

Jelka Pirkovič
University of Ljubljana

Model of Heritage Interpretation Tailored to Public Co-Participation

Introduction

Why engage in heritage interpretation with the co-participation of the public?

In the context of this article I adopt William Logan's tentative definition of interpretation: "Heritage interpretation is the process of attributing meaning and significance to elements from the past, whether these are tangible places, documents and other artefacts or intangible and embodied skills, practices and traditions" (Logan, 2022, 5). This explains why I am using the term 'heritage' and not specifically 'cultural heritage'. By this, I mean all types of heritage, including intangible and natural heritage. Fortunately, there is a growing global awareness of the close link between the human relationship with nature and the cultural values that underpin it.¹ Today, the concept of 'inclusion' is increasingly used in heritage management. Sometimes we see its Slovenian equivalent, 'cooperation'.² However, the latter overlaps with the English translation of the word 'participation'³, thus blurring the semantic distinction between the two. Therefore, I use the term 'co-participation' and its derivatives instead of 'inclusion' in this paper.

Mathematics, more specifically combinatorics as a branch of it, is familiar with the inclusion-exclusion principle, which is a method of counting the number of elements of a union of two or more finite sets. Usually, the union of sets is represented graphically in a Venn diagram, and mathematical formulae allow calculating the number of elements belonging to at least one given set. In parallel, I understand the importance of inclusion in heritage as contributing to a standard definition of heritage concepts and

1 These are so-called ecosystem services and associated cultural values (Azzopardi, 2022, and references therein).

2 Slovenian museums use the Slovenian term for 'inclusion', which is not the most appropriate translation, as the meaning of the English original also covers the social aspect of public involvement in heritage processes.

3 On the meaning and contemporary practice of participation, see Rausch (2022).



mainstreaming them in practice. In sociological and especially in pedagogical terms, inclusion means taking care of people (children) with special needs so that they can be better integrated into social life. “Inclusion is a foreign word used instead of integration, established in the Slovenian education system. Inclusion means equal access and opportunity, while integration means adapting an individual (usually a child with special needs) to the school system, i.e. the environment. Inclusion emphasizes adapting the environment to the child more than *vice versa*” (Zadravec, 2021, 3).

The heritological explanation of the concepts of inclusion and exclusion is summarized by Verena Perko: “I decided to use the terms ‘inclusion’ and ‘exclusion’ because of the semantic inequality of the Slovenian term ‘public involvement’ in a museum or archaeological practice. In Slovenian museum practice, the term ‘inclusion’ means the consistent participation of the public, e.g. in the physical installation of exhibitions or the loan of material from private collections, and sometimes also the involvement of seniors in less responsible museum services, e.g. guided tours of major exhibitions. Very similarly, the term is also used in archaeological practice, where the public is almost consistently involved only as a passive audience for organized expert tours or small-scale exhibitions of material adapted for the local public, e.g. during the excavation of a nearby site. In the West, ‘inclusion’ in both practices means integrating the public into research, documentation, communication and heritage protection processes. This means actively involving the public in all stages of the work, including the interpretation of the material” (Perko, 2008, 118, n. 14).

In the context of interpretation as a component of heritage management, I will show in this paper that the principle of co-participation does not only mean involving the public in the interpretation process, but that this requires adapting the process to meet the needs of the public. I will demonstrate the adaptation of this process by defining the fundamental concepts of heritage interpretation and then illustrate the concepts and the process in the form of a model.

Structure of the paper

In the first analytical chapter, I will start by reviewing the existing models of interpretation and summarizing the relevant characteristics from the perspective of heritage interpretation. This will be followed by a subsection in which I will focus on key concepts pertinent to understanding heritage interpretation. I will explain their semantics (meaning) because the semantics of a concept determines the field or system where the concept is expressed in the way of functioning and carrying out events. In determining the meaning of concepts, I am guided by the definitions explained in the *Dictionary of the Slovenian Standard Language* (SSKJ) and, to some extent, in the *Slovenian Etymological Dictionary* if a particular concept is defined therein.

I then examine the semantics of the key interpretation concepts from two perspectives. I have considered the following:

- neuroscience (adapted from Ian McGilchrist, 2022),
- heritology, or more specifically, the heritological understanding of interpretation as part of heritage protection and management.⁴ In Chapter 2, I present a model of heritage interpretation that is most relevant to the findings of the analytical part of the paper.

1 Analysis of the heritage interpretation system

1.1 Overview of typical interpretation models

Before I explain the critical concepts of interpretation, let us review its development and scope by presenting typical models. This will show us the characteristics of each approach and the differences between them. I have considered hermeneutics, semantics, information science and heritage interpretation as part of heritology.

The hermeneutic circle illustrates the process of interpretation and its main elements, which define its field. The elements and directions of the process are the interpreter – the whole text – the interpreter – the individual parts of the text – the interpreter – the entire text. The process is circular, as the model's name implies. A note for reflection on the subject of hermeneutics: hermeneutics is the science of interpreting a text or other cultural expressions, which requires an active stance on the part of the interpreter. "Obviously, cultures are different from written texts. Cultures are complex semantic clusters; ... they are complex language games – and, more than language games, they are 'forms of life' comprising, in addition to written texts, social customs, religious beliefs, rituals, and practices. Moreover, cultures are internally diversified and unfinished, that is, always evolving and on the move" (Dallmayr, 2009, 23). The pioneer of modern hermeneutics, Hans-Georg Gadamer, emphasized the link between interpretation and dialogue when interpreting texts. Moreover, for him, language and culture are what elevate the subjective, individual experience of the hermeneutic text into the communal, universal (Arthos, 2000, 22). In other words, this means that only culture and the dialogical exchange of experiences transform us into a communion.

Maurice Merleau-Pointy stressed the importance of intercultural dialogue (*ibid.*, 31). Paul Ricoeur went one step further and can be considered the founder of cultural hermeneutics. Susy Adams notes that Ricoeur's thesis that the symbolic functions of culture play a central role in structuring social life is the most far-reaching in this regard (Adams, 2015, 130).

4 Heritology (synonym: heritage studies) is a branch of the humanities (see Perko, 2014, 321, after Šola, 2003, 311).

The semantic triangle illustrates the main elements involved in creating and understanding meaning: symbol (word, sign) – concept (thought) – thing, phenomenon. The diagram shows a link between symbol and concept, while the connection between thing and symbol is only indirect – that is, through the perception of the subject who “thinks” the concept (Ogden, Richards, 1923, p. 11).

The hermeneutic circle and the semantic triangle do not show what happens during the transmission of messages to the other -- we can say they represent the position of the ‘first person’. The other person, who is involved in the communication or dialogue, is only implicitly present.

Similarly, the relationship with the “other person” is implicit in the information triangle: the unstructured, hard-to-access knowledge is a source of information – knowledge is converted into information in the form of a linguistic or otherwise encoded message. The final goal of the information process is an information repository where knowledge is stored, organized and accessible for further use. The link between knowledge as a source and information is therefore defined. The communication path from the information repository to the user is not directly included in the model (Tuđman, 1990, 25–26).

The heritage interpretation triangle is the only one among all models that involve the message’s recipient, i.e. the visitor to the museum or heritage presented *in situ* (Ludwig, 2011, 101). The elements of interpretation are the interpreter, the heritage phenomenon and the visitor, and the interpretation follows the guiding theme. On this basis, the message circulates in a dialogical form. I conclude that the interpretation triangle does not represent a model of interpretation, but rather a pictographic (pedagogical) representation of it.

1.2 Key concepts of heritage interpretation

Memory

According to the SSKJ, memory is a person’s ability to retain and restore ideas, thoughts and information in consciousness. It means the consciousness in which ideas, thoughts, and data about the past are preserved, and the ideas, thoughts, and data about the past are held in consciousness.

According to the *Slovenian Etymological Dictionary*, “to remember” is known in several Slavic languages, and its original meaning is “to think afterwards”. It is related, among others, to the Greek word *mémona* I aspire to, I have in mind, and to the Latin word *memini* – I remember.

Memories are stored in several parts of the brain. The right hemisphere dominates the emotional aspects of speech and memory (including personal memory),

recognition of body language and facial expressions. If we want to stimulate emotional memory more, it is more appropriate to locate certain events in the left visual field (McGhilchrist, 2022, 303, 334, 2080). For example, good memory in chess is related to the functioning of both the left and right hemispheres (ibid, 1068). Good memory supports learning, and *vice versa* – memory training helps learning.⁵ Heritage interpretation uses memories as a resource. The role of memory is crucial in understanding the concept of collective memory, first presented in the pioneering work *La mémoire collective* (Maurice Halbwachs 1950) and the idea of places of memory treated in the trilogy *Les lieux de mémoire* (edited by Pierre Nora 1984-1993). The relevance of both concepts for the contemporary understanding of history is presented in *History, Memory and Public Life* (Maerker, 2018, 6–7, 65–68).

The philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty defines dialogue as the key to the hermeneutic process, determining the relationship between the interpreter and the text. This is particularly important in intercultural dialogue, where different cultures are the object of interpretation and interpreters from diverse backgrounds must participate in the interpretive process. Such cooperation is not limited to an abstract confrontation of views but must involve intense shared experiences of memories that touch and take hold of the participants. Only through remembering through dialogue is openness and reconciliation achieved (Dallmayr, 2009, 37–38).

Knowledge

According to the SSKJ, knowledge is the sum total of the information one has imprinted on one's consciousness through learning, study and training, or the whole of known, established information about reality. According to the *Slovenian Etymological Dictionary*, the root 'known' is familiar in Old Church Slavonic and many Slavic languages. Last but not least, it forms the [Slavic] word 'science' and its derivatives.

Logical, rule-based reasoning, understanding cause-and-effect relationships, numeracy, the ability to focus and, on that basis, to identify and classify details, and the use of ordinary (not symbolic and metaphorical) language are cognitive abilities of the left hemisphere of the brain. The left hemisphere understands the world mechanistically as if it is made up of parts that can be analysed individually because they work based on rules. These are all characteristics of empirical science.⁶ Therefore, we can say that the left hemisphere is the seat of knowledge.

5 There is a vast literature on the benefits and methods of memory training, and it is beyond the scope of this article to cite. I will only mention one recent study on how memory training enhances learning and other cognitive abilities, Ritakallio *et al.* (2022).

6 For example, in the 1960s and 1970s, academic psychology advocated the idea of the brain as a computer (McGilchrist, 2022, 1902).

The right hemisphere recognizes the bigger picture, enables spatial orientation, understands the relationships between the whole and the parts, processes experiences and transforms them into insights, is capable of linguistic expression through metaphors and other forms of figurative speech, understands irony, and enables our emotional and spatial intelligence and creativity (ibid, 163, 282). The right hemisphere constructs a sense of self and the world as a complex and coherent whole and sees reality's living and ever-changing nature. The main psychological problems have a biological basis in damage to or malfunctioning of the right hemisphere. It can therefore be said to be the seat of cognition.

In heritology, knowledge is divided into traditional (also called convivial) and modern forms, and the heritage sciences represent the latter. They are characterized mainly by the fact that each science interprets heritage in its own way, and therefore such knowledge is fragmentary and schematic, not holistic. In contrast, traditional knowledge is concrete, linked to the specific circumstances in which the community lives and to the nature and culture of the community.⁷ The definition of traditional knowledge is taken from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO): "Traditional knowledge (TK) is knowledge, know-how, skills and practices that are developed, sustained and passed on from generation to generation within a community, often forming part of its cultural or spiritual identity" (WIPO, online). The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage speaks of knowledge and practices about nature and the world (Act, 2008, Article 2).

Values

According to the SSKJ, a value is something that someone attaches great value and preference to. Additional meaning is related to the characteristic of something in terms of the satisfaction of specific needs, the degree to which it meets certain criteria, the influence, consequences, action or positive qualities or characteristics of something. Value is what is worthy of recognition, praise or, in an economic sense, the characteristic of something about the work it was invested in or in relation to other goods.⁸ The *Slovenian Etymological Dictionary* derives the root *vred* from the Old High German *werd* (in modern German *Wert*) in the same sense. The word is said to derive from the Indo-European base *uert*, meaning to spin, to turn and, in a secondary sense, to trade.

Brain research has shown that for "the left hemisphere, value is something we invent, which is separate from and, as it were, projected onto the world, and whose function is utility" (McGilchrist, 2022, 1738). The right hemisphere perceives values

7 For the link between traditional knowledge of nature and cultural practices, see Berkes (2000), and UNESCO (2014).

8 In English, the term 'value' is used in the singular for economic and other instrumental values. In Slovenian, this distinction is made by replacing the generic term 'value' with 'worth' in these cases.

as connected to our most profound emotional experiences and moral-ethical impulses (ibid., 868). Recent natural science research has shown that altruism exists among some animals, and thus “animals in social groups are not constantly fighting for supremacy, but expend a great deal of energy in making sure that the group as a whole is peaceful and successful” (ibid., 1754). The observance of “value” rules applies to species whose existence depends on group cooperation and the specific division of roles in ecosystems. Values such as truth or justice, beauty⁹ and goodness can be called basic human values. “Values are not just validated by the outcomes they achieve: they are inseparable from our deepest emotional experience” (ibid., 1729).

There are yet more findings from the field of epigenetics that show the link between the culture a species cultivates and its biological makeup, and as Heying and Weinstein (2020) write:

Culture sits ‘above’ the genome in the sense that it shapes the way the genome is expressed... A capacity for culture is nearly universal in birds and mammals; it has been elaborated, enhanced, and extended by genomic evolution over time; and it is at its most extreme in the world’s most broadly distributed and ecologically dominant species: humans... We are individual members of populations, and those populations...have real psychological differences, but we are more similar than dissimilar. Those differences are the results of interactions between multiple layers of evolutionary forces. Moreover, we humans have the capacity to empathize directly with each other and to change our culture, for good as well as for ill. (Heying, Weinstein, 2020, 14, 16).

I can conclude the following: since values such as caring for the powerless and the fair sharing of goods are part of a culture, this explains why certain values underlie human attitudes towards ourselves, others and the world.

Heritage values are the qualities we attribute to heritage and that give it significance (and hence meaning) (de la Torre 2005, 5). They are part of the moral capital of a community, and refer to the quality and (mainly positive) attributes (actual or potential) of things and phenomena. According to Timothy Darvill, heritage values are divided into use values, option values and existence values (Darvill 1995, 38). In the table below I summarize and partly supplement this division.

9 Neuroaesthetics is concerned with explaining the neurological and evolutionary characteristics of aesthetic experiences. For a review, see Pearce *et al.* (2016), and the literature cited therein.

Table 1: Types of heritage values (Darvill, 1995, 41–45, Pirkovič, 2022, 50)

Use values	Option values	Existence values
Research values (for basic heritage research)	Values enabling future enjoyment in heritage	Values that stimulate curiosity, drive us to discover new things and to participate
Educational values	Values of the new knowledge that heritage can produce in the future	Values that promote a sense of impermanence and mysticism (common human values)
Values for legitimizing political objectives which heritage serves indirectly	Values which strengthen social bonds and solidarity (including through volunteering)	Values which preserve tradition (resistance to change and resilience)
Economic values (leisure activities, tourism, cultural industries)	Values for future economic development and the enjoyment of its fruits	Values contributing to the stability of the community and its institutions
Values which create new, added value	Values for the development of (local) entrepreneurship, new jobs, new careers in heritage management	Cultural-identity values that contribute to the sense of belonging of individuals to the community and of smaller communities to the larger entities

I can illustrate the importance of existence values by a heritage that either dates from distant periods, or whose values are in conflict¹⁰ or are no longer in use. Because of their difficult nature, such heritage is not close to people. If we use its existence values, common to all humans, as a basis for interpretation, we make it more understandable and thus more worth preserving than if we only emphasize its research and economic values, such as for tourism.

Today, in the field of culture and heritology, we are witnessing the instrumentalization of values, which reduces values to something that is relative, popular and serves mainly utilitarian purposes. However, the insights of neuroscience, evolutionary biology and psychology are leading us to see that among all values there are those that have a deeper, more humane meaning.

McGilchrist's core values can be equated with Darvill's existence values. They are the most important because they build our ethical relationships with ourselves,

10 We are talking about what is known as a difficult or contested heritage (Logan, Reeves, 2009).

others, nature and the world. Two publications illustrate the interesting development in the understanding of existence values over several decades, the first from fifty years ago¹¹ (Maslow, 1972, 38, 128–129) and the second, most recent one, on the links between natural and cultural heritage (Kerner, 2019, 1441–1449). Abraham Maslow, a humanistic psychologist, speaks of so-called B-values, and Jasper Kerner, an environmental economist, speaks of transcendental values. Heritage values are ‘embodied’ in the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills that individuals and communities cultivate in relation to heritage. Heritage professionals and authorities are not the only ones called upon to decide what the values and significance of heritage are in specific cases. Individuals, groups and communities who have a connection with heritage in any way have a role to play here.

In summary, when dealing with heritage, we seek to understand the whole range of values and valuation processes, as opposed to the traditional conservation approach, which prioritizes the values of age, rarity, aesthetics or the documentary values of heritage resources.

The concept of interpretation

In our case, the interpretation of heritage is both an overarching concept and a field in which the other three key concepts, memory, knowledge and values, which I have just explained from the perspective of neuroscience and heritology, take place. The SSKJ defines interpretation as doing, causing to be grasped, to know the meaning, the content of something; explanation, translation. Additionally, interpretation means artistic recreation, for example of dramatic characters through acting, as well as playing and reproducing a musical work. This explains the creative layers of heritage interpretation.

An interesting insight into the history of the establishment of natural and cultural heritage interpretation and the role of values in this is presented by Kohl and McCool: “For example, environmental education, adaptive management, and heritage interpretation are all fields born during Modernism in response to environmental problems caused by Modernism... each field began with Modernist assumptions focused on science, rationality, and the objectively measurable facets of reality.” Postmodernism has continued this attitude towards heritage, adding to it a demand “for more participation, considered human rights, community involvement, inclusiveness, other forms of knowing, and value relativism” (Kohl, McCool, 2016, 177 -178). We can see that the postmodernist understanding of interpretation still prevails, and this convinces me in principle, with the exception that heritage values are relative, subject to constant change, and therefore dispensable when heritage loses its instrumental value.

11 The work was published posthumously.

I would like to complement the explanation of heritage interpretation that I gave in the introduction with the following: “Perhaps the most rudimentary idea that comes up when thinking about heritage interpretation is the transfer of knowledge from a heritage institution (say, a museum, archive, library, art gallery, castle and so on) to an audience with the aim of helping them have access to, even understand, the heritage that’s there. For some, interpretation is an exposition of the facts that we know about the heritage assets we hold. A sign in the ground to tell you what tree this is. A translation of what that Roman inscription on the wall says. A label next to a painting with the title and the artist’s name and dates” (Slack, 2020, 10).

For a more illustrative insight into the role of interpretation as part of heritage management, I refer to Reuben Grima, who used the example of public archaeology to explain the evolutionary stages of the approach of professionals as academic knowledge holders to heritage interpretation. These stages or models are:

- the ivory tower model, in which academic science is seen as the sole custodian of knowledge about heritage resources, to the exclusion of the public;
- a deficit model, where the profession plays a key role as a representative of heritage institutions and its mission is to communicate heritage knowledge to the public and to interpret heritage resources (usually supplied separately by individual disciplines);
- a model that can be called “open” interpretation, because it addresses the broad field of heritage knowledge in contemporary society. In this model, experts are just an interface inside a wider community. Together with non-experts, they come into contact with the past and interpret it together. In this model, integrating traditional knowledge and interpretation in various practical, experiential and participatory forms is particularly important (Grima, 2016, 51–55).

If we supplement Grima’s postmodern interpretation of the development stages of interpretation with Gadamer’s hermeneutics, then in dealing with a dialogical and inclusive interpretation we need to keep in mind what I stated in the introduction – when we interpret heritage, we cannot separate it into natural and cultural. In advocating such a stance, the strongest authority is Freeman Tilden, the pioneer of modern heritage interpretation.¹² “Tilden’s rejection of the nature-culture binary through adopting an inclusive notion of heritage can be coherently and productively grounded in a hermeneutic framework, wherein nature is shown to be always already interpreted through cultural mediation” (Ablett, Dyer, 2010, 210). To this, I might add that interpretation is always mediated by language (or another system of signs), and its success

12 Tilden’s definition of “common” heritage is not to be found in his definition – how broadly he understood it can be seen from his references to the disciplines concerned with heritage (history and natural history) or to what is the object of interpretation (natural and man-made heritage) (Tilden, 1977, xviii, 3).

is closely related to the interpreter's metaphorical potential and the cultural attitude of the public. Hermeneutics reminds us of the essence of heritage interpretation, and that is to unveil the meaning of history, cultural traditions and the place of man in nature and the world, all of which heritage embodies.

2 An interpretation model tailored to public co-participation

Based on the introduction, existing models and an analysis of the key concepts – heritage values, knowledge and memory, and the relationships among them – I have developed a model of open interpretation, and expanded it to illustrate the process of interpretation. The process includes tasks in a time sequence, their actors and typical use cases. The elements of the process model are tailored to the requirements of public co-participation.

According to the *Unified Modelling Language* (UML), a model is a logical, abstract specification of the essential structure of a given system that enables its software programming. It is expressed in the form of diagrams and associated documents (specifications, execution instructions, use case descriptions, etc.) The semantic aspect of a model captures the meaning of a system as a network of logical constructs such as classes, elements, associations, states, use cases and messages. The semantic elements of the model carry the meaning of the model. The visual appearance is not important in most models (Rumbaugh, 2004, 15, 18–19).

In our case, I did not follow the UML requirements in full, I only used its basic logic in order to show the essential structure of heritage interpretation as a system (which falls under the field of heritage protection or heritology) as simply and as clearly as possible. An additional requirement is that the model should structure the requirements for the participation of stakeholders, especially the local community, as consistently as possible. A diagram is a “graphical presentation of a collection of model elements ... [it] shows presentation of semantic model elements, but their meaning is unaffected by the way they are presented” (ibid, 323). According to Rumbaugh, there are two types of models and thus diagrams. The first focuses on the presentation of the elements of the system and the relationships among them (and partly also the relationship to context), and the second on changes in the system and its elements as they occur over time. Among the different types of diagrams, the structure diagram and process diagram are the most appropriate for our purposes. Of course, I will not present them in a UML language but in a graphical form such that the structure diagram illustrates the key concepts of heritage interpretation as the model elements and the relationships among them, and the process diagram presents the planning cycle and the changes in content, where the model elements are the key actors, the tasks of interpretation and examples of its use. The structure diagram I propose takes the form of a Venn diagram, and the process

diagram is a variant of the adaptive management model. The characteristic feature of this model is that, unlike linear models, it points to improvements based on monitoring and evaluation of results and system feedback loops.

2.1 Structure diagram of the interpretation

Structure (Venn) diagram of heritage interpretation

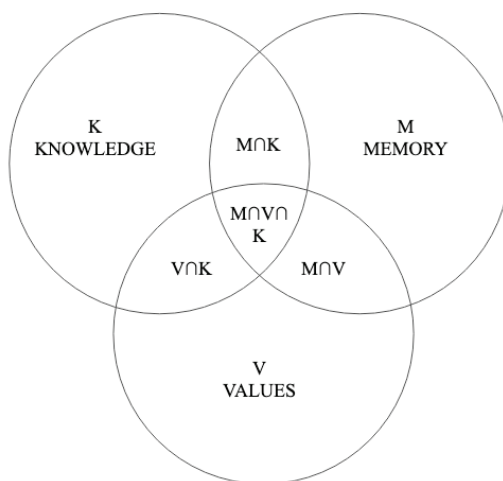


Figure 1: Structure (Venn) diagram of heritage interpretation.

The structure diagram shows the general model from the point of view of three key concepts that I believe are indispensable for heritage interpretation. In concrete examples of interpretation, this is how we record content that falls into the category of memories, values or knowledge. At the same time, we record those contents with characteristics of one and the other key concept or all three concepts: for example, traditional knowledge has both memory and value characteristics. The contents can be recorded (mapped) in a Venn diagram (Figure 1) or in a matrix (Table 2). By mapping the content suitable for interpretation, we get an overview of the multi-dimensionality of content with more interpretative potential (spatially located in the cross-sections of the circles). It is important that, in line with the requirements of participation, the mapping is carried out in this way with the participation of the widest possible range of the public.¹³

13 In Slovenia, there is an application that allows the oral tradition of the elderly to be recorded and accessible online: <https://www.zapisi-spomina.dobra-pot.si/>.

Table 2: Structure model matrix of heritage interpretation (hypothetical example)

M ∩ V Memory ∩ Values	M ∩ K Memory ∩ Knowledge	V ∩ K Values ∩ Knowledge	M ∩ V ∩ K Memory ∩ Values ∩ Knowledge
Interpreting memories (including traumatic ones) to promote ethical values and the right to remembrance/oblivion in commemorations and other events.	Collecting and recording collective memory in different media as an interpretation basis.	Interpreting the traditional knowledge values and their embodiment in heritage and the environment.	Interpretation that contributes to unlocking development potential and to the quality of life of local inhabitants.
Interpreting memories as a manner to reconcile and resolve conflicts over disputed heritage by claiming places of memory.	Developing new knowledge through the creative interpretation of memories and traditions.	The role of interpretation in life-long learning and creative industries that respect heritage values.	Encouraging open interpretation in which all stakeholders participate, thus developing a sense of belonging to the community.

2.2 Heritage interpretation process diagram

The process diagram, as mentioned above, shows the process of interpretation. The process is not linear but rather circular, from preparation and planning, through implementation to evaluation and from the evaluation's conclusions to new preparations for improvements, planning and so on. That is why we speak of a cyclical process. At each stage, I have divided the public into two groups: stakeholders (1) and participants (2). The stakeholders are experts, representatives of the local community and other interested parties. Participants are all those who are targeted by the interpretation or otherwise come into contact with it.¹⁴ The diagram in Figure 2 shows that in the first phase, the main stakeholders are the experts, and the others play the role of participants. In the design process, individuals who express an interest in the interpretation or who are trusted by the participants are actively involved as stakeholders. Ideally, local stakeholders take the lead in the implementation – it is characteristic of an eco-museum that the local community, through its way of life, facilitates and manages the operation of the museum, with the experts only playing an advisory role. In evaluation, the roles are again more equal, but the conclusions should be generally accepted.

14 In line with the purpose of public co-participative interpretation, we are not talking about visitors as passive recipients of interpretive messages but about participants because visitors are also actively involved in the process.

In the new round of interpretation, representatives of the local community can take on the role of experts, as they have accumulated knowledge and experience in the previous phases. The diagram following shows the tasks of each phase (in rectangles) and the use cases (in ovals).

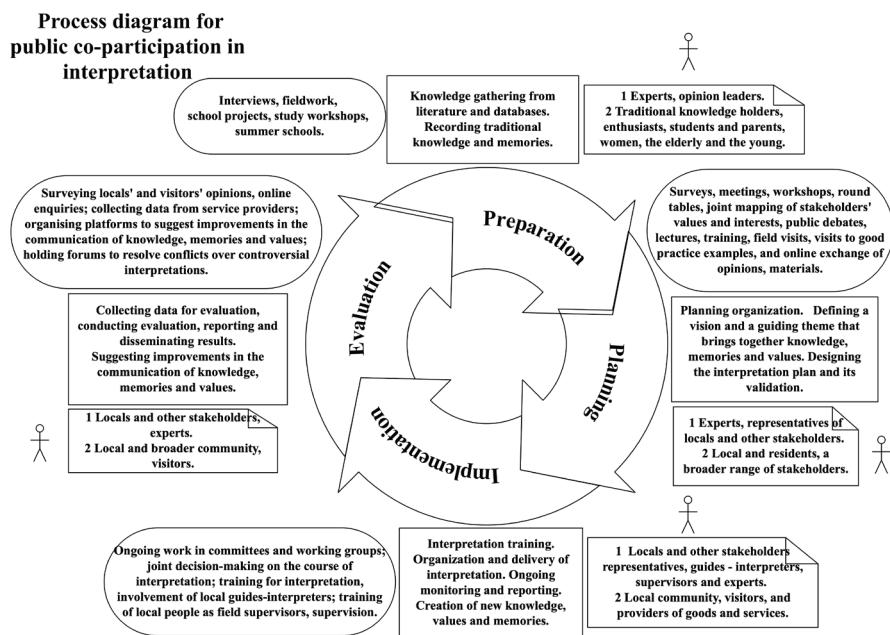


Figure 2: Process diagram for heritage interpretation tailored to public co-participation.

3 Discussion and Conclusion

At first sight, the focus on memory, knowledge and values emphasizes the importance of intangible heritage, while the aspect of movable and immovable (i.e. tangible) heritage seems to be neglected. Heritology provides the answer to this issue, recognizing that heritage phenomena, values and meanings are inextricably interwoven. People come to value heritage when, through memories and experiences, they become aware of its significance for themselves and their communities.¹⁵ In principle, other concepts can be included in the model, such as the different types of heritage: natural and cultural, tangible and intangible, movable and immovable. I want to mention only one key interpretative concern against such conceptual fragmentation: ordinary people

¹⁵ For the links between personal, community and cultural values, see Kenter, (2019, pp. 1441, 1449).

- locals and visitors - do not usually perceive heritage in a fragmented way, according to expert categories. Therefore, an interpretation that only considers conservation 'theory' will not achieve its purpose with the public.

In this paper, I present a general understanding of interpretation based on models from the fields of hermeneutics, semiotics and information science. In explaining the key interpretive concepts, I have limited myself to general positions of neuroscience and heritology only for practical reasons (i.e., the prescribed length of the paper). As heritology and interpretation are highly interdisciplinary, additional aspects will have to be presented in the future, such as the psychological, economic (in relation to tourism) and social (as a factor of social cohesion) aspects.

I have used the basic logic of UML as a basis for the design of the interpretation model. The model is, as already noted, an ideal representation of the structure and functioning of a particular field, in our case interpretation, and is relatively simplified in its structural description. The usefulness of the model can easily be tested. Its use is two-step: first, as part of the preparation, a mapping of the key concepts is carried out (one can add another or use others instead of the ones offered, for example, the typical protected components of heritage or a conservation area).¹⁶ Then the steps of the process model are followed. Variants of the process model have long been used to good effect in business management, policy management and other systems. The co-participatory interpretation model also has practical value, especially when considered as a guide for heritage management. Interpretation contributes to public support for heritage, improving the prospects for conservation (ICOMOS Australia, 2013, 2) and generating new values, memories and knowledge.

I conclude the discussion with the words of new media expert Gabriella Gian-nachi pointing out that participation, which is a form of self-production, creates economic value through the creation of new knowledge. Moreover, it supports the community's identity and strengthens its power (Rausch, 2022, 22). By strengthening economic and moral capital, interpretation becomes one of the practices of the narrower and broader community in dealing with and overcoming differences and divisions. This is particularly important when promoting complex interpretation, as seen, for example in so-called sacred natural sites (Verschuuren, 2018), sites of memory (UNESCO, 2018) and the dissonant or difficult heritage of the twentieth century (Pötz, 2022). Interpretation with public participation contributes to exercising the right to heritage as part of human rights and strengthening the project of humanism (Ošljaj, 2021, 20).¹⁷

16 In Slovenia, the protected components of immovable heritage are defined by the Regulation on Heritage Conservation Areas (Uredba, 2022).

17 Članek je v angleščino prevedel Luka Kocbek.

References

- Ablett, P. G., Dyer, P. K., Heritage and hermeneutics: towards a broader interpretation of interpretation, *Current Issues in Tourism* 12 (3), 2009, pp. 209–233, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13683500802316063>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Act Ratifying the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, *Uradni list RS – Mednarodne pogodbe*, 1/08.
- Adams, S., On Ricoeur's Shift from a Hermeneutics of Culture to a Cultural Hermeneutics, *Études Ricoeuriennes / Ricoeur Studies* 6 (2), 2015, pp. 130–153, <http://ricoeur.pitt.edu>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Arthos, J., Who are we and who am I? Gadamer's communal ontology as palimpsest, *Communication Studies* 51 (1), 2000, pp. 15–34, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10510970009388507>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Azzopardi, E. et al., What are heritage values? Integrating natural and cultural heritage into environmental valuation, *People & Nature* 00, 2022, pp. 1–16, DOI: 10.1002/pan3.10386, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Berkes, F. et al., Rediscovery of Traditional Ecological Knowledge as Adaptive Management, *Ecological Applications* 10 (5), 2000, pp. 1251–1262.
- Dallmayr, F., Hermeneutics and inter-cultural dialog: linking theory and practice, *Ethics & Global Politics* 2 (1), 2009, pp. 23–39.
- Darvill, T., Value Systems in Archaeology, in: *Managing Archaeology* (Cooper, M. A. et al., ed.), London - New York 1995, pp. 38–48.
- Grima, R., But Isn't All Archaeology Public Archaeology? *Public Archaeology* 15 (1), 2016, pp. 50–58, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14655187.2016.1200350>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Heying, H., Weinstein, B., *A Hunter-Gatherer's Guide to the 21st Century*, New York 2021.
- ICOMOS Australia, *Burra Charter: Practice Note – Interpretation*, 2013, https://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/Practice-Note_Interpretation.pdf, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Kenter, J. O. et al., Loving the mess: navigating diversity and conflict in social values for sustainability, *Sustainability Science* 14, 2019, pp. 1439–1461, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-019-00726-4>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Kohl, J., McCool, S., *Future Has Other Plans: Planning Holistically to Conserve Natural and Cultural Heritage*, Wheat Ridge, CO 2016.
- Logan, W., Heritage interpretation, conflict and reconciliation in East Asia: global issues in microcosm, *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development* 12 (1), 2022, pp. 5–18.
- Logan, W., Reeves, K., *Places of Pain and Shame: Dealing with 'Difficult Heritage'*, London – New York 2009.

- Ludwig, T., Natur- und Kulturinterpretation - Amerika trifft Europa, *Natur im Blick der Kulturen*, Opladen 2011, pp. 99–114, <http://www.interp.de>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Maerker, A. K. et al. (eds.), *History, Memory and Public Life: the past in the present*, London - New York 2018.
- Maslow, A. H., *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, New York 1971, 2. ed. London 1976.
- McGilchrist, I., *The Matter with Things: Our Brains, Our Delusions and the Unmaking of the World*, Wilmslow, Cheshire 2022.
- Ogden, K. C., Richards, I. A., *Meaning of Meaning*, London 1923.
- Ošljaj, B., Koronakriza, njene etične razsežnosti in dileme, *Ars & Humanitas* 15 (1), 2021, pp. 17–28, <https://journals.uni-lj.si/arshumanitas/article/view/10259>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Pearce, M. T. et al., Neuroaesthetics: The Cognitive Neuroscience of Aesthetic Experience, *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 11 (2), 2016, pp. 265–279, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691615621274>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Perko, V., Arheologija za javnost – Public Archaeology, *Arheo* 25, 2008, pp. 113–130, <http://www.dlib.si/stream/URN:NBN:SI:doc-07K7WY2F/e6fd8dc7-0008-4230-ad54-0e14593d31b6/PDF>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Perko, V., *Muzeologija in arheologija za javnost: muzej Krasa*, Ljubljana 2014.
- Pirkovič, J., *Upravljanje arheološke dediščine*, Ljubljana 2022.
- Potz, P., Scheffler, N., *Integrated Approaches to Dissonant Heritage of the 20th Century*, Berlin 2022, <http://www.dlib.si/stream/URN:NBN:SI:doc-07K7WY2F/e6fd8dc7-0008-4230-ad54-0e14593d31b6/PDF>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Rausch, C. et al. (eds.), *Participatory Practices in Art and Cultural Heritage: Learning Through and from Collaboration*, Cham, Švica 2022.
- Ritakallio, L. et al., The Pursuit of Effective Working Memory Training: a Pre-registered Randomised Controlled Trial with a Novel Varied Training Protocol, *Journal of Cognitive Enhancement* 6, 2022, pp. 232–247, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41465-021-00235-2>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Rumbaugh, J. et al., *The Unified Modelling Language: Reference Manual*, Boston 2003, https://www.utdallas.edu/~chung/Fujitsu/UML_2.0/Rumbaugh--UML_2.0_Reference_CD.pdf, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Slack, S. *Interpreting Heritage*, London - New York 2020.
- Slovar slovenskega knjižnega jezika*, second, updated and partially revised edition, www.fran.si, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Snoj, M., *Slovenski etimološki slovar*, www.fran.si, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Šola, T., *Eseji o muzejima i njihovoj teoriji: prema kibernetičkom muzeju*, Zagreb 2003.
- Tilden, F., *Interpreting our heritage*, Chapel Hill 1977 (third edition).

- de la Torre, M. (ed), *Heritage Values in Site Management: Four Cases*, Los Angeles 2005, http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/pdf/heritage_values_vl.pdf, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Tuđman, M., *Teorija informacijske znanosti*, Zagreb 1990.
- UNESCO, UN –CBD, Joint Program: *Florence Declaration on the Links between Biological and Cultural Diversity*, Florence 2014, https://www.landscapeunifi.it/land/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/UNESCO-CBD_JP_Florence_Declaration.pdf, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- UNESCO, *Interpretation of Sites of Memory*. Paris 2018, <http://openarchive.icomos.org/id/eprint/2053/1/activity-933-3.pdf>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Uredba o varstvenih območjih dediščine, *Uradni list RS*, 69/22.
- Verschuuren, B., Brown, S. (eds.), *Cultural and Spiritual Significance of Nature in Protected Areas: Governance, Management and Policy*, Routledge, London - New York 2018.
- WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization), Policy – Traditional Knowledge. <https://www.wipo.int/tk/en/tk/>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.
- Zadavec, J., Socijalna inkluzija – projekt, *Varaždinski učitelj - digitalni stručni časopis za odgoj i obrazovanje* 4 (6), 2021, pp. 1–7, <https://hrcak.srce.hr/file/371436>, accessed 24. 8. 2022.

Model of Heritage Interpretation Adapted to Public Co-participation

Keywords: hermeneutics, semantics, collective memory, heritage valuation, participatory approach, adaptive management

Dealing with interpretation, we first revisited the theoretical models of hermeneutics (hermeneutical cycle), semantics (triangle) and information sciences, as well as the model of heritage interpretation pedagogy. To design a more appropriate heritage interpretation model that meets the requirements of full public participation, we defined the key concepts (on top of heritage interpretation itself): memory, knowledge and values. The arguments for such a choice have been expounded from three viewpoints: semantics (defining their current meaning and etymology of terms), neuroscience and heritage studies (in Slovenia and some other countries, we use the term ‘heritology’ – denoting the interdisciplinary field of heritage studies). The paper concludes by outlining the heritage interpretation model, graphically presented in two diagrams: the structural one in the form of a three-circle Venn diagram with the corresponding matrix and the process diagram following the adaptive management pattern. The discussion presents critical issues of the model and points out some advantages of its practical implementation.

Model interpretacije dediščine, prilagojen soudeležbi javnosti

Ključne besede: hermenevtika, semantika, kolektivni spomin, vrednotenje dediščine, participativni pristop, prilagodljivo upravljanje

Pri interpretaciji smo se najprej lotili teoretičnih modelov hermenevtike (hermenevtični cikel), semantike (trikotnik) in informacijskih znanosti ter modela pedagogike interpretacije dediščine. Za oblikovanje ustrežnejšega modela interpretacije dediščine, ki ustreza zahtevam polnega sodelovanja javnosti, smo definirali ključne pojme (poleg same interpretacije dediščine): spomin, znanje in vrednote. Argumente za takšno izbiro smo razložili s treh vidikov: semantičnega (opredeljuje njihov trenutni pomen in etimologijo izrazov), nevroznanstvenega in dediščinskega (v Sloveniji in nekaterih drugih državah uporabljamo izraz heritologija – ki označuje interdisciplinarno področje dediščinskih študij). Prispevek se zaključí z orisom modela interpretacije dediščine, grafično predstavljenega v dveh diagramih: strukturnem v obliki Vennovega 3-krožnega diagrama s pripadajočo matriko in procesnim diagramom po vzorcu prilagodljivega upravljanja. Razprava predstavlja kritična vprašanja modela in opozarja na nekatere prednosti njegove praktične implementacije.

About the author

Asst. prof. **Jelka Pirkovič** has a PhD in conservation and a master's degree in art history (Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana). She is the author of more than one hundred articles and fifteen publications in this field. She teaches with Asst. Prof. Verena Perko at the Department of Archaeology (Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana), and specifically Public Archaeology (bachelor's study), Archaeological Heritage Management (master's study) and Heritology (interdepartmental doctoral study). She was employed at the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia and at the Ministry of Culture, where she was, among other things, State Secretary (2004-2008) and Director of the Directorate for Cultural Heritage (2020-2022). She contributed to the adoption of the new law on the protection of cultural heritage. She participated in various bodies of the Council of Europe and the European Union, especially in the framework of the two EU Council presidencies held by Slovenia. She is active in non-governmental organizations in the field of heritage protection.

Email: jelka.pirkovic@guest.arnes.si

○ avtorici

Doc. dr. **Jelka Pirkovič** ima doktorat iz konservatorstva in magisterij iz umetnostne zgodovine (na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani). Je avtorica več kot sto član-
kov in petnajst publikacij s tega področja. Z doc. ddr Vereno Perko predava na Od-
delku za arheologijo Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani, in sicer Arheologijo za
javnost (dodiplomski študij), Upravljanje arheološke dediščine (magistrski študij) in
Heritologija (medoddelčni doktorski študij). Zaposlena je bila na Zavodu za varstvo
kulture dediščine Slovenije ter Ministrstvu za kulturo, kjer je bila med drugim dr-
žavna sekretarka (2004-2008) in direktorica Direktorata za kulturno dediščino (2020-
2022). Prispevala je sprejemu novega zakona o varstvu kulturne dediščine. Sodelo-
vala je v različnih telesih Sveta Evrope in Evropske unije, še posebej v okviru obeh
predsedovanj Slovenije Svetu EU. Aktivna je v nevladnih organizacijah s področja
varstva dediščine.

E-naslov: jelka.pirkovic@guest.arnes.si