. If and when that is not possible, you have to use other media.

The welcoming person may also give **orientation**, i.e. information that helps people work out where they are going to go. This will need to be reinforced by **signs and/or maps** because people will forget the verbal instruction. They will also forget the map of the site on the orientation panel in the car park, so make sure they can **find their way** around by posting orientation signs.

Visits to heritage sites are full of **distractions** and potential **irritations**. The welcome and attention to making the customer **comfortable** should continue throughout the visit. This is reflected in how staff treat visitors, and in the structure of the site, including seating, shelter, refreshment areas, washrooms etc.

Orientation should help visitors relax by **answering questions** like:

• How much time do we need to see/do everything we planned? How long will it take to walk round?

• What is this place about? Are there any special events scheduled at particular times?

• Where can we sit down and rest? Where can we eat lunch? Where are the toilets?

• Where can children play?

• Who can help us if we need help or want to know more?

The welcome and orientation help people feel comfortable and relaxed, ready to explore the site.

During the visit – Interpretation

This is the communication at the core of the visit. It should use experiences and information to **provoke the visitors' curiosity, engage their interest and help them discover the story** of the site. It will influence what they think and say about the place as they leave and whether they come back. It is **vital to any successful heritage attraction**.

Interpretation can answer questions like:

• Why does this place matter?

• Why is it like it is? What was it like in the past? What is happening here now? What will it be in the future?

• What do I feel about this place and/ or the people who lived here?

Interpretation helps people **relate** to and **understand** what is special about the site. It informs them and enlivens their visit. It makes the place into somewhere **meaningful and memorable.**

After the visit/at the end of the visit – Follow-up reading, appeals, events programme

At the end of a successful visit, visitors will want to find out more, to remember what they have seen, done and heard. They will be interested in **future events** and will be more willing to **support your work** through **memberships and donations**. They probably want something they can take away with them. This is a good opportunity to:

• Sell experience-related merchandise/ souvenirs

• Promote visits to related sites

• Encourage return visits

• Attract support for your work and recruit members

The end of the visit should reinforce visitors' connection with the site/your organisation and pave the way for the next visit. Once you have established this **basic structure of information**, you can focus on enhancing the visitor experience by **adding extra elements** – imagination, interaction, humour, drama, inspiration and personal touches – to the interpretation.

Good visits, like good stories, have a **structure** and your **message is an important tool** in building the structure. You need a great introduction that captures people's interest and tells them why the history of your site is worth spending time on. Then you feed your visitors' interest with further information and stories that fire their imagination, draw upon the physical resources of your site and engage them in interesting and relevant activities. Finally, you want to send them away with something to think and talk about.

This means that you **present your message in its simplest and most provocative way** at the beginning. Then you can draw the visitors into more detail. Identify how each part of your site can add something relevant to your main message. Each of these submessages should be related to something that people can see, do, hear or touch on your site. Linking information to your story and to the site experience makes it all more **memorable**.

You want everyone who visits your site to engage with your main message. But we know that many visitors will not be in a studious frame of mind and are likely to be distracted by a range of other things. Therefore you need to do everything possible to **make this basic message easy to understand.**

The message should be clearly presented at the start of the visit in a way that raises anticipation and curiosity. Giving visitors a clear introductory message helps them organise new information as it is presented during the visit.

The **message** needs to be **delivered in a range of media** across the site. Not everyone will **notice** your message if you just write it down, so think about how you can get the idea across in pictures, in activities, in guided tours and in other ways too. Make sure to **refer** to the message during and at the end of the visit – to make sure no one forgets it (but, of course, **be careful not to overdo it**).

The **message must be featured in your promotion** so that people know what to expect of the interpreted experience on site. It is essential that all **your staff fully understand the message** as well.

Choosing the media and activities

There are **many options** when choosing the media and activities to be used at a heritage site. To make a good decision, you need to **investigate the choices**, think about the **implications**, consider their strenghts and weaknesses, **costs, availability, durability, and suitability to audience and site**. You should **choose media last**, to make sure they fit the nature of the place, audience and key messages. Your choice will be influenced by **communication effectiveness and costs of diffferent techniques**, and by all factors you have considered in planning.

In choosing what media to use, you should **first consider your objectives**, themes, audience characteristics, budget and maintenance capacities. If an interpretive media matches these, it is likely to be the right solution. In a large project you might be able to consider providing a **mix of media**, reflecting the needs of the different learners you would like to involve in your project.

Guided (personal) interpretation offers **personal contact** between interpreters and their audiences. Different activities can be tailored to specific audiences. If well planned and delivered, they will provide entertaining and memorable experiences and allow immediate feedback. They can include walks, talks, demonstrations and observations, performance – re-enactments, role playing, plays, poetry readings, dance and music, special events and other activity programs. These communication methods are **labour intensive** and there is a lot of **coordination** necessary to make them happen.

Your **finances** will influence what you can achieve but (with the exception of very expensive options such as permanent exhibitions) it will usually **influence the scale and quality** of what you produce rather than your selection of medium.

Personal, **face-to-face interpretation**, includes all interpretation that involves someone talking to your visitor: guided tours/walks, illustrated talks, spontaneous/roving interpretation, visiting people at work, watching demonstrations, story-telling, performance and re-enactment. The expected **costs are medium to high**, depending on whether you are using salaried staff or volunteers.

Photo: David Meden for Istra Inspirit

Independent visitors sometimes prefer **informal interaction** at sites. The **unexpected communication** with the interpreter (roving/spontaneous interpretation) can be a welcome distraction on a self-guided tour. **Guided tours** and walks provide an opportunity to **visit remote, endangered or less visible/accessible places.** To stage practical demonstrations and interpretation based on artefacts and props, we need resources above and beyond human resources. There is a need for **practical engagement between the visitor and the prop/artefact,** as a way of learning and experiencing the heritage. Props explain things, gain attention and engage a group. We can use them to **provoke response** and involve different senses. The visitors enjoy when the historical artefacts are being used for their original purpose.

Advantages

- **People like people**. Visitors will warm to a good guide who gives a **human dimension** to the visit. A well-led tour can feel like being given a privileged and authentic **'insider's view'**.
- This is the most **flexible and responsive** interpretive medium. A good interpreter can adapt the style and content of the presentation to suit the visitors' needs and interests. A good interpreter can also help visitors understand complicated processes/issues that would be hard to convey on a panel or in print.
- A wide range of events can be organized based on personal contact, which can be very **creative and entertaining**.

- Guided activities can be charged for and generate income, and they can provide employment.

Disadvantages

- Requires **considerable management** to maintain reliability and consistency, financial and organizational commitment to maintain high quality and to develop new events and programme.
- **Capacity** may be an issue if this is the only form of interpretation. You need to be able to cope with very large and very small groups. The staff will need support and training which can be costly.

When choosing non-personal media to be used at our heritage site, such as self guided interpretation programs and their many versions, such as publications – books, brochures, flyers, illustrations and worksheets; exhibitions; information panels and site specific interpretation boards; signage – banners, flags and special signs; graphic illustrations - artworks, photographs, maps, and other visual material; computer interactives and video games, we need to **consider the application** of these materials, and how to make them **stimulating and engaging**. Immediate audience response is lacking in this case, and the cost of modification once the materials have been produced is relatively high.

Outdoor panels are a very common interpretation medium on **outdoor sites**, particularly **unstaffed** ones. Panels can give orientation information as well as interpretation.

Advantages

- Panels are **always there** – at places and times that people could not be.
- They can carry pictures as well as text so can show what people cannot see (e.g. what the site looked like in the past, what is under the ground, what the people who lived here looked like).
- They are good for **highlighting** significant points of interest about a site.
- They can be **combined with other media** such as audio or sculpture to create interesting and evocative effects.
- They can be very **durable**.

Disadvantages

- They are **inflexible** and cannot be easily changed or updated.
- They can be **visually intrusive** and detract from the atmosphere of the site.
- Only about three people can look at them at one time.
- They cannot guide people through a site. People will not remember a map from a panel – they will need something to carry with them.
- They are limited in how much information they can convey.
- People rapidly become **bored** by them – they do not work well for repeat visitors
- Some materials **do not weather well** and may fade in direct sunlight. Condensation can be a problem in humid conditions.
- They can attract vandals.
- They require skilled design, illustration and scripting.

Publications are non-personal media which include anything that is **printed** for people to read during their visit, including guidebooks, information sheets, quizzes, colouring sheets, activity sheets,self-guided trails, treasure hunts etc. They can have **various levels of complexity** and allow visitors to use them at their own pace.

Advantages

- Publications can include a **lot of information**. (This can be a disadvantage if the publication is not well laid out, planned and designed). They can combine pictures with words.
- Publications are **portable** and can be used all round the site. Visitors can take them home.
- The visitor can read as much as he or she wants, when they want it (including after the visit).

Disadvantages

- Publications only appeal to people who enjoy reading.
- You need to consider **distribution and availability**, particularly if there is no shop, visitor or other outlet on your site. The publications can **generate waste**.

The options for producing portable **audio tours** on heritage sites have increased hugely in the last few years. Spoken commentaries can now be delivered through hired handsets or on visitors own personal devices (mobile phones, i-pods and MP3 players)

Advantages

- Can be **creative**, evocative and dramatic especially when music, dialogue and good sound effects are used, and can hold visitors' attention.

- Can easily be **multi-lingual** and can easily be updated.
- Rapidly changing technology is presenting interesting new opportunities, particularly for personal devices such as mobile phones.

Disadvantages

- Requires **regular maintenance**.
- New technologies still require development and **refinement** before being a good solution for outdoor sites.
- Can **diminish interaction** within the visitor group.

Visitor centres and exhibitions are a combination of the interpretive elements of a visitor centre, i.e. those parts that are concerned with telling visitors about the significance and interest of the place, as well as the retail, catering and toilet functions. The development of a new exhibition is a **significant logistical undertaking** that requires careful and time-consuming planning and management.

Advantages

- Can display artefacts and other **three-dimensional materials**.
- Can be multi-sensory, **interactive**, and incorporate a large range of media.
- The usually provide an **all-weather facility** which can house changing exhibitions.
- Can be a good introduction to the site and the issues involved.
- Can include **retail and catering elements** that generate income and create jobs.

Disadvantages

- Require **major investment** and planning.
- Require **staffing** for security and interpretation every day.

- Exhibits require careful and continuous **maintenance**. Only one or two people can usually use interactives at a time. If they are popular, this may cause bottlenecks and frustration.
- Usually have a **useful life** of about 10 years before they need major refurbishment and updating, and require resources for regular maintenance.

When choosing appropriate media for your site, a number of **considerations** should be taken into account.

- If your site is not staffed, not secure at night and/or vandalism is an issue in your area all fixed installations (including panels and sculptures) are likely to be **vulnerable**.
- If a high proportion of your visitors come twice a year or more, you will need to ensure that the interpretation changes so your site appears **fresh and interesting**. This again means that you cannot rely solely on permanent fixed installations, such as exhibitions and panels.
- If you have a **high proportion of knowledgeable, motivated visitors**, you may need to produce more detailed information. This should be in a portable form (printed or downloadable) that they can carry around the site and take home. If you have, or are trying to attract, family visitors interaction is important – quizzes, trails, role play, demonstrations and practical activities can all be good. A **variety of media** helps all visitors, including those with sensory impairments and different learning styles.
- Conservation and aesthetic considerations are important at heritage sites. Your **interpretation must enhance, not detract or distract from, the experience of the site**. Fixed installations such as panels must be planned and designed with care and sensitivity. Your interpretation and the people using it must not damage the fabric of your site.

- All visitors will benefit from a range of media so it may be good to use a different medium for a new project. Consider how your existing interpretation would work for visitors who like learning through talking and listening, or looking at pictures, or through activity, or by reading, through thinking about things alone, or by being part of a group. Try to **improve the storytelling power of your site** for at least one of these groups with your new project.

Technology

It is essential to **choose the appropriate technology** to deliver the intended message. Apart from deciding on **low-tech or high-tech options** in self-guided or guided interpretation as well as creation of digital engagement and content, we must consider the technology needed to enable visitors to enjoy the physical aspects of the site.

There is a certain amount of **preparation** necessary to accept visitors and enhance their experience of the site. Apart from **parking and acessible infrastructure**, we need to ensure that the site has a **phone and internet service**, which can sometimes be essential also to deliver the intended message.

Low-tech interactive displays, such as models, wheels, jigsaws etc. can be relatively cheap and usually very effective. They need to be checked daily to ensure everything works.

High-tech interactive displays can be very effective, but they are usually complex and often expensive to produce and maintain. There is also an issue with the technology improvements as they date fast. They also need to be checked daily to ensure everything works.

Audio media can be very evocative, especially if the presentation makes good use of sound effects and creative editing. It is a good medium for presenting dialogue, first-person narrative, bi- and multi-lingual content and for people with visual impairments. It encourages visitors to look and listen at the same time. Audio tours can make use of visitors' own equipment, such a smart-phones, are a good aid for orientation and can avoid the need for permanent installations in sensitive locations. Mobile phone audio tours can generate automatic evaluation feedback and potentially provide an income. However, headphones can isolate visitors from one-another.

Audio-visual media can provide a very effective and immersive experience and are a good way to introduce a site and a range of themes and messages in a single presentation. If combined with sub-titles, BSL translation and audio-description they are excellent for people with sensory impairments. When produced digitally they can be used across a number of digital media. If necessary, the picture can be projected onto blank walls or glass instead of screens, thus avoiding intrusion in an historic building. However, they are relatively expensive to produce, can be distracting, can date as technology moves on and can result in bottlenecks as visitors emerge from a presentation in a group.

Multi-media, such as computer-based games, interactives and augmented reality have a strong appeal to children and young people and allow the presentation of a large amount of material in a small physical space. They can provide a virtual tour of a site or building especially for people with mobility impairments. However, not all audiences are comfortable with technology so some people can feel excluded. This type of media dates really fast as technology moves on. Using technology may jar with the essential character of a heritage experience for some visitors.

Photo: Barone Fortress Šibenik

Websites are a vital marketing tool. They provide information pre- and post-visit and can be used to advertise activities in order to reach a very large audience. They can be used for downloadable video/audio tours (such as podcasts) and site leaflets, and can contain interactive games and activities. Websites can be used to provide up-to-date reports on finds and events and can contain a special education area for teachers with curriculum related activities and learning exercises. However, they need regular updates and maintenance, and can exclude visitors without access to internet.

The development of **digital technology** is providing some important **creative opportunities** for interpretation. Digital media provide an ability to **personalize an interpretive experience**, enabling users to choose whatever version of a tour or presentation best meets their needs and levels of interest. Once created, the same digital content can be **presented through a range of media** including touchscreens, mobile phones and websites and can avoid the need for permanent installations such as panels

Multi-media and audio tours can be delivered to mobile phones, MP3 players and handheld computers that visitors bring with them. This can greatly **reduce the set-up and running costs** for a site manager, and is particularly useful at sites that are not staffed

The new generation of mobile phone tours are extremely flexible and can generate automatic evaluation feedback. Digital media have a **particular appeal to children and young people**.

You should only use new technology if that is what an assessment of your aims, audience, messages and budget indicate. The **use of new technology** should **not** usually be **the first option to consider**, but can certainly be the best solution in some circumstances.

Wow Experiences

The visitors will come to our site looking for a **memorable experience**. Outside and beyond the interpretation of heritage, we need to concentrate on **visitor-friendly approach**. The visitors come to us in their leisure time, each with his/her own need. Our customer care must appreciate those **needs**: the need of visitors to relax, to have a break in routine, to bond with their group, to be a part of a social experience, and to experience a variety of opportunities to learn and participate in a social setting. There are many things an **interpreter can** do in order to **inspire** the motivated, the inspired as well as the incidental visitor, and to **provide the „wow" factor in interpretation.**

The interpreter needs to remember that the success of interpretation depends on the **complete visitor experience**. Visitors are not going to learn unless they feel **welcome, relaxed and comfortable** at your site. In order to keep the visitors interested for longer, we need to use a range of communication methods.

The **visitors might not be interested** in your heritage site beyond merely having a look around. But **if you are interested in your visitors**, if you watch them, talk to them, listen to them, and respond to what they tell you, they will **develop a bond** with you and with the heritage you are interpreting. **Engage your visitors** by drawing them into conversations and encouraging them to use their senses and imagination to explore the site. Involve people and encourage group **interaction**. Ask your visitors **questions**, use their experiences and encourage them to think for themselves and do not just give answers.

The message you are delivering should be simple and interesting message. Reinforce it wherever possible. **Give people something to do, not just something to read or listen to.**

Linking the message to the experience increases learning. Make your content relevant and accessible. Be **personal** – use characters and people in your interpretation. Use **real** things, and specific examples – **not abstract** explanations.

It is very important to **be brief**. Much of common heritage interpretation (including leaflets, panels, audio tours, guided walks and audio-visual presentations) is too long. Give people a clear introduction and summary and options for finding out more. **Do not be too serious**.

The written material which is produced must **grab attention**. It is a result of a long journey and expert knowledge but keep in mind that your visitors are at the beginning of the journey. For specialist audience you may use specialist language, but for general audience, the **language** used should be more **general** – a **newspaper headline, postcard home or a letter to a friend,** and not an official report or academic paper). Keep in mind, **simplicity does not mean triviality**. Use a few key concepts and a collection of interesting facts for the content and make sure that your theme and storyline are well defined and clear. The style used should be based on the familiar expression and sentence structure. The material should remain interesting and memorable, and **invite visitors to take it home** and not dump it in the trash can.

"The essence of good interpretation is that it reveals new **insight into what makes a place special.** It gives people a new understanding. If you have ever visited an exhibition, or been on a guided walk and come away saying "Well I never realized that …" or thinking "Aha! Now I understand" you've been an audience for some good interpretation." Carter (2001:6)

Tips for improvement of personal delivery media (guided tours etc.)

Organise the delivery well (know the site well, know your facts, develop a well-planned thematic and structured presentation, practice your presentation, stay on time).

Welcome the visitors (arrive early, explain the format of interpretation, find out if there are special needs visitors, learn some of their names, check their skills and equipment – safety first, find out if someone wants to find something particular out, adjust walking pace).

Involve your audience (ask and answer questions, encourage discussion, relate interpretation directly to visitor experience, use props that visitors can touch, use practical activities, encourage visitors to use all their senses).

Keep the audience engaged (structure talks – cause and effect; objective – discuss a number of points of views; compare to other places; zoom in or out – provide perspective; imagery – illustrate with props, video, illustrations; use silence – create suspense and anticipation, reinforces the message; use active rather than passive language; use analogies and metaphors).

Personal interpretation can be credible, meaningful, effective, efficient, flexible, and gives opportunity to involve visitors. It may be costly, **needs great delivery skills**, it is time limited, and formal – not all visitors have the time to attend.

Personal delivery skills are valuable tools for communication. **Your body** will form the **first impression.** Smile, stand solid to indicate confidence, avoid distracting mannerisms, face your group and use natural gestures, and wear clean clothing. **Your voice** will reflect **enthusiasm and passion** if you vary your tone and pace. **Your language** will help create images in peoples heads – use simple language, speak clearly with short sentences and avoid jargon, use silence for focus and impact, and use humour naturally.

Think on your feet. If you need to buy time to respond, you can rephrase the question, acknowledge the point, ask for clarification, ask for an example, agree...Develop your signature style. **Enthusiasm is the most highly valued attribute of interpreters.**

Above all, **have fun**!!

Review and Helpful Hints

The **methods** used in training the trainers and **helpful didactic tips** and hints will improve the **teaching and learning experience**. In the context of heritage interpretation, the didactic methods of training the trainers and the future interpreters are **the same methods** we are employing when interpreting heritage. **Teaching is the interpretation of information**! We have already reviewed different learning styles and discussed appropriate methods of interpretation, so we can **apply those methods to teaching our future interpreters**.

During training, some **content** is not passed directly to the participants but **transmitted through course structure or course design**. The participants (trainers/trainees) learn how to design learning in order to respect the needs of individual learners, how to include experiences from the learner's own work and life, initiate and promote new learning experiences and inspire the desire for learning in the same way the future interpreters plan their interpretation.

In order to learn from this experience, the **participants should cooperatively develop content in realistic situations.** This will give them space and opportunity to share new experiences and challenge habitual ways of thinking. This way of **learning will strengthen their personal responsibility and support cooperation** of other participants – their trainee peers and future visitors to the site.

> "Do not try to satisfy your vanity by teaching a great many things. Awaken people's curiosity. It is enough to open minds; do not overload them. Just put there a spark. If there is some good inflammable stuff, it will catch fire." Anatole France.

Just as we approach the visitors to our heritage site, we can approach the trainees.

They have limited time and interest. Think what you would tell them in ten seconds. Keep it simple – their attention is likely to wander. Your message should answer the 'so what?' question – as in "so what? Why should I be interested?". **Trainees will remember what they think about and talk about.** The things that will get them talking are the same things that make a **good story**. Look out particularly for a **realistic setting**: personal stories with interesting characters, dramatic events – (not battles, escapes and adventures but events from their everyday life of interpreter), and situations that relate to their own lives.

Your message should be as specific as possible. **Skip the detail**. Just as your visitors will remember messages more than factual information, your **trainees will remember how they dealt with a certain situation or how they interpreted a certain issue** more than all of the theory behind heritage interpretation discipline.

Personal engagement is the **key ingredient in learning** as well as in heritage interpretation. „When a person buys an experience, they pay to spend time enjoying a series of memorable events that a site or facility stages to engage them in a personal way." (Pine and Gilmore)

In teaching heritage interpretation, you should provide the **total experience package**. Include entertainment, education, esthetics, escape from reality...When interpreting heritage, the interpreters try to mix in memorabilia (create memorable experiences and prepare

„memorable" opportunities (photos etc.) as well as souveniers etc. When teaching about heritage interpretation, **the memorable experiences will reflect the opportunity of trainees to participate in creating a new view of the world for their future visitors**. It is important to **engage all senses** in learning.

The ingredients for best practice in heritage interpretation

Respect special connections between people and items. Interpretation is only undertaken within the cultural traditions of which it is part, and respecting the culture of the audience. Explore, respect and respond to the identified audience. **Audience research and feedback** is essential for relevant and effective interpretation, and is a regular part of management of an item/area that is open to visitors.

Understand the item and convey its significance. The significance of some items may be **obvious**, but the significance of many items is **not readily apparent** and should be explained by interpretation media. Research the context of the item, and respect locl amenity and culture. **Context** is an important aspect of **significance**, and can change over time. Values extend beyond the physical boundaries of items/areas.

Make reasonable choices about themes, stories and strategies. The significance of many places is multi-faceted, and it may be **impracticable to communicate every aspect**. Not all themes and stories are appropriate or relevant to the identified audiences.

Stimulate thought and dialogue, provoke response and enhance understanding. Interpretive media are designed to reveal meanings and encourage audience response by adding value and human interest to the presentation of information. Develop interpretation methods and media which sustain the significance of the items, their character and authenticity. The interpretation should **transmit meanings without compromising heritage values.** It should not interfere with or change the item/area or its context.

Integrate interpretation in conservation planning. Interpretation is not confined to an end product of a construction process, opportunities for communicating significance are likely in each stage of a conservation project. Include interpretation in the oingoing management, provide for regular maintenance, evaluation and review. It involves the assessment of the interpretation media, and the **impacts of interpretation**, to ensure that aspects of significance are not lost.

Involve people with relevant skills, knowledge and experience. People with specialist skills and experience have a **major role in interpretation**. They are often able to find solutions quickly and to understand complex problems. Collaborate with organizations and the local community. Community, professional and government organizations have skills, resources, understandings and interests which can make a **valuable contribution** to interpretation.They can develop **synergy**, leading to greater appreciation and understanding of heritage.

Suggested Manuals/Handbooks:

1.   Golden Bow Teaching Modules, SEE TCP Sagittarius, 2014.

2.   A Manual for Interpreting Communitiy Heritage for Tourism; Canadian Universities Consortium Urban Environmental Management Project, 2000.

3.   Interpretive Methods; National Association for Interpretation, 2009.

4.   Interpretive Organizations; National Association for Interpretation, 2009.

5.   Interpretive Planning; National Association for Interpretation, 2009.

6.   Quality Assurance Materials; InHerit, 2014.

7.   Interpretation Handbook and Standard – Distilling the Essence; Department of Conservation, Te Papa Atawhai; editor Fiona Colquhoun, 2005.

8.   Sharing Our Stories; Fáilte Ireland, 2012.

9.   Telling Our Stories – An Interpretation Manual for Heritage Partners; Lancaster County Heritage, 2001.

10.   Quality Standards in Heritage Interpretation – An Excerpt from ParcInterp Trainer Manual; Thorsten Ludwig, Bildungswerk Interpretation, 2012.

11.   Certification: Handbook and Study Guide. National Association for Interpretation, Fort Collins, Colorado, 2015.

12.   Heritage Tourism Handbook: A How-To Guide to Georgia; Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia, 2010.

13.   Interpret Europe. Engaging citizens with Europe's cultural heritage: How to make best use of the interpretive approach; Witzenhausen, Interpret Europe 2017.

14.   Tilkin, Guy, ed.: Professional Development in Heritage Interpretation; InHerit, 2014.

15.   Ludwig, Thorsten: The Interpretive Guide – Sharing Heritage with People; Bildungswerk interpretation, Werleshausen, 2015.

16.   Tour Guide Training Manual: Module 3, Interpretive Skills. SwissContact, 2016.

17.   Telling Our Stories - An Interpretation Manual for Heritage Partners; Lancaster County Planning Commission, 2007.

18.   Cultural Tourism – Making it work for you: A Strategy for Cultural Tourism in Ireland. Fáilte Ireland, 2012.

19.   Sustainable and competitive tourism – New funding opportunities for local and regional authorities; Committee of the Regions, 2014.

20. Accessible routes in historic cities – A best practice guide for planning, design, implementation and marketing of accessible routes in historic urban environments; League of historical and accessible cities, 2014.

21. The Supply of Cultural Skills and Training Research; AC Nielsen for New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2008.

22. Sustainable Cultural Tourism in Historic Towns and Cities; European Association of Historic Towns and Regions, 2006.

23. Proposal of professional competence for natural and cultural heritage interpreters; Seminary of Heritage Interpretation, National Centre of Environmental Education. 2011.

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Carter, James 2001. A Sense of Place: An Interpretive Planning Handbook, 2nd ed. Inverness: Tourism & Environment Initiative. e-version for download

Hall, Gail: Selective World Scan of Tourism & Hospitality Education and Training Frameworks; Report to the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council, 2006.

Ham, Sam H. 1983. Cognitive Psychology and Interpretation: Synthesis and Application. Journal of Interpretation 8(1):11-27. USA.

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Ham, Sam H. 2013. Interpretation - Making a Difference on Purpose. Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum.

Hems, Alison (ed.) 2006. Heritage Interpretation, London/New York: Routledge.

Knudson, Douglas, Ted Cable and Larry Beck 2003. Interpretation of Cultural and Natural Resources. 2nd ed. Venture Publishing, State College, Pennsylvania

Morales, Jorge.; Y S.H. HAM. 2008. ¿A qué interpretación nos referimos? Boletín de Interpretación número 19:4-7. Asociación para la Interpretación del Patrimonio, España.

Pierssene, Andrew 1999. Explaining our World: an approach to the art of environmental interpretation. UK: Routledge.

Pine, B.J.I. and Gilmore, J.H. 1999. The Experience Economy. Harvard Business School Press. The value of experiences, experience realms and as a marketable commodity.

Regnier, Kathleen, Michael Gross and Ron Zimmerman 1992.The Interpreter's Guidebook: Techniques for Programs and Presentations, Interpreter's Handbook Series, UW-SP Foundation Press, Inc.: Stevens Point, WI.

Stange, Jennifer et al; 2009: Tourism Destination Management – Achieving Sustainable and Competitive Results; International Institute for Tourism Studies.

Tilden, Freeman (1957) 1977. Interpreting Our Heritage, 3rd ed. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Tuck, Fiona, 2012: The historic environment and cultural heritage skills survey; Creative & Cultural Skills Industries, Essex,.

Veverka, John A. 2011. Interpretive Master Planning (2nd ed., 2 vol.). Edinburgh, Cambridge: MuseumsEtc.

Whitelaw, Paul E. et al. 2009: Training needs of the hospitality industry; CRC for sustainable tourism Pty Ltd.

Annex I – Evaluation Questionnaire

Ham, Sam H. and Whiler, Betty 2005: Interpretation Evaluation Tool Kit: Methods and Tools for Assessing the Effectivness of Face-to-Face Interpretive Programs, CRC for Sustainable Tourism PTY Ltd, Australia

Photos: Andrea Vugrinović, unless otherwise noted

Heritage Questionnaire

Questionnaire #: ___ ___ ___ ___   Date: ___ ___ ___ ___
Name of Site: _____

WE NEED YOUR OPINION!
About the presentations & guided activities you attended today

The purpose of this short questionnaire is to find out how you feel about the **presentations and guided activities you attended or participated in today**. Please know that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions, nor are some responses better or worse than others. We simply want to know your honest opinions about your experience here today.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE WILL TAKE LESS THAN 5 MINUTES OF YOUR TIME.

THANK YOU!

Instructions (do not answer these example questions):

For each question, place an "X" on the line that best shows how you feel about the presentations and guided activities you attended today.

Example 1: If you believe that the presentations and guided tours were extremely long, you would place a mark as follows:

Overall, the presentations and guided tours I attended today:

were
long   **X** : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____   were short

Example 2: If you believe that the presentations and guided tours were neither long nor short, you would place a mark as follows:

Overall, the presentations and guided tours I attended today:

were
long   ____ : ____ : ____ : **X** : ____ : ____ : ____   were short

Question 1:

Overall, the presentations and guided activities I attended today…

A.)

were
enjoyable   _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____   were *un*enjoyable

B.)

were
meaning*less*   _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____   were meaningful

C.)

made me
curious   _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____   did *not* make me
curious

D.)

made protecting
heritage seem
less important   _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____   made protecting
heritage seem *more*
important

E.)

impacted my
view of my own
life   _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____   did *not* impact
my view of my
own life

F.)

were bad   _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____   were good

G.)

were relevant to
me   _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____   were *not*
relevant to me

H.)

did *not* make
me think   _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____   made me think

I.)

made me value
heritage
preservation
more   _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____   made me value
heritage
preservation *less*

J.)

did *not* impact
my view of
today's society   _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____   impacted my
view of today's
society

K.)

were satisfying   _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____   were *not* satisfying

L.)

were *not* connected to anything I care about ___:___:___:___:___:___ were connected to things I care about

M.)

made me want to talk about what I heard ___:___:___:___:___:___ did *not* make me want to talk about what I heard

N.)

made protecting heritage seem *less* justifiable ___:___:___:___:___:___ made protecting heritage seem *more* justifiable

O.)

impacted my ability to relate to people who lived then ___:___:___:___:___:___ did *not* impact my ability to relate to people who lived then

P.)

were boring ___:___:___:___:___:___ were interesting

Q.)

were connected to things I know about ___:___:___:___:___:___ were *not* connected to things I know about

R.)

did *not* make me want to know more ___:___:___:___:___:___ made me want to know more

S.)

impacted how I see some things about today's world ___:___:___:___:___:___ did *not* impact how I see some things about today's world

T.)

intrigued me ___:___:___:___:___:___ did *not* intrigue me

U.)

did *not* impact how I see myself ___:___:___:___:___:___ impacted how I see myself

Question 2:

Please indicate how much you would be inclined to <u>tell another person</u> each of the following things about this place:

A.)

You should
visit _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____

You should *not*
visit

B.)

The place
is boring _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____

The place is
interesting

C.)

Coming
here is
worth the
money _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____

Coming here is
not worth the
money

D.)

Coming
here is *not*
enjoyable _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____

Coming here is
enjoyable

E.)

Coming
here is
worth the
time _____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____:_____

Coming here is
not worth the
time

Question 3:

Please circle YES or NO for each statement.

A.) The presentations and guided activities I attended today made me
want to attend/participate in another presentation or guided activity.　　YES　　NO

B.) The presentations and guided activities I attended today made me
want to stay longer.　　YES　　NO

C.) The presentations and guided activities I attended today made me
want to return for another visit in the future.　　YES　　NO

D.) The presentations and guided activities I attended today made me
want to purchase a memento or souvenir directly related to this
place.　　YES　　NO

Thanks for the generosity of your time!
If you would like to tell us anything else about your visit today, please write it in the space below.