

# **UNDERSTANDING HERITAGE**

**A Constructivist Approach to Heritage Interpretation  
as a Mechanism for Understanding Heritage Sites**

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**Understanding Heritage:  
A Constructivist Approach to Heritage Interpretation  
as a Mechanism for Understanding Heritage Sites**

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# **Abstract**

This paper offers a new perspective on heritage interpretation as a mechanism for understanding heritage sites. It builds a theory of understanding for heritage interpretation based on constructivism perspectives, which shift the focus of attention from heritage interpretation and the process of understanding as a purely cognitive process into a communicative one. In such a view understanding a heritage site means meeting orientation expectations put forth by heritage interpreters in interpretive provision. By analyzing visitor responses (emotional, verbal and behavioural) managers of a heritage site and heritage interpreters are able to determine whether orientation expectations have been met and thus whether understanding took place. In so far understanding of a heritage site means orienting visitors' perceptions of and behaviours at a heritage site.

The paper also analyses the role of culture in the process of understanding and in the process of heritage interpretation. Culture as such does not influence understanding, nevertheless the collective knowledge systems inherent in it are important for the process of understanding and communication, as they offer the meanings, structures and symbol systems that allow the individuals of a particular cultural group to communicate effectively with each other. Because cultures are characteristic of having a pattern and overlapping with each other, a communication and understanding between the individuals of various cultures is a difficult but not impossible process.

In order to ensure effective communication and reaching understanding a communication model for heritage interpretation was suggested with three interlinked components (team of communicators, active meaning-maker and interpretive medium), which ensure message formation, interpretation and exchange. In order to assist in communication with various visitors, and especially visitors from different cultural backgrounds, some techniques in the construction of information have been analysed, which allow assisting in reaching understanding on the presented issues in heritage interpretation. These techniques are framing, making of themes and stories. The use of these techniques in the construction of the interpretive information, as well as the overall influence of interpretive provision for understanding, have been tested in two cross-sectional studies. These studies have shown that, in view of constructivism theories, a well developed interpretive activity is able to contribute to a better understanding of a heritage site.

# Zusammenfassung

Diese Arbeit bietet eine neue Perspektive auf besucherorientierte Interpretation als Mechanismus zum Verständnis von historischen Stätten. Darin wird eine Theorie des Verstehens auf der Grundlage von konstruktivistischen Perspektiven erstellt, die den Fokus von besucherorientierter Interpretation und den Prozess des Verstehens als rein kognitiver Prozess auf kommunikative Prozesse verlagert. In dieser Hinsicht eine historische Stätte zu verstehen bedeutet die Erfüllung von Orientierungserwartungen, die durch besucherorientierte Interpretation kommuniziert wird. Durch die Analyse von Besucherreaktionen (emotionale, verbale und Verhaltensreaktionen) sind die Manager der Kulturerbestätten in der Lage zu bestimmen, ob die Orientierungserwartungen erfüllt wurden, und damit auch, ob Verständnis stattgefunden hat. In diesem Zusammenhang bedeutet Verständnis einer Kulturerbestätte die Lenkung der Wahrnehmungen und Verhaltensweisen der Besucher an dieser Stätte.

Diese Dissertation untersucht auch die Rolle der Kultur in den Prozessen des Verstehens und der besucherorientierten Interpretation. Die Kultur als solche beeinflusst das Verstehen nicht, dennoch ist ihr inhärentes, kollektives Wissen wichtig für den Prozess des Verstehens und der Kommunikation, weil es die Bedeutungen, die Strukturen und die Symbol-Systeme anbietet, und damit den Individuen einer bestimmten kulturellen Gruppe eine effektive Kommunikation ermöglicht. Da Kulturen bestimmte Muster aufweisen und sich überschneiden können, ist eine Kommunikation und eine Verständigung zwischen Menschen verschiedener Kulturen ein schwieriger, aber nicht unmöglicher Prozess.

Um eine effektive Kommunikation zu gewährleisten, wurde ein Kommunikationsmodell für die besucherorientierte Interpretation mit drei miteinander verbundenen Komponenten (team of communicators, active meaning-maker und interpretive medium) vorgeschlagen, die Informationsformulierung, -interpretation und -austausch gewährleisten. Um in der Kommunikation mit verschiedenen Zielgruppen und vor allem mit Besuchern mit unterschiedlichen kulturellen Hintergründen zu helfen, wurden einige Techniken in der Konstruktion von Informationen analysiert, die mit dem Prozess des Verstehens der dargestellten Themen bei besucherorientierter Interpretation helfen können. Diese Techniken sind Framing, sowie die Entwicklung von Themen und Geschichten. Die Verwendung dieser Techniken im Aufbau der interpretativen Informationen, sowie der Einfluss von interpretativen Maßnahmen für das Verstehen wurden in zwei Studien getestet. Diese Studien haben gezeigt, dass in Anbetracht der konstruktivistischen Theorien eine gut entwickelte, interpretative Maßnahme in der Lage ist, zu einem besseren Verstehen von Kulturerbestätten beizutragen.

# Table of Contents

Abstract	i
List of Tables	v
List of Images	v
List of Figures	vi
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Research methodology and organization of the thesis.....	1
1.1.1 Research objectives.....	1
1.1.2 Theoretical construction of the thesis.....	2
1.1.3 Thesis structure.....	2
1.1.4 Limitations of the research.....	3
1.2 The notion of heritage and its place in heritage interpretation.....	4
1.2.1 Heritage and its scope.....	4
1.2.2 Heritage formation.....	8
1.2.3 Role of heritage in a modern society.....	10
1.3 Development of heritage interpretation in the US.....	11
2. Theory of understanding for heritage interpretation.....	16
2.1 Defining understanding.....	20
2.2 Communicative approach to understanding.....	23
2.2.1 Theory of understanding after Rusch.....	23
2.2.2 Theory of understanding after Schmidt.....	25
2.3 Heritage interpretation as a mechanism of understanding.....	27
3. Role of culture in understanding and heritage interpretation.....	33
3.1 Defining culture.....	33
3.2 Culture and collective knowledge systems.....	38
3.3 Heritage and heritage interpretation in culture.....	40

4.	Heritage interpretation as communication.....	45
4.1	Process of communication.....	46
4.2	Communication model for heritage interpretation.....	48
4.3	Team of communicators and message formation.....	54
4.3.1	Message selectivity.....	56
4.3.2	Frames, themes and stories.....	58
4.4	Active meaning-maker and message interpretation.....	71
4.5	Communication medium and message exchange.....	76
5.	Understanding analysis.....	80
5.1	Aim and objectives of the study.....	80
5.2	Structure of the experimental interpretive leaflets.....	81
5.3	Structure of questionnaires.....	84
5.4	Methodology of the study.....	86
5.5	Interpretation of the results .....	88
5.5.1	Respondent's profile.....	88
5.5.2	Evaluation of external factors, pre-questionnaire.....	91
5.5.3	Evaluation of the attitude changes.....	96
5.5.4	Evaluation of external factors, post-questionnaire.....	114
5.5	Summary of the results.....	116
6.	Conclusions.....	119
	Appendices.....	124
	References.....	145

## **List of Tables**

Table 1.1	Heritage fields after Howard	8
Table 2.1	Definitions of Heritage Interpretation	18
Table 3.1	Characteristics of communicative and cultural memory after Assmann	42
Table 4.1	Selection of Framing Devices	63

## **List of Images**

Image 2.1	Schematic representation of the role of heritage interpretation in the process of understanding	28
Image 4.1	A plate from Bulguksa temple World Heritage Site, South Korea	59
Image 4.2	Interpretive panel at Kinder Scout, High Peak Estate, property of the National Trust, the UK	66
Image 4.3	Costumed interpretation at Edinburgh Castle, Scotland	75
Image 4.4	A touch screen explaining Junsang (a ritual liquor table) and the functions of the objects at a ritual table in Bulguksa temple World Heritage Site, South Korea	76
Image 4.5	Hologram interpretation of the “Arche Nebra” at the information centre in Wangen, Germany	77
Image 5.1	Presentation of the frame through a photo of the tenement house, and the citations of the architects used in the experimental leaflet for the estate of Britz	83
Image 5.2	Presentation of the frame through a photo of the tenement house and a short text; note the use of headings for better focussing of the information in the experimental leaflet for the Wohnstadt Carl Legien	84

**List of Figures**

Figure 2.1	Terminological columns after Schmidt	26
Figure 2.2	Relationship between affective, cognitive and behavioural responses of visitors.	30
Figure 4.1	Illustration of interpretive threesome after Lewis	49
Figure 4.2	Cameron's model with feedback loop in Hooper-Greenhill	49
Figure 4.3	Communication model after Hooper-Greenhill	50
Figure 4.4	Schramm's model of communication	50
Figure 4.5	Communication Model developed by Office of Technology Assessment	51
Figure 4.6	Process of Communication for Heritage Interpretation	52
Figure 4.7	Basic schemes for structuring interpretive information	71
Figure 5.1	Respondents' age distribution in the Britz Study	88
Figure 5.2	Respondents' age distribution in the Carl Legien Study	88
Figure 5.3	Respondents' occupation in the Britz Study	89
Figure 5.4	Respondents' occupation in the Carl Legien Study	90
Figure 5.5	Representation of the respondents according to their living period in the estate, the Britz Study	90
Figure 5.6	Representation of the respondents according to their living period in the estate, the Carl Legien Study	91
Figure 5.7	Attitudes towards certain issues connected with the WHS status	92
Figure 5.8	Information sources about the WHS status of the estates	94
Figure 5.9	Evaluation of the inhabitants on the amount of information about the estate in the media	94
Figure 5.10	Respondents distribution based on the amount of information they receive about the estate without the media	95
Figure 5.11	Self-evaluation of the inhabitants on their knowledge about the history of the estate	96
Figure 5.12	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, the Britz Study	97



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Figure 5.13	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, the Carl Legien Study	97
Figure 5.14	Respondents distribution depending on whether they read the leaflet or not	99
Figure 5.15	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, combined value of the respondents who skimmed through and read the leaflet completely	100
Figure 5.16	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, values of the respondents who read the leaflet completely	100
Figure 5.17	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, category <i>unemployed/retired</i>	101
Figure 5.18	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, category <i>full-time employed</i>	102
Figure 5.19	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category <i>41 to 60 years old</i>	103
Figure 5.20	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category <i>over 61 years old</i>	103
Figure 5.21	Distribution of the preferred means of information presentation in various age groups	104
Figure 5.22	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, combined value of the respondents who skimmed through and read the leaflet completely	105
Figure 5.23	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, values of the respondents who read the leaflet completely	106
Figure 5.24	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category <i>unemployed/retired</i>	106
Figure 5.25	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category <i>part-time employed</i>	107
Figure 5.26	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, category <i>full-time employed</i>	107
Figure 5.27	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category <i>20 to 40 years old</i>	108
Figure 5.28	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category <i>41 to 60 years old</i>	109
Figure 5.29	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category <i>over 61</i>	109

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	<i>years old</i>	
Figure 5.30	Attitudes towards aspects of the estate significance, category <i>have lived up to 5 years in the estate</i>	110
Figure 5.31	Attitudes towards aspects of the estate significance, category <i>have lived 5 to 10 years in the estate</i>	111
Figure 5.32	Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, category <i>have lived over 10 years in the estate</i>	111
Figure 5.33	Knowledge levels of the respondents according to their length of living in the estate	112
Figure 5.34	Distribution of respondents according to knowledge gained from the leaflet	113
Figure 5.35	Distribution of the respondents according to their level of understanding of the aspect	113
Figure 5.36	Rating of the elements usefulness in the presentation of the information in a leaflet, the Britz and the Carl Legien Studies	114
Figure 5.37	Distribution of the preferred means of information presentation	115

# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

The concept of heritage interpretation so popular in English speaking countries is not a new notion, but one which is only slowly acquiring international significance and is expanding into other countries. Even though heritage interpretation is gaining in importance in the management of heritage sites, one cannot ignore the debate going on in scientific circles on the lack of theory behind it, and the disagreement on its definition and application. This chapter will introduce objectives and a methodology of the research. Afterwards it will give a short overview of the concept of heritage and the history of heritage interpretation in the United States with the purpose of establishing a context for the understanding of current problems connected with it, and the reasons for the selection of the research topic.

### **1.1 Research methodology and organisation of the thesis**

#### **1.1.1 Research objectives**

The aim of this thesis is to offer a theoretical background for heritage interpretation in order to strengthen its position as a scientific discipline, and to contribute to its understanding and offer theories that lie behind its techniques and methods. In doing so, this will allow moving away from a try-and-do practice where interpretive methods are applied without deeper understanding of their influence on visitors. With the understanding of what heritage interpretation is comes the understanding of what techniques and methods can be best applied to it. In view of this aim the following objectives have been set for this research paper:

Objective 1: develop a theoretical background for heritage interpretation as a communication process and a mechanism for the understanding of a heritage site.

Objective 2: offer a communication model for heritage interpretation to enable effective communication to ensure understanding and analyse its components.

Objective 3: offer a model for the composition of information for heritage interpretation to ensure better understanding of a site.

### 1.1.2 Theoretical construction of the thesis

The thesis consists of two main parts: a theoretical part, which analyses the ideas and theories relevant for the research topic and develops theory of understanding for heritage interpretation; and a practical part, which means to verify in practice the theoretical suppositions put forth in the thesis.

The theoretical part of the thesis is based on constructivist *epistemology* which presupposes that truth and meaning do not exist in some external world, but are constructed by the subject's interaction with the world and therefore meaning is constructed and not discovered (Gray 2004: 17). A *theoretical perspective* selected for the thesis, which is also linked to constructivism, is interpretivism which looks for "culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world" (Crotty 1998: 67 in Gray 2004: 20). Unlike in natural sciences, which are looking for consistencies in the data, interpretivism deals with the social world and the actions of individuals, thus focusing more on qualitative rather than quantitative enquiries (Gray 2004). The selection of epistemology and a theoretical perspective were determined by the fact that heritage is a part of social reality and cannot be considered separate from it. In order to develop a solid theory for heritage interpretation, various social aspects of objective reality had to be taken into consideration.

A practical part (cross-sectional studies) was worked out in order to verify theoretical ideas and theories developed in the thesis. An analytical survey was chosen as a *research methodology* for the studies. It attempts to test a theory in the field through exploring the associations between variables. Despite being highly structured, analytical surveys nevertheless allow collecting qualitative as well as quantitative data (Gray 2004). Even though interpretivism is more concerned with qualitative data rather than quantitative, due to the time constraints in the current research it was decided to base the initial practical research on quantitative data. For that a questionnaire was chosen as a *data collection method*. The studies developed were conceptualized as pilot studies. Further research on the issue will extend the received findings through a qualitative enquiry.

### 1.1.3 Thesis structure

The thesis is organised into six chapters. Following an overview of the goal, objectives and methodology of the research, *Chapter 1* offers a brief introduction on the concept of heritage and heritage interpretation.

*Chapter 2* analyses theories of understanding, concentrating mainly on constructivist theories of understanding based on the ideas of Gebhard Rusch and Siegfried Schmidt. Furthermore, the chapter provides a theoretical basis for conceptualising heritage interpretation as a mechanism for understanding a heritage site, where heritage

interpretation is not perceived as a simple transmission of information, but as a mechanism for the orientation of visitors' perceptions of and behaviour at a heritage site.

**Chapter 3** critically analyses the concept of culture in relation to heritage interpretation, since it not only forms the content for heritage interpretation but is also essential for the process of understanding. It describes the role of collective knowledge systems in the process of understanding and their role in developing and perceiving interpretive provisions.

**Chapter 4** deals with the development of a communication model for heritage interpretation based on the previously analysed theory, and analyses the separate components of the model. It offers an overview of some of the techniques for developing quality heritage interpretation (such as framing and development of themes) and analysis of the external factors, which secure a better perception of interpretive provisions that have to be taken into consideration.

**Chapter 5** offers analysis of the influence of interpretive provisions on the understanding of a heritage site. The chapter starts with an overview of an experimental interpretive provision (leaflets) that have been developed for the study in view of the communication techniques discussed in Chapter 4. The developed interpretive provision has been implemented and tested at two heritage sites in Berlin. The developed empirical pilot study aimed to analyse to which extent a well-developed interpretive provision could influence the change in attitudes of the local community living at a heritage site to some aspects of that site. Two quantitative studies have been developed and conducted in order to analyse the influence of interpretation. The chapter analyses the results of both studies.

**Chapter 6** offers the discussion of the main findings of the research paper and the suggestions for further development and study of the research topic.

#### **1.1.4 Limitations of the research**

This paper is based on the European perspective of heritage and uses approaches and views commonly accepted in a European context. The multiple examples used in the paper predominately illustrate cultural heritage, which constitutes the special interest field of the author. Nevertheless, the ideas and suggestions developed in the thesis can also be applied to natural heritage sites.

The data collected with the help of questionnaires only provides quantitative confirmations of the theoretical ideas developed in the paper. Further qualitative research is needed in order to provide answers to some of the questions raised by quantitative studies.

## 1.2 The notion of heritage and its place in heritage interpretation

### 1.2.1 Heritage and its scope

Heritage has various meanings and hence definitions attached to it. Howard, for example, accepts the definition of heritage as ‘anything which someone wishes to conserve or collect’ (2003: 9). In recent years this meaning of heritage as something one wants to keep or conserve has been considerably extended. Tunbridge and Ashworth (in Hall and McArthur 1998: 4) identify five different aspects of heritage, which were prevailing in their time and still exist nowadays:

1. a synonym for any relict physical survival of the past;
2. the idea of individual and collective memories in terms of non-physical aspects of the past when viewed from the present;
3. all accumulated cultural and artistic productivity;
4. the natural environment;
5. a major commercial activity, e.g., the heritage industry.

This expansion of the heritage concept is also obvious if one analyses the main existing international documents produced by ICOMOS and UNESCO for the protection and preservation of heritage. Ahmad, for example, points out the broadening of the scope of heritage from “historic monuments and buildings to groups of buildings, historic urban and rural centres, historic gardens and to non-physical heritage including environments<sup>1</sup>, social factors and, lately, intangible values” (2006: 293-4). In the current scientific, as well as international, discussion heritage is perceived more and more often as an all-embracing concept related “to the action of humans and nature, together with an emphasis on the original and symbolic context of the heritage” (Jesus Fernandes and Carvalho 2008: 123).

Even though knowledge of all the aspects of heritage is useful for the understanding of its complex character, it is not particularly helpful in the daily preservation and management of heritage sites. Thus typologies of heritage are developed to assist with the improvement of appropriate conservation and management policies, as well as promotion and awareness-raising actions (Luxen 2000). At the same time this task of heritage categorisation proves extremely difficult as the notion of heritage is a multi-dimensional concept, which is also marked by typological flexibility (Jesus Fernandes and Carvalho 2008). As Graham (2007) points out, heritage may be conceptualized in different ways within one culture and across cultures, as well as have official and unofficial forms. In such a way the content and meaning of heritage changes through time and across space

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<sup>1</sup> The concepts of historic gardens and environments included into the International Charters in Europe and Australia in 1975 and in 1979 are technically not applicable in all the countries, as stated by Ahmad (2006: 295-6).

(Graham 2007), which does not make its definition any easier. Heritage classification can be done on different levels – international, national and even regional and local.

Nowadays there are two main categories of heritage that dominate on the international level: tangible and intangible, each of which can be classified further still. Thus, for example, tangible heritage is categorized in the 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage<sup>2</sup> into cultural and natural, each category having further subdivisions. Article one of the convention defines cultural heritage as *monuments, groups of buildings and sites*, whereas natural heritage, defined in Article two, is represented through *natural features, geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas and natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas* (UNESCO 1972). At the same time the categories of cultural and natural heritage are no longer seen as absolutely separate and have been combined through the category of “cultural landscapes” (Luxen 2000), which in its turn also has an intangible component (Aikawa-Faure 2009). In order to incorporate intangible elements the scope of the 1972 World Heritage Convention has been adjusted and enlarged through the Operational Guidelines to include such categories as *cultural routs, cultural landscape, associative sites and commemorative sites*, all of which recognise intangible components as a part of the site’s significance. Especially in *associative sites* the importance of intangible values associated with cultural properties was given such a prominence that the inscription of such a site into a World Heritage List is possible only for their sake, even if no human construction is seen (Luxen 2000; Beazley and Deacon 2007; Blake 2009).

But of course it was not sufficient to broaden the scope of the 1972 Convention to include intangible elements. A different international instrument was developed to ensure proper preservation of intangible heritage. The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted in October 2003, and entered into force in April 2006<sup>3</sup>. The Convention defines intangible cultural heritage as

the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage (UNESCO 2003, Article 2).

The existence of the above mentioned conventions underlines the important change in the approaches to heritage, namely the holistic perception of it, as a unity of tangible and intangible elements. Categories of tangible and intangible are closely interrelated and the

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<sup>2</sup> The 1972 Convention was not created to mirror tangible heritage only, rather it is the way the convention is interpreted nowadays as mainly dealing with tangible heritage.

<sup>3</sup> However, it should be noted that the concept and problems of intangible cultural heritage have been raised long before that. The main activities which paved the way for the Convention were the development of the Recommendations on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore 1989, the dissemination of the Living Human Treasure system launched in 1993, and the Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 1998 (Aikawa-Faure 2009, Skounti 2009).

distinction between the two is seen as rather artificial (Luxen 2000). As Dawson Munjeri argues “the intangible and the tangible are two sides of the same coin” (2000, para. 1). On the one hand, there is no monument that does not have an intangible element, which is more or less obvious in the historic fabric (Petzet 2003). On the other hand, intangible values are often only associated with particular tangible artefacts or monuments. Skounti (2009) even goes as far as to say that even the “most” intangible aspects (stories, songs, music, prayers, etc.) have a material dimension as they have to be apprehended through one of the human senses. However, when tangible heritage has this or the other kind of intangible values associated with it, intangible values may also exist without having a material locus of it (Beazley and Deacon 2007: 93).

The changes in the perception of heritage, which underline the importance of unity between tangible and intangible, are also reflected in the current practice of heritage interpretation. Thus, for example, the ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage (ICOMOS 2008) offers seven principles to ensure quality interpretation of heritage sites. In several of those principles it draws the attention to the necessity to incorporate intangible elements of a site to its interpretive programmes. Thus, principle three “Attention to Setting and Context” explicitly states that:

Intangible elements of a site’s heritage such as cultural and spiritual traditions, stories, music, dance, theater, literature, visual arts, local customs and culinary heritage should be considered in its interpretation (ICOMOS 2008).

Principle two “Information Sources” points out the necessity of incorporating oral and local traditions in interpretation:

Interpretation should show the range of oral and written information, material remains, traditions, and meanings attributed to a site... It should also acknowledge that meaningful interpretation necessarily includes reflection on alternative historical hypotheses, local traditions, and stories (ICOMOS 2008).

UNESCO classification of heritage offered in the two aforementioned conventions should not be perceived as a universal classification of heritage applicable to all the countries. It rather serves as an outline for classification to the state parties, hence allowing each country to give a more precise and clear classification of its own heritage within a country. A typology, for example given in 1972 Convention, seems to be all encompassing, when we take out the phrase “of outstanding universal value”. This attribute of “outstanding universal value” (OUV) gives additional meaning to the issue and separates sites deemed heritage against those that are not. The concept of OUV was deliberately introduced into the Convention in order to ensure a representative list and to limit its application to the protection of most important cultural and natural sites (Titchen 1996). But because UNESCO was not able to provide a clear definition of OUV for a long time, it caused great disputes during the nomination process of sites as every country interpreted it in its own way, often as “the very best example of the nation’s heritage”, and hence applied it freely (Titchen 1996: 236). The lack of definition of OUV in the



Convention and the Operational Guidelines of 1996 resulted in a Eurocentric interpretation of the notion as well as differences in approaches of the main advisory bodies – the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) – which as a result led to the discrepancy in the number of cultural and natural sites inscribed on the World Heritage List. Thus cultural inscriptions are roughly three times as numerous as natural (Cleere 1996).

To help identify the OUV, the Committee defined ten criteria for the inscription of properties onto the World Heritage List, which originally have been developed separately for cultural (criteria i to vi) and natural (criteria i to iv) sites (see for example Operational Guidelines 2002) and were later merged into ten criteria which are described in the Operational Guidelines from 2005. To be inscribed a site has to meet one or more of those criteria (see Appendix 1).

For the first time the definition of “an outstanding universal value” appeared in the Operational Guidelines of 2005:

Outstanding universal value means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole (UNESCO 2005: para. 49).

This definition of OUV can only be considered in conjunction with the inscription criteria. And even though Titchen criticizes the criteria as quite indistinct that include a great many levels of values, and that many criteria do not refer to any particular type of value at all (1996:237), in 2008 ICOMOS in its report on OUV attempts to give a more clear explanation of the OUV and the criteria connected with it. In this report Michael Petzert defines three groups of values to which inscription criteria constantly make reference to: historic value, artistic or aesthetic value and scientific value (Jokilehto 2008).

With all the critique of the OUV and the inscription criteria for the World Heritage List, this international classification of heritage is only meant to be a guideline for the establishment of comprehensive and more precise classifications of heritage in individual countries. One of the examples of heritage classification on a national level can be the typology offered by Howard (2003), where he identifies seven fields into which heritage may be classified (see Table 1.1.). This classification should by no means be seen as rigid as many items can fit into more than one category. Also other countries, and even various heritage bodies, within one and the same country may have typologies different from the above shown.

Heritage fields		
Nature	Nature reserves, zoos, museums	Fauna, flora, geology, habitats, air and water
Landscape	National parks, AONBs, natural areas, heritage coasts	Gardens and parks, cultural and archaeological landscapes, mountain chains, pains and coastlines
Monuments	Listed buildings, scheduled monuments, conservation areas	Buildings, transport lines, archaeological remains, sculpture
Sites	National battlefields, historic markers	Battlefields, mythical sites, <i>lieux de memoire</i>
Artefacts	Museums, galleries, outdoor museums	Museum artefacts, family albums, artworks, ships
Activities	Clubs and societies, legislation, <i>appellation controlée</i>	Language, religion, performing arts, sports, diet and drink, calendars, customs, crafts
People	Atrocity sites, plaques, graveyards, obituaries	Saints' relics, heroes, victims, celebrities' processions

**Table 1.1** Heritage fields after Howard (2003: 54)

### 1.2.2 Heritage formation

As Howard himself puts it: “Not everything is heritage, but anything can become heritage” (Howard 2003: 7). Something that is considered heritage is not given from the beginning, but is a result of a process influenced by various factors. There are economic factors which are linked with the expectations of financial returns from control of a heritage resource. There are political factors in using heritage for political debates/campaigns in order to assert power. There are social factors that involve the desire of groups to achieve social prestige. And finally, there are cultural factors as well, which contribute to the affirmation of a “strong, homogeneous and unchanging identity” (Skounti 2009: 75).

Ashworth and Howard (1999: 21) describe the process of heritage formation with distinct stages which an item has to pass in order to be called heritage, such as heritage formation, recognition, designation, interpretation and loss.

**Heritage formation** – there are various reasons why items become heritage, but probably most common of them are obsolescence, survival, rarity value, artistic creativity and association. With time and advancing technological progress, some things become obsolete and are no longer used, but for some they still represent a special value exactly

for the reason of no longer being in use. On the contrary, other items are still in use but their sheer age and rarity make them heritage (e.g. old churches and ancient manuscripts). Human artistic creativity is one of the ways of intentionally producing heritage: works of art, music and literature are meant to be collected and preserved. Other things become heritage because of their association with people or events (Ashworth and Howard 1999), as for example, a house in Eisleben and a room in Wittenberg (Germany) where Martin Luther was born and lived. These buildings together with several others associated with Martin Luther and his followers were even inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1996.

Probably the most important criterion in the process of heritage formation is *recognition* – items become heritage only if they are recognised as such. Not everything that is old or rare becomes heritage. Things become recognised as heritage for various reasons, such as thorough research on a particular item, which enumerates convincing reasons why the item has an importance and is worth being preserved (Ashworth and Howard 1999). However, in everyday life heritage is the construction of the mind that cannot always be accounted of through archaeological or conservation practice. Most of the heritage that means the most to individual people will never be subject to recording or conservation and thus recognition as heritage (Byrne 2009: 236). Another reason for heritage recognition may be a shift in a political or an administrative structure, when forgotten items come to the surface again, mainly to justify or support an existing regime (Ashworth and Howard 1999). Blake states that the identification and recognition of heritage is a political act because “the decision as to what is deemed worthy of protection and preservation is generally made by State authorities on national level and by intergovernmental organisations – comprising member States – on international level” (2000: 68).

Recognition is almost certainly followed by *designation*, which is when the governments and authorities come into the play. Designation is essential for establishing the importance of heritage in a country, region or community and it will usually be followed by *conservation* or even preservation, which often involves the debate what exactly and how it has to be preserved or conserved. After all that the place has to be *interpreted* (Ashworth and Howard 1999). Interpretation is important in raising awareness about heritage and explaining why places have to be preserved, especially when a decision to designate them was initiated from above and not by community groups. And it is an indispensable element in the process of heritage formation. Without communicating the site to public, the previous stages of designation and conservation would be futile because eventually a heritage site would be forgotten and lost. The reasons for the *loss* are numerous: physical loss either through human or natural activity; other sites may be closed to visitors for preservation reasons; or still other heritage may be deliberately forgotten, as it happened with Soviet heritage in eastern European countries (Ashworth and Howard 1999).

### **1.2.3 Role of heritage in a modern society**

Not only meanings of heritage have been extending, but also approaches to it have been widening from simple preservation of monuments, to conservation and regeneration of ensembles and areas, and finally to a heritage product, which can be used for economic benefits (Ashworth 1994). Often heritage is seen as a product that can be consumed. It is of course understandable that such a product is being conserved and preserved in order to exploit it for long-term tourism purposes, which also carries certain disadvantages with it. Conservation and preservation freeze heritage and its values in time, whereas before it was a developing, changing entity. Nevertheless, heritage tourism can also be beneficial to a place. The region and local economy can profit through indirect cash flow. Hence, in recent years heritage tourism has been seen as a tool for sustainable development (Graham 2007). In heritage, as a product, heritage interpretation plays an important role by becoming an object of paid for activities, where interpretive activities provide an add-on value to a heritage site for which a tourist is eager to pay, be it a guided tour or an audio guide.

Graham refers to heritage as “a knowledge that constitutes both economic and cultural capital” (2007: 249). Heritage is of course used for economic purposes, in order to promote tourism, economic development and urban regeneration, as indicated earlier. However, heritage is also knowledge, a cultural product and political resource. It can be interpreted in different ways depending on whose interests are more vocal and what political powers have to be protected. As such heritage is time-specific and its meanings can be altered and re-interpreted (Graham 2007: 254-255). Therefore, heritage is not always connected with positive notions. Howard warns that heritage often benefits some and disadvantages others, thus often becoming nationalistic, elitist and backward-looking: “so long as heritage can be used for profit, or to produce group pride or identity, or to subjugate or exclude someone else, then someone is going to use it” (2003: 5-6). Graham also underlines that

... heritage does not engage directly with the study of the past. Instead it is concerned with the ways in which very selective material artefacts, mythologies, memories and traditions become resources for the present. The contents, interpretations and representations of the resource are selected according to the demands of the present (2007: 250).

And because values and historical significance ascribed to a place may change over time (Beazley and Deacon 2007: 96) both heritage and identity have the potential for conflict and dissonance (Robertson and Hall 2008). Robertson and Hall in the example of memorials to Land Wars in the Highlands point out that:

memorials both deny the inheritance of those who chose not to take part in protest and ignore the fact that Highland social protest was not wholly generated by consensus within the crafting community but by conflict also (Robertson and Hall 2008: 29).

The use of heritage for political reasons is not automatically a negative thing and a source for conflict. It also helps to strengthen the local and national identity by enhancing the self-esteem of the local people, as well as becoming an important factor in individual and social well-being and people's quality of life (Fernandes and Carvalho 2008: 123; Johnson 1995: 52; Smith and Waterton 2009: 292). Moreover, heritage helps in maintaining a sense of place, which goes beyond a physical or geographical sense of belonging, and is concerned with placement of individuals within social space:

That is, heritage is a process through which individuals and collectives negotiate their social position and 'place' within particular societies. At an international level, nation states use heritage to negotiate their sense of 'place' in relation to each other (Smith and Waterton 2009: 293).

One cannot ignore the important role that heritage interpretation is currently able to play. Heritage interpretation, as it is shown by Ashworth and Howard (1999), becomes one of the stages in the process of heritage formation. Through communicating a heritage site to a wider public and enhancing understanding of it, heritage professionals also justify and confirm the status of a site or a monument as heritage. It also becomes a heritage product which is able to bring revenues to a heritage site. And it is important in creating local identities, and justifying national regimes. Nevertheless, practical experience of the author shows that many heritage sites have been neglecting interpretation, by either providing no interpretation at all, or providing communicative programmes of a quality which leaves much to be desired. One of the reasons for that is may be lack of understanding about the role of heritage interpretation, as well as its application principles. Heritage interpretation originated from practical experience rather than a theoretical thought. The concept of heritage interpretation and the term itself first appeared at the beginning of the 1940s as a result of changing practices in the national parks of the USA (for more information see chapter 1.3). At first it was offered in conjunction with and as a part of environmental education. With the years, though, it was separated into a self-standing discipline and is currently applied not only to natural, but also to cultural heritage sites. Only in the last decades more and more research studies are being done in order to analyse the role of heritage interpretation in the management and communication of heritage sites.

### **1.3 Development of heritage interpretation in the US**

Traditionally the father of nature guiding (and therefore of heritage interpretation) is considered to be Enos A. Mills (1870-1922), who started conducting nature-oriented field trips when he was 19 years old, and later began to train others to become nature guides. He became the first person who started formally training nature guides (Anderson 2007). In 1916-17 Mills started advocating for the employment of nature guides in natural parks in his articles "Guiding in the National Parks" that appeared in *Country Life in America*

and “Guides Wanted” published in the *Saturday Evening Post* (Weaver 1976). His active engagement facilitated the establishment of an important role of nature guiding at national parks in helping visitors to explore, enjoy and understand nature.

Other important naturalists of the time were Dr. Loye Holmes Miller (1874-1970) and Dr. Harold C. Bryant (1886-1968). Both lectured and led field trips at the summer resorts at Yosemite. Bryant also travelled by horseback to summer resorts in the Tahoe area where he led field trips and lectures sponsored by the California Game and Fish Commission, which received the name of the “Tahoe Experiment” (Weaver 1976: 30-31). In 1920 Bryant and Miller were invited to transfer the “Tahoe Experiment” to Yosemite and thus became the first official nature guides in the National Park Service. Even though nature guiding was introduced in several national parks by that time, its official recognition came with the summer interpretive programmes provided by Miller and Bryant at Yosemite National Park. Within the next few years, a budget was provided for park naturalists and interpretive programmes were extended to a year-round service (Ibid: 33).

From 1915 to the 1940s interpretive activities introduced in various national parks became more popular with the park visitors, and their usefulness was admitted by management agencies which led to the establishment of interpretive positions, responsibilities, policies, training programmes and so forth in the National Park Services and local museums (Machlis and Field 1992: 3). By 1923, for example, interpretive programmes and facilities in national parks were advanced enough to establish an office for their coordination and direction (Lewis 2005: 17).

In the 1930s and 1940s research on interpretive programmes viewed mainly in the course of conservation education grew predominantly in forms of doctoral theses (Merriman and Brochu 2006). One of the first important publications that paved the way for heritage interpretation as a profession was a book written by Freeman Tilden “Interpreting Our Heritage” (1957). Tilden was neither a naturalist nor an interpreter, but worked for many years as a newspaper reporter, a novelist and a playwright. Commissioned by the National Park Service he travelled for years analyzing interpretive programmes at parks, observing ranger walks and talks, noting public reaction to various styles and media of presentation (Robinson 1990; Regnier et.al 1994: 3). As a result of this work numerous books were produced, and the most important of them for the establishment of a heritage profession was “Interpreting Our Heritage”. The book identifies six principles of interpretation (see Appendix 2), which provided the framework for a new profession of a heritage interpreter and became so important that they are still taught and implemented by the majority of interpreters today.

After Tilden’s “Interpreting Our Heritage” a number of other important books and articles were published such as the article “Visitor Groups and Interpretation in Parks and Other Outdoor Leisure Settings” by Don Field and Alan Wagar which first appeared in *Journal of Environmental Education* in 1973, and identified human experiences as the main product for parks and recreational areas and thus shifted the attention of heritage

managers from physical resources to the audience: “the objective of all resource management is to create and maintain a flow of benefits for people” (Field and Wagar 1992: 23).

“*Interpreting the Environment*” (1976) with Grant Sharpe as an editor and an author of six chapters, was the first book to put forth the working methods of interpretation. It not only provided the analysis of the interpretive process and techniques but also underlined the needs for training and research in the field.

In 1980 William Lewis published his book “*Interpreting for the Park Visitors*”, which accumulated studies and discussions held at national workshops and conferences. The book is a manual for interpreters, which includes principles of good interpretation supported by multiple examples. His triad – the audience, resource and the interpreter – comprises the core of the interpretive profession and is still taught to interpreters today.

With the growing importance of interpretation and its popularity with visitors, managers of heritage sites and national parks were looking for different ways of interpreting sites other than by guided tours. Thus, in the 1970s and 1980s managers were encouraging interpreters to develop non-verbal interpretation, which included self-guiding brochures, visitor centres and interpretation panels. These techniques at the beginning were not developed for any particular audience groups and they naturally lacked feedback, which was a constituent part of verbal interpretation. In the mid 1980s it was also realised that interpretation was adding value to the visitor experience and that the people were willing to pay for it. Consequently, some managers started charging for interpretive activities and tour operators were promoting interpretation in the package of their products (Hall and McArthur 1998: 167).

Starting from the 1990s, more and more books appeared in the field of natural and cultural interpretation<sup>4</sup>, which strengthened the rights of heritage interpretation as a separate research field. Among them such books as “*Interpretation of Cultural and Natural Resources*” by Knudson, Cable and Beck (1995), “*Environmental Interpretation: A Practical Guide for People with Big Ideas and Small Budgets*” by Ham (1995), “*Interpretation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*” by Cable and Beck (1998), just to name a few, were published.

Heritage interpretation organisations were developing alongside the research in the field. In 1965 a non-profit corporation under the name of the Association of Interpretive Naturalists (AIN) was registered in Illinois. The organisation mainly attracted interpretive naturalists, recreation planners, and managers of natural history programmes and by 1985 it had almost 1,000 members. Professionals on the other side of the continent were also eager to have an organization of their own which would allow them share their

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<sup>4</sup> It is important to notice that even though various works appeared on interpretation of cultural heritage, techniques and methods applied in heritage interpretation are the same for both natural and cultural heritage.

professional experience. Hence, in 1968 Western Park Interpreters Association was established, later changed to Western Interpreters Association (WIA). Both organisations were later merged into the National Association for Interpreters (NAI) (Merriman and Brochu 2006).

By 2004 NAI had almost 5,000 members throughout the United States and in 32 other countries. It issues *Legacy* magazine which includes research as well as popular articles and since 1996 the *Journal of Interpretive Research*, which has the required status necessary for academics to publish their works (Ibid). At present NAI plays an important role in training interpreters, providing the platform for the experience and skills exchange as well as organising international conferences on heritage interpretation all over the world.

Even though the art of interpretation was born in the US and was and is mainly used to explain natural heritage, heritage interpretation has long been extended to cultural heritage. In the United Kingdom (UK), the principles and techniques of interpretation have been successfully applied to cultural heritage and the research on it has therefore concentrated on cultural heritage. This is obvious from the main scientific publications existing in the field, which predominantly use cultural heritage sites as examples (see e.g. Uzzel, David (ed.) 1989. *Heritage Interpretation*. Volume 1 & 2. Belhaven Press. London).

In the last decades, heritage interpretation has become used as a tool for presenting and explaining heritage to the public. Begun in the US and spread to the rest of the English speaking countries, such as the UK, Canada, New Zealand and Australia<sup>5</sup>, heritage interpretation, even though successfully coping with the task of presenting heritage to the wider public, remains a young field, which is still being formed and which has not yet been widely spread in other countries. The World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS have both realised the important role of heritage interpretation in promoting awareness about heritage and educating people. Hence, both organisations encourage heritage sites to develop programmes for presentation and interpretation of a site. In order to establish standards for interpreting and presenting heritage in various countries, ICOMOS adopted the Charter on the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (ICOMOS 2008). The Charter was a culmination of a five year long process of extensive consultations and debates with the experts from all over the world. The principles of heritage interpretation introduced in the Charter are meant to ensure quality heritage interpretation at cultural heritage sites all over the world.

Unfortunately the principles on their own cannot ensure the establishment of quality heritage interpretation at sites. Without better understanding of what heritage interpretation is and how it functions, methods and techniques will continue to be

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<sup>5</sup> It is obvious from the appearance of such organisations as the Association for Heritage Interpretation (UK), Interpretation Canada: An Association for Heritage Interpretation (Canada), Interpretation Australia Association.



developed on a try-and-do basis, as it has been done by many heritage practitioners until now. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to contribute to the understanding of heritage interpretation as a scientific field by developing a theoretical background for it, and to extend the body of knowledge on heritage interpretation for cultural heritage sites.

## CHAPTER 2

# **Theory of understanding for heritage interpretation**

The definition of heritage interpretation was first given in 1957 by Tilden (see Chapter 1.3), but even today there is no unifying theory for heritage interpretation. It has been conceptualised in view of sociological theories, cognitive psychology and communication theories. It is still going to take time till it wins its independent place as a scientific discipline, even though at present it is already taught at some universities in the US and the UK as a separate programme.

The aim of the following chapters is to offer a theoretical background for heritage interpretation in order to contribute to its understanding, give an explanation of its educational role and a role as a management tool and offer theories that lie behind its techniques and methods. This will allow moving away from a try-and-do practice, where interpretive methods were and often still are applied without deeper understanding of their influence on visitors. With the understanding of what heritage interpretation is, comes the understanding of what techniques and methods can best be applied for it. Heritage interpretation, as a complex interdisciplinary field, is not conducive to only one theory for it; hence, the main theories used for this paper were constructivist theories. Other ideas, which originated from other scientific fields, were applied in support of the expressed constructivist ideas. An application of multiple theories in no way threatens the plausibility of this paper. On the contrary, theories and approaches applied help to explain multiple facets of heritage interpretation, and in this way consolidate understanding of it.

First of all, it is necessary to understand what *interpretation* is, as the term has been used extensively in various scientific fields. Thus, in the field of sociology, for example, quite elaborate theories of interpretation are considered in phenomenological sociology, ethnomethodology, hermeneutics and structuralism (Marshall 1998). Hermeneutics can be called the science of interpretation. It is a study of interpretation of written texts as well as verbal and non-verbal forms of communication (Ibid: 327). The hermeneutic tradition can be traced back to ancient Greek philosophy, and for a long time it was synonymous with biblical interpretation (Prasad 2002), but from the early nineteenth century the fields to which hermeneutics was applied were extended considerably. Thus Thiselton defines five areas and academic disciplines in which hermeneutics has been applied:

(1) Biblical hermeneutics raises *biblical* and theological questions. (2) It raises *philosophical* questions about how we come to understand, and the basis on which understanding is possible. (3) It involves *literary* questions about types of texts and processes of reading. (4) It includes *social*, critical, or sociological questions about how vested interests, sometimes of class, race, gender, or prior belief, may influence how we read. (5) It draws on theories of communication and sometimes general *linguistics* because it explores the whole process of communicating a content or effect to *readers* or to a community (Thiselton 2009: 1).

One of the important notions of hermeneutics is a so called hermeneutics circle, which assumes that:

the meaning of individual texts of a given culture can be fully understood only by understanding the meaning of the overall spirit of that culture, and, in turn, the overall spirit of a culture can be understood only by understanding the meaning of the individual texts and other artifacts produced by that culture (Prasad 2002: 17).

The notion of the hermeneutic circle suffers from logical contradictions as it presupposes grasping the whole before the parts of it can be understood, which might be an impossible task. Therefore, understanding from a hermeneutics perspective is an intuitive rather than a logical and analytical process (Prasad 2002).

In studying human behaviour, a theory of interpretation is used to understand people's utterances, their beliefs, desires and the meaning of their cultural artefacts and practices (Hookway 2001: 7868). In relation to natural and cultural heritage the term *interpret* was first used by Enos Mills in order to describe his nature guiding at Long's Peak (Beck and Cable 2002: 6). The term has most likely been borrowed from linguistics with the meaning of translating from one language into another. In a way it is truly the art of rendering from one language to another – from the language of natural and cultural heritage and its context to the commonly understandable language of a visitor. This art of translating heritage to visitors can be best understood if one considers an example of built heritage. To a simple passer-by, a 17<sup>th</sup> century mansion might not tell a lot, apart from its aesthetic beauty. To the skilful eye of an architect or a conservator, the fabric of the building and its style tell the story of the building's development over the years. To a historian it can tell the story of a family who lived there – their social status, wealth and, to a certain extent, their life philosophy. This is the language which is understood by the professionals and which can be communicated to the audience with the help of interpretation methods. But interpretation is not a simple transfer of information about the site – it aims at showing connections and relations between objects, artefacts and visitors, provoking thought and motivation to explore the site further, which will be explained deeper in the coming chapters.

Whatever the real origins of the term were, it still causes confusion among heritage professionals today, which is obvious from the variety of existing definitions, some of which have been given in the Table 2.1. Not all of the given definitions were coined by

scientists. Tilden, for example, was a journalist and had based his definition on his impressions and experience of “interpretive” practices in US national parks.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Tilden 1977: 8	Interpretation is an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information
Ham 1992: 411	Interpretation is a communication process in which one person translates a language he/she speaks very well into terms and ideas that other people can understand.
Beck and Cable 2002: 1	Interpretation is to give meaning to a “foreign” landscape or event from the past or present.
Interpretation Australia 2005	Heritage interpretation is a means of communicating ideas and feelings which help people understand more about themselves and their environment.
Murphy 2000: 3	Interpretation is an interactive communication process, involving the visitor, through which heritage values and cultural significance are revealed, using a variety of techniques in order to enrich the visitor experience and enhance the enjoyment and understanding of the site.
Veverka 2000: 1	Interpretation is a communication process designed to reveal meaning and relationships of our cultural and natural heritage to visitors, through firsthand experience with the object, artefacts, landscapes and sites.
Colquhoun 2005: viii	Interpretation is an explanation of the natural, cultural or historic values attached to places. It enables visitors to gain insight and understanding about the reasons for conservation and ongoing protection of our heritage.
ICOMOS 2008: 2	Interpretation refers to the full range of potential activities intended to heighten public awareness and enhance understanding of cultural heritage site. These can include print and electronic publications, public lectures, on-site and directly related off-site installations, educational programmes, community activities, and ongoing research, training, and evaluation of the interpretation process itself.

**Table 2.1** Definitions of Heritage Interpretation

ICOMOS has made an attempt in offering the definition of interpretation, which would be accepted by the international community. Unfortunately, as acknowledged by a

former director of the Ename Center for Public Archaeology and Heritage Presentation<sup>6</sup>, numerous consultations and discussions proved to be extremely difficult, which is partly explained by the lack of understanding of the concept itself in various countries. The definition accepted in the ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (see Table 2.1) can hardly be called an ideal, as it was mainly reduced to the enumeration of interpretive activities in order to make it understandable to the international reader. The effectiveness of such an approach is debatable. A short survey conducted among heritage organisations in Germany in January - February 2009 shows that even after providing the ICOMOS definition of interpretation, there was little understanding of a concept among heritage professionals. This paper will not offer another definition of heritage interpretation in order not to contribute to already existing confusion. Even though the ICOMOS definition may not be quite as satisfying to the author of this work in disclosing the meaning of interpretation, one nevertheless may expect that with time and with the wider promotion and application of the Charter, the term will gain greater salience and will be more widely recognised. Therefore, this work is focussed on the development of a theoretical background for heritage interpretation, rather than a debate on its definition.

When analyzing closer the latest definition of heritage interpretation offered by ICOMOS (see Table 2.1) one may single out a key phrase in that definition: “to heighten public awareness and enhance understanding of cultural heritage sites”. The process of heightening awareness or awareness-raising is not a clear concept which is, nevertheless, understood in most societies and cultures. As defined by Sayers “to raise public awareness of a topic or issue is to inform a community's attitudes, behaviours and beliefs with the intention of influencing them positively in the achievement of a defined purpose or goal” (2006: 103). Hence, the two tasks of awareness-raising are to promote understanding of a topic or an issue within a society or community, and to educate people about it with the intention of influencing their attitude, beliefs or behaviour towards the achievement of a definite goal. Insofar one of the steps in awareness-raising is making the issues understandable to the audience. Hence, it is possible to argue that the main goal and outcome of heritage interpretation is a process of creating understanding about a heritage site and complex issues related with it. But what is *understanding*? How does it occur? And what does it mean in relation to heritage interpretation? These are the main issues which will be discussed in the following pages.

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<sup>6</sup> The Ename Center has initiated and was actively working on the development of ICOMOS Charter for Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites ratified in 2008. Therefore it is often called the Ename Charter.

## 2.1 Defining understanding

The term *understanding* in its common use is clear to everyone, but in its scientific use there is no agreement on its definition.

For years various scholars have been trying to bring clarity to the definition of the term in their respective disciplines. As early as 1985, Struber<sup>7</sup> attempted to analyse the reasons for the confusion of the term *understanding* in linguistic philosophy. He defined seven main uses of the word, as applied by different philosophers of that time. The term was mainly connected with the (1) understanding of a sentence; (2) its connections; (3) its context; (4) intentions connected with the expression of a sentence; (5) emphatical meanings connected with a sentence; (6) a deeper meaning of a sentence as opposed to the understanding of a sentence itself, (7) as well as understanding of oneself in a sentence. In his analysis the multiple use of the term for various phenomena is inevitable due to the orientation of the scientists on this or the other lay meanings of the word, and ignoring of all others. He states, though, that such multiple uses of the term neither create a competition for each other and the various methods of understanding, nor exclude each other. They also cannot be considered as having a hierarchical structure (Strube 1985). Strube's analysis of the term is based on the hermeneutical approach, where *understanding* is connected with the comprehension and construction of the texts and expressions. And even though it helps to understand the multiple facets of the term, it does not lead to closer understanding of heritage interpretation. Even though heritage interpretation uses various media, including texts, heritage managers might be less interested with the process of visitors understanding specific sentences and paragraphs of the text and their meanings, and rather with their understanding of a site as a whole, and complex connections of its elements.

In psychology *understanding* is analysed as a cognitive process. In the definition given by Reusser and Reusser-Weyeneth (1997) *understanding* is seen as a cognitive construct of an object by the person situated in a 'functionally pragmatic' context, and influenced by the world view and knowledge accumulated by that person over his or her life span. In such a definition three factors play an important role in the analysis and comprehension of the understanding processes, and namely a *person* with his/her knowledge background, expectations, values and aims; the *nature of the object* (subject) that has to be understood, whether it is a mathematical problem, or a novel; and the *context* in which understanding takes place. Reusser and Reusser-Weyeneth worked out eight characteristics of the *understanding* process, which cover almost all the knowledge of the psychological field on the issue (Ibid: 16-21):

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<sup>7</sup> Prof. Dr. Werner Struber was a full time professor till 2003 at the Ruhr University Bochum dealing mainly with the questions of linguistic philosophy or ordinary language philosophy.

1. ***Understanding as a cognitive construct*** cannot be seen as a process of copying reality, or deciphering of structures with given unchangeable meanings, but rather as a constant process of meaning creation. In such a process a person is always adding his/her subjective contribution to the understanding of a situation.
2. ***Understanding as an assimilation or integration of a fact/situation in the structure of the subjective world knowledge.*** New situations and phenomena can only be understood within the system of already existing knowledge, beliefs and perceptions a person accumulated over his or her life. Something that does not fit in such a system will not be understood and most likely rejected as such.
3. ***Understanding as an interaction of the ascending and descending processes*** should be seen as an active interaction between a person and an object/situation that have to be understood. Understanding is not a one way process from an input to the meaning (bottom-up-process), it necessarily includes analysis of the phenomenon by a person based on the expectations and knowledge systems he/she already possesses (top-down-process).
4. ***Understanding as a process based on meaningfulness (intelligibility), structural quality (truth, correctness) and functionality (situational appropriateness)*** cannot be seen separately from the subjective perception of a reality by a subject. His/her perception of the situation as understandable and meaningful ensures effectiveness of communication. False perceptions often lead to awkward or comical situations. A person always proves the correctness of understanding, based on its appropriateness to the situation and the correctness of the information in accordance with already existing systems of knowledge and beliefs. The criteria which determine correctness of understanding are always subject specific and cannot be easily categorised.
5. ***Understanding as a multi-faceted, multi-meaning and never-ending process.*** Not every object, event or phenomenon can be understood in a single, correct way. Society is full of phenomena that are open to multiple interpretations as are, for example, political reality and expressions of the human behaviour which are open to numerous explanations.
6. ***Understanding as problem solving.*** Many phenomena of objective reality are understood 'effortlessly', but there are also cases when situations that have to be understood do not fit into the existing systems of knowledge and beliefs and become an active process of problem solving. In such a case the perception of a phenomenon is often connected with the restructuring of the problematic areas and restating of the aims in understanding.
7. ***Understanding as 'seeing' the connections.*** Understanding is not an instant process of 'looking through', but rather a gradual process, based on the development, search or changes to the appropriate problem presentation.

8. ***Understanding as a contextually dependable process*** has been proven by various scholars who, for example, underline the important influence of a situational context on the development of a dialog. In the same way, even in typical situations of learning in a classroom, understanding is not only based on cognitive processes of students but also on the contextual situations of a lesson and the environment.

The pedagogical psychological definition of *understanding* as a cognitive process gives a much deeper understanding of the ways people make sense out of things, events or phenomena. It mainly concentrates on the analysis of the processes of aligning new concepts with already existing ones, based on the existing knowledge systems and given context. This approach places the main focus on the person who needs to understand. Heritage interpretation is first of all developed by the site management/interpreters with the purpose to make things understandable to people, therefore the one who wants to be understood (e.g. a heritage interpreter) is equally important. Furthermore, from a practical point of view, it is impossible for heritage interpreters to ‘look into the heads’ of visitors in order to find out the cognitive processes taking place there, as well as previous knowledge and experience. Though it would be possible to do that by means of appropriate research techniques, such undertakings would be very time consuming and expensive. In the daily practice of heritage site management and visitor management it would be impossible to conduct such research at every heritage site. That does not mean that one should not strive to understand the visitors coming to a heritage site. Visitor audits are useful in determining motivations and expectations of visitors. Unfortunately, such audits provide only partial information on true knowledge systems or previous experiences visitors have, and whilst even with the necessary information, it would be impossible to provide interpretation which would be equally understandable to everyone – every person is unique (with his/her individual knowledge systems and experiences). This means that heritage interpreters would need to provide unique interpretation for every single person. Moreover, in the majority of cases, heritage sites rarely conduct comprehensive audience research, usually limiting it to collection of statistical data.

Because analysis of visitors’ cognitive processes for the development of heritage interpretation is impractical at a heritage site, as it requires use of extensive research techniques, which is also connected with great costs, one needs to be looking into different ways of defining whether understanding took place or not, rather than determining if the visitors understand the meaning of separate sentences precisely, or the information provided aligns perfectly with their previous knowledge, beliefs and experience.



## 2.2 Communicative approach to understanding

Radical constructivism puts a different light on *understanding* by considering it as a part of communication, unlike theories of pedagogical psychology which admit the occurrence of understanding, even when communication is not taking place (as for example in solving mathematical problems). Constructivism defines *understanding* as a development of meaningful structures in the process of communication which, in a given situation and context, are compatible and not identical (as it is often seen in hermeneutics) with those of the speaker (Drieschner 2006). Two German scholars, Gebhard Rusch and Siegfried Schmidt, have been actively arguing about the necessity of analysing *understanding* in view of communication theories.

### 2.2.1. Theory of understanding after Rusch

Rusch (1992), in his analysis of *understanding*, points out that the term should be viewed not solely as a psychological process, but as a complex social and cognitive entity. In such a way, understanding is seen as a cognitive-social mechanism, which allows for the selection of desired thinking and behaviour, and as a mechanism of cognitive systems within which the abilities of comprehension operate.

The proof for the interaction between the cognitive and the social lies for Rusch in the fact that the criteria of true or false understanding are not possessed by the one who has to or wants to understand, but by the one who wants to be understood. In other words, the interaction partner A<sup>8</sup> places expectations to the execution of particular actions and *means* something through the orientation actions of a partner B within the interaction. This meaning is an orientation expectation, and only when it is met can interaction partner A confirm that orientation partner B understood him. Only interaction partner A can state whether understanding has been achieved or not, because only he/she can claim whether his/her expectations have been met or not. According to Rusch, *understanding* means meeting orientation expectations (1986, 1992).

In constructivism both interaction partners are seen as autonomous, closed systems which have no access to the knowledge or intentions of each other. Hence, interaction partner B is indifferent to the fact whether interaction partner A ascribes to him/her understanding or not. His/her actions are autonomous of interaction partner A, and because he/she does not have access to the expectations, aims and intentions of the other, he/she also does not know which criteria for determining understanding interaction partner A is using. The only way for interaction partner B to know that he/she has met the expectation (and thus understood what was meant of him/her) is

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<sup>8</sup> Here by interaction partner A is meant a person, who is trying to be understood, while an interaction partner B, is the one who needs to understand. This terminology has substituted the original terms of “orienteer” and “orientee” used by Rusch in order to simplify his ideas for a broader reader.

when interaction partner A praises or rewards him/her (Rusch 1986, 1992). In this, interaction partner B is able to relate the reward to his/her actions and would be eager to repeat them in order to be rewarded anew. Rusch calls this a win-win situation for both: interaction partner A has achieved his/her aims and interaction partner B has received the reward for his/her actions (1992: 224).

Because one can never be absolutely sure that a communication partner understands the other unless he/she confirms it verbally or in action, understanding as a socio-cognitive process depends greatly on the assumptions of what the other thinks. In this situation, Rusch differentiates between *subjective understanding* (I assume that the other understands what I mean) and *objective understanding* (the communication partner proves the act of understanding by fulfilling the orientation/behaviour expectations). Subjective understanding is uncertain, hypothetical and temporary until it is substituted by the objective understanding. Here Rusch (1992) also identifies four important factors:

- (i) Avoidance and/or resolving of the uncertainties caused by subjective understanding is done through *Intersubjectivization*. Intersubjectivization of one's own perceptions can be conducted through *persuasiveness* (argumentation) and through practice of *power* (indocrination).
- (ii) Mutual intersubjective understanding can only be realised through subjective understanding, a so-called *simulation of the other*.
- (iii) Objective understanding can be hindered through subjective understanding – *Immunitization*. The assumptions about whether the other understands or not can help take the position of the other, see the things from his/her view point; yet equally, such a believe (supported by strong self-confidence and self-assurance) may also hinder the objective picture.
- (iv) Subjective and objective understanding might lead to the generalisation of interpersonal behaviour; so-called *generalisation of understanding*, when the patterns learned in the interaction are transformed into other phenomena outside of the interaction, such as natural phenomena.

Rusch calls *understanding* a characteristic that is ascribed to interaction partner B, which is only possible in the interaction situation and can be determined from the view point of interaction partner A. Therefore understanding is not a mental or spiritual state independent of social interaction and experience. On the contrary, *understanding* becomes a social quality criterion for the intellectual and physical performance of the autonomous cognitive systems (Ibid: 232). Psychological and cognitive processes, and namely the processes of how information is acquired and processed by individuals, are only instruments or prerequisites for the achievement of understanding and they are irrelevant for the decision whether understanding took place or not (Rusch 1986: 59). Rather, cognitive processes are selected in accordance with their suitability for the achievement of understanding:

Auf der Ebene von Gruppen und Gesellschaften ist Verstehen das Maß und der Mechanismus, nach dem und in dem akkulturiert und sozialisiert, gelehrt und gelernt wird, in dem die intellektuellen Leistungen, die Auffassens- und Begreifensleistungen der Einzelnen unter dem Gesichtspunkt des Verstehens bewertet und selektiert, die zum Verstehen führenden Leistungen verstärkt und stabilisiert werden (Rusch 1992: 233).

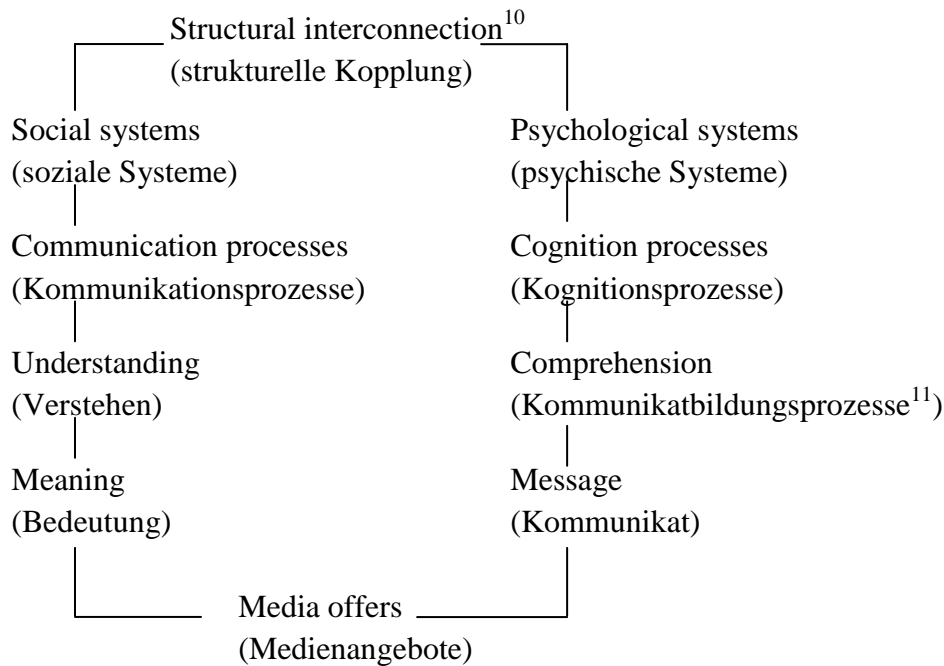
*Understanding* as a social action can only occur in interaction. Hence it is important to interact with the audience either personally or through various media. Though according to Rusch's skill of argumentation *understanding*, as a complex process of interpersonal interaction, is strictly speaking not possible in dealing with written texts. He argues that understanding a text is a cognitive dimension (comprehension), whereas reading styles and their establishment in a society are communicative constructs (understanding) (Ibid: 239).

### **2.2.2. Theory of understanding after Schmidt**

Schmidt's concept of *understanding* is to a great extent based on the ideas of Rusch, which can be seen by the definition which he gives where *understanding* is "the assessment of the orientation expectations which a speaker directs towards the communication participant: when its verbal or nonverbal actions meet the expectations of the speaker, then he will evaluate them as (more or less high or complete degree of) understanding"<sup>9</sup> (Schmidt 1994: 154). In the same way as Rusch, Schmidt also considers *understanding* to be a part of communication and therefore points out the necessity of differentiating between understanding and comprehension – communicative and cognitive processes. Even though the German language does not differentiate between the two concepts (there is only one term existing *Verstehen*), Schmidt nevertheless indicates confusion in the terminology in the German scholarly fields. Consequently he offers terminological columns which would allow the drawing of clear lines between the two terms (Figure. 2.1). This classification puts *understanding* into the domain of communication processes, thus clearly detaching it from the cognitive area. In such a view, the hermeneutic perception of *understanding* as that of a text interpretation can be referred to cognitive processes rather than communicative ones. As such, no orientation expectation is satisfied and no social act or behaviour follows as a result of interaction, which is an indispensable part of understanding if we follow the definition of Rusch.

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<sup>9</sup> Author's translation of "...Einschätzung der Orientierungserwartung, die ein Sprecher an Kommunikationsteilnehmer richtet: entsprechen deren verbale bzw. non-verbale Anschlußhandlungen den Erwartungen des Sprechers, dann bewertet er sie in der Kommunikation als (mehr oder weniger hohen oder vollständigen Grad von) Verstehen" (Schmidt 1994: 154).



**Figure 2.1** Terminological columns after Schmidt (1994: 155).

According to Schmidt, media (texts, pictures, films, etc.) can be categorised in both systems. On the one side, cognitive processes can be ‘transformed’ into media offers, which stimulate communication processes. On the other hand, media offers can also stimulate cognitive processes. By being presented in both fields – communication and cognition – media offers stimulate their structural interconnection (Ibid: 84). Hence, understanding is not necessarily occurring only in face to face communication, but can take place in the interaction with, or rather through, the interaction with various media as well.

In the same way as Schmidt differentiates between comprehension and understanding, he also differentiates between message and meaning. Message is a result of cognitive processes and is always subject dependant. Whereas meanings are ascribed to the words or texts in accordance with the social rules and based on the collective knowledge of a society:

Bedeutungen sind Bestandteile kollektiven Wissens; sie resultieren aus der sozialen wie individuellen Geschichte der verbalen wie non-verbalen Interaktion von Kommunikationsteilnehmern, die sich gegenseitig verstehen sowie Anspruch auf Aufmerksamkeit und Relevanz erwarten (Ibid: 140).

<sup>10</sup> Here Schmidt talks about the joining of two systems – Communication and Cognition, which process the same events in a different manner, but inevitably influence each other. As communication is not possible without cognition, we cannot talk of cognition without communication. In such a way, both systems build a coherence and without uniformity (Ibid: 90).

<sup>11</sup> Schmidt describes “Kommunikatbildungsprozesse” as cognitive processes that are caused by the perception of various media, such as a text (Ibid: 154).

Schmidt points out that processes of comprehension are not communicative, even though they may become an object of communication. A decision on whether understanding took place or not is done on the basis of the verbal or non-verbal responses a communicative partner has made, and not by direct knowledge of his/her cognitive processes (Schmidt 1994). *Understanding* as a socio-cognitive process allows a detachment from the cognitive processes of the interaction partners, and a concentration on their behavioural responses<sup>12</sup>. Through responses evoked by the interpretive provision in the visitors, it is possible to see whether understanding has been achieved and whether expectations have been met or not.

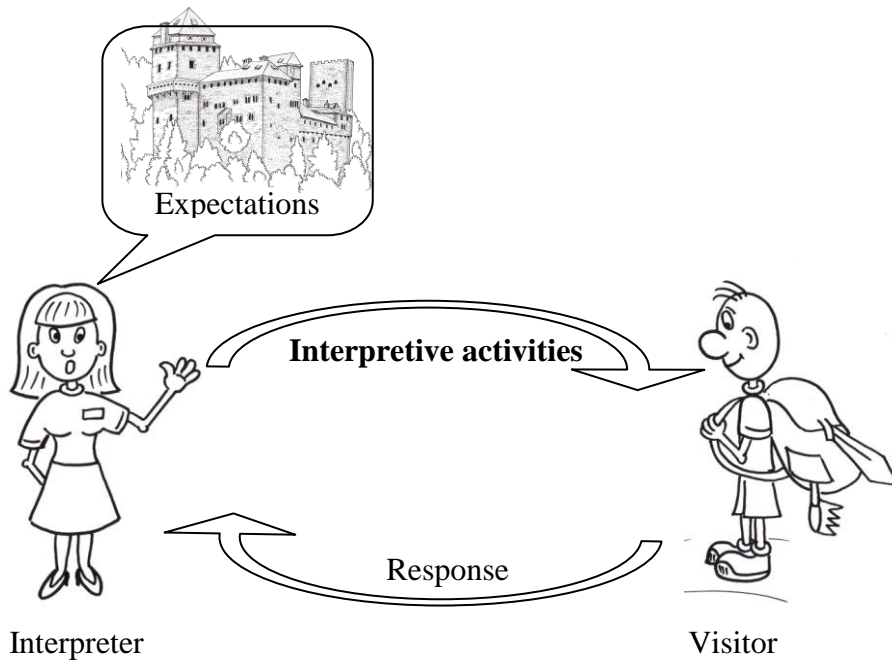
### **2.3 Heritage interpretation as a mechanism of understanding**

As Rusch (1992) showed, *understanding* is a process of selecting desired thinking and behaviour where the judgement whether understanding took place or not can only be made by the one who wants to be understood based on the ‘correct’ cognitive or behavioural response an interaction partner gives. If the aim of heritage interpretation is to promote understanding (as per the ICOMOS definition) than one can no longer perceive it as a simple transmission of information. Heritage interpretation becomes a mechanism of orienting visitors’ perception of a heritage site in order to increase their knowledge of it and to induce desired visitor behaviour. Therefore, one of the important qualities of heritage interpretation should be its purposefulness: if one wants the visitors to meet certain expectations then first of all one needs to develop such expectations before interpretive provisions are developed. When selecting information for heritage interpretation, one should answer the following question: “How do I want the visitors to think of a site?” and “What behaviour do I expect from visitors?” Interpretive techniques should be chosen in view of their suitability for transmitting interpretive messages to help visitors meet the orientation expectations developed by the managers and interpreters of a heritage site.

When one applies the constructivist theory of understanding to heritage interpretation then the role of heritage interpretation in the process of understanding is to act as an orientation action (see Image 2.1). Heritage interpreter is an interaction partner A, who wants to be understood. A visitor is an interaction partner B, who needs to understand. A heritage site is an object on which expectations are placed. Those expectations act as indicators for determining whether understanding took place or not: if the expectations are fulfilled, then one may say that understanding took place.

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<sup>12</sup> In accordance with Rusch, behavioral responses do not only include actions but verbal utterances as well.



**Image 2.1** Schematic representation of the role of heritage interpretation in the process of understanding

Through interpretive activities an interpreter orients visitors' perceptions of and behaviour at a heritage site in order to achieve the expectations. It is easier to understand what expectations at a heritage site are when one relates them to a more understandable concept of objectives. Any interpretive programme has (or at least should have) specific objectives that need to be achieved with its help – be it a cognitive objective, such as to increase knowledge of visitors on specific issue of a site, or a behavioural objective in order to change negative visitor behaviour.

When looking at heritage interpretation, as a mechanism for understanding a heritage site from a constructivism point of view, heritage managers can more easily determine, whether understanding took place or not based upon responses of the visitors. When one wants to direct visitors with the help of heritage interpretation activities to go to some parts of a heritage site and not to the other, by simply observing the visitors it is possible to determine whether understanding has been achieved or not – the visitors either follow the paths interpreters have developed, or they stroll around ignoring developed heritage trails. When the intention of site managers is to explain to visitors the complexities and importance of site preservation, and thus induce them to contribute to it, this can be to a certain degree determined by the amounts of donations that follow after the production of interpretive provision (which explicitly encourages people to donate), or by the amounts of volunteers willing to help at a site.

Due to communication and media research one typically differentiates between three media effects – those influencing cognition, affect and behaviour (see for example

Olson 2001). It might also be helpful to extend the responses to orientation expectations, which Rusch (1992) limited to behaviour and verbal response, to the emotional as well. This suggestion is supported by the fact that the emotional component is very important in heritage interpretation, which is often underlined by various heritage practitioners. Thus Uzzel and Ballantyne (1998) underline that emotions are an important part of heritage interpretation as they ‘colour’ visitors’ memories and experiences, and thus the selective attention to information. They underline that:

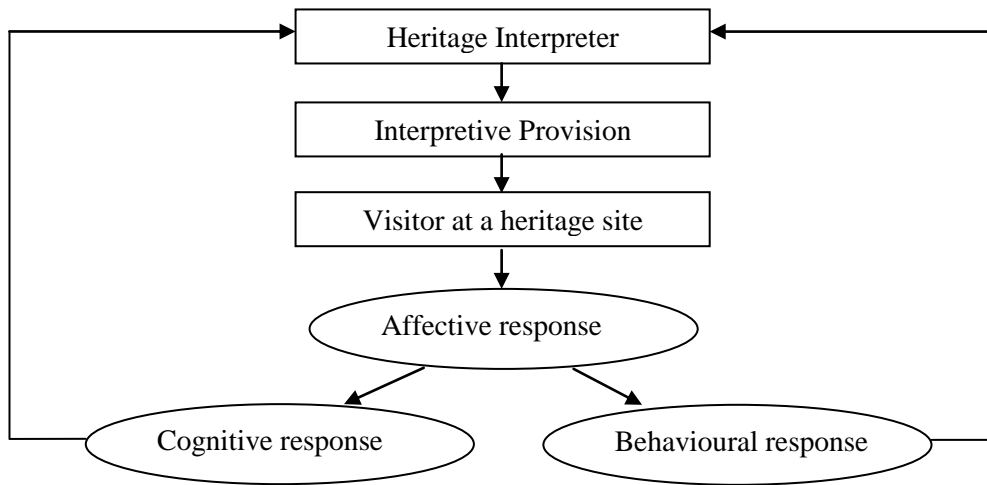
... we will not be as effective as we could be as communicators and people in the business of changing attitudes and behaviours in respect of serious environmental issues if we exclude an affective dimension in interpretation (Ibid 1998: 153).

Smith goes even further and underlines the important role of emotions in heritage performance for creating collective identities:

The emotional content of performance is a significant aspect of the ‘heritage experience’, which itself not only makes, transmits and maintains social values and meanings, but does so in a manner that invokes, and indeed requires, self-conscious emotional act of remembering and memory making (2006: 71).

Therefore it is appropriate to identify **three groups of responses** for the visitors to heritage interpretation – emotional, cognitive and behavioural, which can be used as indicators to determine whether understanding took place or not. In order for understanding to take place, the expectations of heritage managers/ interpreters have to be met by the visitors by producing the ‘correct’ response (cognitive, behavioural or emotional) to the interpretive provisions. The feedback heritage interpreters receive from cognitive and behavioural responses of visitors determine to what degree they have understood a heritage site. The relation between the three responses is illustrated in Figure 2.2.

On the emotional level visitors are expected to appreciate, admire, respect and value a heritage site. With the help of heritage interpretation, interpreters attempt to promote a better understanding of the site and its values and as a consequence evoke a whole range of feelings (which can be induced both through evoking positive and negative emotions, as for example in war heritage). Emotional connection to the site is one of the prerequisites for the development of desired behavioural patterns. The influence of emotions on human cognition and behaviour has been studied in psychology (see for example Forgas 2002), marketing (see for example Huang 2001) and political science (see for example Rudolph et al. 2000). All those studies underline the important influence of emotions on cognition (judgement making) and behaviour. Emotional connection to the site ensures authenticity of the site to a certain degree, where visitors feel that they really consume the past or get a good idea of what life was like in the past.



**Figure 2.2** Relationship between affective, cognitive and behavioural responses of visitors.

Quality interpretive programmes allow visitors to experience emotional realism. Emotional connection to the site “enables visitors to explore the past for themselves, and make history more meaningful to their lives and personal experience” (Bagnall 2003: 91). Heritage interpretation becomes a tool that engages visitor imagination and enables them to create emotional connections to the site. Unfortunately, whether understanding has been reached cannot be easily accounted for based on the affective response alone and thus not easily determined, unless the visitors are asked what they feel or they say so on their own. Nevertheless, development of positive emotions (a feel good factor) at a heritage site is important for putting visitor’s cognitive and behaviour responses in a context.

Of course, the aim of every communicative programme at a heritage site is to stimulate visitors to learn something about it, though one cannot expect people to memorise every bit of information presented. Rather one should aspire to show visitors connections between various events, to direct the visitors in their perception and understanding of the site. Because cognition and understanding go hand in hand, we cannot expect understanding to take place without previously formed cognitive processes. The cognitive reaction that should be expected is not the mere memorisation of information. In order to say that understanding took place on a cognitive level one needs to put in place different expectations. Visitors need to be oriented in their ways of perceiving a site, pointed in the direction of important facts and stories, and allowed to make their own conclusions. Some of the most important techniques to help orient visitor perceptions of the site are framing and themes, which are explained in more detail in Chapter 4.4.2.



The behavioural group of expectations can be more easily analysed, and is usually a good criterion to determine whether expectations have been met and understanding has been reached. Behavioural expectations, among others, can be a respectful conduct at the site (especially if it is a religious or sacred site), careful use of the historic objects, volunteering or donations to the site, a repeated visit to the site. These are the things that can be easily observed and quantified (e.g. Did littering diminish as a result of new heritage interpretation? Did the numbers of donations or volunteering increase?). Many heritage sites have been already using heritage interpretation to promote codes of conduct at sites, as well as to minimize the cases of vandalism and littering (see for example Caildini 1996, Widner and Roggenbuck 2000, Widner Ward and Roggenbuck 2003). This is something what Uzzel calls “soft” visitor management. Through providing understanding of the site and creating emotional connections with it, heritage managers are able “creating a change in the visitor’s attitudes and inducing thoughtful and considerate behaviour” (Uzzel 1989: 2). As a behavioural response, one might also place expectations to direct the visitors to go to some parts of a heritage site (rarely used or those able to withstand big amounts of visitor) and not to go to the others (especially very sensitive and endangered places). This is called by Uzzel (1989) “hard” visitor management and has been successfully done with the help of heritage trails or guided walks. In combination with emotional elements, heritage interpretation is able to induce people to contribute to the preservation of the site through donations or volunteering.

Understanding (on the emotional, cognitive and behavioural levels) has to be rewarded in order to confirm the act of understanding, and to consolidate the desired response. The reward has to be built into the heritage interpretation programme. Such a reward can be immaterial – a feel-good state, a satisfaction from learning new, interesting and earlier not known information, a gratification of contributing to heritage preservation or education – as well as material, such as discounts to the site entrance for frequent or group visits, a gift for the participation in an interpretive activity, a “Thank You” card for the donation amongst others.

When viewing understanding as a social phenomenon in the interaction with media (including written text), it comes not to the recognition of the original intentions of the author (as in hermeneutics), but to the fact that a listener/reader meets the expectations of the other communication partner (e.g. heritage interpreter), resulting in the expression of appropriate statements or behaviour. When certain expectations are clearly determined while developing interpretive provisions, emotional, cognitive and behavioural reactions that follow after the interaction with the interpretive media become criteria for the determination whether understanding has been achieved or not, in the same way as it happens in interpersonal interaction.

The described approach to heritage interpretation as a mechanism for understanding heritage sites also allows explaining both roles of heritage interpretation recognised today – its educational role and a role as a management tool. Thus, for example, a

theoretical background for heritage interpretation developed by Ham et al. (2007) based on the theory of planned behaviour is only able to explain the role of heritage interpretation as a management tool for changing, reinforcing or creating a new behaviour. The educational role of heritage interpretation can not be that easily explained through the process of impacting behavioural, normative or control beliefs of visitors. Theory of heritage interpretation developed in this chapter covers both roles of heritage interpretation. Depending on what expectations/objectives are placed heritage interpretation is developed to influence either cognition or behaviour – either to educate visitors or to change their behaviour.

Orientation of visitors' perceptions with the help of heritage interpretation in order to achieve understanding does not mean that the visitors will blindly accept the ideas presented by the interpreters. The role of heritage interpretation is not to persuade the visitors that presented views are the only possible ones, but simply to make the visitors perceive the events and ideas from the point of view interpreters believe to be most suitable for revealing the values and the significance of a heritage site. Visitors are free to hold a different opinion of the things and events presented, but as far as they produce desired responses one may say that understanding took place. The task of selecting messages that are presented to the audience is not an easy one. On the one hand, heritage interpreters are guided by the principles of heritage interpretation in this process, as they are, for example, presented in the ICOMOS Charter on the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites, which in Principle 2 states that "Interpretation and presentation should be based on evidence gathered through accepted scientific and scholarly methods as well as from living cultural traditions" (ICOMOS 2008). It also underlines that "meaningful interpretation necessarily includes reflection on alternative historical hypotheses, local traditions, and stories" (Ibid). But interpretive principles are not the only factor that guides interpreters in selecting messages to be presented to the audience. Organizational ideology, political and economic interests also play a decisive role in this process and will be discussed shortly in Chapter 4.3.1.

## CHAPTER 3

# Role of culture in understanding and heritage interpretation

As a social process understanding is also inevitably influenced by the culture of a particular society. Even though society and culture are two independent concepts, they are so closely interconnected that one cannot be thought of without the other. Rusch points out that the ascribing of understanding or misunderstanding is virtually a cultural as well as a social selection of behaviour, thinking styles, psychological and cognitive processes (1992: 234). With its social systems, culture is one of the variables that influences understanding of individuals. Furthermore, heritage itself is a cultural domain, as well as a content for heritage interpretation. Accordingly, the following chapter will analyse the role of culture in the process of understanding and in heritage interpretation.

### 3.1. Defining culture

Before showing the influence of culture on the process of understanding, the following section will first of all give an overview of the concepts of culture.

The notion of culture is used quite freely in language, and includes a myriad of meanings that people attach to it. In science *culture* went through meaning different things – from husbandry, to a humanistic self-development, to a synonym for civilization, to a body of artistic and intellectual works and to a way of life (Eagleton 2000). In this chapter some of the definitions of culture as they exist in different scientific fields will be given. These definitions and their authors were not selected as representatives of a specific field, but merely meant to show the complexity of the concept of culture.

As early as 1952, two cultural anthropologists, Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, analysed more than 100 definitions of culture and conceptualised their own definition out of them:

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture

consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values, culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditioning elements of future action (in Gannon 2008: 19).

LeVine, guided by the ethnographic approach, defines culture as a means of social coexistence which is only possible in a group. He sees it “as a shared organization of ideas that includes the intellectual, moral, and aesthetic standards prevalent in a community and the meanings of communicative actions” (1997: 67). He also goes further and defines other essential properties of culture (Ibid: 69-77):

- 1) culture has a collective nature, which is obvious in “a group consensus” about the meanings of symbols used for social communication and necessary for encoding and decoding of messages;
- 2) it has an organized nature;
- 3) it is multiplex, which describes the existence of explicit and implicit meanings born from historic and social evolution of a given society;
- 4) culture is variable across human populations.

Even though LeVine’s definition and properties underline the variability and complexity of culture, one might still assume that culture is something static – a totality of social practices and beliefs of a given group. Fiske was one of the scholars who supported the idea of culture as a process by defining it as “the constant process of producing meaning of and from our social experience” (in McQuail 2000: 92).

When analysing various definitions of culture, it becomes apparent that some definitions include immaterial aspects – human beliefs and morals – when others include only the material products of human creativity and mind. And there are also those who attempt to combine both. Tylor, for example, defined culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (in Streeck 2002: 300). His definition seems to be bound solely to the immaterial sphere (knowledge, beliefs, etc.), and one cannot clearly distinguish whether by ‘art’ the author means artistic inclinations of a person, or the products of creativity. Streeck, coming from the field of communication studies, combines both spheres and explicitly underlines the external and internal character of culture; thus putting a human being in the centre, as culture does not only include human’s material creations, like symbols, shelter, technology and others, but also “its mental abilities to operate them” (Ibid: 303). Streeck also supports the idea that culture and cultural meanings cannot be attributed solely to symbols: it is partially embodied in material culture as well, such as buildings, roads, vehicles, furniture, appliances and so on. Material objects are an embodiment of the whole history of human intellect and action, and when one comes into interaction with those things, the meanings they enclose articulate with the meanings one has in mind. Consequently, human beings rely greatly on the material environment as a “stock

of ready-made symbolic structures”, which they use in their everyday life (Streck Ibid: 328).

Hofstede (2001) goes even further than assuming culture as a “stock of symbolic structures”, and defines it as a programming of the mind “that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others” (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005: 4), determining the patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. However, he sees culture as only one level of mental programming (the collective level), which is learned, as opposed to other levels, such as human nature (the universal level) and personalities (the individual level), which are also a part of programming, but which are to a great extent inherent <sup>13</sup> (Hofstede 2001).

A similar view of culture as a programme is offered by Schmidt (1999) as well. He considers culture important for the survival of a society, which he defines as a programme of communicative thematization of reality models (Wirklichkeitsmodelle) of a society (Ibid: 130). From various definitions of culture, Schmidt singles out three basic aspects which are common for most definitions: (1) culture is conceptualised as a ‘human product’, (2) it enables and regulates communication, (3) it manifests itself in symbols, beliefs and values which serve for the preservation and reproduction of the society as well as cause its change. His main concern though is addressed to the types of models, which can incorporate the diverse characteristics of culture. Here he chooses to support the ideas of those scholars who see culture “not as a model *of* behaviour, but as a model *for* behaviour” (Schmidt 1992: 427). Such an approach allows him to conceptualise culture not as something coming out of ‘cultural phenomena’, but as a programme, the application of which, under certain socio-historical conditions, creates something that an observer perceives as “cultural phenomena”. Schmidt’s description of culture is obviously influenced by the terminology of computer sciences, in naming it as a modern interactive and intelligent programme with sub-programmes. The application of this programme in various contexts creates cultural manifestations:

Je nach Ausführungsinstanz (Programmanwendungen), Situationen, Anwendungsbereich und Verknüpfung von Programmbereichen liefert das Programm ganz unterschiedliche Ergebnisse (kulturelle Manifestationen) (Ibid: 434).

Schmidt also points out that culture should be differentiated from its users. It is only able to materialise itself through the application by its users, but it is not limited to them. In the same way, the culture of any society cannot be equated with cultural manifestations such as symbolic systems, art objects, rituals, and so on. Culture can be observed through cultural manifestations, but not limited to them (Ibid: 436-437).

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<sup>13</sup> “the human ability to feel fear, anger, joy, sadness, shame; the need to associate with others and to play and exercise oneself; and the facility to observe the environment and to talk about it with other humans all belong to this level [human nature] of mental programming. However, what one does with these feelings, how one expresses fear, joy, observations, and so on, is modified by culture” (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005:5).

Culture as a programme coordinates cognition and communication about collective knowledge that is produced in the cognitive areas of the programme users, and as such culture performs two decisive tasks: (i) reproduction of the society and (ii) control of the individuals. The reproduction of a society is realised through socialisation (family and formal education) of children and is transferred further to individuals. Schmidt defines socialisation as the “implementation of the cultural programme in the cognitive systems of the individuals” (1999: 131).

The definitions of culture are numerous, and it is impossible to analyse all of them in this paper; even a simple enumeration of them would take a separate volume. McQuail’s summary of various definitions of culture into attributes may become useful in understanding what culture is (2000: 93):

- culture is something collective and shared with others;
- it has a symbolic form of expression;
- it has a pattern and regularity;
- it continues over time;
- communication determines its development and survival,
- it can be located and recognized in three places: in people, in things (texts, artefacts) and in human practices (socially patterned behaviours).

As shown in McQuail’s attributes of culture, and a few definitions given above, the concept of culture has multiple facets and characteristics, and the understanding of it has been changing and developing over time. Therefore it is not surprising that such an important international organisation, as the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had to re-think the concept of culture it had been using before. The World Commission on Culture and Development (WCCD) in one of its most crucial reports, “Our creative Diversity” (which was commissioned by UNESCO), recognises culture as a tool of economic development, but at the same time underlines that the concept of culture cannot be reduced to this role only. Its second and most important role is “giving meaning to our existence” (WCCD 1996: 23):

This dual role of culture applies not only in the context of the promotion of economic growth, but also in relation to other objectives, such as sustaining the physical environment, preserving family values, protecting civil institutions in the society, and so on (Ibid: 23).

On the one hand, WCCD sees culture as a means of holding a society together and enabling people to communicate, cooperate and interact with each other. On the other hand, culture defines how people interact with the natural and physical environment. The report also underlines several important properties of culture (Ibid):

- 1) culture is not confined or equal to the country. A country might be multicultural, which creates both benefits (e.g. pluralism) and threats (e.g. oppression through ruling regime).

- 2) cultures overlap. “Basic ideas may, and do, recur in several cultures, because cultures have partly common roots, build on similar human experience and have, in the course of history, often learned from each other” (Ibid: 35).
- 3) cultures are not homogeneous entities. They show differences along various axes, such as gender, class, religion, language, ethnicity and others. The same applies to cultural ideas and traditions. Members of a culture may disagree on various religious, ethical, social or political issues.

The concept of culture defined by WCCD for UNESCO received some criticism from Eriksen (2001), who identifies two main problems of the report. First, he states that the report does not draw a clear line between culture as a way of life, and culture as artistic work. Second, the report often refers to cultures as belonging to a particular group of people, associated with their heritage roots. Conversely, the report also emphasises that cultures are subject to external influences, to globalisation. Erikson points out that those descriptions reflect the two approaches in conceptualising culture which currently exist in anthropology. The first is characteristic of cultural relativism, which sees culture as a tradition, and the second of post-structuralism, which refers to culture as communication. Eriksen’s criticism lies not in the fact that both approaches were brought together in the report, on the contrary, culture combines both of the mentioned dimensions – tradition and communication. His argument refers to the fact that the post-structuralistic perspective, which is more common for modern anthropology, received little attention in the report (Ibid).

Eriksen’s (2001) argument that culture is both tradition and communication cannot be ignored, and as it was obvious from the definition of Schmidt (1992, 1999), constructivist theory puts a greater emphasis on culture as communication rather than on tradition (but in no way excludes it). When talking about heritage interpretation as a communication process, and a mechanism for understanding, both dimensions of culture come into play. Heritage sites, as the objects for communication, are manifestations of culture which represent tradition, and are more or less static in time. Yet in order to make heritage sites understandable to a modern visitor, one has to employ and activate the cultural programmes, or systems of knowledge, shared in a society. Culture transmits patterns and symbolic meanings which are detrimental for the establishment of understanding among members of this given society or group. Alternatively we can also say that culture determines communication, by offering patterns of thinking and symbolic meaning to be shared by a group. As Bruner rightfully notes, in the course of the human history culture became more sophisticated and complex, which we have to learn and adapt to, and at the same time it is a “tool kit” for doing it (1990: 12). Only through employing this cultural knowledge, beliefs and ideas which are established as trustworthy and are accepted by the majority, is it possible to achieve understanding. It wouldn’t help to explain the history of the Middle Ages through the code of chivalry which is no longer accepted in a modern society, or

attempts of gaining the truth from convicts by means of the only acceptable method of that time – torture. Of course cultural knowledge itself eventually becomes the object of communication, as a chivalric code, which produces many romantic notions in the heads of modern visitors, which have been constructed by literary works and movies. But these are definitely not the romantic feelings that guided the knights in their deeds in former times. Therefore, the challenge of heritage interpretation is often to make historic objects and events understandable to modern visitors through employment of current knowledge systems. There are symbolic, shared meanings, which transmit the knowledge of a group, and at the same time offer the pattern for understanding the phenomena. These have to be taken into consideration when developing heritage interpretation programmes, which will be discussed in a greater detail in the following section.

The task of making heritage sites understandable becomes even more challenging when one considers multiple international visitors at a heritage site, to whom a site has to be communicated as well. The WCCD (1996) report underlines an important property of culture that shows that even though this task is challenging, it is in no way impossible. This property, namely that cultures overlap and that same/similar ideas reoccur in different cultures, allows communicating heritage sites and making them understandable to foreign visitors as well. And through a number of techniques (see some of them in Chapter 4.3.2) it is possible to build up communication for visitors on those common concepts.

### **3.2. Culture and collective knowledge systems**

Culture, by itself, does not influence understanding. It is collective knowledge available in a particular culture that influences our understanding of things or phenomena (Schmidt 1999). This collective knowledge has been analysed by various scholars of different schools under different names: reasoning schemas (in educational psychology Resnick 2004: 1), discursive domains (in sociology Hall 2006: 169), symbolic or interpretive systems (in cognitive psychology Burner 1990: 21, in communication studies Streek 2002: 303), reality models (or social knowledge) (in constructivism Schmidt 1999:130), just to name a few. In principle all these theories underline an important role of collective knowledge systems in the process of understanding and meaning making. These support the main ideas of social constructivism by showing that collective knowledge systems do not just exist in the culture, but are shared by certain clusters of individuals that use them. Vygotsky, in his theory of education (which is considered by many to be the origin of social constructivism), considered the individual mind as not being “autonomous from the social cultural group” (2005: 392). Individual consciousness, and thus individual meaning making, exists through ‘collective



subjectivity', which is created throughout history by collective participation and collaboration by society members (in Liu and Matthews 2005). Even though the above mentioned concepts originate from different scientific fields, they support constructivist ideas and complement each other.

Every culture contains a multitude of meanings, and its members are able to retrieve them with the help of collective knowledge systems which are inherent in language and discourse, patterns of social interaction and forms of logical explication. Through such knowledge systems, lives are made understandable to certain groups (Burner 1990: 21, Streek 2002: 303). Validation of such knowledge is done not through comparison with 'reality', but through action and communication. Knowledge is verified against knowledge produced by action and communication, that is to say, knowledge systems are verified against other knowledge systems (Schmidt 1992)<sup>14</sup>. It means that meaning also exists outside of the individual in a specific culture. In this sense, culture becomes a 'constructive of the mind' or what Bruner called "public and shared" meaning (1990: 12) which enables us to coexist with other individuals in a specific society, and to make sense by brining meanings to the public domain and negotiating them there.

In the process of meaning negotiation, Hooper-Greenhill underlines the important role of "interpretive communities" (2002: 199):

Individual meaning-making is forged and tested in relation to communities of meaning-making, which establish frameworks of intelligibility within which individual subjects negotiate, refine and develop personal constructs.

She underlines that in the process of understanding not only personal biography and cultural background are important, but also interpretive communities. The interpretive community is not determined by socio-economic or demographic positions, but by the common repertoires and strategies used in interpretation (Hooper-Greenhill 2002), as well as preferred ways of speaking and writing (Resnik 2004: 8). In such a way, people can belong to multiple interpretive (or after Resnik 'discourse') communities,

each enabling and constructing thought in different ways. Which code individuals use, which discourse community they situate themselves within, depends on their social construal of particular cognitive situations, as well as on codes they have available as a result of their past social experience (Resnick 2004: 8).

Therefore culture, through its collective knowledge systems, becomes one of the decisive factors in our interpretation and understanding of the world. Geertz defines culture as a context within which social events, behaviours or processes can be

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<sup>14</sup> Schmidt calls such systems "reality models", which he defines as knowledge orders existing for problem solving that are born out of the problem solving and are available for problem solving. Reality models help people make sense of the surrounding reality and the society in which they live. These models, both in their creation and acceptance, are social but they should be settled with individuals who create, apply and evaluate these knowledge orders (Schmidt 1999: 130).

described (in Streeck 2002: 304). Accordingly, understanding is not purely individual, but is a shared event. Although each individual actively makes sense of his or her own experience, strategies for understanding are determined by the dominant knowledge systems existing in a society or culture. Both culture and collective knowledge systems evolve together with humanity. Each cultural form, be it a symbol, behaviour or an artefact, can be interpreted in its contemporary cultural meaning or “as a reflection and instantiation of older, more global human achievements” (Streeck 2002: 303). Furthermore, because meaning is influenced by social and cultural norms, attitudes and values, it is possible to detect and predict patterns in meaning making and understanding in a particular culture (Silverman 1997: 2), which can be used in developing heritage interpretation for specific cultural groups.

Keller (2008) points out the fact that the categories and semantic distinctions of collective knowledge systems in various cultures and societies are often comparable, which makes intercultural communication difficult but not impossible. At the same time, the variation spectrum of these categories and their importance within the culture as well as among comparable cultures is further spread out. Here Keller is using an example of the concept of ‘a cow’, which is interconnected with different affective and moral evaluations for a vegetarian than for a carnivore, as well as it would be different for an Indian than for a British man (Ibid: 82). Hence, interpretation of cultural heritage to foreign visitors might become a challenging but not impossible task.

### **3.3 Heritage and heritage interpretation in culture**

A heritage site itself is a part of culture and hence also a part of collective knowledge. Graham, for example, maintains that heritage is less concerned with material artefacts, and is rather a matter of meanings we ascribe to the objects. Hence, heritage becomes a medium of communication for the transmission of ideas, values and knowledge (Graham 2007). Graham is not the only scholar that considers heritage a knowledge system. A similar idea was also viewed by Hall and McArthur, who offered heritage to be considered as a “culturally constructed idea and set of values that are attached to a wide range of artefacts, environments and cultural forms” (1998: 5).

Ashworth (1994) also recognises heritage as a part of shared knowledge and a mechanism to the transmission of that knowledge. Heritage sites and museums have an authority and power of presenting and teaching a ‘correct’ history, and transferring the knowledge shared by many. At the same time that heritage shapes socio-cultural place identities in support of particular state structures, it is based on and creates local place identities.

Assmann’s theory of collective memory is useful in explaining the role of heritage in culture. It is based on the theory of French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs on

“collective memory”, which states that communities determine the memory of its members. Individuals recollect not only what they learn from others, but also what others tell them, which others confirm to them as important. These things are perceived as important, and thus get settled in memory, in reference to others and in the context of definite social frames. In the same way, things that cannot be placed within the current social frames are forgotten (Assmann 1992: 36). Memory is transferred and secured through communication, without communication there is no memory:

Man erinnert nur, was man kommuniziert und was man in den Bezugsrahmen des Kollektivgedächtnisses lokalisieren kann (Ibid: 37).

Halbwachs's theory was further developed by Assmann, where he first of all differentiates between communicative and collective memories. *Communicative memory* includes recollections of the recent past, which usually does not go further back than three generations. These are recollections which are shared with contemporaries. This type of memory is developed alongside with its carriers and it disappears with them. *Cultural memory*, on the contrary, is focussed on fixed points in the past. Here not only the objective past is meant, but the past incorporated in symbolic figures, to which memories cling. For cultural memory, remembered history, rather than factual, is important (Ibid: 52). And cultural memory itself is important for the preservation of collective identities:

In der Erinnerung an ihre Geschichte und in der Vergegenwärtigung der fundierenden Erinnerungsfiguren vergewissert sich eine Gruppe ihrer Identität (Ibid: 53).

This type of identity is different from everyday identities. It has something ‘sacred’ in itself, as put by Assmann, and is manifested through ceremonial communication in the forms of texts, dances, pictures and rites. Hence, unlike communicative memory, which is used in everyday life, cultural memory circulates in celebrations, festivals and other events of the ritual and ceremonial character. The main aim of these is to safeguard and continue a group's social identity (Assmann 1992: 50-53, Assmann und Assmann 1994: 120). The differences between communicative and cultural memory are shown in Table 3.1.

The transition from communicative memory to cultural is ensured by permanent forms of media, which guarantee that further generations have an access to the past, and to certain degree, forgotten events. Photos, documentaries and films capture and archive the objective past. Here Assmann and Assmann (1994: 120) place a great importance on the media of the second level, which activate access to saved information. Documents (or media of the first level) decode and save information, whereas monuments (or media of the second level) not only decode and save information but also allow access to a socially defined and practiced world of recollection. Within this second level of media, which Assmann and Assmann (1994) call monuments, heritage

sites play an important role in forming cultural memory, transforming knowledge and building social identities. Heritage sites build a point of reference between the past and the present, as well as enhance and confirm identities through rituals and ceremonies. When rituals are better to be observed at sacred and religious sites, and when everyone would agree that they still contribute to the identities of certain communities, many other historic sites also confirm the ideas viewed before.

	<b>Communicative memory</b>	<b>Cultural memory</b>
Content	History experience within the one's own biography	Mythic prehistory, events in the absolute past
Form	Informal, little formed, instinctive, is born in interaction, everyday life	Founded, highly formed, ceremonial communication, celebration
Media	Live recollections in organic memories, experiences and hearsay	Firm objectification, traditional symbolic coding in word, picture, dance, etc.
Time structure	80-100 years, with the present time horizon of 3-4 generations	Absolute past of the mythic prehistory
Carrier	Unclear, contemporaries of the recollection society	Specific tradition carrier

**Table 3.1** Characteristics of communicative and cultural memory after Assmann (1992: 56).

For example, the Castle of the Augustusburg and Falkenlust at Brühl, Germany, which was inscribed on the World Heritage List under cultural criteria ii and iv as the earliest example of the Rococo architecture in 18<sup>th</sup> century Germany, also contributes to collective knowledge and local identities. Apart from offering guided tours and making people acquainted with the history of the castles and their owners, the management of the sites offers the castles as a backdrop for classical music concerts and various social events – a falconer festival, open doors days, World Heritage Day, Explorer Day and others. The castles have no ceremonies or traditions that are still in practice; nevertheless they play an important role for people today. Through getting a better insight into the past, and being able to use a heritage site in the present, people receive a sense of continuity which is important for cultural/social and personal identity. The past is being given a line of subsequent events, leading to the present and giving the direction for the future. One might argue that in this case a heritage site is only important to the community which is directly connected to the history of the site, and has no relevance to others. At the same time people not only perceive themselves as with the past, present and future, but also have the same perception of others. When

thinking of a Chinese or a British person, one does not think of them of now and here, but of people with history, which influenced their development, and in a way which formed their existence. And the more one knows of his or her history, the closer he/she gets to perceiving them the way they perceive themselves.

Independently from Assmann, O’Keeffe views the idea of historical or collective memory, which aligns with the ideas of Assmann, in supporting the argument that historic/collective memory is not objective but that “of which we are reminded as distinct from that which we remember” (2008: 5). He states that collective memory is the product of external programming, of being reminded. Conversely, Nora also points out that “memory needs to be artificially created, fixed and represented in the form of *lieux de mémoire*; material, symbolic and functional at one and the same time” (in Robertson and Hall 2008: 21).

Heritage sites and their interpretation play an important role in the external programming of collective memory. The stories presented to visitors not only represent the knowledge shared by many but also offer the things and events that are worth being remembered. Busted (2008) shows that the past has been always a resource for ‘nation builders’: oral traditions are rescued, renewed or invented and presented as examples of unique genius of a distinct group. Collective memories are also expressed in monuments, processions and rituals in public space. Such commemorative ceremonies are flexible processes subject to constant revision in response to the needs of time:

Features previously neglected or suppressed may be freshly emphasized and characters and happenings previously venerated may be downgraded. The purpose of such selective, shifting group remembering is to seek historical justification for current political attitudes and practices. Group memory is therefore a fluid, flexible construct subject to constant renewal and this means that the interrelationship between past and present is a complex one (Ibid: 70).

In this view, heritage and its interpretation become a valuable resource for political purposes. Additionally heritage transfers knowledge not only about history, cultural practices and traditions, but also knowledge of what a society constitutes. In this way it contributes to the establishment of identities and becomes a memory carrier. Schmidt points out that sculptures, pictures or built heritage, become a manifestation of culture only if they reach the level of communicative thematization in the relevant public opinion. One can talk of heritage only when it plays a role in communication, or when it reaches a certain level of publicity and stays there for a significant period of time (Schmidt 1992: 438). The role of heritage interpretation in this context is to make the information about heritage sites more salient, and to transmit the knowledge represented through them, whilst making it available and understandable to people. This allows visitors to see the connection between the past and the present and the life of their predecessors.

Understanding of culture as a programme draws attention to the fact that there are patterns of thinking, feeling and acting – collective knowledge systems – that are determined by culture and that are not necessarily shared to the same degree through various cultures. When considering heritage interpretation a tool for making cultural manifestations understandable to people, one needs to take into consideration that interpretive activities are going to be presented to people from different cultures.

One of the motives for many state parties in nominating sites to the World Heritage List, or traditional practices and expressions for the Proclamation of Masterpieces, is the hope of attracting more visitors, which boosts local economic growth (Hafstein 2009). Therefore, it is important to take into consideration international visitors as well. As expressed by the WCCD report (1996) and by Keller (2008), collective knowledge in many countries is often comparable as it originates either from common roots or history, and which allows cultures to ‘overlap’. When developing interpretive materials, one should consider which concepts are universally understandable (e.g. family, religion, friendship) and which need to be explained in order to be understood by a broader audience (e.g. religious practices and beliefs).

Knowing that understanding is partially influenced by cultural knowledge, and in view of the multitude of cultures, it becomes clear that it is impossible to develop a message which would be understood in the same way by all who receive it. Misunderstanding is more a rule rather than an exception in museums and heritage sites. Nevertheless, it is possible to increase the amount of the audience that understands interpretive messages the way they were intended to. It is often difficult for the audience to understand the meaning and relevance of some displays, because they were developed only in view of the knowledge systems to which a curator or an interpreter belongs. Unless visitors share the same knowledge they will not be able to understand the message. In planning interpretive activities and displays it is therefore important to build on the knowledge systems of the target audience for which they are developed (Hooper-Greenhill 2002: 123). Moreover, by interpreting historical events it is necessary to consider the possible differences in cultural perspectives to one and the same event.

Heritage sites do not only build content for heritage interpretation; they are also the carriers of cultural memory and collective knowledge, which in many instances can only be transferred and made understandable to visitors with the help of heritage interpretation. In this respect one should talk about the **responsibility** of heritage managers to use heritage interpretation. Nowadays, heritage interpretation is still struggling to win its place in heritage management and justify the meagre funds placed for it. Heritage interpreters literary have to struggle to prove the importance of heritage interpretation to sponsors. When looking at heritage as knowledge (as analysed earlier), and as a carrier of shared knowledge existing in a society, then it becomes clear that heritage managers have a certain degree of responsibility to make sure that knowledge is accessible to the public. It is no longer enough to preserve and conserve heritage, it

has to be used as well. And by ‘used’ not only the physical use of the site as a museum or a recreation area is meant, but also the use as a knowledge system available to humanity.

To summarise, it is important to underline an important role of culture as an individual and shared event, which is both a tradition and communication. It contains and transmits patterns and symbolic meanings shared by the individuals of a particular group. Heritage sites and heritage practices allow the preserving and transmission of collective knowledge as well as contribute to identity and place building, and become important players in allowing individuals to gain access to collective memories. Heritage interpretation becomes a mechanism for the understanding of heritage sites and granting access to collective knowledge. A failure to make a heritage site understandable lies not with the visitors and their supposed ‘lack’ of knowledge, but with heritage interpreters, who fail to give sufficient guidance to create understanding. As Rusch points out:

“It can no longer be only a defective, poor or stupid cognition of a recipient causing failure [in understanding] but also – and in many cases – it actually is the incompetence of the communicator in helping the addressee to find her/his own way to understand” (Rusch 2007: 126)

Due to the commonalities of cultures, heritage interpretation is able to transmit cultural knowledge to recipients from different social and cultural backgrounds.

## CHAPTER 4

# Heritage Interpretation as Communication

When heritage interpretation is considered as a mechanism for understanding a heritage site, and understanding as a cognitive-social mechanism is only able to take place in communication (based on the ideas of Rusch and Schmidt discussed earlier), it is important to analyse the communication process for heritage interpretation. Therefore this chapter will offer a communication model for heritage interpretation to enable understanding, and will analyse the model components essential for effective communication. Furthermore, basic schemes of structuring interpretive information will be offered.

When talking about communication, it is first of all important to differentiate between mass communication and interpersonal communication. There are obviously differences in the communication processes and the ways audience is viewed in both approaches, which are shown below (after Hooper-Greenhill 1994a: 2-3).

Characteristics of mass communication	Characteristics of interpersonal communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One-way assertive communication</li><li>• Communicator defines the message</li><li>• Communicator is the power-base</li><li>• Receiver not considered</li><li>• No automatic feedback</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Two-way reactive communication</li><li>• Multiple methods possible</li><li>• Meaning made between the parties</li><li>• Power shared more equally</li><li>• Possibility of feedback</li></ul>

Characteristics of a mass audience	Characteristics of an interpersonal audience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Large</li><li>• Undifferentiated</li><li>• Unknown to itself</li><li>• Unable to act as a whole</li><li>• Acted upon/passive</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Small groups/individuals</li><li>• Differentiated</li><li>• Aware of each other and in contact</li><li>• Active</li></ul>



A great deal of interpretation at a heritage site is done in a face-to-face manner, for example, guided tours, costumed interpretation and third person interpretation. These types of interpretation fall into the field of interpersonal communication. Nevertheless, not every visitor is willing or able to join a guided tour, therefore heritage sites also rely greatly on interpretive activities or installations developed for a mass audience – exhibitions, interpretation panels, heritage trails and audiovisual interpretation. It is important to mention though that in the last decades many museums and heritage sites opted to employing elements of interpersonal communication in order to improve communication with visitors (Hooper-Greenhill 1994a). With the multitude of visitors to heritage sites and museums, one needs to consider communication developed for the masses, but with elements of interpersonal communication in order to make it more appealing to various target groups.

## **4.1 Process of communication**

Numerous theories have been developed to explain the process of communication over the past decades. This chapter will outline a few theories on communication, which have been selected as most suitable for the illustration and explanation of the communication model developed by the author of this paper for heritage interpretation.

Over the years the views on the process of communication have been undergoing considerable changes. Early research on communication viewed it as a linear process of transmitting a message from a sender to a receiver. This early model, developed by C. Shannon and W. Weaver in the 1940s, simplified the process of communication. Even though there were attempts to extend and improve it, it was soon abandoned by most scholars (DeFleur and Dennis 2002). However, the model remained influential in the work of the museums and heritage sites till the late 20<sup>th</sup> century (Hooper-Greenhill 1994b).

Carey (1992) was one of the first who pointed out the existence of two alternative views on communication that exist in society: a transmission view as mentioned above, and a ritual view. Unlike a transmission view of communication, which refers to sending a signal or a message “over distance for the purpose of control” (Ibid: 15), the ritual view of communication is perceived as a process of sharing, participating and associating:

A ritual view of communication is directed not toward the extension of messages in space but toward the maintenance of society in time; not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared believes (Ibid: 18).

In Carey's understanding, the role of communication in its ritual view is not to transmit information, but to construct and maintain a meaningful cultural world to individuals that serves both as a control and container for human action (Ibid: 18-19).

The two counterpoised views of communication are not mutually exclusive; the ritual view of communication does not exclude information transmission or attitude change, but rather states that it should be viewed in the system of cultural and social order (Ibid). McQuail refers to this model of communication as an 'expressive' model, because it shifts the emphasis from the process of transmission to "the intrinsic satisfaction of a sender (or receiver)" where "communication is engaged in for the pleasures of reception as much as for any useful purpose" (2002: 54). He points out that expressive communication depends on shared understanding and emotions, and on associations and symbols that are available within the culture (Ibid). The ideas of Carey and McQuail find reflections in the idea of collective knowledge systems existing in a particular culture, which have been discussed earlier in Chapter 3.2. Communication should be seen not only as means of transmitting knowledge, but also as a means of achieving understanding in communication between individuals. Because collective knowledge systems influence understanding of things or phenomena, (as pointed out by Schmidt 1999) and understanding is a part of communication process, it is not surprising that individuals make use of images and symbols available in a collective knowledge system in order to communicate with each other and to achieve understanding.

Furthermore, Stewart Hall suggests analysing communication not as a linear process, but as a complex structure "sustained through the articulation of connected practices, each of which, however, retains its distinctiveness and has its own specific modality, its own forms and conditions of existence" (2006: 163). Even though all of those practices are necessary to the total process of communication, none of them can fully guarantee the next practice, since each has its specific modality and conditions. Hall's analysis of the communication process through television made a great contribution to understanding the decisive role of a message in encoding and decoding, and its discursive form. He defines a transition of an event into and out of a message form as a 'determinate moment' in the communicative exchange. Moreover, the formation of the message always involves a discursive aspect – every event has to be decoded with the help of symbols available in the language and culture (Ibid: 164).

The second important point to Hall's theory is the transmission of a message into social practices. In this process decoding is only the first stage. In order for a message to "have an 'effect', satisfy a 'need' or be put to a 'use'" it has to be perceived as a meaningful discourse and then be meaningfully decoded (Ibid: 165). It is necessary to point out here that the meaning of a decoded message does not necessarily correspond to that of an encoded one. This greatly depends on the symmetry/asymmetry of encoded and decoded codes. The encoding/decoding codes

depend on ‘discursive domains’, or collective knowledge systems predominant in social, political and cultural spheres in a given society or culture:

The domains of “preferred meanings” have the whole social order embedded in them as asset of meanings, practices and beliefs: the everyday knowledge of social structures, of “how things work for all practical purposes in the culture”, the rank order of power and interest and the structure of legitimations, limits and sanctions (Ibid: 169).

Hall’s idea of symmetry and asymmetry of encoded and decoded codes might lead to assumptions that communication between cultures is not possible, as the codes will be so different that the understanding of a message would not be possible. Such a faulty assumption is eliminated as soon as one considers one of the properties of culture defined by WCCD (1996: 35), as discussed earlier, namely that cultures overlap. Communication between cultures might be difficult but not impossible as similar ideas, notions or symbols reoccur in various cultures and belong to the collective knowledge systems of those cultures.

Both Carey and Hall underlined the importance of external factors, such as culture and social structure, in the process of communication. It is not surprising that the same factors that influence understanding would influence the process of communication as well. Therefore, despite the fact that many heritage sites still operate with a simplified concept of communication, heritage interpretation cannot be viewed as a linear transmission of information from a heritage interpreter to a visitor. It is a much more complicated process of meaning formation and negotiation, which is influenced by various external factors.

## **4.2. Communication model for heritage interpretation**

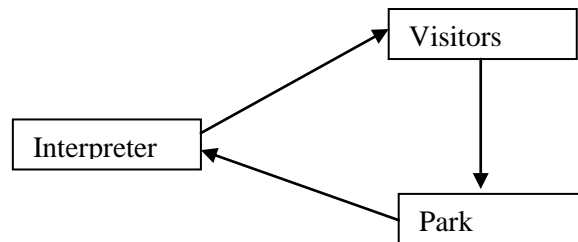
Already in the 1980s, Bill Lewis<sup>15</sup> was underlying the importance of an interactive threesome in communication – an interpreter, the visitor and the park. This communication model is often illustrated as shown in Figure 4.1.

For meaningful interpretation, an interpreter has to be aware of the interactions between the three elements: (1) he/she has to know himself/herself (2) the park visitors and (3) the park itself. The interpreter first of all has to know about his/her own abilities and motivations as an interpreter; what personal characteristics he/she possesses which might help him/her inspire people about the site. He/she also needs to know whom he/she interprets to, who comes to the park, what backgrounds and motivations visitors have, as well as to realise that people learn differently and know the ways he/she can transmit the pertinent information to different learners. And

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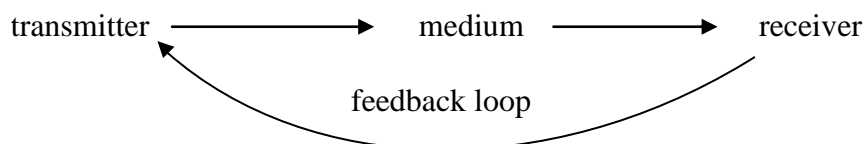
<sup>15</sup> Lewis worked for 30 years in the National Park Service in the United States and now continues to train interpreters at national parks and other organisations across the country.

finally he/she needs to know the uniqueness of the place and be able to show it to others (Lewis 2005). This model can be called the first communication model for heritage interpretation. Nevertheless, this model, if illustrated as in figure 4.1., does not allow feedback from a visitor to an interpreter. As a result it would be difficult to determine whether understanding took place, because an interpreter is not able to receive confirmation of his expectations from the visitors.



**Figure 4.1** Illustration of interpretive threesome after Lewis.

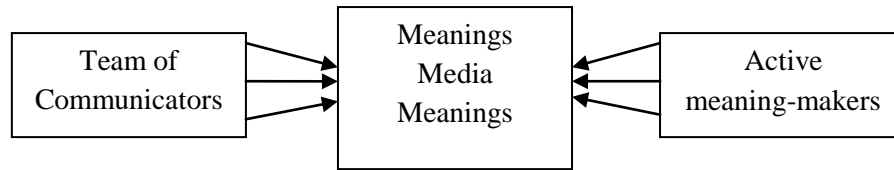
Cameron's feedback loop in a communication model developed for museums (see Figure 4.2) was meant to ensure the correctness of a message transmitted and a possibility of readjusting it if necessary. This model was developed in the late 1970s for the study of effectiveness of the exhibitions (in Hooper-Greenhill 1994b: 23). Only by enabling a feedback channel is it possible to know whether the message was received correctly. Even though the model remains linear and the audience is still perceived as passive, it has remained influential till the present, and is often used in explaining the process of communication in museums (see for example Edson and Dean 2000: 172).



**Figure 4.2** Cameron's model with feedback loop in Hooper-Greenhill (1994b: 23)

In 1994 Hooper-Greenhill offered a new communication model for museums (see Figure 4.3.). In this model a transmitter was replaced not by a single communicator, but by a team of communicators, which included "the interests of the curator, the designer, the conservator, the audience" (1994b: 25). The receiver is no longer passive, but an active meaning-maker, whose background, personal knowledge, views and attitudes determine the interpretation of a message. According to Hooper-Greenhill media includes "all the communicative media of the museum; the building, the people, the exhibitions, the objects, the cafe, the toilets and so on" (Ibid: 25). It is

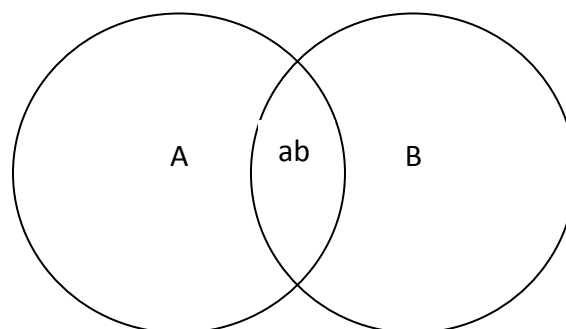
a so-called ‘middle ground’ between communicators and the audience, where the meanings are constructed.



**Figure 4.3** Communication model after Hooper-Greenhill.

This model shows an interaction between a team of communicators and the audience. It recognises the active role of the audience and thus shows the necessity of analysing its motivations, knowledge and expectations before interpretive messages are developed. Hooper-Greenhill also points out an important role of the environment in the creation of meanings – not only are interpretive exhibits important but a museum as a whole can stimulate or hinder understanding. A similar idea was also stated by Uzzel, who pointed out that quality of facilities at a heritage site or in a museum can both enhance and diminish the meanings communicated by displays (1994: 297).

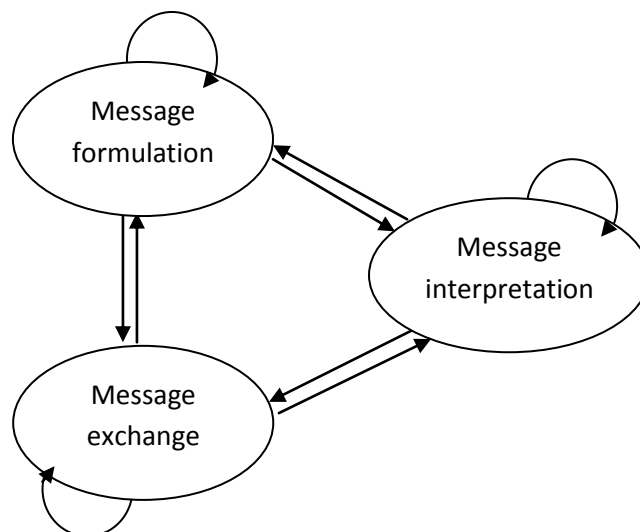
The illustrated communication models were selected from the field of museology or heritage studies, which also illustrate the development of the thought on communication in these fields. Even though the above mentioned models illustrate some important aspects of communication, they fail to incorporate broader factors that might influence the communication process, namely that culture is represented through collective knowledge systems. In order for the message to be understood by the recipient in the way it is meant to, both a communicator and a recipient need to have a certain level of knowledge, views and beliefs which they share or have the access to the same or similar knowledge systems. It has been best depicted in a communication model by Schramm (in Morgan and Welton 1994: 33) (see Figure 4.4.).



**Figure 4.4** Schramm's model of communication

Area ‘ab’ is the area where the life experience of A overlaps with that of B and forms the common ground for communication (Morgan and Welton 1994: 33). Schramm’s model of communication points out that communication is not a mechanic process of information transfer, rather in order for communication to take place the transferred information should be relevant for both a communicator and a recipient. In the same way, not only should the information be relevant, but also collective knowledge systems for its interpretation should be compatible so that a message is understood correctly (That is what Hall (2006) symmetry and asymmetry of encoded and decoded codes). Provided that collective knowledge systems shared by a communicator and a recipient are different would either lead to misunderstanding, or total failure of communication.

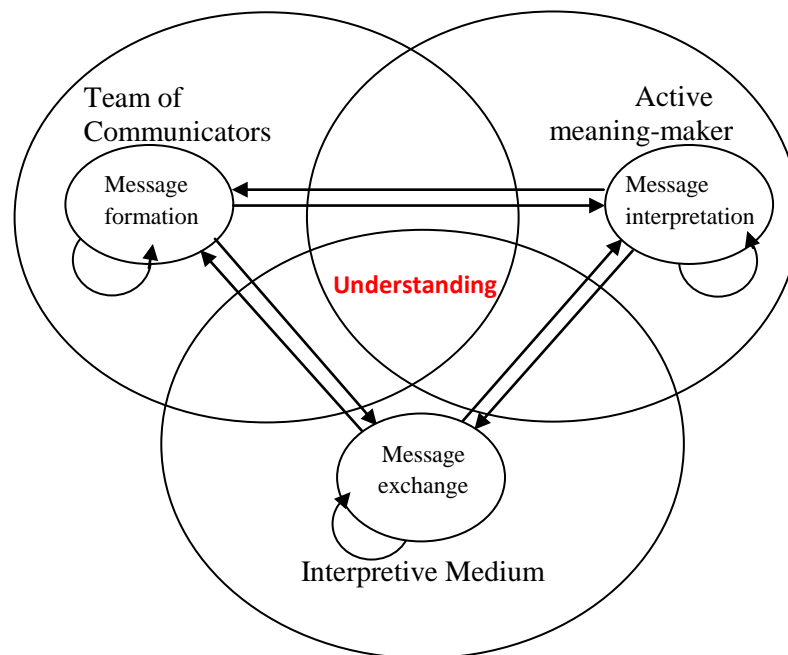
Another model of communication worth mentioning was offered by the Office of Technology Assessment in 1990 and is meant to show a multidimensional approach to communication. With the development of new technology, it is no longer easy to identify who is the sender and who is the receiver, as the information can now be accessed on demand by anyone. A new model underlines the importance of meaning negotiation and not its transmission, and defines communication as the process by which messages are formulated, exchanged and interpreted. These activities are required for the act of communication and relate to one another in a process in many ways (as shown in Figure 4.5) (Office of Technology Assessment 1990: 32).



**Figure 4.5** Communication Model developed by Office of Technology Assessment (1990: 33).

The communication model for heritage interpretation developed for this thesis combines many of the elements of the above mentioned models (see Figure 4.6). Most of the communication models illustrated earlier have three components in common – those who produce messages, those who receive them and ways the

messages are transferred. In the developed model these components are represented through a team of communicators (often it is more than one person, who develops interpretive messages), an active meaning-maker<sup>16</sup> and an interpretive medium. Because both understanding and communication are the processes, which are influenced by culture in the form of collective knowledge systems, in order for communication to be successful and for understanding to take place, both a ‘Team of Communicators’ and an ‘Active Meaning-maker’ need to find the common ground for communication (which also includes sharing compatible<sup>17</sup> collective knowledge systems). As has been already shown earlier, every individual has knowledge and experience, which is characteristic of him/her only. In the same way, individuals come from cultural environments which determine their collective knowledge systems. The same applies to the ‘Team of Communicators’ and an ‘Active Meaning-maker’, who need to find common ground, which allows communication and understanding to take place.



**Figure 4.6** Process of Communication for Heritage Interpretation

Moreover, the choice and quality of interpretive medium may either stimulate or hinder understanding and is to a certain degree culturally determined. Some sites or aspects of the site are better interpreted with multimedia, others with traditional

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<sup>16</sup> The terminology offered by Hooper-Greenhill (1994b: 25) has been applied to this model, as it most suitably describes the two communicative components.

<sup>17</sup> One may only speak of compatible collective knowledge systems as these are not constant systems that exist independently of individuals. On the contrary, collective knowledge systems are actively used by the individuals of a given culture, who make an active use of them by filtering collective knowledge through personal knowledge and experience, and thus inevitably altering it.

storytelling or a ritual dance<sup>18</sup>. Understanding is possible in the area where the three components intersect. Only when messages developed by a team of communicators with the purpose of orienting the audience to fulfil certain expectations appeal to the audience's knowledge and experience, and a medium selected to transfer the messages correspond to audience preferences, can one expect that the orientation expectations (hidden in interpretive messages) will be fulfilled and understanding will take place.

These three components of the communication model are in close interaction with each other: a team of communicators interacts with the audience by providing interpretive activities and by evaluating the different responses to them. At the same time, the team is in constant interaction with the interpretive media by developing new interpretive activities, evaluating the old ones and carrying out site research in order to improve interpretation. The audience in its turn interacts with the interpretive media by using impersonal types of interpretation (e.g. interpretation panels), and with the team of communicators by using personal types of interpretation such as guided tours, and by participating in visitor surveys.

The model also illustrates the complex processes of message formation, interpretation and exchange. This is a dynamic process where the audience is constantly evaluated, messages are formulated and reformulated in accordance with audience evaluation and feedback, and so the medium is changed accordingly. In this way, there is a constant feedback for a 'Team of Communicators' both from an 'Active Meaning-maker' and from an 'Interpretive Medium'. Feedback from interpretive media is based on its usability by the audience. A heritage interpreter may see the effectiveness of the media based on whether it is not used by the visitors, or on the contrary extensively used, and also when it is not used in the way it was meant. In order for understanding to take place, the audience first has to receive the message, and when the medium which carries the messages is found too complicated to use or unattractive, then the message will not be received at all.

In the following sections each of the components of the communication model for heritage interpretation will be analysed in a greater detail. Attention will be particularly dedicated to the 'Team of Communicators' and message formation, whereas the other two components will only be shortly analysed. Because the criteria for true or false understanding lie with the one, who wants to be understood, that is a heritage interpreter or a team of communicators, more attention will be paid to analysing the process of creating effective orientation actions (heritage interpretation) rather than to cognitive processes of message perception.

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<sup>18</sup> Societies where storytelling has a long tradition are more likely to accept interpretation if it has a form they are used to, rather than using information constructed based on facts, as is common in Western society. New technologies allow the offering of digital and virtual storytelling, which might be a great asset in interpreting tribal heritage sites.



### **4.3 Team of communicators and message formation**

A heritage interpreter is very important in developing and delivering interpretive messages, but it is rarely only one person involved in the process. The interpretive messages might truly be developed by one person only, yet they are inevitably influenced by the philosophy of an organisation for which the interpreter works, or by the priorities constructed by a management team. The message formation depends on the structure of organisation, its social and political role, its mission, institutional knowledge, assumptions about the audience, as well as knowledge and background of those who select the messages. Furthermore there are also designers who are working on developing interpretive material/activities with which the messages will be transmitted to the audience. And very often the way messages are presented can influence their understanding. Thus it is useful to talk here about a team and not a singular communicator.

Message formation is a complex process for several reasons. First of all, as Assmann (1992) underlined, cultural memory always has its carriers, be it shamans, bards, priests, teachers, artists or other knowledge carriers. Unlike communicative memory, cultural memory is not disseminated on its own. It has to be transmitted (Ibid: 54). This role of transmitting memory and knowledge is carried by a team of communicators. At the same time, it is important to remember that heritage institutions are not only transmitters but also creators of the knowledge as well:

Heritage institutions such as museums and historic sites traditionally function as subtle hegemonic devices for the production and public representation of knowledge, meaning, and belonging. By their very presentation at a heritage site, ideas are fixed, authenticated, and made credible in the minds of the public (Ashley 2006: 639).

Heritage interpreters as the creators of ‘public knowledge’ assist the audience in gaining and accessing personal and collective knowledge as well as raising public awareness for a range of social issues (Ashley 2006). The development of interpretive information not only ensures that cultural knowledge is transmitted, it can also lead to the change of that knowledge when specific aspects are presented stronger than others or other aspects as true or false. Therefore, in the end, interpretation is all about selecting aspects from the totality of knowledge that have to be communicated to a visitor (more on message selectivity in 4.3.1).

Second, messages are not simply formulated and sent away, it is necessary to make sure that they are understood the way they were intended, otherwise one cannot be sure that the communication achieved its aim (Herbert and Brennan 2004). It is easy to find common ground in a face to face communication where facial expressions and gestures can give some idea on whether the message is understood or not, and where adjustments and additional explanations to clarify the expectations can be

made immediately. In impersonal communication it is much more difficult to achieve. A 'Team of Communicators' has to cope with the complex task of matching the meanings of the messages they develop with the meanings the audience can make of them. For that they have to make a great many assumptions about what visitors do and don't know. Kraus and Fussell underline that "to a substantial degree, the ability to communicate effectively is dependent on the correctness of these assumptions" (2004: 173). That is what Rusch called *subjective understanding* (Rusch 1992). Of course the 'Team of Communicators', in making assumptions, can rely on the beliefs and expectations they already have. They would never be able to know for sure what the audience thinks, expects and whether the messages are received the way they were meant to unless they ask the audience, in other words conduct a visitor audit/survey. A visitor audit is one of the essential components for effective message formation but often ignored by many heritage sites. The reasons for this are numerous. One of the most common ones is probably a lack of sufficient human and financial resources for conducting a comprehensive analysis. Another is a blind believe in the correctness of one's assumptions. It often happens that guides elaborate on 'important' historic events, which many visitors are not able to put into a greater context, because they simply lack the knowledge about the history of a particular country, for example. There also might be interpretive panels or signs which are too difficult to understand due to an abundant amount of terminology in them which visitors have no knowledge of. Uzzel (1994) points out, that managers often make unreasonable assumptions about the knowledge of visitors. This usually results in communication on the managers' level of knowledge or assumed visitors' level, rather than what visitors actually know.

Moreover, because heritage interpretation is about orienting a visitor's perception of a heritage site and his/her behaviour at a site in accordance with the expectations heritage managers have, it is important to form the messages which will be presented to the audience in accordance with those expectations. The audience to a heritage site is very diverse and it makes it even more complicated to analyse it. One cannot analyse the knowledge level and experiences of every single individual coming to a site. This would take too long and would produce more questions than answers. But every individual belongs to a certain social group – a student, a scientist, a housewife, a businessperson - which is characterised by certain levels of knowledge and expectations which can be generalised and analysed:

At the other end of the continuum is information that derives not from direct knowledge of specific individuals, but from knowledge of the social categories to which those individuals can be assigned. Each individual is a member of a number of social categories, and category membership can be an accurate predictor of what the individual is likely to know (Kraus and Fussell 2004: 174).

The following sections will analyse the problems connected with message selectivity and will show some techniques in the formation of the messages that ensure that orientation expectations are better met and that understanding takes place.

### **4.3.1 Message selectivity**

Representation of heritage is often a matter of selectivity, where the same stories receive better coverage than others. Additionally as societies change the meaning of heritage, sites can also change (Crowley 2008: 65). It is clear that it is not possible to present all the values and stories that a heritage site has. Heritage sites are complex entities which are not only interesting from an historical point of view, but from archaeological, architectural, sociological and other paradigms as well. If one tries to present everything that comprises the significance of a particular site, one would simply overload the visitors with information, as Rumble points out “one should aim for ‘minimum conceptual orientation of the visitor’” (1989: 26). Therefore, heritage interpreters need to carefully select the information which would be used in heritage interpretation and communicated to the visitors.

Hafstein states that “selection and (inevitably) exclusion are ... structural elements of the system of heritage” (2009: 108), as the limited resources available for certain sites are directed away from other sites. This is true not only of conservation and restoration practices but of interpretation as well. The stories selected for interpretation may serve to bury or efface certain places or events as well as reveal and celebrate certain others (Byrne 2009: 230), in order to increase the potential for identification of some heritage sites (Bendix 2009: 254). Such selectivity inevitably leads to potential conflicts, when certain aspects of historic memory or certain stories are excluded from the process of preservation and transmission (Ibid). Selectivity is rarely a process determined by one individual person. There are also other players which influence this process. It may be influenced by political and/or commercial interests, as well as romantic inspirations.

In any country politics plays an important role, its influence on the cultural sector differs from country to country though, and is probably more actively exercised in developing countries, where heritage sites become a platform for the political debate, or are used to support the existing regime. For example, St. Sophia Cathedral World Heritage Site in Ukraine has been used as a backdrop for political speeches by a number of politicians in recent years, and accordingly the interpretation of the site is mainly concentrated on supporting the idea of the monument being a witness to the birth of the Ukrainian nation (Shalaginova 2009: 74).

By no means is this example used to criticise the use of heritage for civic education, but there are cases when heritage is used to support hostility of one nation against another. For example, the Etzion Bloc, a heritage site south of Jerusalem, has a complex and often tragic history, and from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century has

fallen under the control of various administrations (Ottoman, British, Jordanian and Israeli). Interpretation at the site, as stated by Lehr and Katz (2003), is aimed at securing Israeli control over the site. Consequently, the interpretation at the site offers only an Israeli perspective on the site development, excluding an Arab perspective and emphasising the heroism of “a peaceful but beleaguered community ... sacrificing itself for broader strategic goals vital to the survival of the embryonic Jewish state” (Ibid: 224). Heritage sites will remain political arenas, but heritage professionals should strive to promote the ideas of mutual understanding, respect and co-operation in developing interpretive activities.

On the other hand, many heritage sites have been turned into visitor attractions which main aim is to entertain and not to educate. Of course at such sites only ‘spectacular’ stories are presented which are meant to surprise, horrify or bewilder a visitor. Furthermore, heritage managers and interpreters tend to romanticize history when they select messages that are meant to stimulate nostalgia or idealise the past. Such interpretation has more to do with commercial interests than with presenting an objective reality. Here it is appropriate to quote Leanen, who said that

The rose-tinted selection and presentation of the past responding to unfulfillable needs of dreams of power, comfort and prestige appears to be a matter of consumption rather than a cultural issue for making people aware of their identity (1989: 89).

Such interpretation has a threat of building an idealised image of the past with no illustration of hardships or miseries, where people entertained themselves in castles at feasts and jousting, as most want to identify themselves with nobles rather than with servants.

Often the users, that is to say the visitors to a heritage site, determine the character of heritage interpretation and the kind of information selected. Ashworth refers to interpretation in marketing terminology as a packaging for a heritage resource, which very often becomes a product itself: “Interpretation involves a conscious series of choices about which history-derived products are to be produced, and conversely which are not” (Ashworth 1994: 17). In this way, different heritage products (or interpretive programmes) can be developed for different audiences from the same heritage resource (Ibid: 22).

Van Gorp, in an analysis of communication processes, underlined that people are not able to perceive objective reality and the multitude of various impressions that make the selection of messages by media inevitable (2007: 67). The same applies to heritage interpretation – no matter how hard one may try, it is impossible to squeeze a complex and rich history of events of a heritage site into a thirty minute visit for a regular person. Therefore selection is truly inevitable, the question is only how it should be done and what should motivate it in the first place. Not only the voices of the rich, the most powerful and influential should be heard, but there should also be

opportunities given to local communities and individuals to tell their stories. Their voices can be “appropriated and encompassed” by interpretive provisions, and made digestible to the dominant culture through public exhibition (Ashley 2006: 639).

Even though there is not yet a code of ethics for heritage interpreters, ICOMOS has strived to ensure some of the important principles in heritage interpretation in the Charter on the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (ICOMOS 2008). Some of these principles also ensure objective and impartial presentation of information as well as inclusion of oral traditions and local stories. It is expected that with time such principles might be further developed by a community of heritage interpreters. A recently established European network for heritage interpreters – Interpret Europe: European Association for Heritage Interpretation – has tasked itself to develop international quality standards for heritage interpretation, which are meant to ensure an objective and quality communication of heritage sites to visitors and local communities.

### **4.3.2 Frames, themes and stories**

As Tilden has defined in one of his principles for interpretation, not every piece of information is interpretation:

Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However all interpretation includes information (1977: 9).

The aim of interpretation is not only to transfer factual information, but as has been analysed in Chapter 2.3, heritage interpretation should contain orientation expectations (both cognitive and behavioural) of heritage managers/ interpreters. The example shown in Image 4.1 clearly illustrates that not every information provided at a heritage site can be called interpretation. Information given on a sign is a simple transfer of factual information, names and dates, which most visitors will not even remember at the end of their visit. There is no clear orientation expectation in this information, either cognitive or behavioural. This information does not describe the function of the place or its importance to people; it does not stimulate visitors to find out more about the place or religion of the country. Most people will be reluctant to look for additional information after their visit, because interest decreases with the time, especially if a visitor continues on to the next attraction, which provides him/her with more experiences. Therefore, not just information but interpretation have to be provided at a heritage site and have to be made accessible to visitors.



*Information on the plate:* Bi-ro-jon (Vairocana Buddha Hall). The Bi-ro-jon is hall in which is enshrined the Geum-dong-Bi-ro-ja-na-bul-Jwa-sang (Golden Bronze Vairocana Buddha Sitting Statute). National Treasure No. 26. Vairocana Buddha embodies Truth, Wisdom and Cosmic Power. The hall was constructed in 751 A.D. and reconstructed on the original founding platform in 1973 when Bul-guk-sa was restored to its original form, after having been repaired and rebuilt several times. The architectural style belongs to that of the later Jo-son Dynasty.

**Image 4.1** A plate from Bulguksa temple World Heritage Site, South Korea.

In developing interpretation it is therefore important to know how to compose the information which is presented to the audience. When composing quality interpretive messages, there are two important things that have to be considered. First of all, when presenting information that has a strong cultural component, it is necessary to provide visitors who might not be aware of such component with the additional background information that would help to understand the rest of the information. As has already been analysed earlier in Chapter 3, culture (and namely collective knowledge systems embedded in it) play an important role in the process of understanding. This is especially true when interpreting to foreign visitors since heritage interpreters have to find common ground which would allow presenting information to visitors in ways they can understand best. This can be done with the help of *framing*, which is discussed later in this chapter. Additionally, a simple sentence which serves as a ‘backbone’ to the rest of the information (a theme), may help orient visitors in their perception of a heritage site. The importance of themes has been underlined by numerous interpreters (see for example Ham 1992, Pierson 1999, Lewis 2005) and is shortly analysed in this chapter as well. The two techniques of constructing information for interpretive activities – framing and themes – can become powerful tools in enabling visitors to understand heritage sites.

## **Framing**

The effectiveness of interpretation depends to a great extent on the quality of the messages that are developed for the audience; it is not always what is said but how it is said that makes a difference. Because visitors to heritage sites are very diverse in terms of their origin, education, personal and cultural backgrounds, there is a need to offer tools, which would enable them to understand the messages in the way they are meant to be. One such tool is framing which is a way of presenting complex issues in a way understandable to the audience. Framing becomes especially useful in presenting complex issues of a heritage site, such as conservation and management, or the history of a religious heritage site to the audience from a different religious background.

Hall (2006) pointed out that an event is perceived through an economic, political or social background, which make it significant or not. Without the relation to predominate ideologies, knowledge and assumptions rooted in those backgrounds, an event has no meaning to people (Ibid: 164). Here framing techniques may help provide the background necessary for the understanding of events and ideas.

The origins of *framing* lie in the fields of cognitive psychology and anthropology. It was further adopted by other disciplines such as sociology, economics, linguistics, social-movement research, policy research, communication science, public relations, and health communication (Van Gorp 2007). This chapter will mainly concentrate on the ideas of framing from the point of view of social constructionists, such as Entman, Scheufele and Van Gorp.

Framing was brought into political research in the 1980s and the 1990s as a theory of mass media effects that, unlike magic-bullet theories, took into consideration the audience's characteristics (predispositions, schemas and others), which influence the ways a message is interpreted. Unlike agenda setting and priming framing is based on the assumption that the way an issue is presented can have an influence on how it can be understood by the audience (Scheufele and Tewksbury 2007).

Framing has been defined differently by various authors, with many of these definitions referring to framing as a tool of constructing or perceiving social reality. Entman, for example, offers the following definition of framing:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described (1993: 52).

A somewhat similar definition has been also offered by Hallahan:

Framing is a critical activity in the construction of social reality because it helps shape the perspective through which people see the world...the framing metaphor is better understood as a window or portrait frame drawn around information that delimits the subject matter and, thus, focuses attention on key

elements within. Thus, framing involves processes of *inclusion* and *exclusion* as well as *emphasis* (1999: 207).

Framing can also be perceived as a package which poses the problem to the reader, suggests the ways it can be analysed, and offers the path for possible conclusions. In this way, it fulfils four main functions – *to define problems*, *to diagnose causes*, *to make moral judgements* and *to suggest remedies* (Entman 1993, Van Gorp 2007). In such a way it doesn't just provide the information on a particular event, but also the way it should be interpreted (Van Gorp 2007: 65). A frame in a particular text does not need to perform all the functions, it all depends on the purpose of communication and why the text was developed. In journalism and other communication media, framing is used as a “mode of presentation” that is selected to present information in a way that “resonates with existing underlying schemas among their audience” (Scheufele and Tewksbury 2007: 12).

Scholars typically identify two groups of frames – media frames or frames in communication, and individual frames or frames in thought (Scheufele 1999, Chong and Druckman 2007). Whereas the first refers to the words, images, phrases and presentation styles which are used in the presentation of issues and events by speakers and media, the latter refers to the ideas which the audience believes to be the most important aspect of an issue (Chong and Druckman 2007: 101), as well as “mentally stored clusters of ideas that guide individuals' processing of information” (Entman 1993: 53). The concepts of frames in thought correlate with the ideas of collective knowledge systems discussed in Chapter 3.2.

In the communication process frames can be found in four locations: the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture. Communicators may make a conscious or unconscious choice of frames when developing their messages. The text contains frames which are manifested by a number of key words and phrases as well as certain stylistic means (for example metaphors, comparisons, stereotyped images). In interpreting the text the receiver is guided by his/her own set of frames that might be different from those held by the communicator and embodied in the text. And finally, culture is the stock of commonly used frames (Entman 1993). Here Entman combines both frames in communication (frames in a text) and frames in thought (frames presented in a communicator and receiver). Culture combines both sets of frames. On the one hand it may determine the presentation style common in a particular society. On the other hand, it also offers a stock of ideas to be used by members of that culture. The ideas of frame placement are also supported by Reese who states that “frames are principles of organizing information, clues to which may be found in the media discourse, within individuals, and within social and cultural practices” (Reese 2001: 14).

In his analysis of locations, Entman was identifying frames as equal to schemata, when used by the communicator in composing the text. Currently, many scholars consider frames different from schemas and some of the reasons for that are given by



Van Gorp (2007). He relates to frames as a part of culture which are independent of an individual and describes six additional characteristics essential to his conceptualisation of framing:

- (1) There are more frames than those currently applied, which offer alternatives for message producers and receivers, which leads to different definitions of topics and issues, and to the fact that “the same events make different kinds of sense depending upon the frame applied” (Ibid: 63).
- (2) Being a part of culture, the frame is not bound to the context – the text and the frame are independent from one another.
- (3) Because frames are related to cultural phenomena they are often unnoticed and implicit.
- (4) Frames are differentiated from personal mental frames or schemas. Unlike schemas, which gradually develop and relate to personal experience and feelings, frames, as a part of culture, are stable and construct “broader interpretive definitions of social reality and are highly interactive with dynamic schemata” (Ibid: 63).
- (5) A frame changes very little or gradually over time, but the process of applying frames is dynamic and subject to negotiation.
- (6) The essence of framing lies in social interaction of message producers and their sources and audience; the audience interacts with media content and with themselves.

In choosing and building frames, communicators are influenced by various factors in the same way as during the process of selecting stories which have to be presented to the audience. These are, first of all, the ideology, attitudes and professional norms of a communicator. The second factor is ‘organisational routines’, that is to say the vision and philosophy of a particular organisation. The third source is external and includes such actors as politicians, authorities, interest groups, and other elites (Scheufele 1999: 115). Not only do news production institutions have structured meanings and frames that guide the work of journalists, this is equally true of museums and heritage sites. Even though they are often perceived as objective communicators of history, they too have their own structured meanings that guide their work (Reese 2001: 22) and determine frames used in the communication with the audience.

Frames are not always used by the audience – one may take it into consideration when hearing or reading a story, another might ignore it. The acceptance and sharing of media frames depends on “what understanding the ‘reader’ brings to the text to produce negotiated meaning” (Reese 2001: 15). But Van Gorp (2007) emphasises that when cultural ideas constitute the frame, there is a stronger ‘resonance’ between the message and the schemata of the audience, and thus a greater possibility that the frame will be accepted and used in evaluating the message. Some frames are so powerful that a simple reference to them may activate the schema. Due to that quality

frames do not need to occupy the central position in the structure of the text, but can be briefly presented in a number of devices (Ibid). Some of the framing devices are illustrated and explained in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1.** Selection of Framing Devices (adjusted from Frame Works Institute 2002: 16-32).

<b>Devices</b>	<b>Important to Know</b>	<b>How to use effectively</b>
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Context establishes the cause of the problem and who is responsible for solving it.</li> <li>• Context can further systems thinking and minimizes the reduction of social problems to individual solutions.</li> <li>• Context must be built into the frame with the introduction of the problem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• current data and messages have to be linked to long-term trends.</li> <li>• the data needs to be interpreted: the visitors need to be told what is at stake and what it means to neglect this problem.</li> <li>• the problem needs to be defined so that influences and opportunities are apparent – “the dots need to be connected”, both verbally and in illustrations.</li> <li>• one has to focus on how well the organisation/community/state is doing in addressing a problem, not on how well individuals are addressing it.</li> <li>• the episodes of the issues have to be connected to root causes, conditions, and trends with which people are familiar.</li> <li>• a solution needs to be presented.</li> </ul>
Numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once a frame is established, it will “trump” numbers.</li> <li>• Most people cannot judge the size or meaning of numbers; they need clues.</li> <li>• Numbers alone often fail to create “pictures in our heads.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• numbers have to be used sparingly. When dramatic numbers are used, one may have the inadvertent effect of making the problem seem too big, too scary, or too far away.</li> <li>• the meaning has to be provided first, then the numbers. Social math has to be used to reinforce that meaning.</li> <li>• numbers need to be used strategically: not simply to establish the size of the problem, but to convey the cost of ignoring it.</li> </ul>
Visuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pictures trigger the same models and frames as words.</li> <li>• Pictures can undermine a carefully constructed verbal frame.</li> <li>• Pictures are visual short hands.</li> <li>• Close-up shots emphasize the personal and conceal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• traditional images that have dominated the news regarding an issue need to be avoided.</li> <li>• close-up shots of individuals need to be avoided unless they serve framing goals, as audience tend to assign responsibility to those individuals.</li> <li>• sequence and placement of photos need</li> </ul>

	environmental and systems-level influences.	to be used to demonstrate cause and effect, and trends instead of isolated events .
Metaphors and simplifying models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metaphors and simplifying models complete ways of thinking that include patterns of reasoning.</li> <li>• They allow making extensive inferences beyond the words actually used.</li> <li>• They are highly quotable for news media.</li> <li>• They offer effective alternatives to other storytelling devices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one has to use metaphors and models to help people understand how issues work</li> <li>• one has to select metaphors and models that connect the issue to larger systems</li> <li>• one has to use metaphors and models that emphasize prevention and/or causality</li> </ul>

Hallahan (1999) underlines that framing offers a context for the information perception:

Framing puts information into a context and establishes frames of reference so people can evaluate information, comprehend, meanings, and take actions, if appropriate. Indeed, the message must be imbued with sufficient clues so that people can make sense of the message and for it to be persuasive (i.e., to have an influence on people’s predispositions or overt behaviours). Framing provides those clues (Ibid: 224).

The idea of making messages persuasive is not only important for the field of public relations but for heritage interpretation as well. In recent years, several studies have been conducted on the use and influence of interpretive provisions on visitor’s behaviour. Various works have shown the effectiveness of interpretation in changing visitor’s behaviour at a heritage site, when interpretive messages include moral and fear appeals (Hockett and Hall 2007), appeals to injunctive norms (Cialdini 1996, Winter et al. 1998) or behavioural, normative and control beliefs (Ham and Krumpke 1996). The fundamental idea of those works is that heritage interpretation, by appealing to visitors’ norms and beliefs and changing their attitudes, is able to change problem behaviour and reduce negative impacts at a site. This research on using heritage interpretation for changing visitor behaviour supports the ideas stated earlier on heritage interpretation being a mechanism for understanding. By stating an expectation (in this case to change a negative visitor behaviour) and by using interpretive activities and appropriate techniques for that, one is able to induce visitors to meet certain expectations fully or partially, and thus create a better understanding of a site.

In social constructivism, framing is often viewed as a central element of successful persuasion. Payne (2001), for example, points out that many studies on using framing for persuasion show that many social players successfully promote and build social

norms by using frames that resonate with broader public understanding. At the same time he also underlines that the use of a resonant frame is not the only factor in persuasive communication, and that the whole act of communication has to be analysed. It is mainly due to the abundance of frames, and often competing frames, that they cannot be considered as the only decisive factor for persuasive communication:

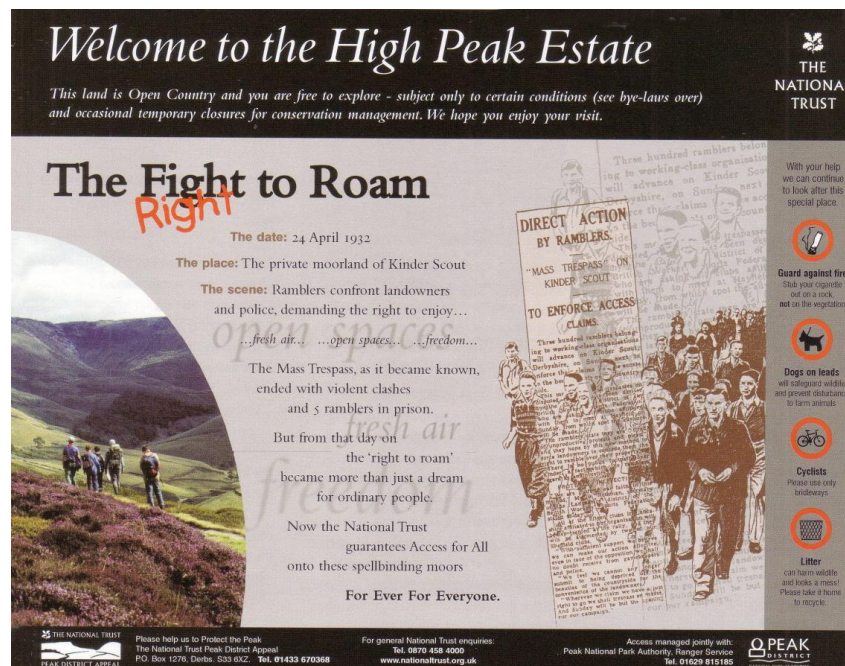
... researchers have found that a single desired outcome can potentially be explained by multiple frames and any given frame can conceivably justify more than one possible outcome... However, even apparently persuasive frames that achieve desired normative outcomes can be distorted, meaning that some form of coercion has occurred (Ibid: 45).

Frames only contribute to a certain degree in the process of persuasion. The whole communicative process is important – the intentions of communicators as well as the setting. It is important to apply the findings on framing done in other scientific fields in order to avoid the same mistakes in applying them to heritage interpretation. Thus, in developing frames for an interpretive provision, a team of communicators should not merely rely on the frames they think might be effective, but they have to test them with a target audience before the interpretation is printed. The frames used by interpreters might be different from those used by the audience. Moreover, the whole communication setting has to be taken into consideration to ensure that nothing hinders information perception. When, for example, an interpretive sign is placed on a spot that is not easily assessable (e.g. due to growing vegetation), even the best frames will not help if the visitor is not able to read the information.

Examples of using framing techniques in heritage interpretation are still very rare. One example for it would be an interpretation panel at the Kinder Scout, High Peak Estate commissioned by the National Trust. Already the heading of the interpretation panel orients the visitor in the perception of a site, and namely to think that the *right* to roam was once a *fight* to roam (see Image 4.2). This idea is also supported by an old photograph from 1932 of the mass of people trespassing on the Kinder Scout. With the help of the heading and the image, visitors are induced to think differently of the open moors they enjoy at the moment, which were once only accessible to a limited group of people (the owners and their guests) (Tissier and Sattaur 2007).

Another example of framing is the use of a theme. Hallahan (1999) enumerates some main forms of framing, which are valence framing (putting information in either a positive or negative light), semantic framing (alternative phrasing of terms) and story framing (storytelling). He calls story framing one of the most challenging forms as

Story framing involves (a) selecting key themes or ideas that are the focus of the message and (b) incorporating a variety of storytelling or narrative techniques that support that theme (Ibid: 207).



**Image 4.2** Interpretive panel at Kinder Scout, High Peak Estate, property of the National Trust, the UK.

Pan and Kosicki (in Reese 2001: 13) also state that some themes can become frames because of their structural function. Heritage interpreters have been employing this form of framing (without calling it ‘framing’) for decades, which has also proven to be successful with visitors.

Application of framing in journalism and advertising proves that it is one of the effective ways in orienting perception and understanding. The use of framing techniques in heritage interpretation can help improve communication with visitors, especially foreign visitors, and establish a better understanding of a site. In face to face communication one is able to guide an interaction partner with the help of gestures or additional explanations in order to help him/her fulfil their expectations, in impersonal communication framing can become such a tool for guiding and helping to meet expectations.

### Themes

Heritage interpreters have long recognised the necessity of structuring information to be presented in interpretive activities. One of the important elements in this is the use of themes. Sam Ham (1992) defines themes as one of the four most important qualities of interpretation. Here it is important to differentiate between a theme and a topic, because the two terms are often used interchangeably in English. Topic is the general idea of a presentation, whereas theme is the main message meant to reveal the topic. In order to describe the topic one might need several related themes. Here one also needs to be aware of the fact that the average person is able to remember about five facts at a time,

thus it is better to use just three to five themes in a single presentation (Ibid). Topics are not always defined by the heritage interpreters, often they are defined by the management or legislature. Interpreters introduce the general values of the place that have to be preserved and presented (Knudson et al. 1995: 366). Thus, at most World Heritage Sites, the main presentation topics are defined by the statement of the site significance, which is developed for the nomination of a site to the World Heritage List. Such statements are often greatly generalised and need to be further broken down into specific themes when presented to visitors.

As early as 1980 Lewis defined several characteristics of a good theme (2005: 38):

A theme should:

*Be stated as a short, simple and complete sentence*

*Contain only one idea*

*Reveal the overall purpose of the presentation*

*Be specific*

*Be interestingly and motivatingly worded when possible*

Pierksené (1999: 87) extends the principles offered by Lewis even further and states that themes should:

- Relate directly to what the visitor can see or experience;
- Should deal with the “how” or “why” of the situation;
- Express a fact or a story that can be further built on;
- Have some underlying appeal to visitors humanity;
- Hint at general principles that visitors can see exemplified elsewhere.

A theme focuses on key concepts that visitors take from a presentation, therefore it is advisable to state this at the very beginning of a presentation. It has been proven already that people comprehend and remember information better when the theme is stated at the beginning (Knudson et al. 1995: 313, Ham 1992). The rest of the information and stories will simply help develop the themes. An example of building a theme based on three types of objectives (or expectations, as defined in this work) is given by Sam Ham (2003) in his article “Rethinking Goals, Objectives and Themes” in *the Interpscan*. He underlines a necessity to define a clear goal and objectives before a theme is created, as the latter is determined by the former. Thus in his article he proposes a hypothetical example where the goal is “to stimulate visitors to care about X National Park by inspiring them” (Ibid: 11). The three objectives set to achieve this goal are learning, feeling and doing objectives (or cognitive, affective and behavioural expectations as defined in Chapter 2.3) (Ibid):

- *Learning*: “Given the opportunity to do so, people who have heard my talk are going to say that one of nature’s greatest experiments was the creation of a rainforest”

- *Feeling*: “Given the opportunity to do so, people who have heard my talk will use words like *amazed, surprised, blown away, flabbergasted, moved, inspired, struck, and awestruck* with what goes on in a temperate rainforest”
- *Behavioural*: “After hearing my talk, people in the audience will choose to stay for discussions and Questions and Answers Sessions even though they know the program is over”

A possible theme that can be developed to achieve the above mentioned objectives could be “One of nature’s greatest experiments was its creation of the temperate rainforest” (Ibid). This initial theme only addresses the learning objective and could be considerably improved if feeling and behavioural objectives are also incorporated into it – “strengthening it by making it a statement that demands attention and creates curiosity in and of itself” (Ibid) as the final theme shows:

“One of nature’s greatest experiments was the creation of the temperate rainforest in X National Park. To this day, it harbours answers to questions that science is still too naive to even ask” (Ibid: 11)

Every theme should be well-researched using all the available sources such as libraries, archives, public agencies (e.g. conservation departments), local experts, local historical societies and museums. It is of course not possible to use all the researched information in interpretation, but it helps to identify good themes and stories (Regnier et al. 1994). Another useful technique for generating themes might be a community workshop. This involves various stakeholders interested in interpretive activities and may offer various perspectives on the topic. It is also important to remember that members of the same organisation (be it a museum or a heritage site) have a profound knowledge of various issues that must be taken into account. In this vein, workshops within the organisation should be carried out as well. It is important to involve those who have knowledge on a topic and might be helpful in developing themes (Ham et al. 2005).

Lawson and Walker (2005) underline the importance of involving the audience into the development of themes, especially when the themes are controversial. It is especially the case with aboriginal heritage, where official interpretation differs from that of aboriginal people. The involvement of aboriginal people or cultural minorities whose heritage is being interpreted will not only help develop the themes, but will also make interpretation objective, open and involved.

A good theme should also be relevant and interesting for the audience (Regnier et al. 1994, Pierssené 1995: 85, Ham et al. 2005). Highly technical themes might not be appealing to all visitors. Interpreters should strive to choose the topics and themes which are interesting for the audience and not only for the interpreters. Pierssené points out that “it is not just a matter of quantity of information...but of its apparent relevance to the visitor in that place at that moment” (1999: 85). Therefore, the choice of themes

should be based on two factors. Firstly, what the site managers want the visitors to remember at the end of the visit and secondly, what the audience might find interesting (Murphy 2000).

As already identified by Hallahan (1999), a story framing involves not only a theme but also a number of narrative techniques which reveal that theme. Therefore, the last and the most important component in interpretive message is a story.

### **Stories**

Quality interpretation demands a considerable investment of time, thought and effort for the development of material which has to be presented to visitors. The three main elements in the construction of quality interpretation are frames, themes and stories. It is exactly stories and not just information that have to be used in order to provoke interest and not to bore visitors with the enumeration of dates, names and places. The information presented should be interesting and memorable. Norman points out that

Stories are marvellous means of summarizing experiences, of capturing an event and the surrounding context that seems essential. Stories are important cognitive events, for they encapsulate, into one complex package, information, knowledge, context, and emotion (1993: 129).

Williams also underlines the importance of stories in human lives:

We have all been natured on stories. Story is the umbilical cord that connects us to the past, present, and future. Family. Story is a relationship between the teller and the listener, a responsibility. After the listening you become accountable for the sacred knowledge that has been shared. Shared knowledge equals to power. Energy. Strength. Story is an affirmation of our lives to one another (1987: 130).

Beck and Cable identify three important functions of a story: they entertain people; they educate people; and they motivate people to “form a more balanced relationship to the Earth and other people” (2002: 34). Stories also have a potential to hold the attention of large and mixed-age audiences, due to the images they produce in the mind of visitors which also help to retain the information (Knudson et al. 1995: 352).

Winslow offers the following techniques for good story-telling, which underline this necessity (in Knudson et al. 1995: 354-355):

1. to use original myths, legends, and stories in order to maintain authenticity;
2. to create stories, if original stories are unavailable to suit the purpose of interpretation. Such a story should be based on a thorough research, some of the sources of which may include journals, local newspapers, older members of a community and books;
3. to create a mood for a story, which includes choice of an appropriate site, dress-up in authentic costuming, and use of artefacts or facsimiles;
4. to use expressions, gestures, and mimics along the story;



5. to use a full range of vocal expressions, volume, tempo, and sound effects.

The above mentioned techniques described by Winslow can be applied in printed interpretation as well, not just in live interpretation as is done in story-telling. Here is an example to illustrate the first technique defined by Winslow. Across different countries and cultures there are differences in attitudes of children to their parents and vice versa. For example, the Korean culture is strongly influenced by the teachings of Hongik Ingan, who postulated that one should “live and act for the benefit of all mankind” (DSRG 2007: 7). In Korean philosophy “us” comes before “me” (Ibid: 7). The deep respect Koreans possess for their parents is nicely illustrated in a tale “Under the Burning Sun”, one of many folklore tales, which have survived till today:

“A brush seller once arrived in a village, and went to the village school to sell his wares. When he got there, he found several young children reading books on the veranda of the schoolhouse. Most of the children were in the shade, but one child was sitting reading his book under the burning sun. The man thought this strange, and asked the boy,

“How old are you?”

“I am seven years old,” the boy replied.

Why are you reading under the sun, while other students are on the cool floor?”

The boy, wiping the sweat from his forehead, answered,

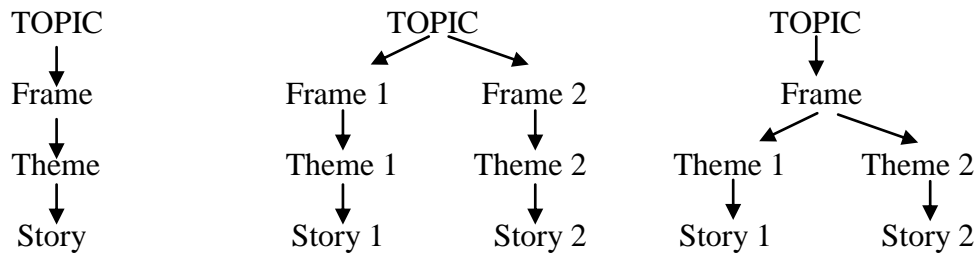
“My family is poor, and my father works as a day labourer in order to pay my school fees. My books, brushes, and papers are all the result of my father’s hard work and sweat. I feel guilty reading on the cool floor while my father is working in a field in the summer heat. That is why I am reading this book under the burning sun.”

Deeply moved, the brush-seller praised the boy for his thoughtfulness towards his father, and gave him his best brushes as a reward” (Ibid: 12)

This story might be used in interpreting Korean culture. Though it might not list the main principles of Korean philosophy, it definitely gives a good idea of what respect for the family means in this culture. It orients a way of thinking and allows visitors from a different culture to put some facts into context, even though they might seem strange from their cultural perspective. Heritage interpreters are less interested in forcing visitors to memorise the facts about Korean philosophy and culture and are rather concerned with visitors understanding it. Therefore, providing folk tales in a combination with the factual information is more useful in heritage interpretation than factual information itself. Folktales have strong emotional components which enhance understanding of the aspects.

The three elements – framing, themes and stories – when used thoughtfully and correctly, will help to orient a visitor not only at the site but also in his/her perception and understanding of the site. There are various ways of combining the three, which greatly depends on the complexity of the information that has to be interpreted and the skills of heritage interpreters. Van Gorp (2007) points out that because a frame is not

linked with any specific topic, one and the same topic can be framed in different ways. Schematically the process of developing interpretive information can be shown in the following way: one has to choose a topic; consider a frame or frames which might be used to help understand the topic better; choose the theme(s) and develop the stories to reveal those themes (see figure 4.7.).



**Figure 4.7** Basic schemes for structuring interpretive information.

Of course one can think of any other possible schemes of structuring interpretive information. For example, it is possible to use two stories to reveal the same theme. Nevertheless it should be mentioned here that the schemes should be kept as simple as possible, and the number of frames and themes within one interpretive activity should be kept to a minimum. This would ensure a better perception of information and better understanding of a topic. The choice of a topic for interpretation and the subsequent choice of frames and themes should always be guided by the expectations heritage interpreters place on visitors.

#### **4.4 Active meaning-maker and message interpretation**

The second component in the communication model for heritage interpretation is an active meaning-maker (a visitor) who is interpreting information provided at a heritage site.

According to Rusch (1986) and Schmidt (1994), since establishing understanding one is less concerned with the cognitive processes occurring in the heads of interaction partners, this chapter will not analyse how the messages are interpreted, but will rather concentrate on external factors that can influence understanding.

Media research shows that messages coming from an authoritative and credible source will be more effective (McQuail 2000: 431). In this respect heritage sites and museums have a great advantage as people often consider heritage professionals to be credible sources of information:

Most museums [and heritage sites] are places where exhibited information is derived from scholarly and scientific pursuits, therefore, the public expectation is

that the information presented in museum programs and exhibitions is accurate (Dean 1997: 218).

But even with the best possible interpretive messages, and the credibility of a heritage site as an authoritative source, one should expect that some visitors will not be perceptive to them due to various reasons – the physical condition of a site may seem to some unattractive and boring, or a visitor might be tired from travelling, or there is no information provided in a language the visitor understands. All those factors may influence the perception of information and create so-called inaccuracies in communication and thus hinder understanding. DeFleur and Dennis (2002: 14) define the accuracy principle in communication as the level of correspondence between the intended meaning and the interpreted meaning. The lower the level of correspondence, the less effective an act of communication will be in achieving an intended influence. They have defined some principles of achieving accuracy in interpersonal communication, which might be useful in heritage interpretation as well:

***Feedback principle*** – is possible in face to face communication, when a guide can provide additional explanations or clarification if necessary, but is absent in impersonal communication (panels, exhibits etc.). Here one may evaluate the effectiveness of interpretive material with the help of questionnaires and interviews, which may also provide a certain level of feedback. This periodic evaluation is necessary to ensure that no counter messages have been produced and that the visitors understand a site as intended.

***Role-taking principle*** – is important for heritage managers and interpreters in order to put them into the shoes of visitors, investigate their motives for coming to the site, as well as their expectations. It may help to simplify the technical language of the information to a level understandable to the general public.

Research on election campaigns (see for example McQuail 2000: 440-446) has found that a number of factors influence the flow of messages. Even though the means of achieving the aim are different in a political campaign and in heritage interpretation, the aim itself is quite similar – both are trying to advocate knowledge about a particular issue and win the support of audience to it. In this regard, it would be appropriate to apply knowledge from that area to heritage interpretation. Factors such as attention, perception, motivation (Ibid: 441-442) and environment (Norman 1993) have been found to play a decisive role in hindering or favouring the flow of messages. In the following, a short overview of each factor is given.

***Attention*** is important for the acquisition of information and consequently for achieving desired effects (change of attitude or behaviour). Attention to messages depends on the interest and relevance of the content for the audience, as well as on its motives and pre-dispositions, and to a certain degree on a channel of message transmission (McQuail 2000: 441). For this reason the two main factors in heritage interpretation on which the

audience attention depends on the content of the interpretive material, and media used for interpretation. Therefore, (even though it has been repeatedly mentioned throughout this work, it is worth mentioning again) it is useful to conduct periodic visitor research, which analyses whether visitors find the information provided interesting, useful or relevant to them.

There are a lot of techniques which help make interpretive themes and stories more attractive to visitors. Beck and Cable offer the following techniques to make interpretation, both interpersonal and printed, more compelling and interesting (2002: 33):

Examples	Use of concrete illustrations to assist the audience to understand and relate to the message
Cause-and-Effect	Showing of relationships – people are interested in what things cause other things to happen
Analogies	Explanation of a point by making a comparison to something similar that is more familiar to the audience
Exaggeration of a time scale	Making information more meaningful by exaggerating the scale of time (e.g. the history of the Earth condensed into a 24-hour day to explain geological features)
Similies	Usage of the words “like” or “as” to relate characteristics of two things.
Metaphors	Giving a word or a phrase that is usually used to describe something very different to capture the meaning of a new idea and to fuel interest
Anecdotes	Usage of concise personal sketches that relate to the theme of the presentation to lend interest
Quotations	Quotation of others to add colour to the message. People are interested in the observations of others
Humour	Usage of appropriate humour to engage an audience. Humour may be especially useful in the early stages of the presentation to loosen up the audience
Repetition	Repetition of key phrases to create memorable messages
Current News Events	Inclusion of current events into the presentation to make a related point

Another common limitation at heritage sites is a lack of varied interpretive media. Current research shows that people learn differently, and they usually choose the media

which helps them acquire information best. Some like guided tours, others prefer audio guides, whilst others prefer interpretation panels. Nevertheless there are many heritage sites that provide guided tours or interpretive panels as the only way of interpretation. Additionally Hodge and D'Souza underline that certain messages are better transmitted via an explicit media. For example, complex stories with numerous dates or events over different times or places cannot easily be communicated by pictures and "messages about qualities cannot easily be communicated by numbers" (1994: 41).

Another important issue is languages – it is really difficult to be attentive to the information which is provided in a language one does not know. World Heritage Sites in particular and sites with high levels of foreign visitors should put emphasis on attempting to provide interpretation in multiple languages, as the amount of foreign visitors they attract grows every year.

**Perception** is essential because messages are subject to multiple interpretations, and heritage interpretation needs to ensure that the messages are understood in the way they were intended. Sometimes in communicating with an audience, things are said that were not meant or the point is not transferred effectively; miscommunication cannot be avoided. Heritage sites have a rather diverse audience who come from different social and cultural groups. This complex task of mediating between them inevitably leads to communication "break down" (Ibid: 46). It is important not only to assume what effect a message might have, but to test it. Pilot projects are very useful in testing the interpretive activities with the target audience and adjusting the messages before activities are implemented.

**Motivation** matters because the type and degree of expected satisfaction can influence either learning or attitude change (McQuail 2000: 442). One of the main motivations for visiting a heritage site is recreation. It is therefore necessary to provide a certain degree of entertainment in order to ensure that a visitor spends more time at the site and is open to receiving information; though this does not mean turning heritage sites into Disneyland. There are also other ways of entertaining a visitor. First, there are various ways of presenting information. As already shown in Chapter 4.4., people enjoy stories. Bruner (1990: 56) points out that a typical form of understanding the surrounding world is narration. Very often information about a heritage site is simply overloaded with facts and numbers. Of course it does not mean that one should avoid providing any factual information, but it is important to remember that a human brain has a limited memory capacity. Secondly, interactive and involving interpretation is another way of entertaining visitors. It may range from costume interpretation (see Image 4.3) to touch screens, holograms and other audio-visuals, which will be mentioned in the following chapter. By providing a wide and varied scope of interpretive programming, site managers ensure that more people are motivated to participate in them.



**Image 4.3** Costumed interpretation at Edinburgh Castle, Scotland.

**Environment** is usually decisive in making people more or less perceptive to presented information. Norman points out that “people are typically willing to exert great mental effort upon their recreational but not their educational activities” (1993: 32). In order to achieve an optimal experience, he identified several principles for the environment which may be applied to any heritage site (Ibid: 34):

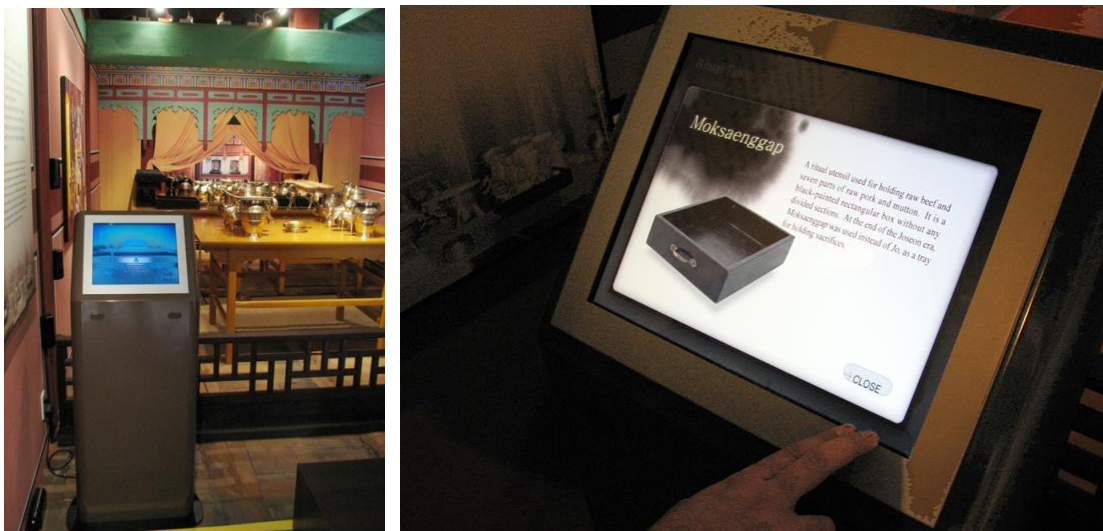
- One should provide a high intensity of interaction and feedback;
- Heritage interpretation should have specific goals and established procedures;
- One should motivate the visitors to explore more and interact with a site;
- One should provide a continual feeling of challenge, one that is neither so difficult as to frustrate a visitor nor so easy as to produce boredom;
- It is important to provide a sense of direct engagement, produce the feeling of directly experiencing the environment, directly working on the task;
- The heritage interpreter should provide the visitors with appropriate tools that fit the user and task so well that they aid and do not distract;
- Interpretive setting should avoid distractions and disruptions that intervene and destroy the subjective experience.

Visitors to a heritage site are diverse and it is impossible to satisfy everyone, however that does not mean that heritage interpreters should not strive to do so. It is important to remember that apart from internal factors, such as schemata and cultural experience, there are a number of external factors which need to be taken into consideration when developing interpretive provisions. Understanding greatly depends on the context, and heritage sites as well as interpretive infrastructure are the context for understanding.

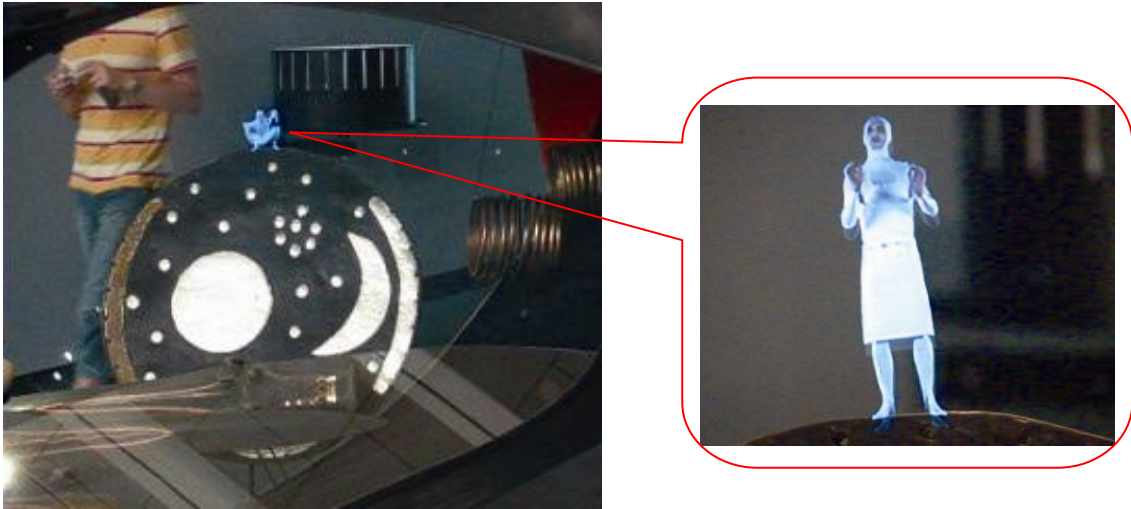
Therefore, heritage interpreters need to provide an environment that encourages the exploring of interpretive material. Interpretive material itself should be attractive and able to motivate visitors to enjoy and explore a site. It should be appropriate and interesting for a visitor, not just for the interpreter.

## **4.5 Communication medium and message exchange**

Finally, the third component in the communication model for heritage interpretation is the medium which allows transmitting information to the audience. Over the last decades heritage interpretation has moved away from guided walks and talks at a camp fire to a much wider variety of activities which do not involve an interpreter. With the growing popularity of heritage tourism and increasing numbers of visitors, heritage interpreters are trying to make interpretation activities more varied, interesting and numerous in order to satisfy multiple demands of the audience. Consequently more and more heritage managers and interpreters rely on differing media (booklets, interactive presentations, interpretation panels) to convey information about a site. With the development of new and increasingly affordable multimedia technologies, heritage interpretation techniques have been expanded to quite sophisticated forms of presentation such as virtual tours, touch screens and holograms (see Images 4.4. and Image 4.5.).



**Image 4.4** A touch screen explaining Junsang (a ritual liquor table) and the functions of the objects at a ritual table in Bulguksa temple World Heritage Site, South Korea.



**Image 4.5** Hologram interpretation of the “Arche Nebra” at the information centre in Wangen, Germany.

The scope of this paper does not allow for analysing all interpretive media and ways of conveying information in a greater detail. Instead, it is useful to consider possible effects media can produce and their authority in influencing understanding.

Unlike interpersonal communication, where interaction partners constantly receive meta-information conveyed with the help of gestures and mimics which also contribute to the understanding of both partners, in impersonal communication such information is missing. Rusch (1992) identifies the following elements which are missing in a written text and hence make understanding more difficult:

**1. Social isolation:** due to social isolation of the text the reader is deprived of verbal and non-verbal signals of the communication partner, which means that there are no signals which could indicate understanding or non-understanding of the text. An author can neither correct nor provide more details or explanations to the text, nor can a reader ask for explanations of particular parts or ideas. Understanding of written texts requires from a reader a great deal of subjectivization and autonomy of understanding, both of which cause uncertainty and detachment. The instruments to overcome them, according to Rush, are education (to learn to understand ‘correctly’), argumentation (persuasion of the ‘correct’ reading ways) and conventionalisation of the reading of socially relevant texts (Ibid: 247). These instruments are usually acquired through socialisation in schools and families. For heritage interpretation this social isolation means that special attention has to be paid not only to the development of the messages, but also to their testing with appropriate media with the target audience. Modern multimedia allows creating an illusion of personal interaction with the help of audiovisual stimuli, where the audience can also receive additional information or explanations by pressing the appropriate button. But in conventional printed media such an option is usually unavailable.



**2. Contextual isolation:** through print the text is isolated from the original context, for example, situations, actions, interrelations, relations to reality and so on (Ibid: 247). This type of isolation can be overcome by means of using various introduction forms, by showing connections of the text to the site itself, and by providing additional context to which the readers can relate. One can draw on familiar events or things in order to introduce complicated concepts for unfamiliar events and use many other framing techniques discussed earlier.

In order to overcome social and contextual isolation, it is advisable to test the interpretive provision with a target audience before its implementation. This allows for identifying whether the messages have been understood the way they were intended to, whether the choice of media is appealing for the target audience, and in case some corrections are needed which may be done before great amounts are spent on production.

Over the decades the question of media effects has been extensively studied in the field of communication and media studies. Research on the topic developed from the assumption of direct effects (“magic bullet effect”) to limited effects resulting in a two-step flow model. The two-step flow of communication theory reveals that apart from mass media, there is another important source of information – other people. Many people do not learn about events from TV or radio, rather from their families, friends and acquaintances. Fundamental in both theories was the acknowledgment of the individual’s thoughtful use of media and reduction of the power of media. Research on media effects conducted during World War II showed that media had very little effect in changing opinions and attitudes, and that most changes occurred due to individual characteristics. Research that followed the war confirmed that people select different kinds of content from the media and interpret it in many different ways, moving further away from all powerful media to selective and limited influences. By the 1940s a different question was posed in media research – why do people select some information and ignore others? It became clear that people are not passively exposed to any kind of information but they actively seek the content which they think will satisfy their interest. From this, uses and gratification theory was developed which mainly concentrated on psychological factors such as interests, needs, values and attitudes, which determine a selectivity of content. In the 1970s these theories gave way to a powerful media effect model, or as sometimes referred to as a moderate effects perspective. Such theories as cultivation, agenda setting and spiral of silence may count for powerful effects theories. All of them underline the importance of media in opinion formation of the mass audience through heavy media use, or the salience of issues in the media, or the presentation of ideas as those belonging to the majority (DeFleur and Dennis 2002: 425-458; McQual 2000: 417-422; Olson 2001).

Typically distinctions are made between media effects influencing cognition (knowledge and opinion), affect (attitude and feeling) and behaviour. In early research these three

effects were believed to follow a logical order, from the first to the third, and with an increase in significance – behaviour being more important than knowledge. At present it is no longer believed that the three have a particular order, nor is it believed that behaviour is more important than cognition and affect (McQuail 2000: 423). Studies of advertising messages have tried to match the content of messages with the three areas and a number of important findings have been made. First, it was shown that problem-solving scenarios positively relate to cognition but negatively to affection, whereas excitement, aggression, and sexual content (labelled as mood arousals) were positively related to affect, but negatively related to cognition. Second, such variables as age, gender, and media use proved to be important in perceiving the messages. Thus, it was noticed that female respondents recollect more of the emotional messages presented, whereas male respondents recalled more of the rational appeals. Finally, it was found that a change in attitude does not necessarily lead to behavioural change (Olson 2001). In the field of heritage interpretation so far little research has been conducted to analyse the influence of media on the understanding of various messages. Consequently heritage interpreters can draw on experience and research conducted in communication studies.

In heritage interpretation it is important to analyse the aim of interpretation before choosing the medium, whether the result is to affect cognition or emotions of visitors. It was proven experimentally that television and, hence, audio-visual media has a greater influence on human feelings due to the power of imagery, whereas printed material is more useful in presenting complex issues (Cho et al. 2003).

All in all numerous studies on media 'efficiency' conducted in previous decades have proven that print and audio-visual media do not constitute a "hierarchy of more or less efficient vehicles of communication", but rather message structures and meaningful combinations of verbal and visual elements will influence information acquisition and potential learning by an audience (Jensen 2002b: 145). As Uzzel pointed out, "the message is more important than the medium in increasing visitors' understanding of a site or subject" (1994: 293).

# CHAPTER 5

## Understanding analysis

### 5.1 Aim and objectives of the study

Heritage interpretation is a relatively new scientific field; therefore the amount of experimental research conducted in the field is much smaller than in other fields. Existing experimental studies may be grouped into two areas: (1) studies on the effectiveness of interpretation for educating visitors about various issues at heritage sites and the effectiveness of different interpretive media for visitor satisfaction and comprehension of interpretive messages (Ham and Weiler 2002, Ham and Weiler 2007, Knapp and Barrier 1998, Knapp and Yang 2002, Knapp and Benton 2005, Morgan et al. 2003, Pearce and Moscardo 2007, Povey and Rios 2002, Wiles and Hall 2005); (2) analysis of the application of interpretive activities for solving management issues at a heritage site, such as changing negative visitor behaviours, promoting the rules of conduct and warning of potential dangers (Caldini 1996, Winter and Cialdini 1998, Widner and Roggenbuck 2000, Widner Ward and Roggenbuck 2003, Lackey and Ham 2003, Hockett and Hall 2007). These studies also reflect the two roles of heritage interpretation as an educational activity and a management tool.

The aim of this particular pilot study is to analyse how far interpretation contributes to the understanding of a heritage site to visitors and communities and not to analyse how much information has been retained from interpretive provisions, as has already been proven by various studies that visitors perceive better and retain more information from the activities developed using interpretive principles (see Povey and Rios 2002). A theory of understanding developed earlier in section two is based on the constructivist approach that states that understanding is a communicative process (as opposed to a cognitive process), and means meeting orientation expectations which a speaker directs towards the communication participant. When verbal or nonverbal actions of a communication participant meet the expectations of the speaker, then he/she will evaluate them as understanding (Rusch 1986, 1992; Schmidt 1994: 154). Therefore the role of heritage interpretation in enhancing understanding of a heritage site is not to ensure that visitors have memorised as many facts about a heritage site as possible, but to orient visitors' perceptions of and behaviour at a heritage site. Therefore this empirical study aimed to analyse to which extent a well-developed interpretive provision can influence a change in attitudes of a local community living at a heritage

site. Therefore following two objectives (orientation expectations) have been identified for the study:

1. *Cognitive objective*: to increase an understanding (as subjectively defined by the respondents) of the aspect of green spaces and gardens in Britz estate and Wohnstadt Carl Legian with at least 25% of the respondents who read an experimental leaflet completely.
2. *Affective objective*: to change positively an attitude to the aspect of green spaces and gardens with at least 10% of the respondents who read an experimental leaflet completely.

The study has been constructed in three steps:

*Step one*: distribution of the first round of questionnaires to analyse existing attitudes of local communities to the individual aspects of the case study sites – pre-questionnaires;

*Step two*: distribution of the experimental interpretive leaflets amongst the test subjects;

*Step three*: distribution of the second round of questionnaires in order to identify any changes in attitudes, and to analyse the effectiveness of interpretive information – post-questionnaires.

The housing estates of Britz (Hufeisensiedlung) and the Wohnstadt Carl Legien, two of the six estates belonging to the Berlin Modernism Housing Estates World Heritage Site, have been selected for testing these interpretive activities and studying any attitude changes. The selection has been made for two main reasons. Firstly, at present there is no interpretive provision available on the premises of the estates<sup>19</sup> which could interfere with the results of the study. Secondly, because the amount of tourists at the estates at present is quite scarce (most tourists come as a part of a group tour) the local community that lives at the estates has been selected as the target group for the study. This makes this study unique, as most of the existing research in the field of heritage interpretation addresses tourists and only very few studies address local communities, which are also target groups for interpretive provision.

## 5.2 Structure of the experimental interpretive leaflets

Two interpretive leaflets were developed for the estates to be tested in the study (see Appendix 3). Both leaflets present the same topic of public green areas and gardens. This topic has been selected due to the fact that it is apparently less well-explained and

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<sup>19</sup> With the exception of a single information column in the entrance to the Wohnstadt Carl Legien.

presented to the visitors and communities in comparison, for example, to the topic of the modern architecture in the estates<sup>20</sup>.

The interpretive leaflets have been developed in accordance with the communication scheme developed earlier in this paper: *topic > frame > theme > story* (see Chapter 4.3.2).

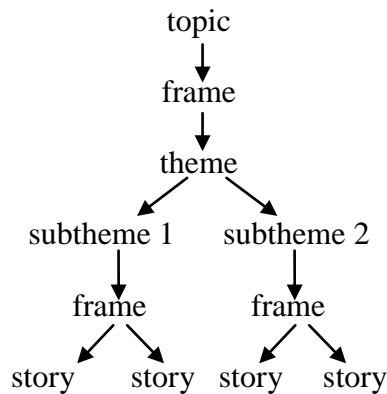
The experimental leaflet for the estates of Britz (henceforth referred to as the Britz Study) consists of three themes: the main theme on green areas and gardens, and two subthemes which expand on the main theme – on the construction reform of the 1920s and 1930s in Berlin, as well as on the aspects of social building in the estate:

Main theme: “Gardens and Green Areas of the Hufeisensiedlung are an integral part of the architectural complex which allowed for the realization of the architects’ social aspirations”.

Subtheme 1: “The construction reform of the 1920s and 1930s improved the living conditions of the working class in Berlin”.

Subtheme 2 “Gardens and Green Areas of the estate were planned not only for the purposes of food provision, but also for stimulating and enabling social interactions among neighbours”.

All the information in the leaflet was constructed in order to unveil the above mentioned themes. Schematically, the structure of the leaflet for the Britz study can be shown as follows:



From the scheme above, one can clearly see that the interpretive text in the leaflet was framed (with the help of a context technique) on two different levels. First, the frame was included in the entire leaflet– the information on gardens and green areas was provided within the context of bad living conditions that existed in tenement houses (Mietskasernen) of Berlin in the early 1900s, and the difference made by constructing housing with private gardens and sufficient public green space. This context was provided with the help of a historic photo that illustrates an apartment in a tenement

<sup>20</sup> Such an assumption is based on the statements of preservation officers and existing information sources available at the estates.

house in the early 1900s, with a short explanatory text (see Image 5.1). Secondly, the individual stories (short informative paragraphs) in the leaflet were framed by providing the context for their perception with the help of historic citations from the architects of the estate (see Image 5.1).

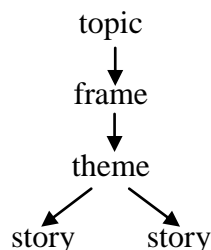


**Image 5.1** Presentation of the frame through a photo of the tenement house, and the citations of the architects used in the experimental leaflet for the estate of Britz

The experimental leaflet for the Wohnstadt Carl Legien (henceforth referred to as the Carl Legien Study) was developed in a more simplified manner and consisted of one theme:

Gardens and Green Areas of the Wohnstadt Carl Legien are an integral part of the architectural complex, which allowed for the realization of the architects' social aspirations.

Schematically, the structure of the leaflet for the Carl Legien Study can be shown as follows:



The framing technique for this leaflet was similar to the leaflet for Britz Study. Due to the fact that this leaflet was much smaller in scope than the other, the frame was used for the overall information. It was constructed in the same way as in the other leaflet by

providing a photo from the tenement housing, followed by a short explanatory text (see Image 5.2).



**Image 5.2** Presentation of the frame through a photo of the tenement house and a short text; note the use of headings for better focussing of the information in the experimental leaflet for the Wohnstadt Carl Legien

Individual stories in the leaflet were not framed. Nevertheless, the information in the stories was focussed with the help of the headings, which was the same technique applied in the leaflet for the Britz estates (see Image 5.2).

The information in both leaflets was composed according to the rules of narration (described in Chapter 4.3.2): the information was kept short, it was provided in small paragraphs, the language was not overloaded with technical terms and, when possible, addresses to the reader were incorporated into the text. The effectiveness of framing and other techniques for the construction of the information in the leaflets were shortly analysed by the second round of questionnaires and will be explained later in this chapter.

### 5.3 Structure of questionnaires

A similar set of questionnaires was developed for both studies which were conducted in the Britz estate and in Wohnstadt Carl Legien. The questions stated in the **first questionnaire** (pre-questionnaire) can be grouped into three categories: (1) questions that determine a general background of the respondents, such as gender, age and occupation; (2) questions that determine internal and external factors that could influence attitude change, such as amount of information about the site from the media

(3) questions that determine the attitude of the respondents to specific aspects of a heritage site (see Appendix 4).

In the first group of questions, the respondents were asked about their gender, age and occupation. Question 1 aimed to identify how long the respondents had lived in the estate. The original assumption behind this was that the length of living at the site might influence the respondent's overall attitude to the site and to its individual aspects.

The second group consisted of five questions. Questions 2 and 3 addressed the issue of the World Heritage Status and the sources through which the respondents learnt about it. The internationally recognised UNESCO status might influence the respondent's perceptions of the estate. Therefore this question was further expanded on through Question 7 of the questionnaire, which aimed to analyse the attitudes of the respondents to specific issues connected with the WHS status, such as the attractiveness of the WHS status itself, tourism and preservation regulations. Whereas the other questions were constructed as simple yes/no or multiple choice questions, for the construction of Question 7 a Likert-scale was used to determine different degrees to which the respondents think the statements apply to them or not.

Questions 5 and 6 aimed to analyse the amount of information about the significance and history of the site which the respondents receive through the media and without it. Additionally, Question 8 aimed to determine the subjective knowledge of the respondents about the significance and history of the estate.

The third group of questions addressed the studied variable, namely the attitudes of the respondents towards the specific aspects of the estates. The two questions used in this group (Question 4 and Question 9) were constructed with the Likert-scale in order to determine respondents attitudes towards the importance of the aspects for them, as well as the importance of the same aspects as presented to the visitors/tourists at the estates. It is important to point out that the Likert-scale does not measure their attitude per se, but helps to rate a group of individuals in ascending or descending order with respect to their attitudes towards the issues in question (Kumar 2011: 174).

In the **second questionnaire** (post-questionnaire) the questions were also grouped into three main blocks: (1) those determining general background; (2) those determining attitudes (3) questions determining external factors (see Appendix 5).

In the first group of questions the respondents were again asked about their gender, age, occupation and the length of living at the estate in order to compare the responses in both questionnaires on those variables. Also in this group were Questions 2 and 3 which aimed to analyse whether the respondents read the leaflet and if so, how thoroughly.

The second group of questions meant to analyse the attitudes of the respondents to the specific aspects of the site according to their own personal importance on a Likert-scale (Question 1). This question was formulated in the same way as in the first



questionnaire. Additionally, Questions 4 and 5 aimed to analyse whether the respondents felt they learnt more about the target aspect(s) of a site through the leaflet, and whether they understood the site better.

In the third group of questions, Question 6 addressed some of the elements in the leaflet construction in order to analyse whether the respondents found them helpful for the understanding of the information. Question 7 aimed to determine information sources which were preferred by the respondents for learning more about the site. The purpose of the question was to determine whether the media chosen for the study (a leaflet) was appealing for the respondents and could influence the perception of information. For example, if the form of a leaflet was not appealing to the majority of the respondents, they could ignore it and not read it at all or superficially, which would diminish the anticipated effects.

## 5.4 Methodology of the study

Due to time limitations it was not possible to conduct a study that would evaluate the changes in the understanding of a site, and consequently attitudes towards its aspects, over a longer period of time. Therefore a *cross-section study* was designed to test some of the theories developed in this paper. In a cross-section study, data is collected at one point in time and typically using survey methodology for which a questionnaire was selected as a data collection method (Gray 2004: 31).

The questionnaires were put in the mail boxes of the target groups together with return envelopes to send the answers back. In postal questionnaires there are two threats to the validity as defined by Gray (Ibid: 207): the extent to which respondents complete the questionnaire accurately, and the problem of non-response. In order to ensure accuracy, the questionnaires were kept short and pretested with a group of respondents of different ages similar to that of a target sample group. The form of the study did not allow to follow-up the non-responses in order to compare for similarities between their responses with those who did answer. The study was conducted anonymously; the letters with questionnaires were put into mailboxes systematically without a notation of the names. There was therefore no way of determining which respondents within the sample group answered or did not answer the questionnaires, and as a result a follow-up questionnaire was impossible. Additionally so called **face validity** has been applied to the structure of questionnaires, which was meant to ensure that each question has a logical link with an objective of the study (Kumar 2010: 179). Thus, for example, questions 5 and 6 on the first questionnaire were asked to verify internal validity in order to analyse the influence of external factors (in this case information from media) that might have influenced the study results, before the second questionnaire round was conducted.

There are three main types of reliability in quantitative research: stability, equivalence and internal consistency. *Reliability as stability* measures consistency over time and over similar samples. In *reliability as equivalence* consistency is achieved by using equivalent forms (or alternative forms) of a test or data-gathering instrument. The alternative test forms may be applied sequentially to the same sample group or simultaneously to matched samples. *Reliability as internal consistency* presupposes that a test can be split into two matched halves, with the marks in each half highly correlating with the other half (Cohen et al. 2007: 146). For this study **reliability as stability** over similar samples was selected. Therefore, the same questionnaires measuring the same variables were conducted simultaneously at two estates: the Wohnstadt Carl Legien and the estate of Britz in Berlin.

A *systematic sampling method* was chosen for the study, which presupposes that “the elements of the population are arranged in some natural sequential order” (Brase and Brase 2011: 16). This method uses an equal probability method in which every  $k^{\text{th}}$  element is selected.  $k$  is the sampling interval (or the *skip*) calculated as:  $k = N/n$ , where  $n$  is the sample size, and  $N$  is the population size (or the number of households in the estate). The targeted sample size for each of the two estates was 500 questionnaires in each round, based on the amount of households in the estates<sup>21</sup> lead to the sampling interval of three in private housing (in Britz) and two in apartment blocks (in Britz and in Wohnstadt Carl Legien). A random starting point was selected to ensure that every house and apartment had an equal chance of being selected.

To aid in the interpretation of the received data a predicted change of 10% or higher between pre and post-questionnaires was considered significant. The predicted change was determined after the preliminary evaluation of the first round of questionnaires indicated an existing high-degree of positive attitudes to various aspects of the studied sites. Therefore, based on only one activity which has been developed for the study (an interpretive leaflet), one could not have expected a great change in attitudes which were already very positive. Thus, any change which was equal or higher than 10% was considered significant for the study.

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<sup>21</sup> In the estates of Britz, only the construction parts I, II and VI were included into the study, therefore the skip was calculated on the number of households in those parts only.

## 5.5 Interpretation of the results

### 5.5.1 Respondents' profile

The response rate in both rounds of questionnaires in Brit and Carl Legien study comprises:

- Britz Study – 131 responses of the pre-questionnaires (response rate of 26%) and 113 in post-questionnaires (response rate of 23%);
- Carl Legien Study – 131 responses of the pre-questionnaires (response rate of 26%) and 120 in post-questionnaires (response rate of 24%).

The age distribution of the respondents in both studies and in both questionnaire rounds is illustrated in Figures 5.1 and 5.2. Single ages are combined in ten-year age groups, from 21-30 years to 61-70 years, with the exception of the age groups which lie below and above the mentioned age frame – the lowest target age group being 15-20 years and the highest - 71 years and over.

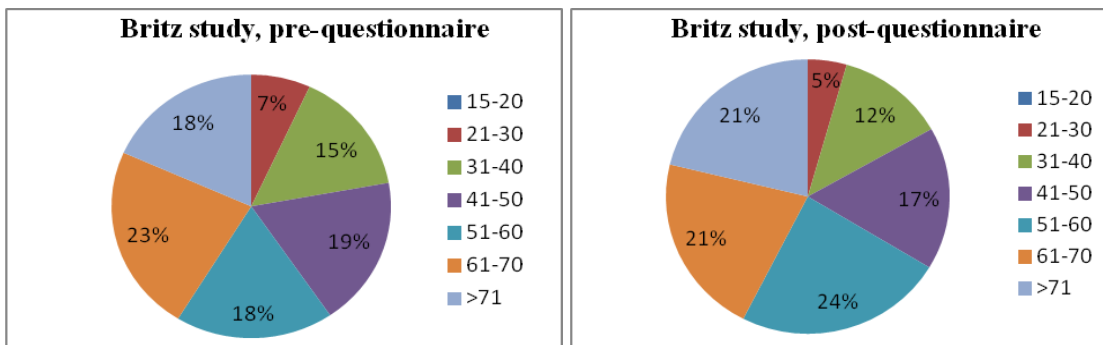


Figure 5.1 Respondents' age distribution in the Britz Study.

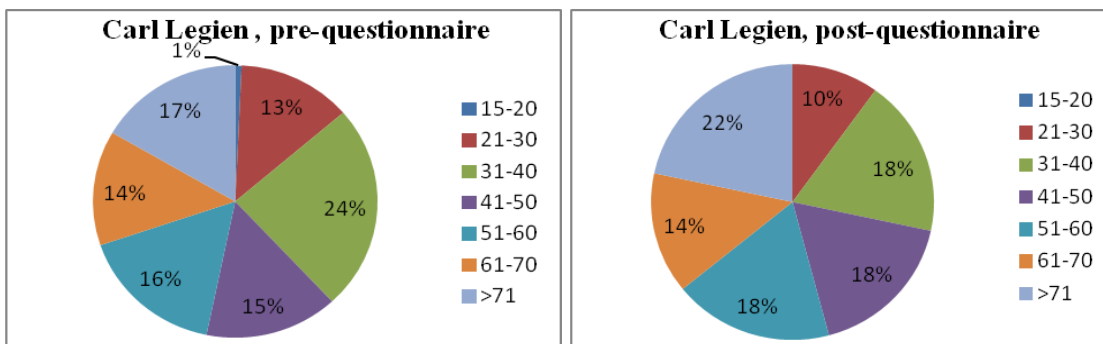
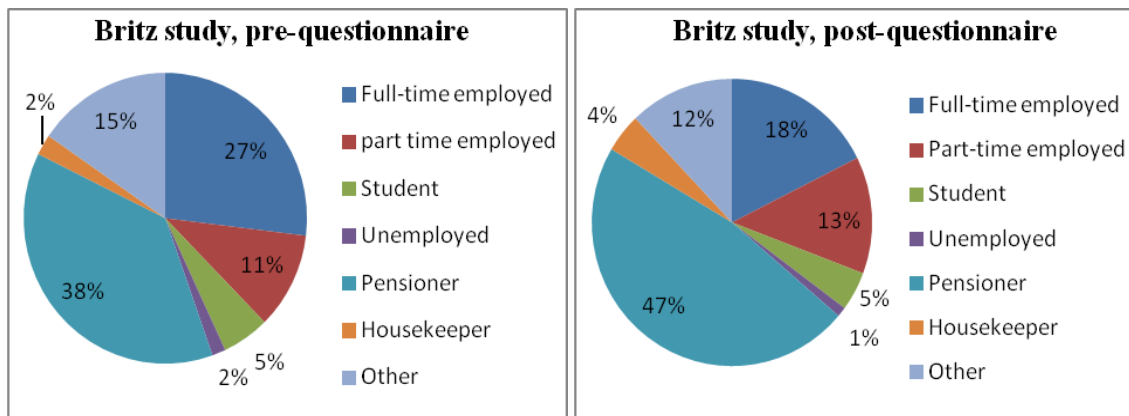


Figure 5.2 Respondents' age distribution in the Carl Legien Study.

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 clearly show that apart from the age group 15-20 years (which is only represented with 1% in pre-questionnaire in the Carl Legien Study) all the other age groups are well-represented in both studies and both questionnaire rounds. In the Carl Legien Study, during the first round of questionnaires the age group of 31-40 years

is 9% better represented to the same group in the Britz Study, though the tendency diminishes to a 6% difference in the post-questionnaire round. In contrast, the age group of 61-70 years is better represented (by the same ratio of 9%) in the Britz Study, with a diminishing tendency to 7% in the second round. The differences among other groups comprise 6% or less in both questionnaire rounds. The variation in the age groups between the questionnaire rounds does not exceed 6% in both studies. Thus, for example, in the Britz Study the age group of 51-60 year olds increased by 6% in the second questionnaire round, whereas the amount of respondents aged 41-50 years diminished by 2%.

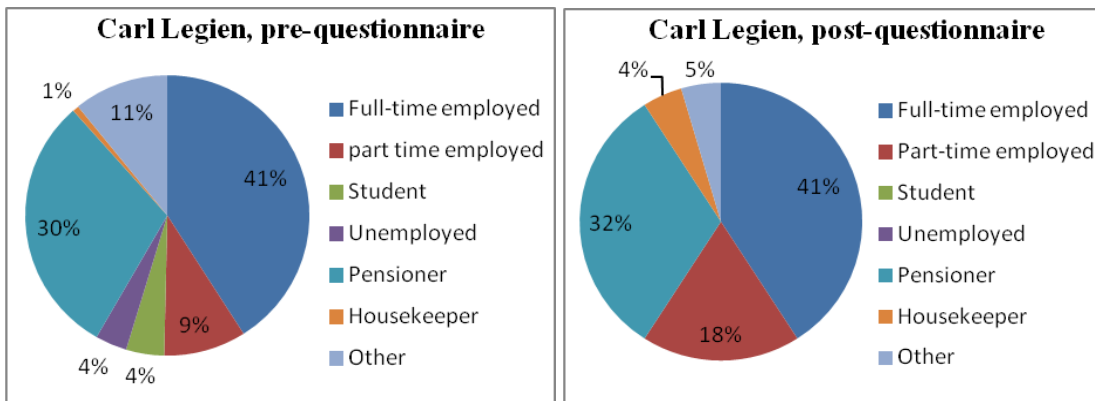
The occupational profile of the respondents in both studies and both questionnaire rounds is illustrated in Figures 5.3 and 5.4.



**Figure 5.3** Respondents' occupation in the Britz Study.

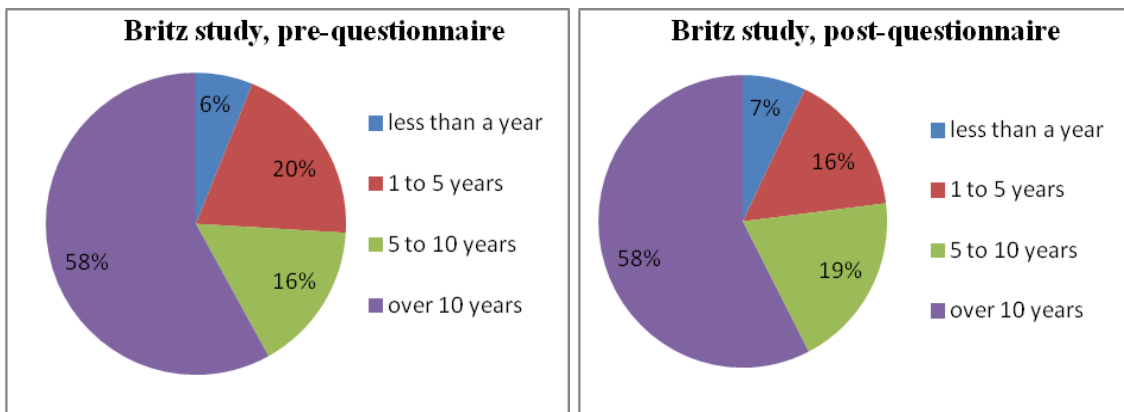
In the Britz Study the pensioners constitute the main group of respondents and are represented by 38% and 47% in the first and second round of questionnaires, respectively, followed by full-time employees represented by 27% in the first round of questionnaires and by 18% in the second. The category “other” comprises mainly self-employed people and civil servants. In both questionnaire rounds, the occupational groups “students”, “unemployed” and “housekeeper” constitute the smallest part of the respondents which when combined does not exceed 10%.

Unlike in the Britz Study, the two main occupational groups in the Carl Legien Study are pensioners and full-time employees (see Figure 5.4). Whereas the proportion of full-time employed respondents represented by 41% is much bigger than in the Britz Study, it remains constant over both questionnaire rounds. The proportion of pensioners also remains relatively constant over the whole study, represented by 30% in the first round and 32% in the second. Similar to the Britz Study the category “other” mainly includes self-employed people and civil servants. Students, unemployed and housekeepers are represented in small numbers.



**Figure 5.4** Respondents' occupation in the Carl Legien Study.

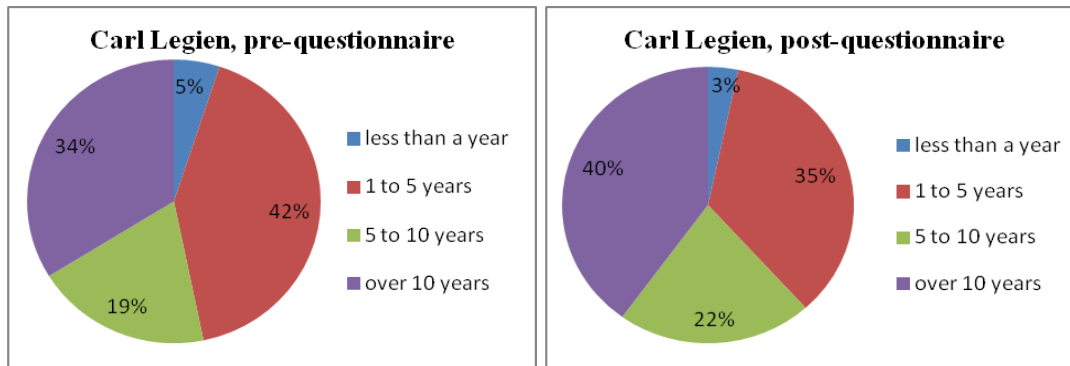
For this research it was also important to determine how long people had lived in the estate in order to analyse the potential differences in the answers between “old” inhabitants, and those who had lived in the estates for a comparatively shorter period. Figure 5.5 clearly illustrates that the biggest group that participated in the Britz Study consists of those who had lived in the estate over 10 years (represented by 58% in both survey rounds). Because no significant difference was noticed in the answers of the respondents who had lived in the estate longer than 10 years, a more detailed breakdown of this group in the second round of questionnaires was not seen as necessary.



**Figure 5.5** Representation of the respondents according to their living period in the estate, the Britz Study.

In the Carl Legien Study the respondents are distributed more evenly than in the Britz Study according to their period of living in the estate (see Figure 5.6). In the first round of questionnaires the respondents who had lived in the estate for one to five years constitute the biggest group (42%), and are followed by the respondents who had lived more than ten years in the estate (34%), and those living five to ten years (19%). In the second round of surveys, the “older” inhabitants constituted the biggest group of

respondents (40%), followed by respondents who had lived between one and five years (35%) and by those living between five to ten years (22%).



**Figure 5.6** Representation of the respondents according to their living period in the estate, the Carl Legien Study.

In both studies the group of respondents who had lived in the estate for less than a year is the smallest, and with maximum of 7%, cannot be considered representative for making any further separate comparisons. Therefore this group is in some instances combined with another adjacent group (1 to 5 years) in order to make the comparison of the results possible<sup>22</sup>.

### 5.5.2 Evaluation of external factors, pre-questionnaire

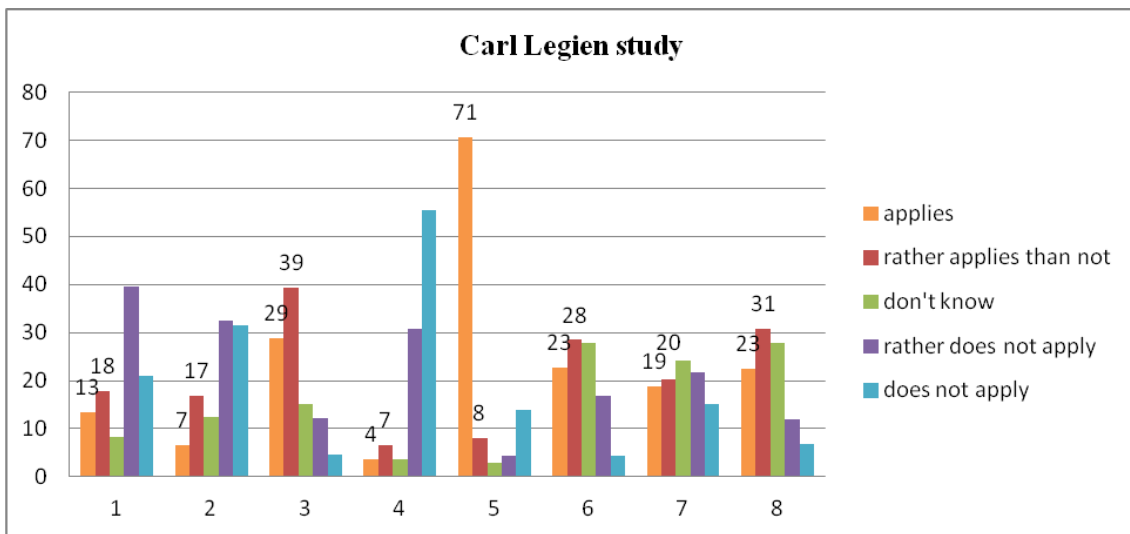
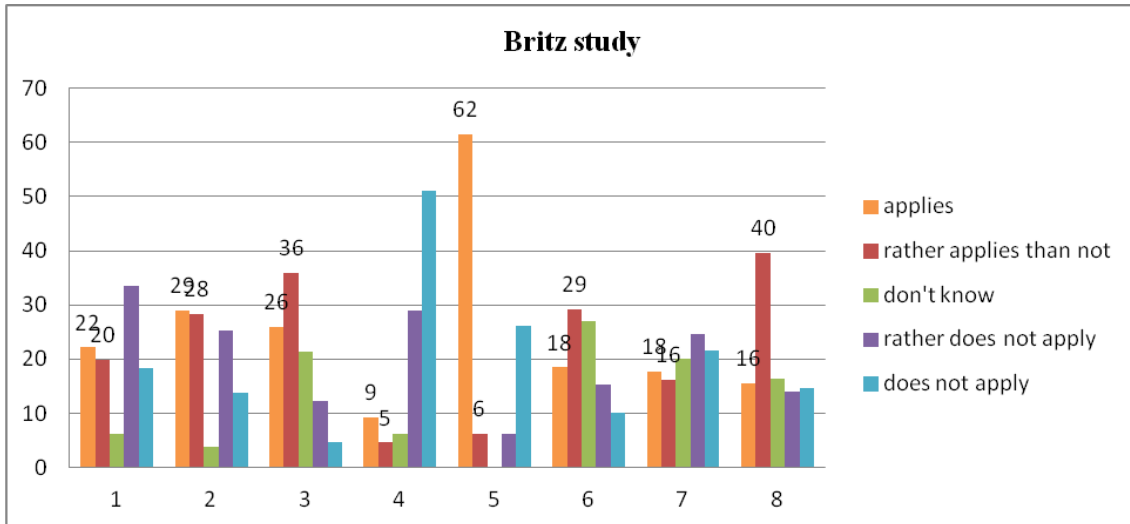
In both studies, a high level of awareness about the World Heritage Status of the estates was indicated. In the Britz Study all the respondents knew that the estate belonged to a World Heritage Site, and in the Carl Legien Study only 5% of the respondents were not aware of the WHS status.

Some of the consequences which the WHS status brings with it (e.g. increase in tourist visits, stricter application of preservation regulations), and the attitudes of respondents to them, were analysed with the help of Question 7. The respondents were asked to select to which degree certain statements applied to them or not. The answers of the respondents from both studies are presented in Figure 5.7.

For the majority of respondents, the WHS status did not have an influence on the choice of the place of residence, nor does it increase its attractiveness for living (Statements 1 and 5). This can be explained by the fact that the majority of inhabitants already were living at the estates by the time they became a part of the World Heritage List in 2008. Nevertheless, 42% (combined result of the answers on categories “applies” and “rather applies than not”) of the respondents in the Britz Study and 31% in the Carl Legien Study find the estate with the WHS status attractive for living. Moreover 26% in the

<sup>22</sup> The cases in which the answers of two groups are put together are explicitly indicated in the evaluation.

Britz Study and 14% in the Carl Legien Study selected “does not apply” in the fifth statement (“The WHS status was not decisive in the selection of the place of residence”), which could be interpreted that this group of respondents was influenced by the WHS status in their selection of the place of residence.



1. An estate with a WHS status is more attractive for me to live in
2. I am often irritated by the many preservation regulations
3. I would like to contribute to the preservation of the estate and its significance
4. I sometimes find the tourists in the estate disturbing
5. The WHS status was not decisive in the selection of the place of residence
6. I look positively on tourists in the estate
7. As just one person I cannot contribute to the preservation of the estate and its significance
8. I find the preservation regulations reasonable and implement them

**Figure 5.7** Attitudes towards certain issues connected with the WHS status

When it comes to the preservation regulations, one might notice from the answers of the respondents on Statements 2 and 8 that almost a third of the respondents (29%) in the Britz Study feel strongly irritated by the preservation regulations in the estate. Combined with the amount of respondents who feel rather irritated than not, this number adds up to 57%. On the contrary, in the Carl Legien Study only 7% of respondents feel strongly irritated by the preservation regulations, and 17% of those who state that they are irritated. This combined difference of 33% between both studies can be explained by the fact that the Carl Legien estate consists of apartment buildings only, which are not privately owned and which are managed, and thus refurbished, in accordance with the preservation regulation by the managing organisation, and not by the tenants. The Britz estate, on the contrary, consists not only of apartment buildings managed by an organisation, but also of houses which are mainly privately owned and whose owners have to comply with the preservation regulations in the maintenance of their houses. Nevertheless, despite being irritated with the preservation regulations, 56% of the respondents in the Britz Study (16% “applies” and 40% “rather applies than not”) still find such preservation regulations reasonable and apply them. Unfortunately, from the questionnaires, it is not clear whether such answers come from owners of the houses or from tenants. Similarly in the Carl Legien Study, 54% of respondents (23% “applies” and 31% “rather applies than not”) find the preservation regulations reasonable.

Only a small percentage of respondents in both studies (combined value of 14% in the Britz Study and 11% in the Carl Legien Study) find tourists in the estate disturbing (Statement 4). This can be explained mainly by the fact that both estates are situated away from the main tourist routes in Berlin, and since inscription onto the World Heritage List, they have not experienced a great increase in tourist visitations. Most tourists come to the estates as a part of a guided tour. The number of such tours throughout the year is not numerous and thus does not disturb the inhabitants of the estates. Therefore a positive attitude of the inhabitants to the tourists in the estate is indicated (Statement 6) – 18% and 29% (on categories “applies” and “rather applies than not”, respectively) of the respondents in the Britz Study and 23% and 28% in the Carl Legien Study look positively on the presence of tourists in the estate.

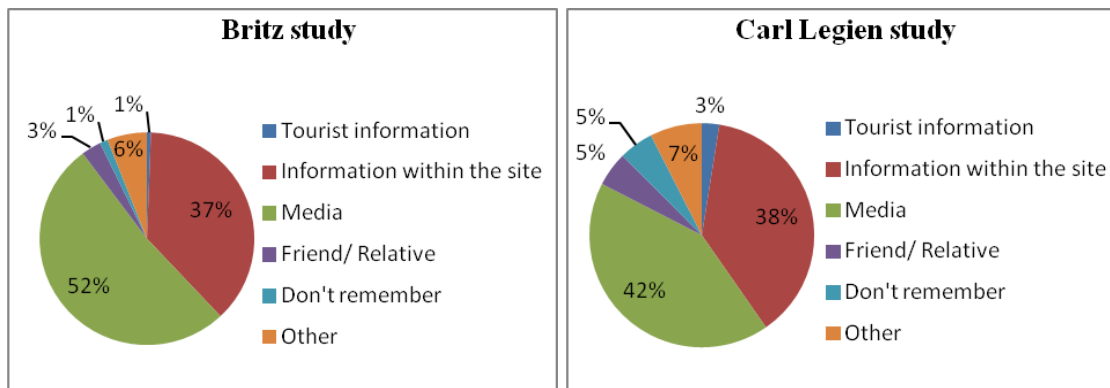
The answers to Statements 3 and 7 indicate that the majority of the respondents in both studies would like to contribute to the preservation of the estates and their significance (see Figure 5.7. with answers to Statement 3). At the same time, 35% (combined value of “applies” and “rather applies than not”) of respondents in the Britz Study and 39% in the Carl Legien Study feel that they cannot contribute to the preservation of the estate and its significance as an individual.

The average respondent in both studies (based on the results illustrated in Figure 5.7) can be described as having a positive attitude towards the WHS status; being rather irritated by the preservation regulations (more in the Britz Study than in the Carl Legien Study), but finding the regulations reasonable and implementing them; not being



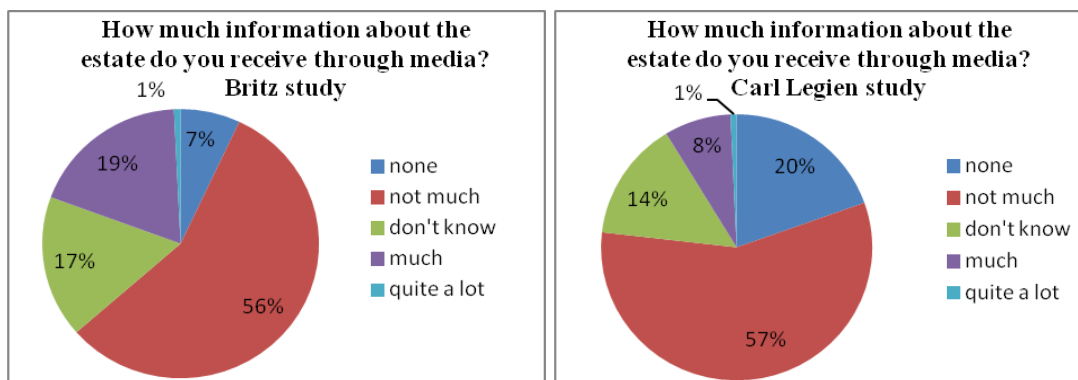
disturbed by the tourists in the estate, and strongly willing to contribute to the preservation of the estate and its significance; but not being sure that as an individual he/she can succeed in that. Based on this average positive profile of the respondents, one may expect that the experimental leaflet will be positively accepted and will have good prerequisites to produce anticipated effects on the respondents.

Results illustrated in Figure 5.8 indicate that the two main sources for the dissemination of the information about the WHS status are information provided within the site and the media.



**Figure 5.8** Information sources about the WHS status of the estates.

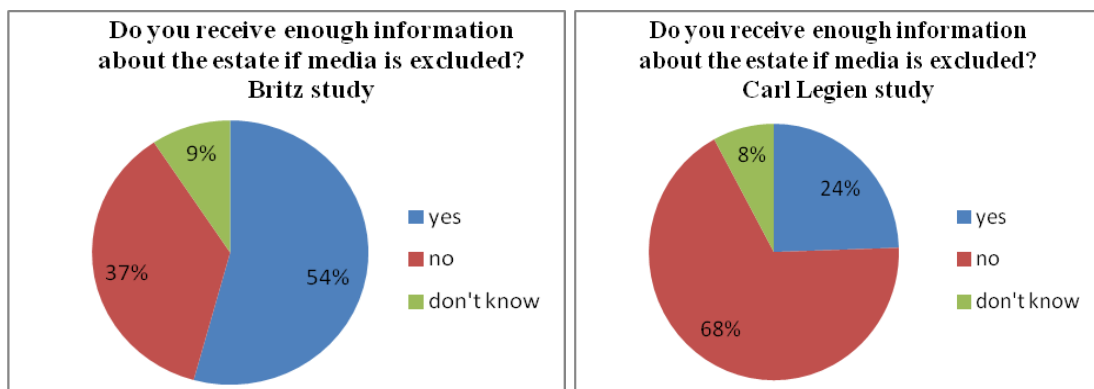
Because the media is one of the external factors that could influence the results of the study as an information source about the estate and its aspects, Question 5 of the pre-questionnaire meant to evaluate the amount of information about the estate inhabitants receive through media. As illustrated in Figure 5.9, 63% of the respondents in Britz Study and 77% in the Carl Legien Study indicated that they receive little or no information about the estate through media. Even though the media was one of the main sources for announcing the WHS status, its further role for communicating information about the history and significance of the estate is seen by many as insufficient.



**Figure 5.9** Evaluation of the inhabitants on the amount of information about the estate in the media.

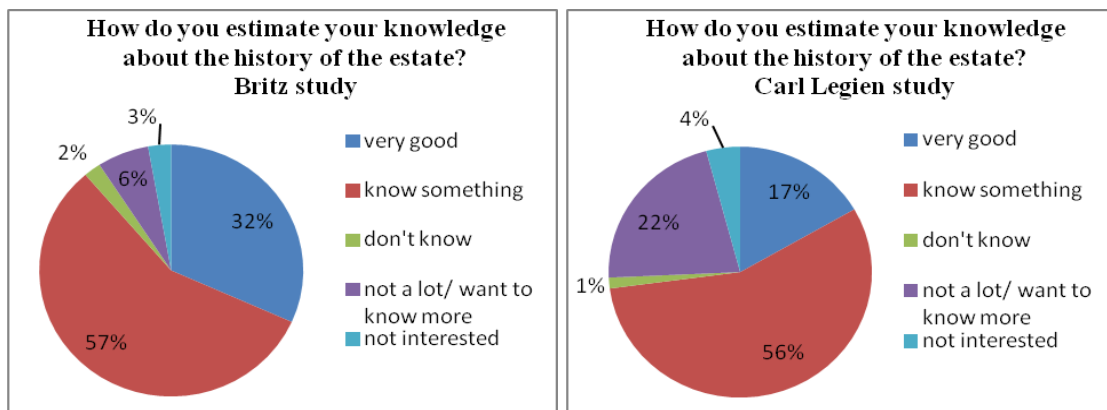
Because only 20% (combined value of “much” and “quite a lot”) of the respondents in the Britz Study and 9% in the Carl Legien Study indicated that they receive sufficient amount of information about the estate from the media, it is possible to conclude that the information provided in the media (if such information should be provided during the study) will not have a significant influence on the results. Moreover, the time between the distribution of the experimental leaflets and the second questionnaire was limited to one week. To the best knowledge of the author of the study, no information on the history or significance of the estate was provided within either the media or by preservation authorities at the estates in that period of time which could have influenced the results of the study.

When asked whether the respondents think they receive enough information about the estate if the media is not taken into account, 53% of the respondents in the Britz Study and only 24% in the Carl Legien Study answered with “yes” (see Figure 5.10). It is not obvious from the question and the answers where such information may come from, but if the information sources illustrated in Figure 5.8 are taken into consideration, which indicated information within the estate as the second main source about its WHS status, such information could have been provided at both estates by management organisations and conservation officers during Heritage Days or information events. Also the existing charity association “Freunde und Förderer der Hufeisensiedlung” in the Britz estate conducts extensive work on providing information about the estate and its history, which might explain why half of the respondents in the Britz Study feel well-informed, even though no communication or interpretation provision exist at the site at the moment. The Wohnstadt Carl Legien does not have an association which works on the preservation of the site and communication of its significance to the inhabitants, as in the Britz estate, which could explain the difference in the answers to that question in both studies.



**Figure 5.10** Respondents distribution based on the amount of information they receive about the estate without the media

The respondents self-evaluation on their awareness about the history and the significant of the estate showed that 32% of them in the Britz Study know the history of the estate very well, whereas only 17% make the same statement in the Carl Legien Study (see Figure 5.11). Only a small number of inhabitants (7%) in the Britz Study expressed the wish to know more about the history and significance of the estate, in contrast 22% felt the same in the Carl Legien Study. These results are consistent with the results illustrated in Figure 5.10, where the respondents in the Britz Study already feel well-informed about the history and the significance of the estate, thus considerably fewer feel a need to know more.

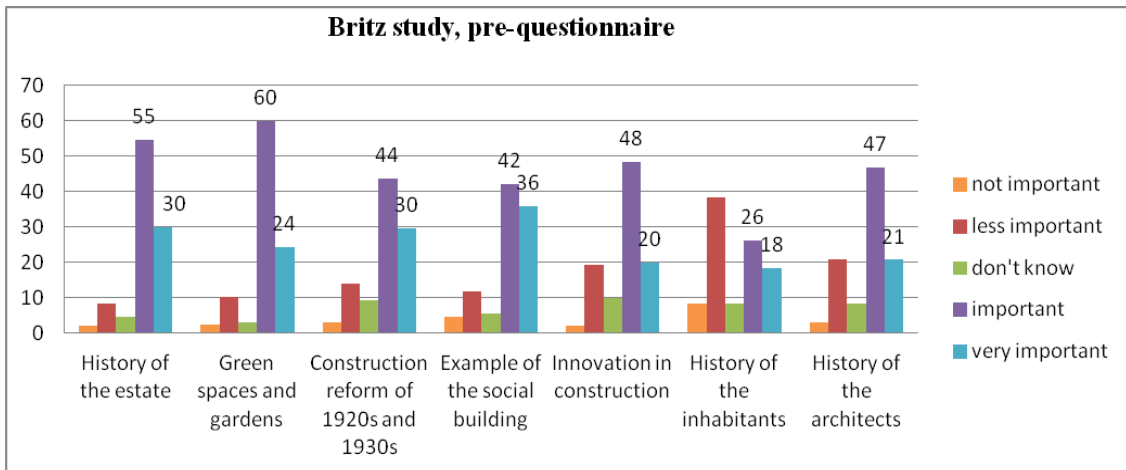


**Figure 5.11** Self-evaluation of the inhabitants on their knowledge about the history of the estate.

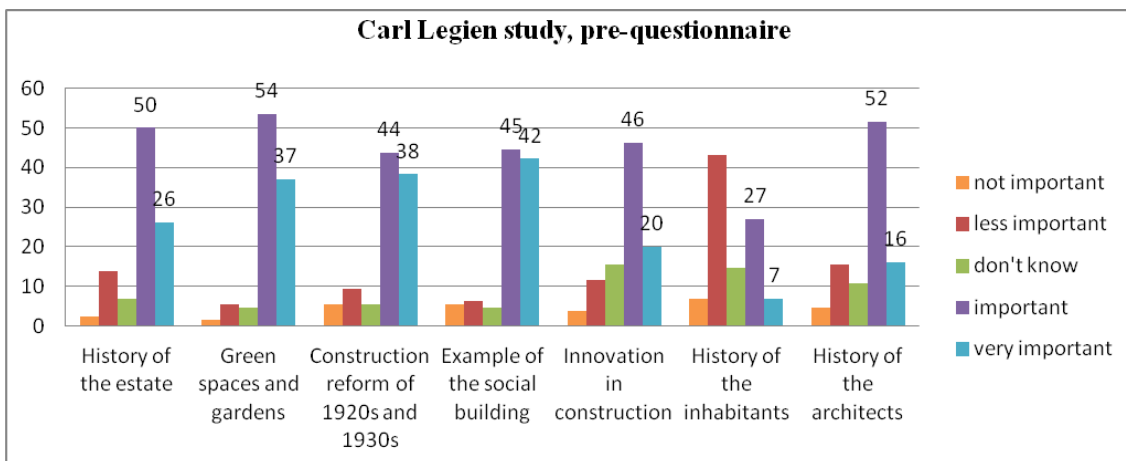
### 5.5.3 Evaluation of the attitude changes

The inhabitants of the estates were asked to evaluate seven aspects of the estate significance according to the degree of their importance to them. At the moment, the Berlin Modernism Housing Estates World Heritage Site does not have clearly defined values for the estates, therefore the aspects of the site significance were formulated based on the nomination documentation and justification for inscription criteria. Figures 5.12 and 5.13 clearly show that overall the respondents have a very positive attitude to the various aspects of the estate in both studies. Apart from the aspect “history of the inhabitants”, all the other aspects were rated as important or very important by the majority of the respondents. Many respondents – 38% in the Britz Study and 43% in the Carl Legien Study – perceive the personal histories of the estate inhabitants as less important. That might be explained by the fact that, on the one hand, as inhabitants of the estate they are not interested in the personal stories of their neighbours, and, on the other hand, they might wish to preserve their private sphere and not being displayed as a museum object. The results of this first reason are supported by the second attitude evaluation where respondents were asked to evaluate the same aspects of the estate

which they feel are important for presenting to tourists (see Appendix 6). That evaluation shows that fewer respondents in both studies (a decrease of 9% in the Britz Study and by 11% in the Carl Legien Study) have evaluated the aspect “history of the inhabitants” as “less important”. It also shows that some respondents consider that the stories of the inhabitants might be interesting for the tourists.



**Figure 5.12** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, the Britz Study (in %).



**Figure 5.13** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, the Carl Legien Study (in %)

The overall comparison between the two evaluations (for themselves and for the tourists) shows that the respondents evaluate the aspects of the estate presented to the tourists as the most important. The indicated increase in the degree of importance is up to 9% on some aspects in the Britz Study, and even up to 15% in the Carl Legien Study (compare Figures 5.12, 5.13 and Appendix 6). In the Britz Study, the aspect which is

evaluated as more important for the tourists is “history of the architects” (an increase of 9% on the scale “important”) and in the Carl Legien Study it is the same aspect and also “history of the estate” (an increase of 13% and 15%, respectively, on the “very important” scale). These results also confirm that the respondents have a very positive attitude not only towards the various aspects of the estate, but to the tourists as well, as residents wish the significance of the estates to be explained to them.

The second evaluation of the important aspects for tourists meant to analyse whether the respondents have a different perception of the site for themselves, and for others. Such a difference could be positive as well as negative. The results show that in both studies the aspects are evaluated even more positive if they have to be presented to tourists. This also correlates with the results illustrated in Figure 5.7, which show an overall positive attitude towards tourists, as the sites are not yet threatened by mass tourism and the inhabitants are not irritated by their presence. In the following sections, the attitude changes to the aspects of the estates as the respondents perceive them for themselves will be analysed in greater detail.

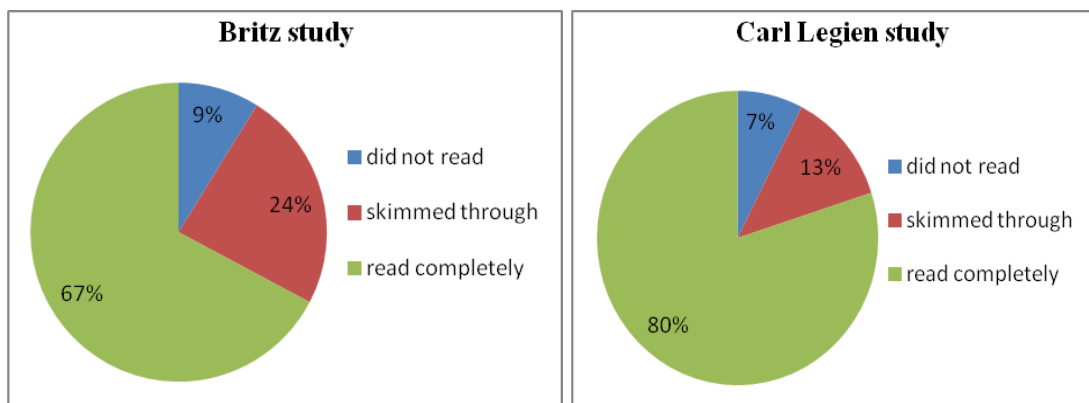
In the Britz Study, such aspects as “history of the estate” and “green spaces and gardens” are perceived by more than half of the respondents as important (55% and 60%, respectively) and by 30% and 24%, respectively, as “very important” (see Figure 5.12). Moreover, such aspects as “construction reform of 1920s and 1930s” and “example of the social building” were evaluated by a third of respondents as “very important” (30% and 36%, respectively).

In the Carl Legien Study, such aspects as “gardens and green spaces”, “construction reform” and “example of the social building” were evaluated as even more important than in the Britz Study (represented by 37%, 38% and 42%, respectively, on the “very important” scale).

The aspect of “green spaces and gardens” receives great prominence as important or very important in both studies, which allows to conclude that despite the existing opinion that this aspect is less understood and valued by the respondents, it receives quite a high placement in their evaluation. On the one hand, this might be explained by the fact that the importance inhabitants attach to this aspect is associated with the quality of life rather than its importance as a part of a heritage site. On the other hand, this might also be explained by the greater salience of the issue of green spaces in the press over the years. For example, the works on the restoration of the public green spaces in the Britz estate, which began in early spring 2011 and involved cutting down many trees and planting new ones, received extensive media coverage. The restoration of green spaces in the Wohnstadt Carl Legien in 2004 also received extensive media coverage. Despite the fact that the aspect of “green spaces and gardens” was already evaluated by the inhabitants as important, it was decided to continue with the study and to evaluate whether a well-developed interpretive leaflet could still produce an attitude change, even though the attitudes were already highly positive.

In the Britz Study an experimental leaflet presented the aspects of green spaces and two related aspects, such as “construction reform 1920s and 1930s” and “example of the social building” (see the themes developed for the leaflet discussed in Chapter 5.2). In the Carl Legien Study the scope of the leaflet was much smaller and only one aspect of “green spaces” was presented. A week after the leaflets were distributed amongst the test subjects, another questionnaire was conducted to evaluate whether the leaflet had produced any change in the attitudes towards the presented aspects.

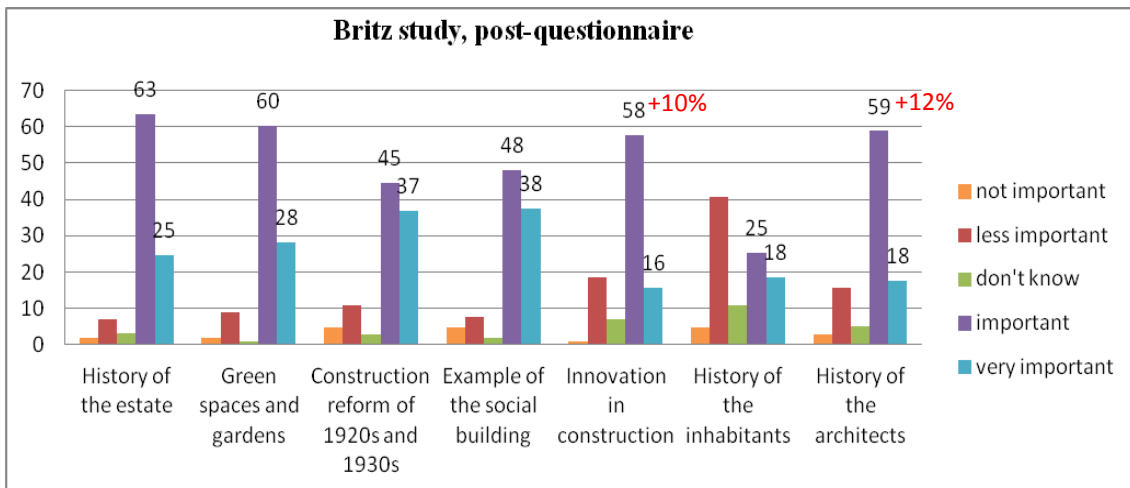
Logically for the leaflet to produce any effects, it had to be read first. 9% of the respondents in the Britz Study and 7% of the respondents in the Carl Legien Study did not read the distributed leaflet (see Figure 5.14). From the answers it was not possible to interpret whether that was connected with the fact that they did not receive the leaflet, or if the leaflet did not appeal to them. From the other respondents in the Britz Study, 67% read the leaflet completely, whereas in the Carl Legien Study this number reached 80%. The difference in the amount of respondents who read the leaflet may be explained by the fact that the leaflet for the Carl Legien Study was much smaller and easier to read completely. The respondents who did not read the leaflet were excluded from further evaluation of the results, as the aim of the study was to evaluate the changes a leaflet have or might have produced.



**Figure 5.14** Respondents distribution depending on whether they read the leaflet or not.

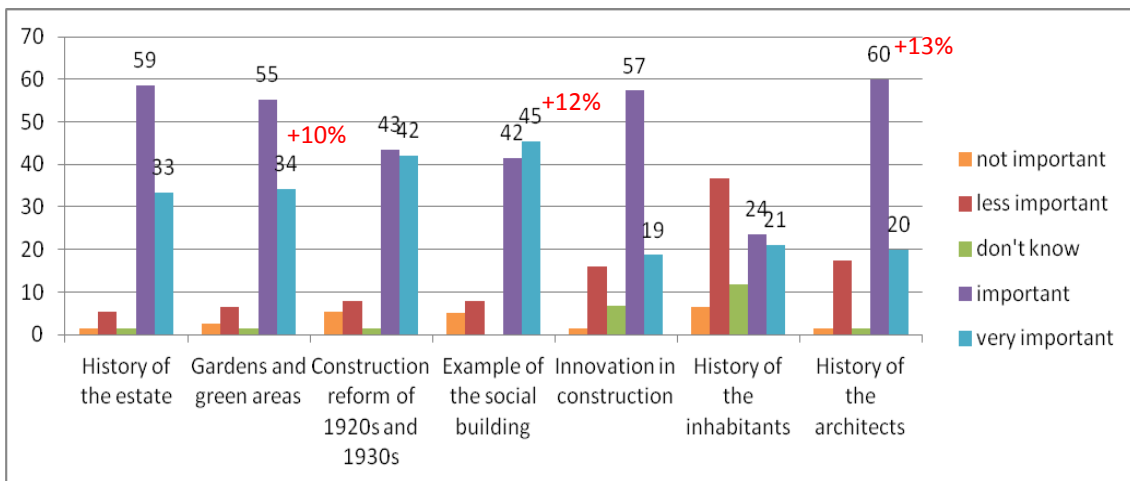
### *The Britz Study*

The overall result of the evaluation from all respondents who read or skimmed through the leaflet in the Britz Study is illustrated in Figure 5.15. The red numbers indicate the significant changes in attitudes in comparison to the first round of questionnaires. From Figure 5.15 it is obvious that only the aspects “innovation in construction” and “history of the architects” indicate significant changes in attitude by reaching a value of 10% and 12%, though these aspects were not targeted by the leaflet.



**Figure 5.15** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, combined value of the respondents who skimmed through and read the leaflet completely (in %).

The change in the attitudes towards the target aspects becomes different if one compares the results of the respondents who read the leaflet completely, and eliminate the answers of those who simply skimmed the leaflet (see Figure 5.16). It is obvious that two out of the three tested aspects – “gardens and green spaces”, “construction reform 1920s and 1930s” and “example of social building” – show a significant change in attitudes when the respondents rank them as “very important” (increase of 10% in the aspect of “green spaces” and by 12% in “construction reform”).



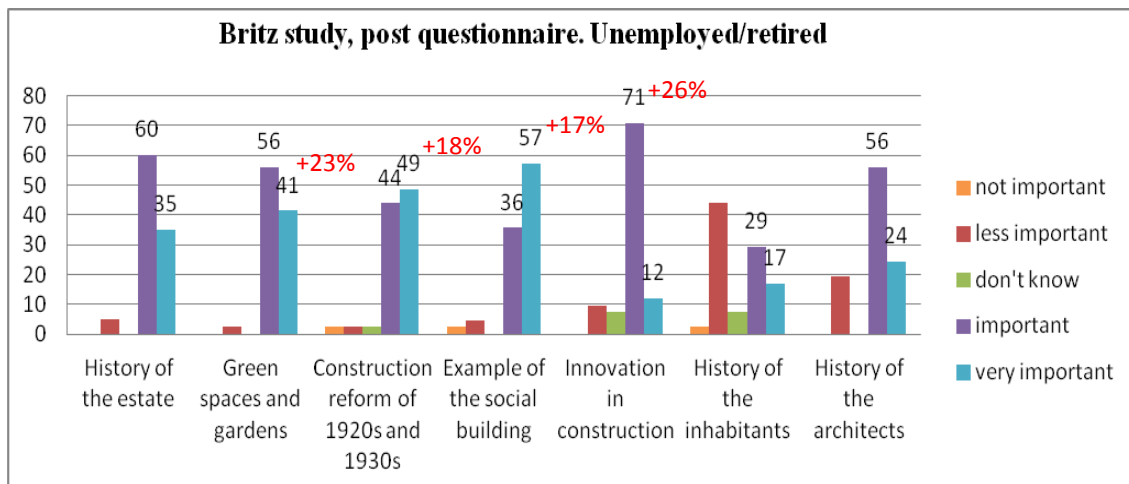
**Figure 5.16** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, values of the respondents who read the leaflet completely (in %).

Additionally, the aspect “history of the architects” also shows significant change in the scale “important” by indicating an increase of 13%. This might be explained by the use of citations from the architects in the leaflet, which might have shown the respondents

the importance of the architects' perceptions towards the estates. And even though it was not the main aim in the construction of the leaflet, it still produced a significant change in this aspect as well.

This attitude change becomes even more prominent if one compares the results of the two questionnaires on the occupational basis of the respondents. All the respondents in both questionnaire rounds were grouped into three main categories: full-time employed, part-time employed and unemployed/retired. The category *full-time employed* consisted of the respondents who were full-time employed, self-employed and civil servants. The group *part-time employed* was constituted out of part-time employed and students, whereas to *unemployed/retired* included unemployed, pensioners and housekeepers. The answers in the category "other", which did not specifically identify the type of occupation, were not taken into account in the evaluation.

The main attitude changes took place in the category of *unemployed/retired* (see Figure 5.17, with significant changes indicated in red)<sup>23</sup>. As is clear from Figure 5.18, significant changes took place in all three target aspects on the scale of "very important". Additionally, a significant change also occurred in the category "innovation in construction" on the scale "important". This could be explained by the fact that some information in the leaflet which presented the changes that took place, due to the construction reform, in the 1920s and 1930s could be considered by many respondents also as an innovation in construction, which in a way it was.



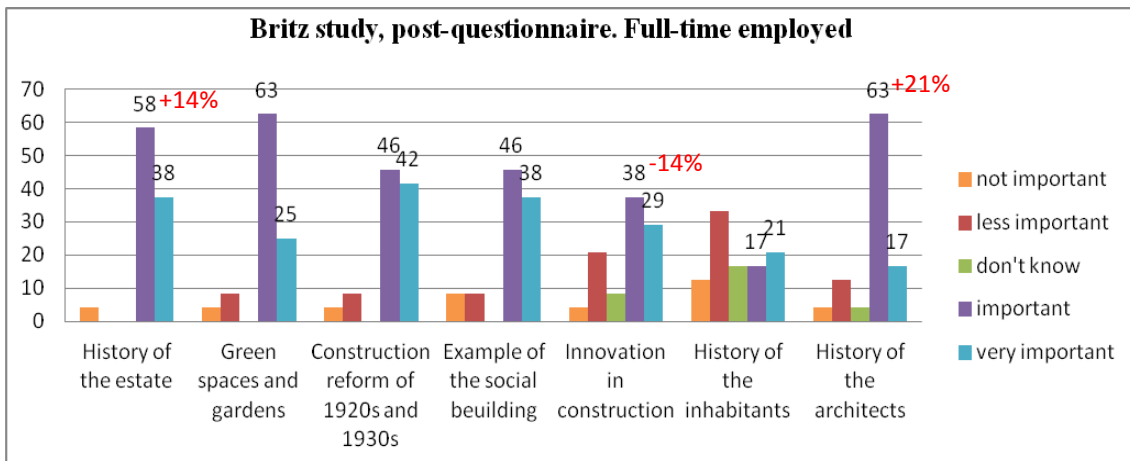
**Figure 5.17** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, category *unemployed/retired* (in %)

The group of *part-time employed* with only 10 responses was not statistically representative and could not be included in the evaluation.

<sup>23</sup> The attitudes of the respondents to various aspects of the site significance according to their occupational status in the first round of questionnaires is presented in Appendix 7.



In the group of *full-time employed*, significant changes took place in the categories of “history of the estate” (increase of 14% on the “important” scale), “history of the architects” (increase of 21% on the “important” scale) and in the category “innovation in construction” (decrease of 14% on the “important” scale) (see Figure 5.18 with significant changes indicated in red). There were no significant changes in any of the targeted aspects.



**Figure 5.18** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, category *full-time employed* (in %).

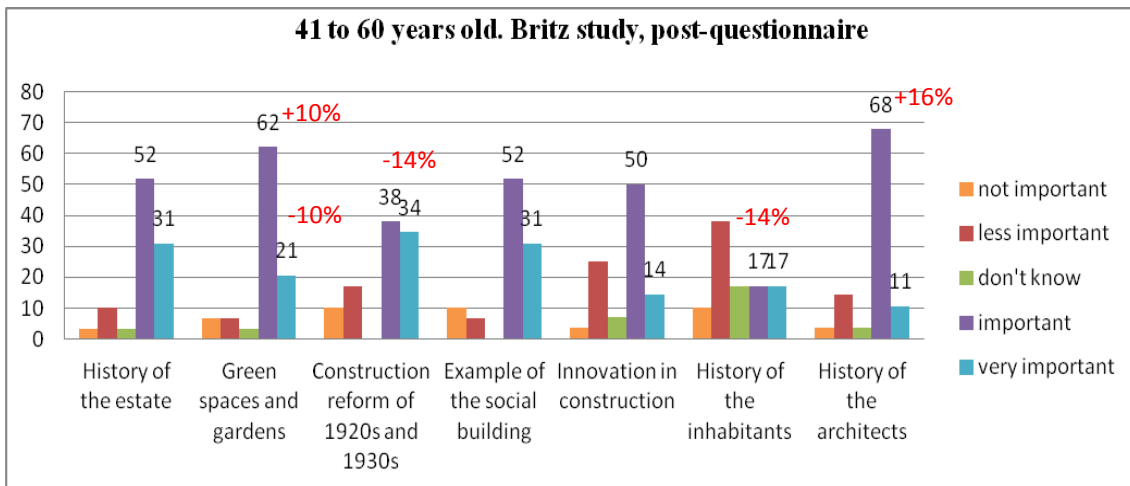
Significant changes in all the three target aspects in the group of *unemployed/retired*, and no changes in the group of *full-time employed*, cannot necessarily be explained by the occupational status of the respondents, but rather their age group as the majority of the respondents in the category *unemployed/retired* are older than 61. Therefore, the questionnaire results have also been evaluated according to the age groups of the respondents.

In order to produce more statistically relevant data (due to the small sampling size), the respondents, who initially were grouped into ten-year spans, were grouped into a 20-year span. This also allowed comparing the results with the results in occupational status<sup>24</sup>. In the Britz Study, the comparison of the age group between 20 to 40 years was not possible due to a small amount of respondents in the second round of questionnaires (8 respondents in total). In the age group 41 to 60 years, the significant change occurred in categories “gardens and green spaces”, “construction reform”, “history of the inhabitants” and history of the architects (see Figure 5.19).

In the category “gardens and green spaces” the distribution of importance of this aspects was moved more to the scale “important” (by 10 %), and reduced by the same percentage in the scale “very important” in comparison to the first round of questionnaires. In the category “construction reform”, a decrease of 14% on the “important” scale can be identified, and a similar decrease can be identified in the

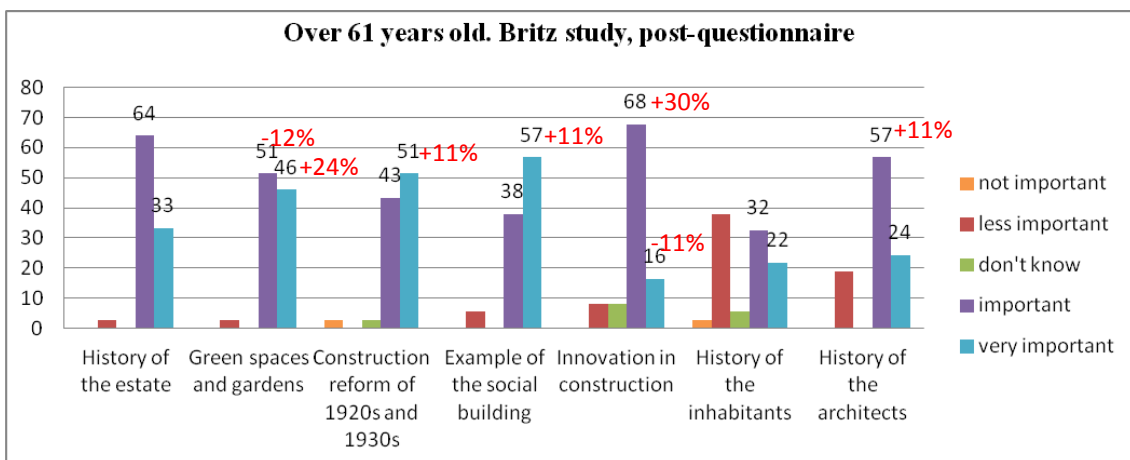
<sup>24</sup> The results of the first questionnaire round according to the age group are shown in Appendix 8.

category “history of the inhabitants”. In the category “history of the architects”, an increase of 16% can be indicated on the scale “important”. Overall these changes might indicate that the developed leaflet was not particularly influential for this age group, as it produced a slightly negative effect. These results are also consistent with the results in the category *full-time employed*, where no significant changes were indicated in the targeted aspects.



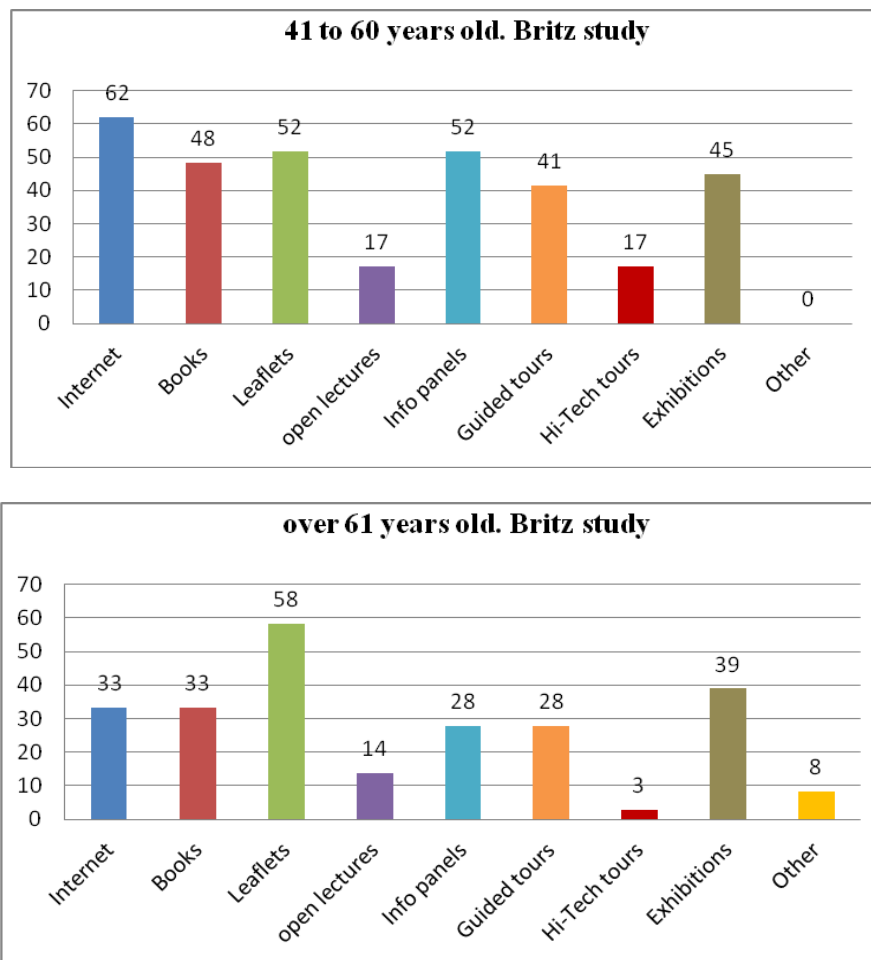
**Figure 5.19** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category *41 to 60 years old* (in %).

In the age group over 61 years, significant changes occurred in all three target aspects: “gardens and green spaces”, “construction reform” and “example of social building” with increases of 24%, 11% and 11%, respectively, on the scale “very important”. Additionally 30% of the respondents considered the aspect of “innovation in construction” more “important” if compared to the first questionnaire round, and similarly 11% of the respondent considered the “history of the architects” more important (see Figure 5.20).



**Figure 5.20** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category *over 61 years old* (in %).

It seems that the developed leaflet produced better effects with elderly respondents. The interpretive leaflet developed for the study meant to address a wider audience, as it was not possible to develop various interpretive activities for different target groups with the existing research budget and time frame. Apparently, the form and context of the leaflet was more appealing to the respondents in the age group *over 61 years old*, which might have induced them to read the information more carefully. Because the results of the attitude comparison in the age groups is more or less consistent with the results of the occupational groups, one may assume that the groups of *unemployed and retired* had more time to read the leaflet more carefully, which might have produced a stronger effect on the attitude change. Additionally, the form of the leaflet, its visual layout and the context, might have been more attractive for the older age group. This assumption is also confirmed by the results illustrated in Figure 5.21 where respondents were asked to indicate their preferred means of information presentation.



**Figure 5.21** Distribution of the preferred means of information presentation in various age groups (in %).

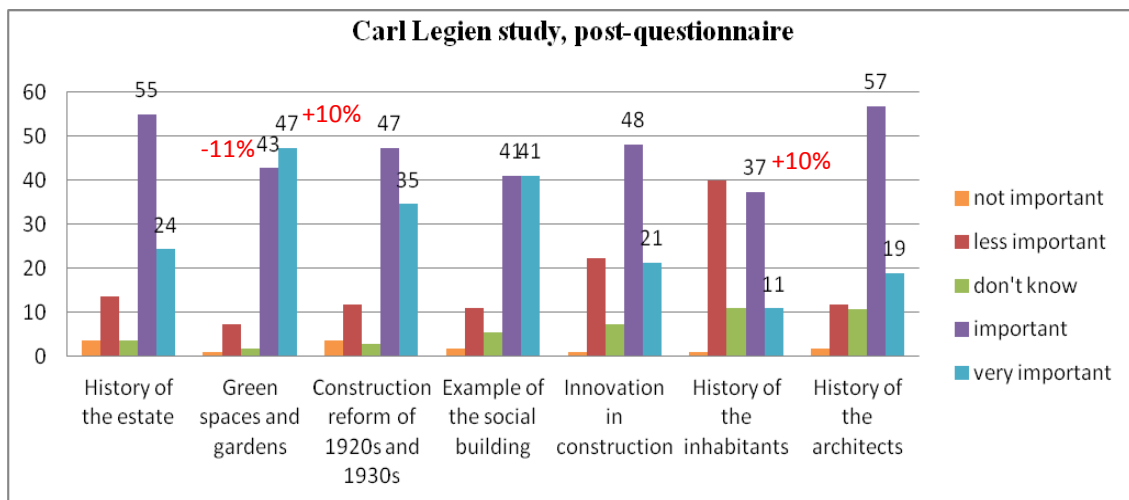
It is clear from Figure 5.21 that 52% of the respondents in the age group of *41 to 60 years old*, and 58% of the respondents in the age group *over 61 years old*, prefer leaflets

in learning more about various aspects of the site’s significance. However, if one compares these results to preferences in other types of media within the age group, it is obvious that in the age group *over 61 years old* this means of information presentation takes a leading position. Whereas in the age group of *41 to 60 years old*, it is only one of many preferred means, which is also preceded by internet presentations. Thus, both time availability for reading of the leaflet more carefully, which is connected with the occupational status of the respondents, as well as the attractiveness of the leaflet to a particular age group, are possible explanations for the received results. Nevertheless as the author is not currently aware of any studies conducted on the effects interpretive activities can produce on people of different age groups or occupational status, it is not possible to make any conclusive assumptions about the effects of the tested leaflet on these categories of respondents. Further research would be needed to find the explanations for the given results and produced effects in these categories.

The comparison of responses according to the length of living in the estate was not possible due to a small sampling size in three out of the four categories.

**The Carl Legien Study**

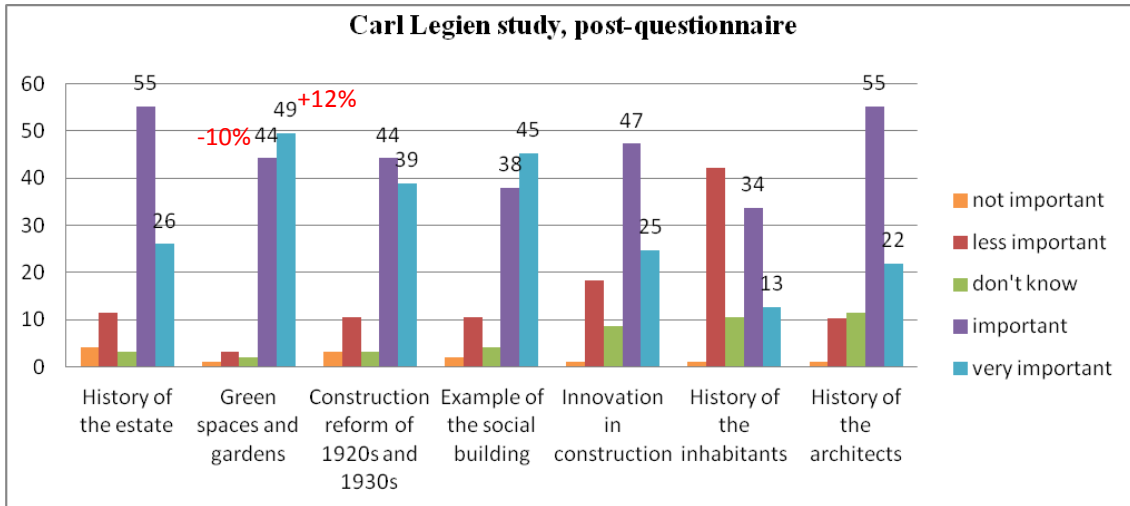
The overall result of the evaluation from all the respondents who read or skimmed through the leaflet in the Carl Legien Study is illustrated in Figure 5.22.



**Figure 5.22** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, combined value of the respondents who skimmed through and read the leaflet completely (in %).

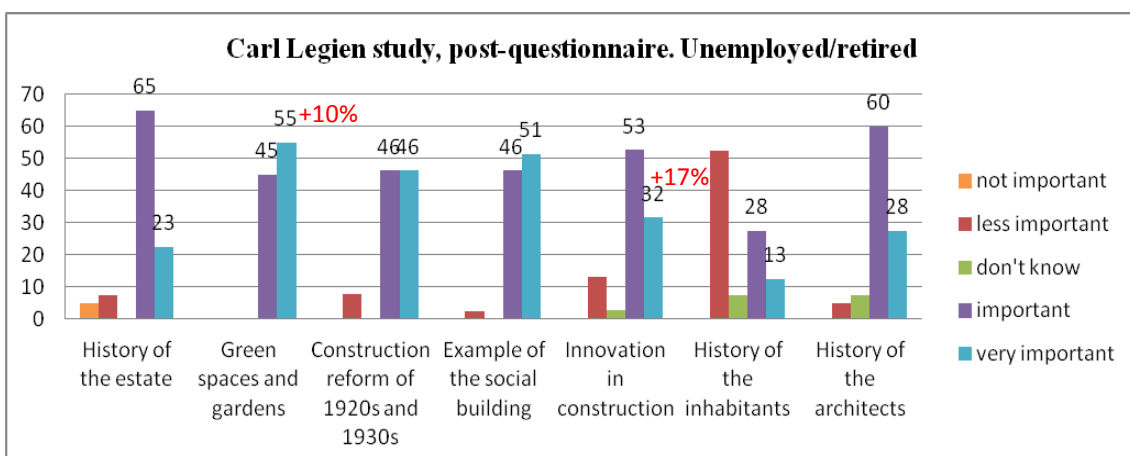
A significant change took place in the target category “gardens and green spaces”, where the attitude was shifted more to the scale “very important” (an increase of 10%), as well as in the category “history of the inhabitants”, with a shift of 10% in the scale “important”.

The result only slightly changes if the answers of the respondents who merely skimmed the leaflet are eliminated (see Figure 5.23). A significant change took place in the target aspect of the estate’s significance (which was presented in the leaflet), whereas in all the other aspects no significant changes occurred.



**Figure 5.23** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, values of the respondents who read the leaflet completely (in %).

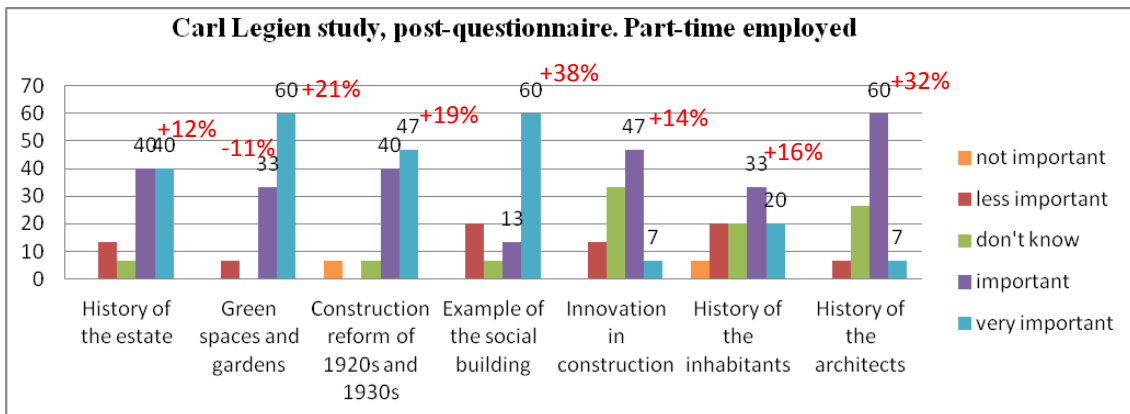
The attitude changes of the respondents according to their occupational status<sup>25</sup> are illustrated in Figures 5.24 to 5.26 (with significant changes indicated in red). From Figures 5.24 to 5.26 it is obvious that attitude changes in the target category “gardens and green spaces” took place in all the occupational groups, showing the most significant change in the group *part-time employed*, indicated by an increase of 21% on the scale “very important”.



**Figure 5.24** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category *unemployed/retired* (in %).

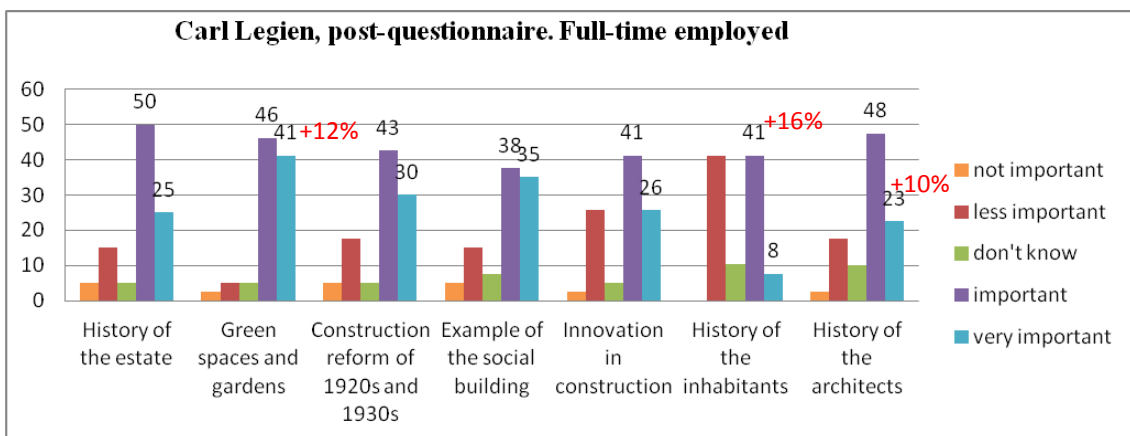
<sup>25</sup> The attitudes of the respondents to various aspects of the estate according to their occupational status in the first round of questionnaires is presented in Appendix 9.

In the group of *unemployed/retired*, a significant change also took place in the category “innovation in construction” (an increase of 17% in the scale “very important”, see Figure 5.24). Because the leaflet was making reference to the construction reforms of the 1920s and 1930s, it could have been perceived by some respondents as innovation in construction. Unfortunately the answers of the respondents do not allow for verification of this assumption, which could be done through further qualitative research.



**Figure 5.25** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category *part-time employed* (in %).

In the group *full-time employed*, significant changes also occurred in the categories “history of the inhabitants” and “history of the architects”, with an increase of 16% in the scale “important”, and an increase of 10% in the scale “very important”, respectively (see Figure 5.26).

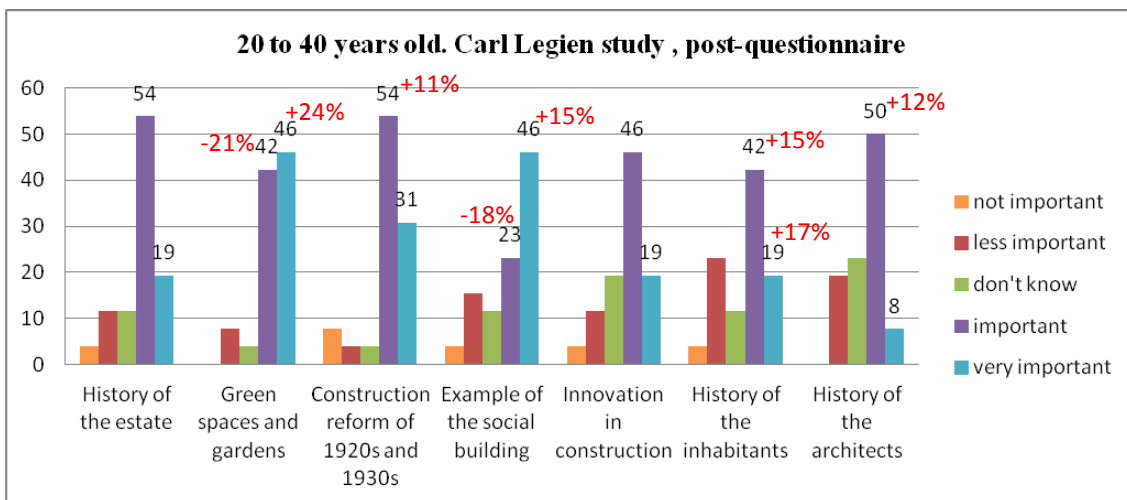


**Figure 5.26** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, category *full-time employed* (in %).

The group of *part-time employed* appears to have had the most significant changes in all the aspects of the estate significance (see Figure 5.25). Before any interpretation of the given data can be made, it would be useful to compare the results of the attitude changes

in the age groups as well, since the results may be consistent with the occupational categories similar to the Britz Study.

In the age group *21 to 40 years old*, which was more representative in the Carl Legien Study than in the Britz Study, a positive change can be inferred in several categories (see Figure 5.27). The target category “gardens and green spaces” shows an increase of 24% on the scale “very important”, and an increase of 11% to 15% in several other categories. The results are also consistent with the results of *part-time employed* respondents (see Figure 5.26), which can be explained by the fact that this occupational group mainly includes respondents under *40 years old*.



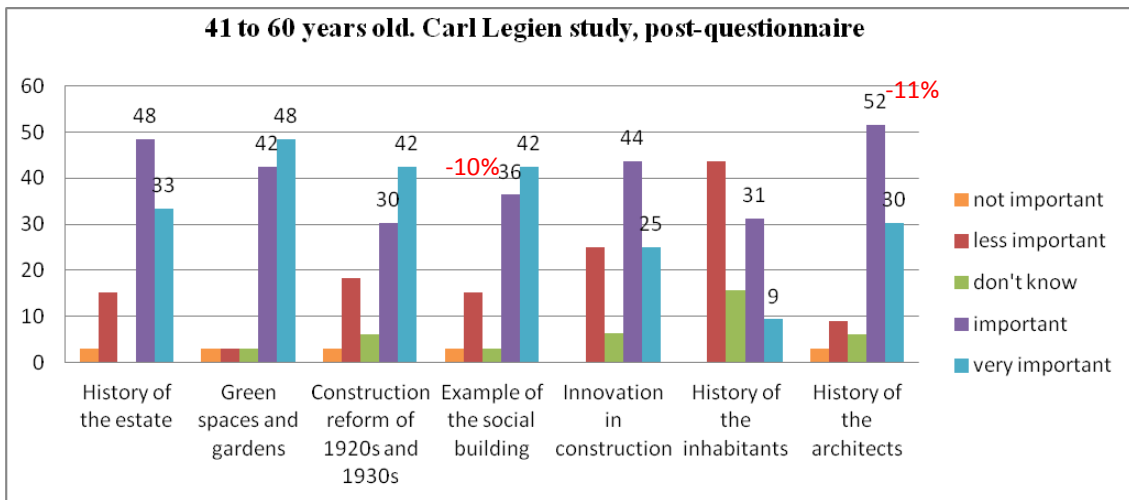
**Figure 5.27** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category *20 to 40 years old* (in %).

When comparing the results according to age groups, a similar negative tendency as in the Britz Study can be identified in the age group of 41 to 60 years old. This age group shows a slight decline of 10% and 11% in the categories “example of social building” and “history of the architects”, respectively, on the “important” scale (see Figure 5.28)<sup>26</sup>. Moreover it indicates no significant changes in the target aspect.

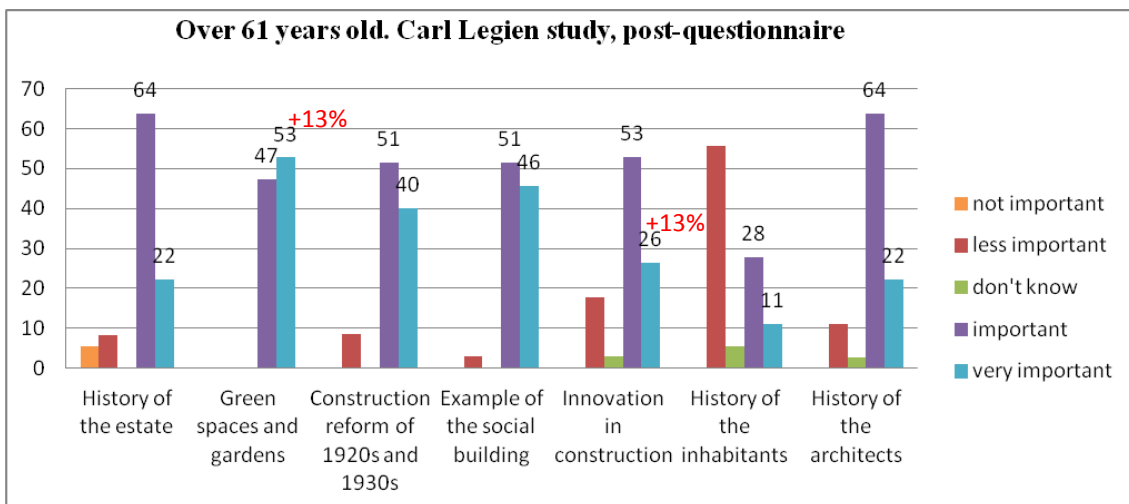
The age group *over 61 years old* indicated positive changes in the target category “gardens and green spaces”, characterised by a rise of 13% on the scale “very important”, and by 13% on the same scale in the category “innovation in construction” (see Figure 5.29).

These results are also consistent with the results of the respondents in the category *unemployed/retired* (see Figure 5.24).

<sup>26</sup> The attitudes of the respondents to the aspects of the estate according to the age groups in the first round of questionnaires is presented in Appendix 10.



**Figure 5.28** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category *41 to 60 years old* (in %).



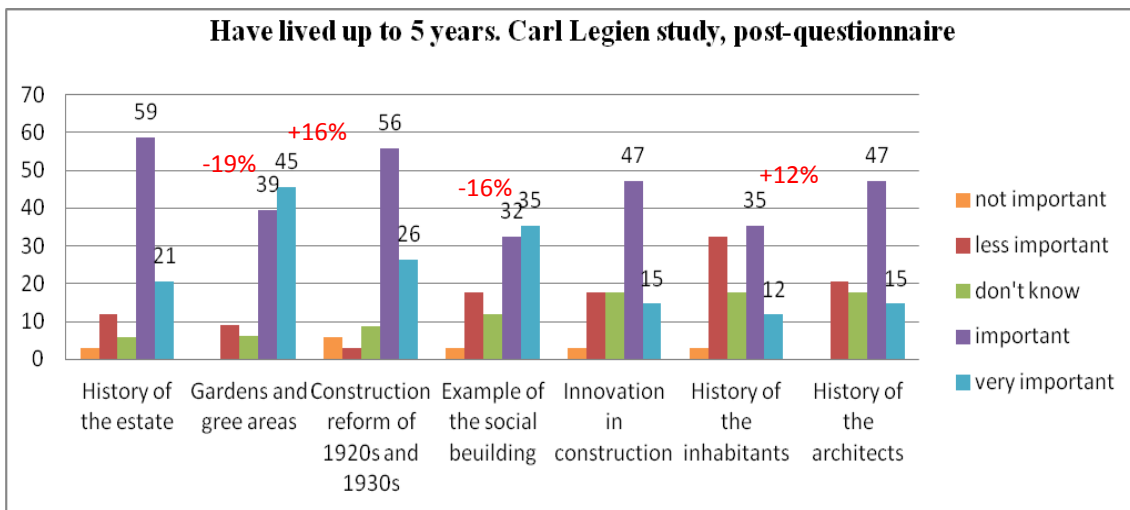
**Figure 5.29** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate, category *over 61 years old* (in %).

These results indicate that the leaflet had a positive effect on the age group *over 61 years old* similar to the Britz Study, but has produced even better results in the age group of *21 to 40 years old*. One possible explanation of these results could be that the younger generation was not yet able to accumulate great knowledge on the history of the estate, and as a result was more easily influenced by the information provided in the leaflet. This has increased positive attitudes not only to the targeted aspect, but on other aspects as well. Unfortunately it was not possible to compare the results of this age group in the Britz Study due to the small sampling size. The results of other age groups are also consistent with the results in the Britz Study, and therefore can be interpreted similarly: both occupational status and the age of respondents could offer an



explanation to the results, but without further qualitative research no solid assumptions can be made.

The comparison of the attitude changes according to the length of living<sup>27</sup> in the Carl Legien Study showed significant change in the target category of “gardens and green spaces” (an increase of 16% on the scale of “very important”), as well as the categories “example of social building” (a decrease of 16% on the scale “important”), and “history of the inhabitants” (an increase of 12% on the scale “important”) in the answers of the respondents who had lived in the estate for up to five years<sup>28</sup> (see Figure 5.30).

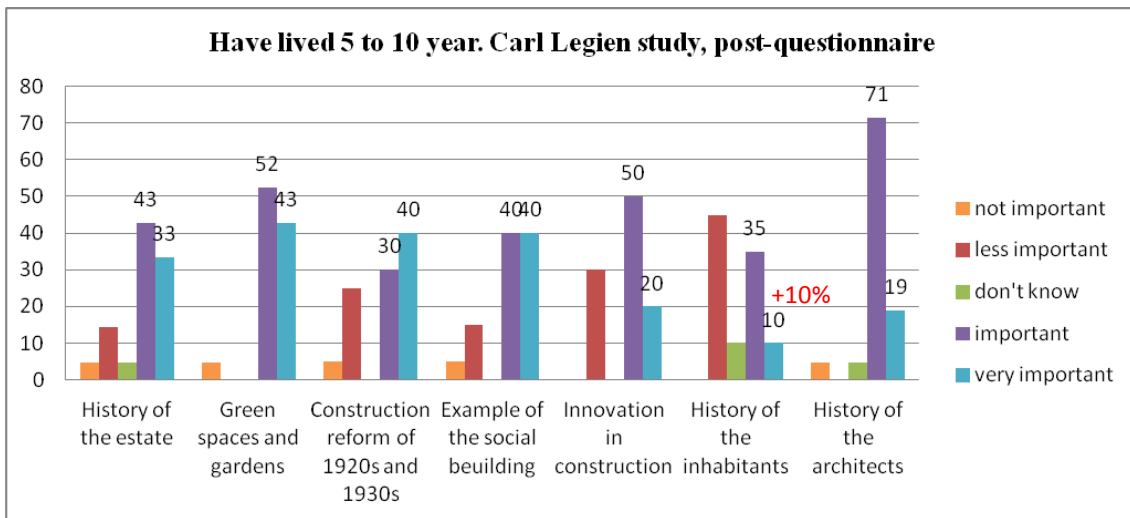


**Figure 5.30** Attitudes towards aspects of the estate significance, category *have lived up to 5 years in the estate* (in %).

In the answers of the respondents who have been living in the estate from five to ten years, no significant change in their attitudes can be identified, with the only exception being the 10% increase on the scale “very important” in the category “history of the inhabitants” (see Figure 5.31).

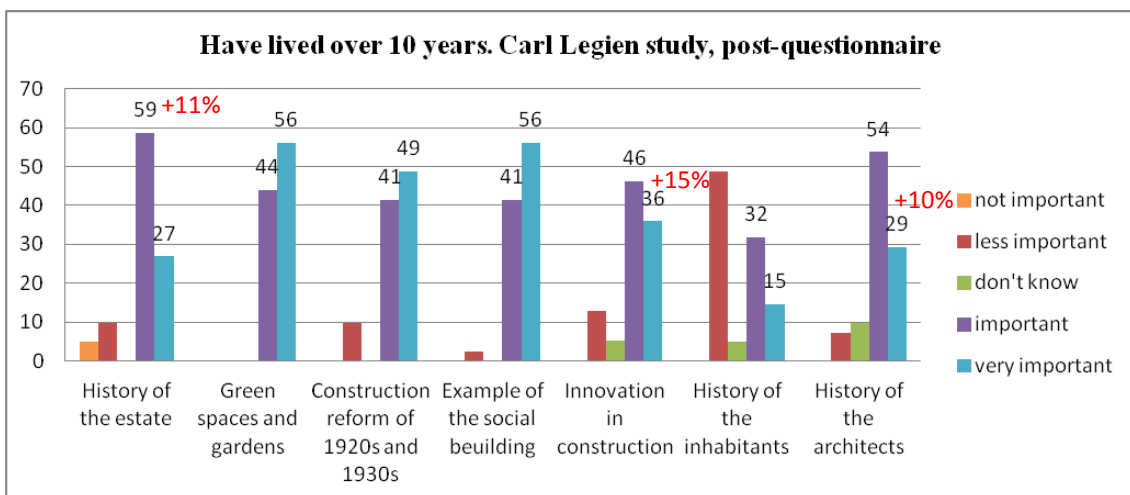
<sup>27</sup> The results of the attitudes to the aspects of the estate significance according to the length of living in the first round of questionnaires is given in Appendix 11.

<sup>28</sup> The results of the respondents who live in the estate up to a year, and those living from one to five years have been combined into one category in order to provide more statistically relevant data.



**Figure 5.31** Attitudes towards aspects of the estate significance, category *have lived 5 to 10 years in the estate* (in %).

In the attitudes of the respondents who have been living in the estate for *over 10 years*, significant changes took place in the categories “history of the estate” (an increase of 10% on the scale “important”), “innovation in construction” (an increase of 15% on the scale “very important”) and “history of the architects” (an increase of 10% on the scale “very important”) (see Figure 5.32). No significant change can be indicated in the target aspect of “gardens and green spaces”.

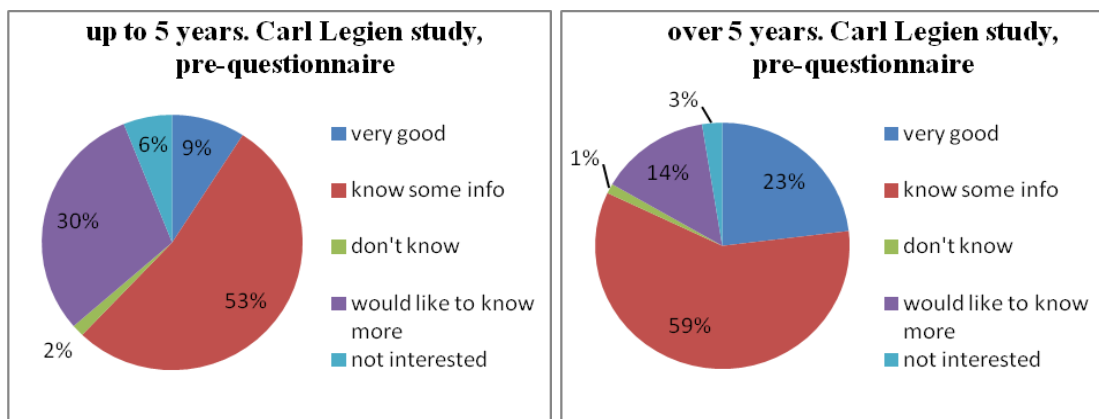


**Figure 5.32** Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance, category *have lived over 10 years in the estate* (in %).

Apparently the small leaflet had more of an effect on the respondents who have been living in the estate for a relatively shorter period of time, since none of the significant changes have taken place in the target aspect of “gardens and green spaces” in the answers of the respondents who have been living in the estate for more than five years.

This can be explained by the fact that respondents who have been living in the estate for more than five years, already know more information about the history and significant of the site to those who have been living there for fewer years. Accordingly, many respondents are consistent in their knowledge and attitudes. On the contrary, the respondents who have been living in the estate for a shorter period of time could be more influenced by the interpretation provided in the leaflet. This assumption is also supported by the results illustrated in Figure 5.33.

From Figure 5.33 it is clear that 82% of the respondents who have been living in the estate more than five years know the history of the estate either very good, or have already read or heard some information. This is in contrast to the 62% of respondents who stated the same who have been living in the estate for up to five years. Moreover, 30% of these respondents would like to learn more about the site, which is twice as much as in the group of respondents who have been living in the estate more than five years.

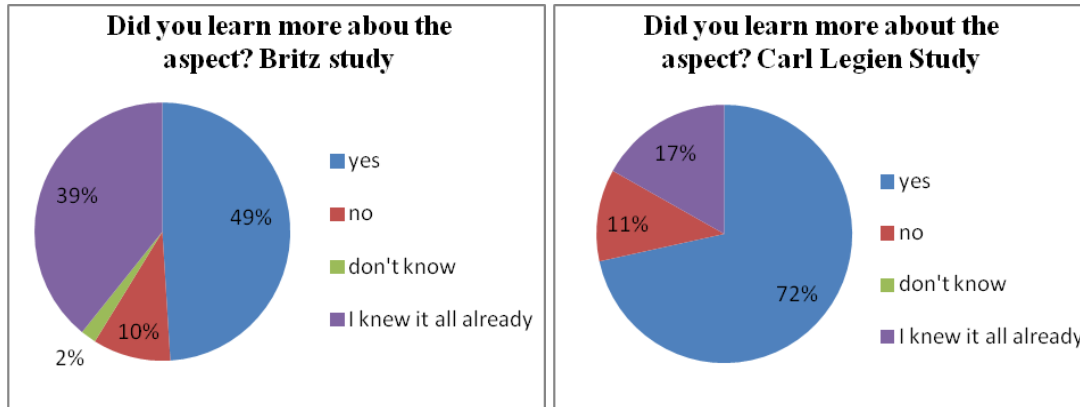


**Figure 5.33** Knowledge levels of the respondents according to their length of living in the estate.

***Knowledge gained from the leaflet***

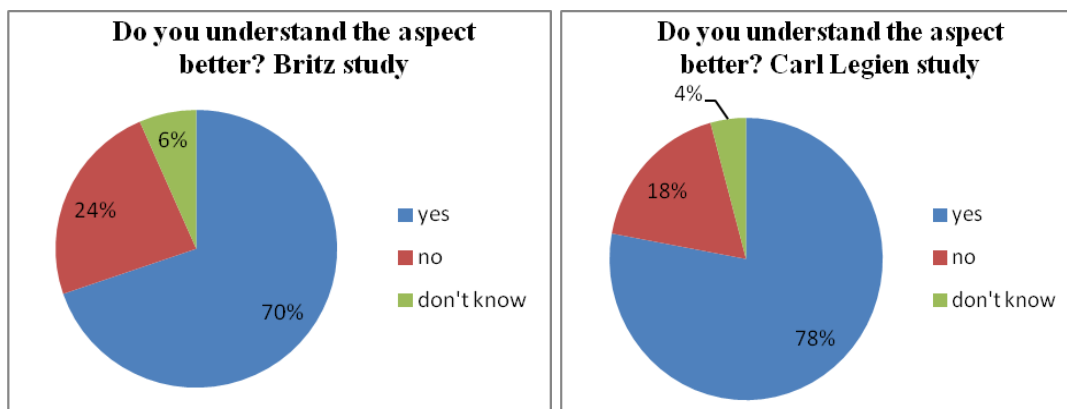
In addition to the attitude changes, the leaflets meant to bring about a gain in knowledge on the presented aspect. The respondents were asked whether they had learnt more information about the aspect of “gardens and green spaces”, as well as whether they think they understood this aspect better after reading the leaflet. The overall results of those who have read the leaflet indicate that 49% of the respondents in the Britz Study, and 72% in the Carl Legien Study, believe that they have learnt more information on the aspect of “gardens and green spaces” from the leaflet (see Figure 5.34). The difference in the answers is explained by the fact that 39% of the respondents in the Britz Study stated that they already knew information presented in the leaflet. This is also consistent with the results illustrated in Figure 5.11 where more respondents in the Britz Study

than in the Carl Legien Study indicated that they knew the history of the estate very well.



**Figure 5.34** Distribution of respondents according to knowledge gained from the leaflet.

In addition, 70% of the respondents in the Britz Study, and 78% in the Carl Legien Study, stated that they understood the aspect of “gardens and green spaces” much better due to the leaflet (see Figure 5.35).



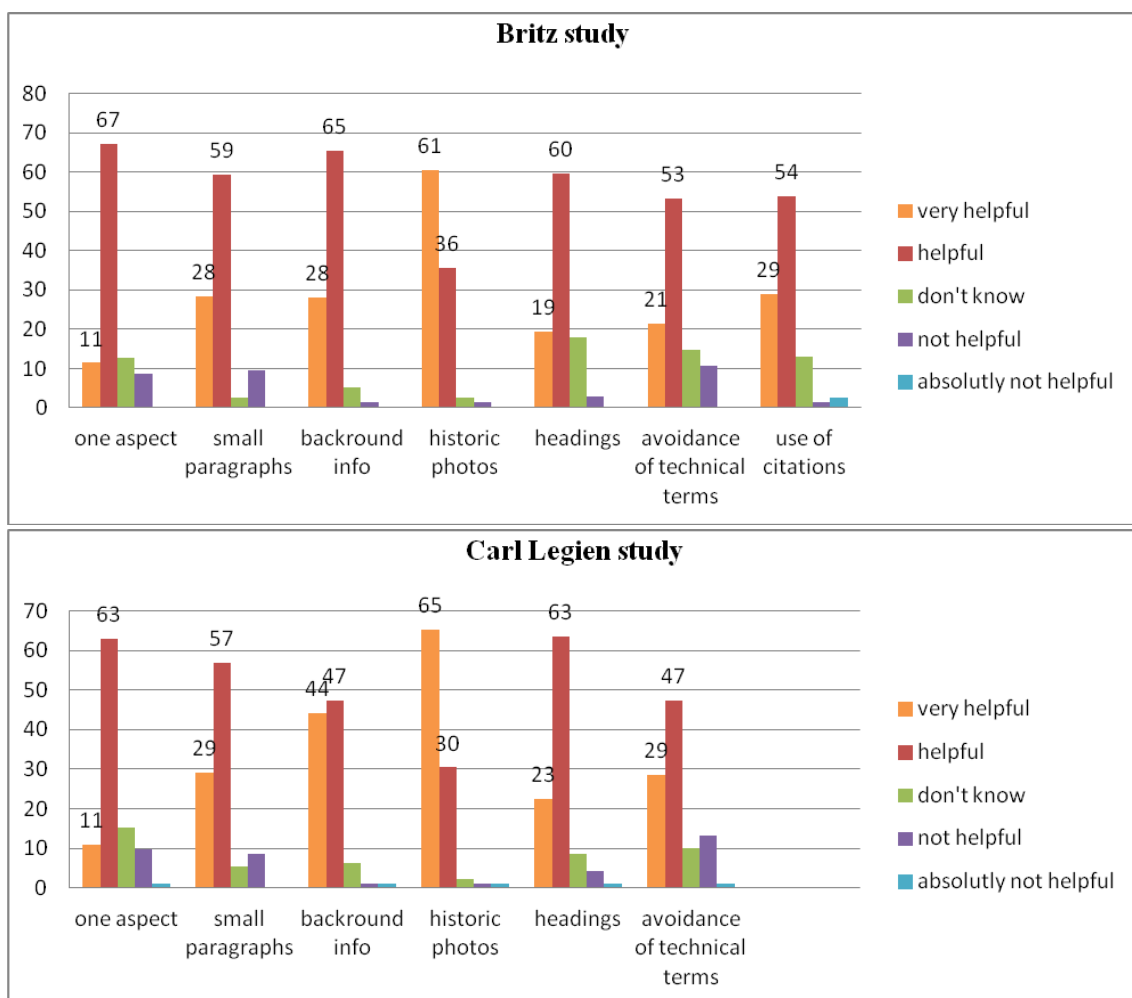
**Figure 5.35** Distribution of the respondents according to their level of understanding of the aspect.

Likewise, even though the respondents who skimmed through the leaflet do not indicate positive attitude changes in the target aspects of the estate significance, 59% of them in the Britz Study and 54% in the Carl Legien Study stated that they learnt more on this aspect (see Appendix 12). Furthermore, a third of the respondents in the Britz Study, and almost half in the Carl Legien Study, stated that they understood this aspect much better thanks to the leaflet (see Appendix 12). This can be explained by the fact that the organisation of the information into smaller paragraphs, the use of historic photos and

the use of headings and citations (in the Britz leaflet) that even by skimming the leaflet, respondents were able to get the main ideas which were communicated in it.

### 5.5.4 Evaluation of external factors, post-questionnaire

In order to evaluate the usefulness of the elements in the presentation of the information, as well as the two elements used for framing, the respondents were asked to rate some elements in the construction of the leaflet depending on how helpful they were in allowing the reader to understand the information. The results of such rating made by the respondents, who read the leaflet completely, are presented in Figure 5.36.



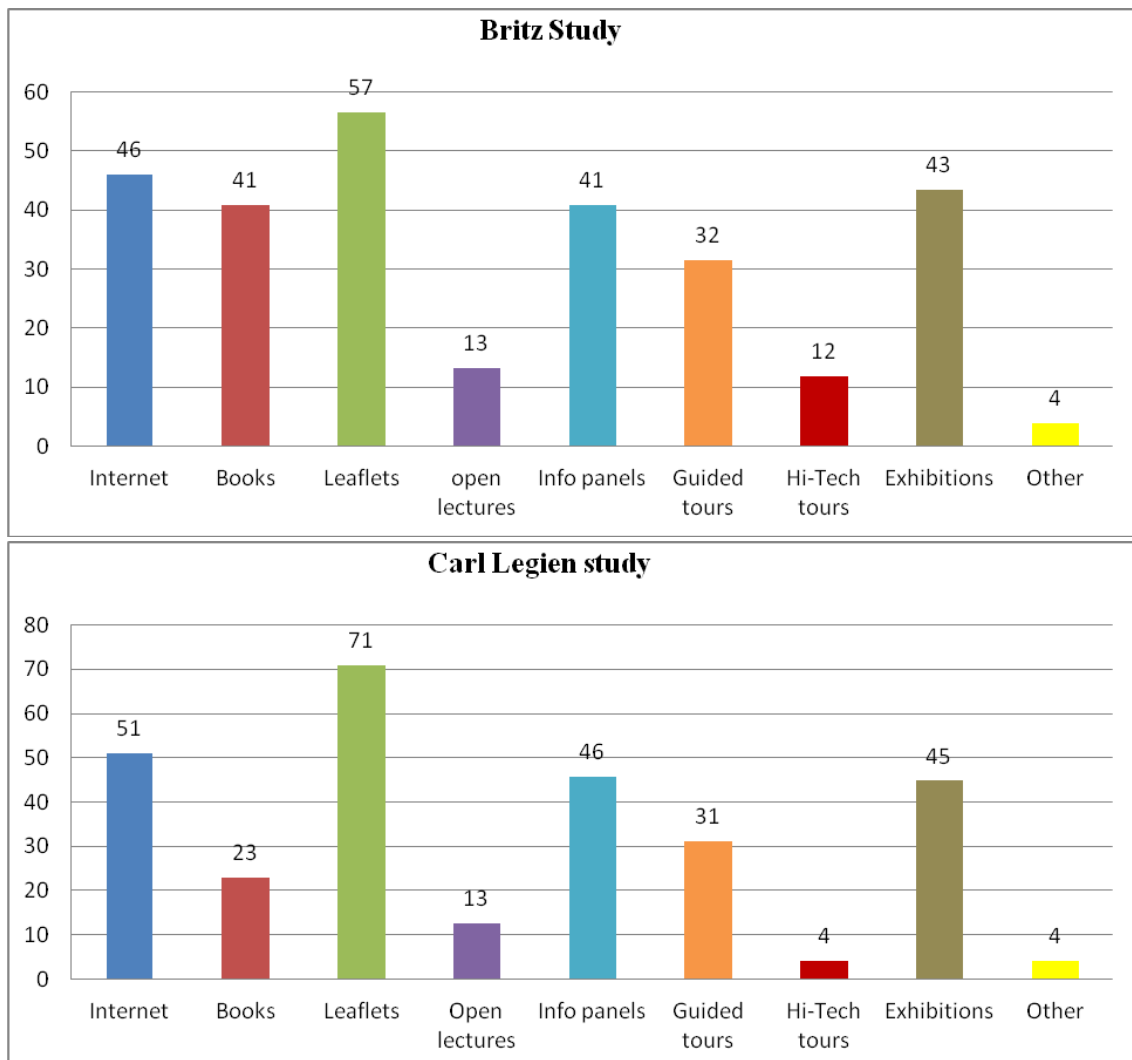
**Figure 5.36** Rating of the elements usefulness in the presentation of the information in a leaflet, the Britz and the Carl Legien Studies (in %).

The two techniques of framing in the Britz Study – content through a historic photo of a tenement apartment, and historic citations from the architects – proved to be helpful for more than half of the respondents in understanding the main aspect presented in the leaflet, and for almost a third of respondents, the use of these elements (28% and 29%,

respectively) was even deemed very helpful. In the Carl Legien Study, the framing technique through a historic photo of a tenement apartment, with a short amount of information, was found very helpful by 44% of the respondents, and helpful by 47%.

Given that all the other aspects for rating in both studies have received high ratings in their degree of helpfulness, only once again prove the usefulness of interpretive principles in the preparation and organisation of information.

In order to evaluate whether the chosen form of interpretation (a leaflet) could have influenced the results of the study, the respondents were asked to select the means of information presentation they would prefer in learning more about the estates. The respondents could choose more than one means of information presentation. The respondents' preferences in information presentation are illustrated in Figure 5.37.



**Figure 5.37** Distribution of the preferred means of information presentation (in %).

The results, illustrated in Figure 5.37, show that 57% of the respondents in the Britz Study who read the flyer completely, and 71% in the Carl Legien Study, prefer leaflets for learning more about the significance and history of the estates. Thus, the form of a leaflet chosen for a study, as one of the preferred means of information acquisition about the estate, could have contributed to producing positive effects in attitudes and knowledge acquisition. Though, as shown in Figure 5.21, the form of a leaflet is also subject to different preferences in various age groups.

Additionally the results show that the leaflets are followed by the internet, exhibitions and information panels (with values varying from 41% to 51%) in both studies, as well as books (41%) in the Britz Study. Slightly more than a third of the respondents in both studies would also prefer guided tours for learning more about the history of the estate. With the exception of the internet, traditional means of information presentation such as leaflets, information panels and exhibitions, seem to be most popular with the inhabitants of both estates.

## 5.5 Summary of the results

This study has clearly shown knowledge gain and a positive improvement in the attitudes of the respondents towards aspects of a heritage site as a result of being exposed to interpretive information. Since attitudes of the inhabitants towards aspects of the estate were already very positive, the change that took place was consequently not radical. At the same time, one cannot expect to change the attitudes of inhabitants dramatically, and for a longer period, only with the help of a single interpretive activity. In order to achieve lasting results, a series of activities over a substantial period of time have to be applied.

In the first round of questionnaires, the respondents have evaluated the aspects of the estate very positively, therefore a change of ten percent or more between both questionnaire rounds was determined as significant for this study. The significant change in attitudes to the aspect of “gardens and green spaces”, and related aspects (in the Britz Study), occurred in both cross-sectional studies.

In the Britz Study, greater changes in attitude have occurred in the group of *unemployed/retired* and the group *over 61 years old*. Here, a significant change of over 23% could be observed on the aspect of “gardens and green spaces”. Because the two groups are nearly homogeneous – the group of *unemployed/retired* mainly consists of respondents *over 61 years* – it was not possible to determine conclusively whether the occurred change was connected to their occupational status or to the age of the respondents.

In the Carl Legien Study, a significant change also occurred in the target aspect of “green spaces and gardens”. Unlike in the Britz Study, this attitude change did not increase in the *unemployed/retired* group, but remained constant at 10%. Whereas in the group of *part-time employed*, the change reached 21% on the target aspect. The group of *part-time employed* in the Britz Study was not numerous enough to provide any reliable results, therefore any comparison between the studies was not possible. Similar to the Britz Study, the attitude changes in occupational groups in the Carl Legien Study were consistent with the attitude changes in the age groups, as indicated by attitude changes in the target aspect in the age groups of *21 to 40 years old* and *over 61 year old*.

The study has also shown that the length of living in the estate also plays a role in any attitude alterations, as those living in the estate for less than five years have shown greater attitude changes, whereas those living in the estate for more than five years have shown no significant changes in their attitude (see Figure 5.30). Though these results could not be verified in the Britz Study, it nevertheless is possible to assume that respondents with little or no knowledge on the history of the estate were more influenced by the experimental leaflet and interpretive information, and thus produced positive attitude changes. Therefore, one may expect that if such information is presented to tourists, who might have less knowledge on the aspects of the estate than residents, such a leaflet can produce even better positive changes in attitudes and knowledge gain. This assumption also correlates with the results illustrated in Figure 5.34, which indicates that considerably more respondents in the Carl Legien Study indicated that they have learnt more from the flyer than in the Britz study, where prior knowledge on the estate was higher.

This study has also shown that not all the respondents have been influenced by interpretive provisions and by developed frames. For instance, the age group of *41 to 60 years old* has shown either no significant change in attitudes, or negative changes in the target aspects in both studies. As already mentioned in section 4.3.2 earlier, not all the individuals make use of developed frames (Reese 2001). In the same way, not all of the respondents are influenced equally by interpretive activities. The studies have shown that the leaflets have produced more significant changes in the age groups *21 to 40 years old* and *over 61 years old*.

Moreover, the results also indicate a degree of knowledge gain from the leaflets as self-evaluated by the majority of respondents in both studies. Thus, 49% of the respondents in the Britz Study, and 72% in the Carl Legien Study, stated that they learnt more on the aspect of “gardens and green spaces” from the leaflets. The choice of a leaflet as a main means of information presentation by many respondents (see Figure 5.37) testifies to the fact that the developed leaflets were attractive to many respondents, and thus have induced them to choose the same form of information presentation for other aspects as well.



In view of the constructivist approach to understanding, one may conclude that understanding took place thanks to the interpretive leaflet. Because the expectation of the author was to improve respondents' knowledge and induce a positive attitude of the respondents towards a specific aspect of a heritage site, and as the study shows, such an improvement did take place. It means that understanding took place and that the respondents understand the aspect of green spaces and gardens in the estate much better, which is also confirmed by their self-evaluation.

The real degree of understanding of any aspect of a heritage site cannot be determined only with the help of quantitative techniques. An additional qualitative analysis might help to accrue more information, and explain changes in attitudes that have been produced by this study.

## CHAPTER 6

### Conclusions

When perceiving heritage interpretation as a mechanism for understanding heritage sites from a constructivist point of view, heritage managers can utilise a tool for determining whether understanding took place or not, without having precise knowledge of cognitive processes occurring in the heads of visitors. According to the German constructivists Rusch and Schmidt, understanding is not a purely psychological process, but a complex social and cognitive event (Rusch 1992, Schmidt 1994). In this way, understanding is not based on direct knowledge of thoughts and perceptions of the interaction partner, but on the assessment to what degree the orientation expectations placed by the speaker are fulfilled. During communication, a speaker directs the orientation expectations towards the interactive partner, and when through his/her verbal or non-verbal actions an interaction partner meets the required expectations, then a speaker will evaluate the action as a partial or complete degree of understanding. In other words, when asking an interaction partner to bring a glass of water, a speaker directs the expectations to the interaction partner (and namely to be given a glass of water), and based on the actions of an interaction partner (whether he/she brings a glass of water or juice) a speaker is able to determine whether understanding took place or not. Therefore, the criteria of true or false understanding are possessed not by the one who needs to understand, but by the one who wants to be understood.

This approach to understanding when applied to heritage sites allows for developing more purposeful interpretive provisions. First and foremost, the managers of a heritage site and interpreters need to be clear of what they expect from visitors coming to a heritage site. Only after such expectations have been clearly formulated, one is able to develop an interpretive provision that best suits in transferring these expectations to visitors. But because one can never be absolutely sure that the interaction partner understands the other, unless it is confirmed verbally or in action (objective understanding), the process of understanding depends greatly on the assumptions of what the other thinks (subjective understanding). Such tools as visitor audits and surveys are useful in providing heritage interpreters more information on visitors, their expectations and levels of knowledge about a site, which allow formulating justified assumptions of what visitors want or whether expectations placed on them will be fulfilled. Additionally, such subjective understanding can be transferred into an objective one with the help of surveys or questionnaires with which heritage managers

and heritage interpreters may be able to determine the actual experiences visitors had during their site visit, and any knowledge gained.

Heritage interpretation can become a mechanism of orienting visitors' perception of and behaviour at a heritage site. By analysing visitors' responses, heritage interpreters are able to determine whether understanding took place or not. Even though Rusch (1992) limits the responses to orientation expectations to behavioural and verbal responses, when applying his ideas to heritage interpretation it is also important to take the affective component (emotional response) into consideration. Emotional responses cannot be so easily accounted for as verbal and behavioural responses, but several studies (see for example Forgas 2002, Huang 2001, Rudolph et al 2000) have shown that emotions have a great influence on cognition and behaviour. Therefore, in determining the expectations for visitors to a heritage site, one also has to 'plan' for emotional components as well. Emotional components included into interpretive provision can help direct the visitors in their perception of a heritage site, or influence the behaviour of visitors at a site. Cognitive and behavioural responses of visitors can be more easily accounted for by directly asking visitors through surveys, or by observing their behaviour at a heritage site.

The process of understanding, as a socio-cognitive process, is greatly influenced and determined by culture, or rather through the collective knowledge systems embedded in it. These collective systems allow the members of a particular culture to retrieve meanings existent in it (Burner 1990, Streeck 2002). Since understanding is not purely individual but is a shared event, the strategies for understanding are determined by dominant knowledge systems (Streeck 2002). Heritage sites play an important role in such collective systems by being part of that knowledge and a medium of communication for the transmission of such knowledge. Through heritage interpretation, managers of heritage sites not only provide access to collective knowledge, but also present 'correct' history, by offering things and events that are worth being remembered. This places great responsibility on heritage managers and heritage interpreters, and even though there is no code of ethics for heritage sites and museums universally recognized in various countries, such a document as the ICOMOS Charter on the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage puts forth the principles for a holistic and 'unprejudiced' interpretation of heritage sites, which among other things underlines that heritage interpretation must be well-researched, and take into consideration the material as well as the immaterial values of a site (ICOMOS 2008).

When talking about cultures and collective knowledge systems, one may assume that if understanding depends on these systems inherent in a particular culture, then, on the one hand, it would be difficult to interpret a heritage site to individuals coming from different social groups who might be using different knowledge systems in the understanding process. On the other hand, it would be impossible to make a heritage

site understandable to an individual coming from a different culture from where that heritage site is located. Nevertheless, with all the complexity of the concept of culture, two important characteristics of it are especially important in developing heritage interpretation which allow for communicating ideas to individuals from different social or cultural backgrounds. Firstly, cultures have patterns and regularity (McQuail 2000) which can be detected and predicted (Silverman 1997) for the purposes of developing interpretive activities for various social groups. Secondly, cultures overlap – the same or similar ideas may recur in several cultures. This may be caused by partially common roots or history of various cultures, or knowledge gained from interaction with each other (WCCD 1996). This overlapping of cultures allows determining ideas and concepts which are common for various cultures, and applying them in interpretive programmes in order to achieve understanding.

In view of the above mentioned heritage interpretation is can not be perceived as a linear communication process; it is an interaction between three main components (as shown in Figure 4.6): a team of communicators, an active meaning-maker and an interpretive medium. These three communication components are responsible for message formation, message interpretation and message exchange. The model developed for heritage interpretation in this thesis presupposes constant feedback from one component to the other. The process of communication is a complex interaction where messages are formulated and re-formulated in accordance with the feedback provided by the audience and interpretive medium. Understanding in such model is possible when the Team of Communicators develops the messages (with the purpose of orienting visitors in their perception and behaviour) that appeal to the Active meaning-maker, who interprets the messages and acts on them (who either fulfil or do not fulfil the orientation expectations) and when an appropriate Interpretive Medium is selected to transfer the messages to the audience (without a loss in meaning).

Culture is important for the process of understanding in the same way it is important for the process of communication. In one sense, the Team of Communicators is influenced by the collective knowledge systems in formulating interpretive messages which offer a set of ideas and symbolic structures for formulating ideas and concepts. Equally, they are influenced by social factors – the philosophy of an organisation, as well as political or commercial interests and romantic inspirations, which play an important role in selecting messages that have to be presented to the visitors at a heritage site. This process of message selectivity is complex and inevitable. The culture of an Active meaning-maker offers collective knowledge systems which allow them to interpret the messages presented at a heritage site. And even the Interpretive medium is influenced by cultural preferences in presenting information. Hence, some cultures might rely on new technologies in heritage interpretation, while others prefer traditional narration. Therefore, one has to be very considerate in developing interpretive activities for culturally diverse audience, when one, for example, has to take into consideration that

some historical perspectives presented in interpretive activities might not necessarily be accepted in some cultures.

For the development of effective messages for heritage interpretation three components are important: frames, themes and stories. Frames are especially important when developing interpretive messages for various social or cultural groups. They can be perceived as a package that poses the problem to the reader, suggests the ways it can be analysed, and offers the path for conclusions (Entman 1993, Van Gorp 2007). Frames proved to be effective in presenting complex ideas and issues to the audience and orienting their perception and judgement of those issues. One has to differentiate between frames in communication and frames in thought. Whereas the first refers to images, words, phrases and presentation styles that are typically used by the media, the latter refers to the ideas, which an audience believes to be the most important aspect of an issue (Chong and Druckman 2007). For heritage interpretation, the formation of interpretive message frames in communication is the most important. They can be presented to visitors through context, numbers, visuals, metaphors and simple models, as well as a number of other techniques. It is important to note that frames are not always used by the audience – while some might take them into consideration, others might choose to ignore them (Reese 2001). This was also supported by the results of the cross-sectional studies, where the frames developed for interpretive leaflets were ignored by some respondents and actively used by others (see Figure 5.36). Moreover, frames only contribute in a certain degree to persuasive communication. The whole process of communication is important which also includes the setting. The use of frames in developing interpretive activities has not yet been widely applied in heritage interpretation. Although development and use of themes is also considered by some scholars as a framing technique (see Pan and Kosicki in Reese 2001).

Themes have received considerably more attention in the literature on heritage interpretation. Their importance in developing effective interpretive messages has been underlined by various scholars (see Regnier et al. 1994; Knudson 1995; Ham 1992; Pierssené 1999; Ham et al. 2005). A theme is a short, simple and complete sentence that contains only one idea, revealing the overall purpose of the presentation and is interestingly and motivationally worded (Lewis 1980). The construction of themes is a complex process which is based on good research that includes not only available written and archived sources, but also the ideas and perceptions of local communities. It should also relate to the audience. Highly technical or extremely simplified themes may not appeal to visitors. Good themes should also reflect the expectations from/ objectives of interpretive activities.

Quality interpretive provision should also use narrative techniques to make the information appealing and memorable to visitors. It should make use of myths, legends and stories and should create a mood through the appropriate setting, costumes or artefacts and use of emphatic expressions. Only by offering visitors stories, and not

factual information, is it possible to make a heritage site more appealing and to influence visitors' perception and behaviour.

This thesis has offered basic schemes for structuring interpretive information (see Figure 4.7), which have also been applied in the experimental leaflets and proved to be effective with most respondents. As mentioned in section 4.3.2, effective framing techniques are only partially influential, in the same way effective interpretive messages are only as influential as the external factors allow them to be. In the process of communication, not only do messages themselves, but also such factors as visitor's attention, perception and motivation as well as the environment have to be taken into consideration. The thesis has briefly described a number of techniques which may help to maintain visitors' attention and to increase their motivation. It also offered an overview of the characteristics of the setting that makes the perception of interpretive messages more favourable (see Chapter 4.4).

The ideas and theories developed in this thesis have been tested in two cross-sectional studies which have shown that a well-developed interpretive provision is not only able to contribute to a gain in knowledge on a specific issue, but is also able to change attitudes of respondents to particular aspects of a site. Even though the studies did not show great attitude changes in the respondents' answers, due to the fact that initial attitudes were already considerably high, they nevertheless showed that attitude changes took place due to a well-developed interpretive provision. Moreover the studies have also identified great changes in knowledge gain thanks to an interpretive provision.

However, the developed studies were only able to provide quantitative data and have raised a number of questions, such as whether the perception of interpretive messages is influenced by the occupational status or the age of the respondents. The answers to such questions can only be provided through further qualitative research.

Additional research is also necessary on a more detailed analysis of the application of frames in heritage interpretation, such as typologies of frames, typical frames in various cultures, influence of frames on attitudes and knowledge gain in heritage interpretation.

## **Appendix 1:**

Inscription Criteria for World Heritage Sites in UNESCO Operational Guidelines 2008, para. 77:

Nominated properties shall therefore:

- (i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
- (ii) exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
- (iii) bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
- (iv) be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
- (v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
- (vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria) ;
- (vii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
- (viii) be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
- (ix) be outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
- (x) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.

## Appendix 2

### **Principles of Interpretation** after Freeman Tilden (1977: 9):

I. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.

II. Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.

III. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.

IV. The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.

V. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.

VI. Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.



## Appendix 3:

### Experimental Leaflet for Britz estate

**Mietkasernen oder Neues Bauen?**

Baum-Taut, der Architekt der „Neuen Bauart“, wollte bewiesen, dass es möglich war, Großsiedlungen zu bauen, die sozialhygienisch, ästhetisch ansprechend und für die Bewohner praktisch seien. Außerdem sollten Mietkasernen, wie sie damals in den Mietkasernen üblich waren – Platzmangel und schwache hygienische Verhältnisse lebenden Anwohner durch menschenwürdige Wohnverhältnisse zu mündigen Mitgliedern der Gesellschaft werden.

**Der Gartenarchitekt Ledwacht Migge**

Wurde von Anfang an mit einbezogen, da seine Pläne für zwei große, öffentliche Bereiche der Siedlung – den Innenhof des Hofeisenwegs und den Innenhof des Hofeisenwegs – von Taut und Wagner zu finden sind.

**LEBERRECHT MIGGE**

Quelle: J. Fritzsche, V. Grottel, Wohnen und Stadt, München 1984, S. 420

Kolonnenhof aus der Wohnungsgruppe Engewald 1928

**Architektur und Gartenkultur – zwei Seiten einer Medaille**

Die moderne Architektur der 1920er Jahre in Berlin hat für Außenstehende in der Regel einen Eindruck von besserem und gesünderem Wohnmöglichkeiten für alle, die dahinter standen, haben nicht nur die Architektur der Siedlung bestimmt, sondern auch die Gestaltung der Grünflächen und Gärten zugrunde. Der „Außenwohnraum“, wie es Bruno Taut ausdrückte, war und bleibt ein Bestandteil dieser Architektur.

**BRUNO TAUT**

Jochen Nüssler-Straße 11, Gartenseite um 1932

**Ein Garten verbindet!**

Auch bei der Planung der Privatgärten für die Reihenhäuser der Siedlung beabsichtigte Taut, das soziale Miteinander der Bewohner zu stärken. Der offene Charakter der Privatgärten führte dazu, dass dem zufälligen, ungeplanten Gespräch über den Gartenzaun oder dem gemeinsamen Spielen der Kinder „Raum gegeben“ werden konnte. Dies erwies sich mit der Zeit als so erfolgreich, dass viele Bewohner der Reihenhäuser den trennenden Zaun zum Nachbargarten empfanden.

Onkel-Braug-Strasse 105, Gartenseite um 1932

**Der Mensch zählt!**

Die Gärten und Grünflächen in der Hofeisen-Siedlung sollten, ähnlich wie die Wohnungen, auf den Mieter zugeschnitten sein und auch dessen soziale Umgebung positiv beeinflussen. Sie sollten einerseits die moderne Schlichkeit der Architektur unterstreichen und andererseits mit Aufenthalts- und Erholungsangeboten die beengten Wohnverhältnisse kompensieren. Da die Ausstattung der Siedlung weit über dem Niveau einer Mietkasernen lag, sollten die Ernte-Erträge aus dem Siedlungsgärten den Mietern auch dabei helfen, die höheren Lebenshaltungskosten bezahlen zu können.

**Dein Garten soll nicht zu unterschiedlich sein!**

Um ein gleichartiges Erscheinungsbild der Gärten längerfristig durchzusetzen, verteilte die Betriebsgesellschaft Einfache kostenlose Nachrichtenblätter an die Mieter. Darin gab sie Anleitungen zum Wohnen und zum Obst- und Gartenbau. So wurden unter anderem Tipps zum Beschneiden von Obstbäumen und zu allgemeinen Gartenarbeiten gegeben, als auch Rezepte zu den angebauten Produkten abgedruckt.

Hufeisen-Siedlung, Innerer Ring um 1928

**Jeder Wohnung einen Garten!**

Nach Tauts Vorstellungen sollte im Inneren des Hofeisenwegs ein von den Bewohnern gemeinsam zu nutzender Freibereich eingerichtet werden. Jeder Stockwerkswohnung sollte eine Parzelle in diesem „Nachbarschaftsgarten“ zugeordnet werden, der in den ursprünglichen Planungen auch „Baumgarten“ genannt wurde. Allerdings wurde dieser Bereich in der Realisierung den Erdgeschosswohnungen zugeordnet – was ihm einen eher privaten Charakter verlieh.

Lowitz-Reuter-Ring um 1932

Hufeisen-Siedlung, Innerer Ring um 1928

Um das starke Bevölkerungswachstum in Großstädten wieder in geordnete Bahnen zu lenken, wurden um 1900 stadtpolitische Konzepte entwickelt, die mit dem „Wohnen im Grünen“ eine Lösung für die damals schwierigen Wohnverhältnisse sahen.

Erfahren Sie bei einem Spaziergang durch die **Bauhabschnitte I und II** der Hofeisen-Siedlung, welche Rolle die Gärten und Grünflächen im Konzept der Architekten spielen sollten.

**GRÜNES WOHNEN IN DER GROSSSTADT**

Ein Spaziergang durch die Gärten und Grünflächen der Hofeisen-Siedlung



# GRÜNES WOHNEN IN DER GROSSTADT

## Ein Spaziergang durch die Gärten und Grünflächen der Hufeisensiedlung



„Wir sind der Meinung, daß die unmittelbare äußere Umgebung der Wohnung für die Wohnung selber von größerer Bedeutung ist, als der Wert der Wohnung erhöht oder vermindert kann.“  
Bruno Taut, 1931

**Raus aus der Wohnung, rein ins Grün!**  
Bei der Planung der Hufeisensiedlung wollte Taut auf keinen Fall groß und dicht bebaut sein. Er wollte eine luftige, grüne Umgebung. Die Architekten besaßigten, „den Menschen der Großstadt aus der Asphaltwelt herauszuheben und seine Wohnung in eine grüne Umgebung zu setzen.“  
(Ehrle 1933)



Kopfschulden im Inneren der Hufeisensiedlung, 1934



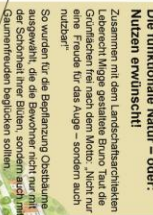
„Die Form des Hauses... ist aber nicht entstanden aus einer vordefinierten künstlerischen Idee, sondern aus den sozialen Forderungen und den Bewegungen des Geländes.“  
Bruno Taut, 1926

**Architektur folgt Natur**  
Ein solcher Grundsatz wurde in den Entwürfen Bruno Tauts und Merra Waggers nicht nur nach dem natürlichen Gegebenheiten, sondern auch nach dem natürlichen Gelände der Siedlung mit Architektur umgesetzt. Die ursprüngliche Lage der Siedlung wurde beibehalten, aber die Gestaltung lässt sich jedoch noch anhand der zweiten Bebauungspläne erkennen.

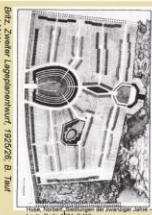


Plan der Hufeisensiedlung, 1923, B. Taut

**Die funktionale Natur – oder: Nutzen erwünscht!**  
Zusammen mit dem landschaftscharakteristischen Leberecht Migge gestaltete Bruno Taut die Siedlung als eine „Pauze für das Auge – sondern auch nutzbar.“  
So wurden für die Beplanung Obstbäume ausgewählt, die die Bewohner nicht nur für die Schönheit ihrer Blüten, sondern auch mit Samenfrüchten beglücken sollten.



Neue Berlin, Bild 3, 110



Plan der Hufeisensiedlung, 1923/26, B. Taut

**Große Pläne, kleine Änderungen**  
Bei der Umsetzung von Plänen kommt es zu Änderungen. So geschah es auch mit den Plänen der Hufeisensiedlung. Die Pläne wurden erst nach dem Bau der ersten Häuser als „Stand mit Banker“ vor. Allerdings wurde nicht sein Entwurf, sondern der von Oskar Wagner verfeinert. Wagner umgab den Teich mit einer Hecke. Damit wurde abgesichert, Abschaun erlaubt. Neben nicht verwirklicht.

**Wie die Architektur, so der Garten**  
Vorbereitungen im Siedlungsplan sollten bei der Arbeit stehen – sei wachen von Bruno Taut und Leberecht Migge wurde dieses Prinzip von Leberecht Migge auf die Siedlung übertragen. Aus diesem Grund wurden die Pläne, die privaten Gärten und auch die Anwesenheit an der Siedlung ebenfalls gestaltet.

„Auch der Siedlergarten unserer Zeit muss in seinen Teilen möglichst ruhmlos, in der Gestaltung rationalisiert aufgebaut werden. In der Gestaltung der Siedlung im Arbeitsprozess möglichst industriell sein.“  
Leberecht Migge, 1923



Auf diesem Foto von 1923 ist eine wunderschöne Begrünerung zu sehen, die die Siedlung im Inneren des Hufeisensiedlungsgeländes mit Menschen für die



Diese Fotobild wurde im Rahmen einer Promotionsarbeit und mit freundlicher Unterstützung von Kultur-Interpretation Deutschland und der STU Octopus entwickelt.  
Illustrationen und Layout: Inna Strelagova  
rene, Steffen Müller



„Strichen bedient, darunter nicht Langweiligkeit, die Wohnstätten mit der gleichen Hausordnung, die man nicht oder doch zu sein, aus der Bewegung des Ganges, kommt es zu Blickspaltungen, Raumteilungen von Straßen, die ein behagliches Wohnleben tragen können.“  
Bruno Taut, 1923



Heilung am 17. Mai 1926



Heilung am 17. Mai 1926



„Ein idealer Volkspark müsse... allen Volksschichten einfach alles das wiedergeben, was unser Großstadtleben als solches ihm vornehmlich.“  
Leberecht Migge, 1913



Entwurf für die Grünanlage 'Paradies' von Leberecht Migge 1926

**Eine Straße mit Charakter**  
Durch kräftige Fassadenfarben, die Verzierung der Fensterrahmen und deren Anordnung, die Gestaltung der Siedlung Bruno Taut, Monotonie in seiner Architektur zu vermeiden. Eine einheitliche Begründerung und das Anpflanzen von Bäumen, die gut leiser einzelnen Straße auch heute noch einen eigenen, unverwechselbaren Charakter. So wurde hier im Hufeisensiedlung im Lewis-Becker-Ring der Straße, die am das „Hufeisen“ herumführt, hingenommen. Röhren angepflanzt.

**Ein Dorf mitten in der Stadt**  
Der Hufeisensiedlung war ursprünglich sehr schön gestaltet – ein schmaler Gehweg auf der Fassade angelegt wurde. Aber schon nach einigen Jahren gab es erste Änderungen. In den 30er Jahren wurde eine Linie vor der Hecke und - nach dem Bau der Siedlung - wurde der Hufeisensiedlung angepflanzt. Rasenflächen Apple-Rosen angepflanzt.

**Was ist mit dem Teich passiert?**  
Das zweite große öffentliche Grünanlage der Hufeisensiedlung befindet sich in den ersten Jahren „Paradies“ genannt. Nach dem ersten Entwurf von Leberecht Migge existierende Teich geplant. Die Pläne des Meißener Gartenbauingenieurs Oskar Wagner wurden letztendlich denen Migges vorgezogen – wofür der Teich umgeben wurde. Die Hecke wurde an dieser Stelle ein Spielplatz entstand.

**Das „Paradies“ im Wandel der Zeit**  
Nach dem Krieg wurde er in ein Volksgarten bzw. in die öffentliche verwendet. In den 1980er Jahren entstand von Neuem ein Spielplatz. Auch heute bietet der Platz wieder verschiedene Erholungsmöglichkeiten.



## Experimental Leaflet for Wohnstadt Carl Legien

Bild: Dietl. J. F. Meyer: Das Berliner Mietkasernen-Wesen 1862-1864. München 1964. S. 863.

Das obige Bild zeigt das Wohnumfeld, wie es in den Mietkasernen üblich war – ein kasser Gegensatz zum „Neuen Wohnen“ in der Wohnstadt Carl Legien. In der Wohnungs-Erquetele von 1918, die die schwierigen Zustände in Mietkasernen dokumentierte, heißt es:

**„Rudersdorfer Straße 15, 5. Geschloß, Dachwohnung.“**

Ist völlig schwarz, verstaubt, durch die Decke dringt Nässe, zwei große und ein Kondemert dienen für die aus 2 Erwachsenen und 3 Kindern bestehende Familie.

### Neue Zeiten, neue Anforderungen

In seinen früheren Projekten zeigte sich Bruno Taut noch stark von den Ideen der Gartenstadt-Bewegung beeinflusst, die das „Haus im Grünen“ zum Ideal erhob. Bei der Wohnstadt Carl Legien stand er vor der Herausforderung, diese Ideen auf die Großstadt zu übertragen – die hohen Grundstückspreise erforderten eine dichte Bebauung.

Taut, der sich zuvor für die Auflockerung der städtischen Bebauung eingesetzt hatte, war nun gezwungen, neue Lösungen zu finden. Dies tat er nun in dem Anspruch, das „Wohnen im Grünen“ für alle gesellschaftlichen Schichten zu ermöglichen und gleichzeitig die Überlegenheit einer solchen, neuen Bauweise gegenüber den traditionellen Mietkasernen zu beweisen.

### Auf den Kopf gestellt...!

Bei der Wohnstadt Carl Legien haben die beiden Architekten die damals üblichen Herangehensweise umgekehrt. Die „gute Stube“ also die besten Wohnräume, lagen meist zur Straße hin, Bruno Taut aber verlegte diese Räume zum Hof hin, also nach „hinten“. Die Bewohner hatten damit einen guten Blick in den Garten und der Wohnungsrundriss war somit „auf den Kopf gestellt“.

Foto: Landesdenkmalamt Berlin, Wolfgang Bittner

Die verschiedenen Baumarten sollten den Charakter von Tauts Architektur unterstreichen und die Grünanlagen um die Gebäude gliedern. Damit wollte der Architekt den Bewohnern ein Erkennungs- und Unterscheidungsmerkmal der oft gleichartigen Wohngebäude anbieten, um ihnen die Identifikation mit ihrem Teil der Siedlung zu erleichtern.

Im obigen Bild flankieren vereinzelte Birken die Vorderseite der Gebäude zur Straße hin, während zum Hof hin Robinien zu erkennen sind.

Bild: Bauverwaltung Weiskind, Vol. 44, Nr. 36 (28. September 1923), S. 363.

Die beiden Architekten der Wohnstadt - Bruno Taut und Franz Hillinger - ließen sich von dem holländischen Architekten J.J. Oud inspirieren, insbesondere von dessen Siedlung „Tusschendijken“ in Rotterdam. Die Ausrichtung der Loggien auf den begrünten Innenhof und die einheitliche Gestaltung der Hofassenden, die für „tusschendijken“ charakteristisch waren, wurden von den Architekten auf die Wohnstadt Carl Legien übertragen.

### Ein Stück Natur in der Großstadt

Bruno Taut hatte es sich zum Ziel gesetzt, den Bewohnern seiner Siedlungen ein Stück von dem zurückzugeben, worauf sie in der Großstadt normalerweise verzichten mussten. Deshalb waren ihm die Baumarten, die er in seinen Siedlungen pflanzte, wichtig. Er schätzte die lichtdurchlässigen Kronen der Birken und die Blütenpracht der Robinien. Diese beiden Baumarten ließ er nicht nur in der Wohnstadt Carl Legien anpflanzen, sondern auch bei vielen weiteren seiner Wohnanlagen und Siedlungen in Berlin.

### Ein Spaziergang durch die Grünflächen der Wohnstadt Carl Legien

Foto: Friso Ouwelshuis

### GRÜNES WOHNEN IN DER GROSSSTADT

Um das starke Bevölkerungswachstum in Großstädten wieder in geordnetere Bahnen zu lenken, wurden um 1900 stadtfähnere Konzepte entwickelt, die mit dem „Wohnen im Grünen“ eine Lösung für die damals schwierigen Wohnverhältnisse sahen.

Wohnstadt Carl Legien um 1933

Für beide Architekten waren nicht nur die Gebäude an sich wichtig, sondern auch deren Lage im Grünen. Erfahren Sie bei einem Spaziergang durch die Wohnstadt Carl Legien, welche Rolle die Grünflächen im Konzept der Architekten spielen sollten.



# GRÜNES WOHNEN IN DER GROßSTADT

## Ein Spaziergang durch die Grünflächen der Wohnstadt Carl Legien

### 1 Licht, Luft und Grün

Fast alle Höfe der Wohnstadt öffnen sich zur Erich-Weinert-Straße hin. Dabei ist die Grenze zwischen dem öffentlichen Bereich um die Straße und den Gärten im Inneren der Wohnblöcke nur durch die Bepflanzung angedeutet. Der Blick der Bewohner sollte von ihrer Loggia aus über die Straße hinweg in den gegenüberliegenden Hof schweifen. So sollte trotz der engen Bebauung ein Gefühl von Durchlässigkeit und Weite erzeugt werden.



Hof zwischen Silt- und Trachtenrodstraße um 1933

### Große Loggia als Heilmittel

In den Jahren nach dem ersten Weltkrieg wurden Sonnenbäder und eine ausreichende Versorgung mit Frischluft eine vorrangige Wirkung gegen damals verbreitete Volkskrankheiten wie der Tuberkulose zugesprochen. Die großen Fensteröffnungen der Wohnstadt wurden also nicht nur aus ästhetischen Gründen, sondern auch als Mittel der Gesundheitsfürsorge angelegt.

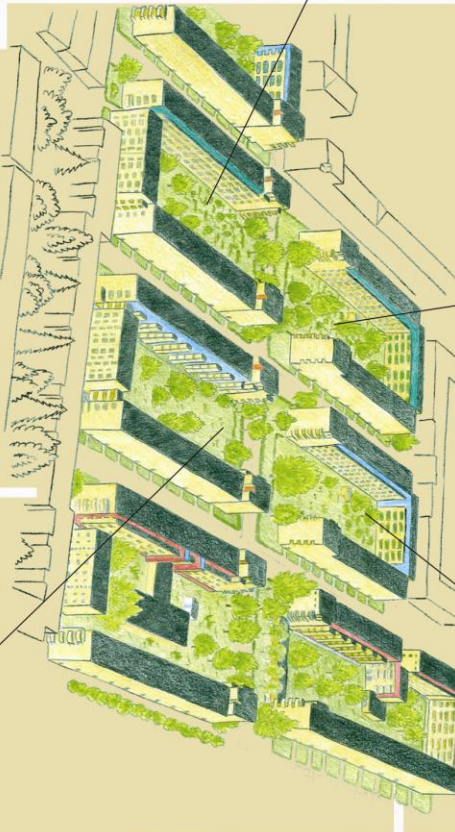
Dieses Fassadentypus wurde im Rahmen einer Prototypenstudie und mit freundlicher Unterstützung von Kulturhistorikerin Dr. Ina Scharnhorn und der BTU Cottbus entwickelt.  
Illustrationen und Layout: Ina Scharnhorn  
Texte: Stefan Müller



Hof zwischen Silt- und Trachtenrodstraße um 1930



Hofdecke zwischen Sodik- und Trachtenrodstraße um 1932



### Was ist aus der Idee Bruno Tauts geworden?

In Notzeiten, vor allem während des Zweiten Weltkriegs, wurden die Grünflächen in den Höfen zur Nutzung als Gärten freigegeben. Nachdem viele der Gärten wieder aufgegeben worden waren, veränderten sie über die Jahrzehnte hinweg. Es wuchsen vermehrt Großsträucher und Bäume, so dass das einheitliche Erscheinungsbild verloren gegangen ist.  
Erst in den letzten Jahren wurden wieder Versuche unternommen, nicht nur die Gebäude, herzutreten, sondern auch die Grünflächen wieder aufzuwickeln – westlich einige Bäume gefällt, und die Rasenflächen teilweise wieder angelegt wurden.



Hofdecke zwischen Sodik- und Trachtenrodstraße um 1932

### 2 Der Teppich aus Gras

Die Gestaltung der Höfe war für den Architekten sehr wichtig – sie wurden in Zusammenarbeit mit einem Gärtner bis ins Detail geplant. Die Höfe wurden geprägt von den weiten, teppichartigen Rasenflächen, in die nur vereinzelt Bäume gepflanzt wurden. Taut hatte damit den typischen, engen und freundlichen Hinterhof, wie er bei Mietskasernen üblich war, durch eine grüne Case ersetzt.  
Die unterschiedlichen Kombinationen der Farben im Zusammenspiel mit Sonne, Licht und Schatten gaben jedem Hof einen eigenen Charakter.



Erich-Weinert-Straße um 1932

### 4 Ein Vorgarten entlang der Hauptstraße

Trotz des Platzmangels beließ Taut einen breiten Grünstreifen entlang der Erich-Weinert-Straße unbebaut und verzichtete auf einen Sichtschutz durch dicke Bepflanzung. Damit sollte der Eindruck von Weite verstärkt und ein vorgartenähnlicher Charakter hervorgerufen werden.



Brandenburgische  
Technische Universität  
Cottbus



7. Bitte bewerten Sie, ob folgende Aussagen für Sie zutreffen:

	trifft zu	trifft eher zu	ich weiß es nicht	trifft eher nicht zu	trifft nicht zu
Eine Siedlung mit Welterbestatus ist für mich als Wohnort attraktiver	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ich bin von den vielen denkmalpflegerischen Vorschriften öfters genervt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ich möchte zum dem Erhalt der Siedlung und deren Bedeutung beitragen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manchmal finde ich die Touristen in der Siedlung störend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Der Welterbestatus war bei der Wahl der Wohnung nicht entscheidend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ich sehe gerne die Touristen in der Siedlung	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ich kann als Einzelperson nichts für den Erhalt der Siedlung und deren Bedeutung beitragen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ich finde die denkmalpflegerischen Vorschriften eher sinnvoll und setze sie um.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Wie schätzen Sie Ihre Kenntnisse über die Geschichte der Siedlung ein?

- Ich kenne die Geschichte der Siedlung und deren Entwicklung sehr gut
- Ich habe einige Informationen darüber gelesen/ gehört
- Kann ich nicht einschätzen
- Ich weiß nicht viel darüber, aber möchte gerne mehr erfahren
- Die Geschichte der Siedlung interessiert mich weniger

9. Als Welterbe zieht die Siedlung auch Besucher an. Welche Aspekte der Siedlung sollen Ihrer Meinung nach den Besuchern vermittelt werden? Schätzen Sie die Wichtigkeit der folgenden Aspekte ein.

	Absolut nicht wichtig	Weniger wichtig	Weiß nicht	Wichtig	Sehr wichtig
Baugeschichte der Siedlung	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gartenkultur und öffentliche Grünflächen der Siedlung	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Die Siedlung als Beispiel einer umfassenden Baureform der 1920-30er Jahre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Die Siedlung als Beispiel des sozialen Wohnungsbaus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geschichte zu technischen und ästhetischen Innovationen im Bau	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geschichten der Siedlungseinwohner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Informationen zu den Architekten Bruno Taut und Martin Wagner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





7. Bitte bewerten Sie, ob folgende Aussagen für Sie zutreffen:

	trifft zu	trifft eher zu	ich weiß es nicht	trifft eher nicht zu	trifft nicht zu
Eine Siedlung mit Welterbestatus ist für mich als Wohnort attraktiver	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ich bin von den vielen denkmalpflegerischen Vorschriften öfters genervt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ich möchte zum dem Erhalt der Siedlung und deren Bedeutung beitragen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manchmal finde ich die Touristen in der Siedlung störend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Der Welterbestatus war bei der Wahl der Wohnung nicht entscheidend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ich sehe gerne die Touristen in der Siedlung	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ich kann als Einzelperson nichts für den Erhalt der Siedlung und deren Bedeutung beitragen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ich finde die denkmalpflegerischen Vorschriften eher sinnvoll und setze sie um.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Wie schätzen Sie Ihre Kenntnisse über die Geschichte der Siedlung ein?

- Ich kenne die Geschichte der Siedlung und deren Entwicklung sehr gut
- Ich habe einige Informationen darüber gelesen/ gehört
- Kann ich nicht einschätzen
- Ich weiß nicht viel darüber, aber möchte gerne mehr erfahren
- Die Geschichte der Siedlung interessiert mich weniger

9. Als Welterbe zieht die Siedlung auch Besucher an. Welche Aspekte der Siedlung sollen Ihrer Meinung nach den Besuchern vermittelt werden? Schätzen Sie die Wichtigkeit der folgenden Aspekte ein.

	Absolut nicht wichtig	Weniger wichtig	Weiß nicht	Wichtig	Sehr wichtig
Baugeschichte der Siedlung	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gartenkultur und öffentliche Grünflächen der Siedlung	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Die Siedlung als Beispiel einer umfassenden Baureform der 1920-30er Jahre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Die Siedlung als Beispiel des sozialen Wohnungsbaus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geschichte zu technischen und ästhetischen Innovationen im Bau	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geschichten der Siedlungseinwohner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Informationen zu den Architekten Bruno Taut und Franz Hillinger	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





4. Haben Sie durch das Falblatt mehr über den Aspekt der Grünflächen erfahren?

Ja     Nein     Weiß nicht     Ich habe das alles schon gewusst

5. Würden Sie behaupten, dass Sie durch das Falblatt den Aspekt der Grünflächen besser verstehen?

Ja     Nein     Weiß nicht

6. Bewerten Sie bitte folgende Elemente im Aufbau des Falblattes je nachdem, wie hilfreich Sie sie für das Verstehen der dargestellten Informationen gefunden haben:

	Sehr hilfreich	Hilfreich	Weiß nicht	Nicht hilfreich	Absolut nicht hilfreich
Falblatt ist nur einem Aspekt der Siedlung gewidmet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aufteilung der Informationen in kleinere Absätze	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Darstellung der Hintergründe zur Mietskasernenwohnung durch Kurzinformation und Bild	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nutzung von historischen Fotos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nutzung von Überschriften	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vermeidung von vielen technischen Begriffen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nutzung von historischen Zitaten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Um mehr über die Bedeutung der Siedlung zu erfahren, welche Informationsquellen würden Sie vorziehen?

- Internet-Präsentationen
- Bücher
- Faltblätter, Broschüren
- Öffentliche Vorlesungen
- Infotafeln
- Führungen
- Hi-Tech Präsentationen (z.B. Handy-Führung)
- Ausstellungen
- Andere



4. Haben Sie durch das Falblatt mehr über den Aspekt der Grünflächen erfahren?

Ja     Nein     Weiß nicht     Ich habe das alles schon gewusst

5. Würden Sie behaupten, dass Sie durch das Falblatt den Aspekt der Grünflächen besser verstehen?

Ja     Nein     Weiß nicht

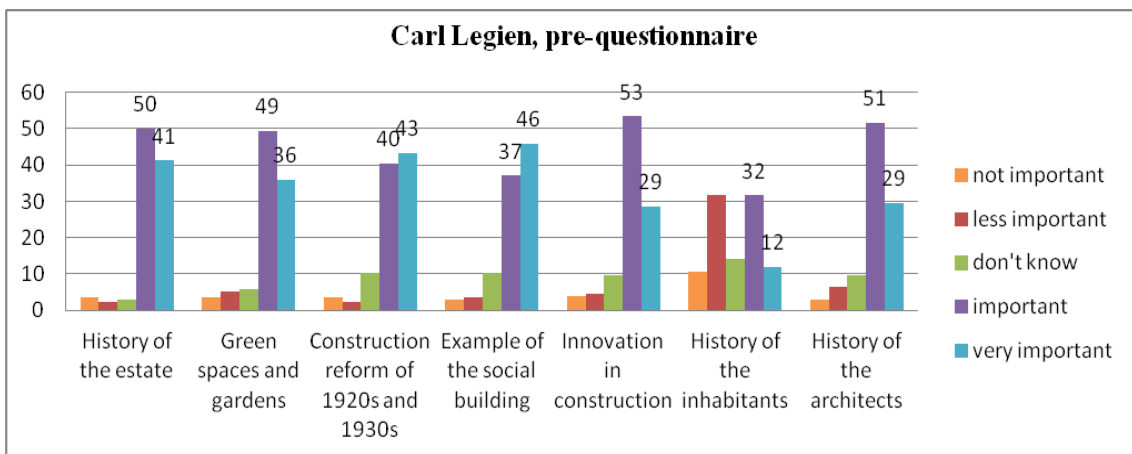
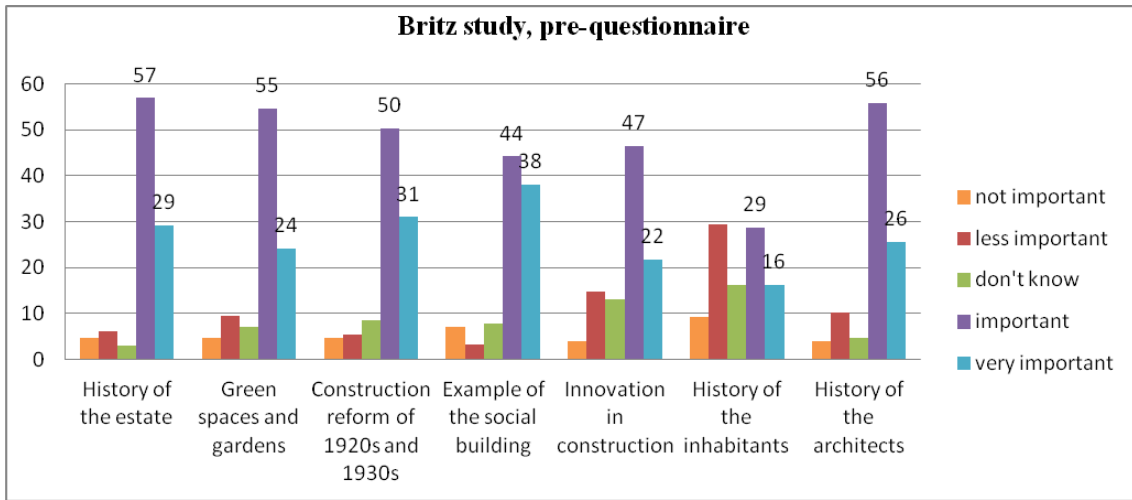
6. Bewerten Sie bitte folgende Elemente im Aufbau des Falblattes je nachdem, wie hilfreich Sie sie für das Verstehen der dargestellten Informationen gefunden haben:

	Sehr hilfreich	Hilfreich	Weiß nicht	Nicht hilfreich	Absolut nicht hilfreich
Falblatt ist nur einem Aspekt der Wohnstadt gewidmet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aufteilung der Informationen in kleinere Absätze	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Darstellung der Hintergründe zur Mietskasernenwohnung durch Kurzinformation und Bild	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nutzung von historischen Fotos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nutzung von Überschriften	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vermeidung von vielen technischen Begriffen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

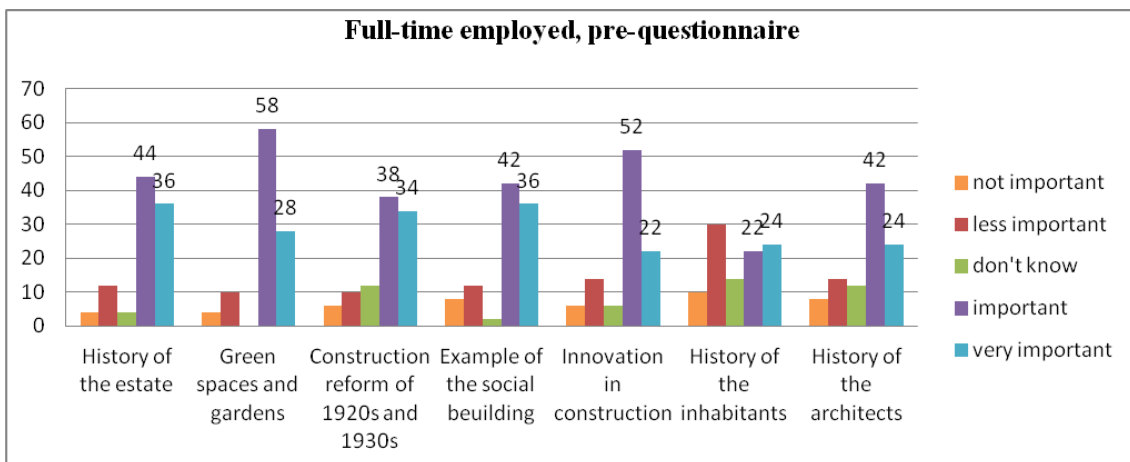
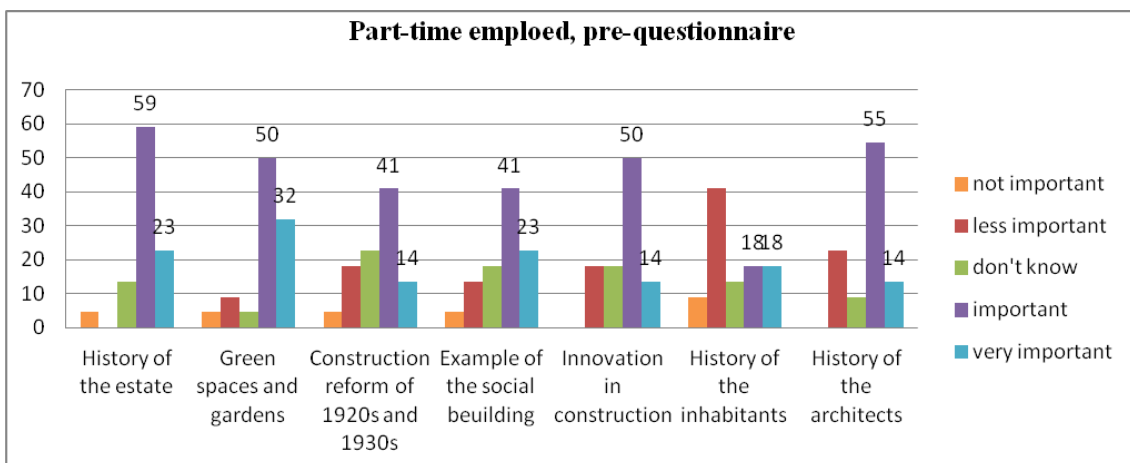
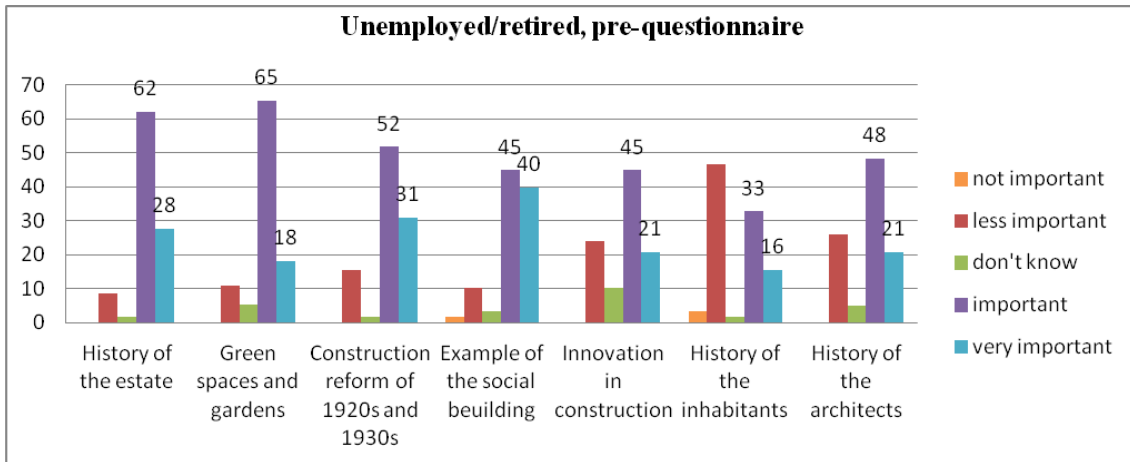
7. Um mehr über die Bedeutung der Wohnstadt zu erfahren, welche Informationsquellen würden Sie vorziehen?

- Internet-Präsentationen
- Bücher
- Faltblätter, Broschüren
- Öffentliche Vorlesungen
- Infotafeln
- Führungen
- Hi-Tech Präsentationen (z.B. Handy-Führung)
- Ausstellungen
- Andere

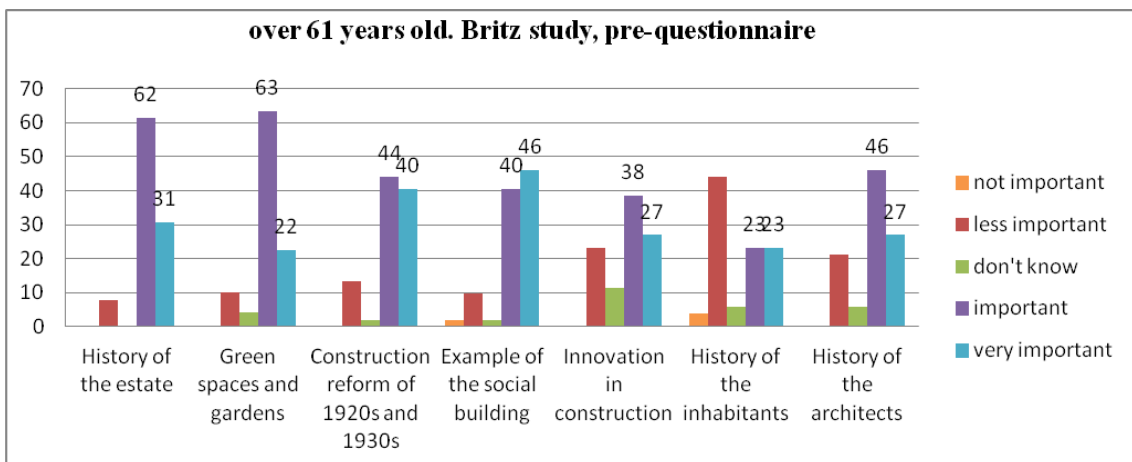
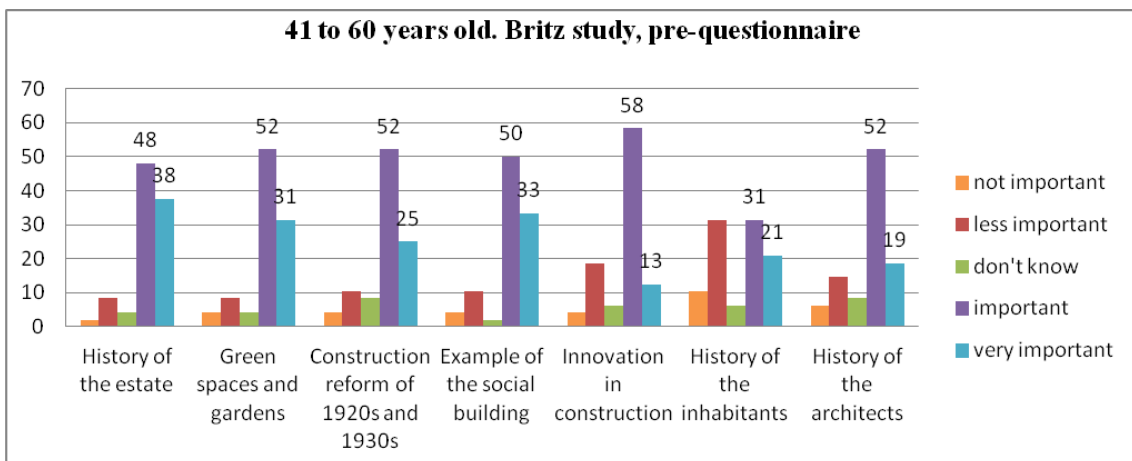
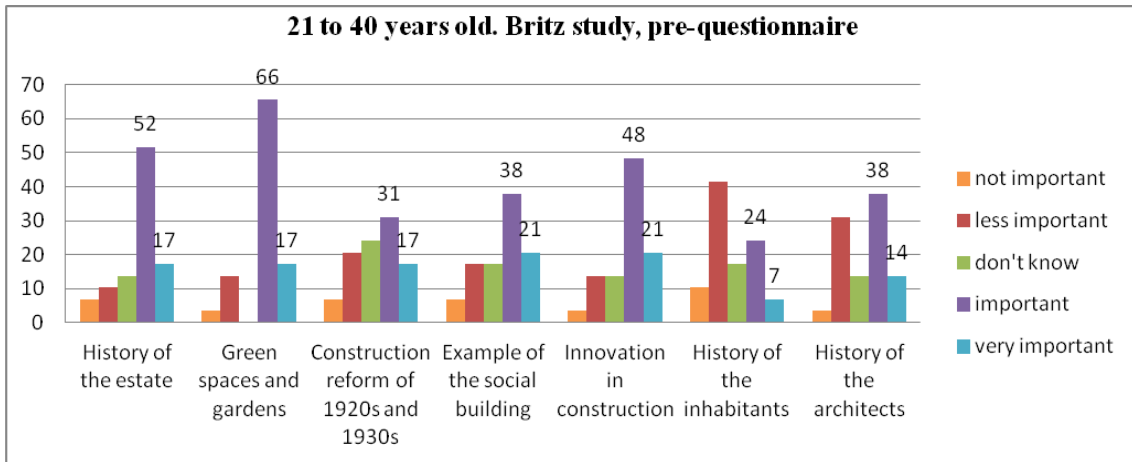
**Appendix 6: Respondents' evaluation of the site aspects on their importance when they have to be presented to tourists**



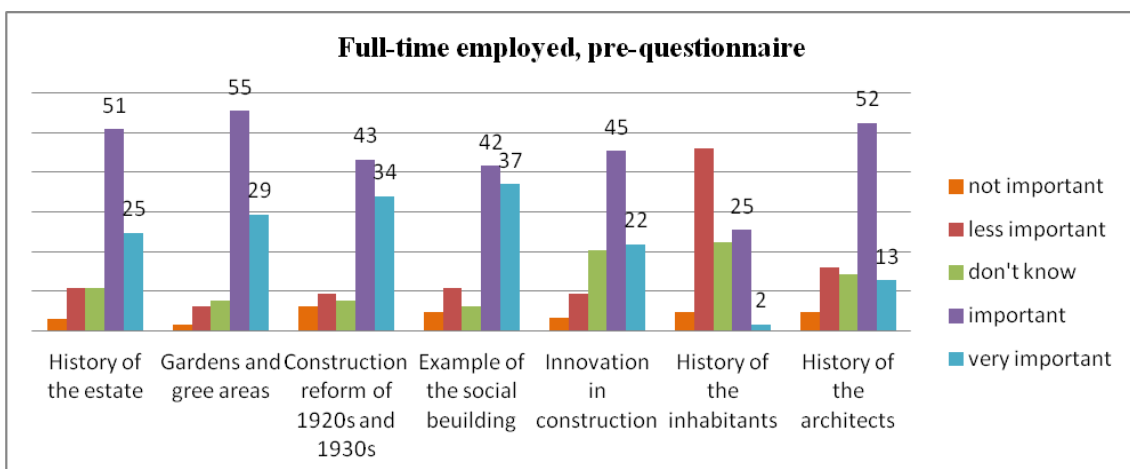
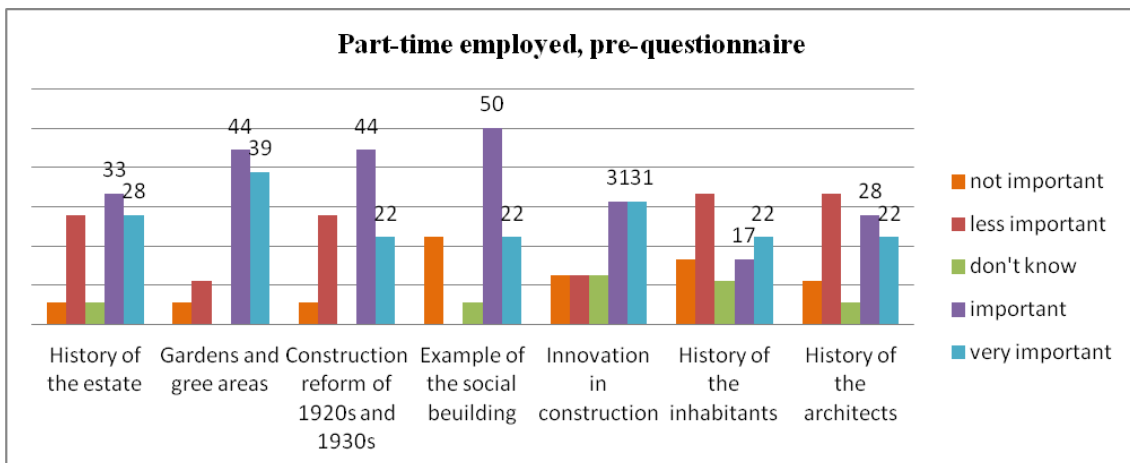
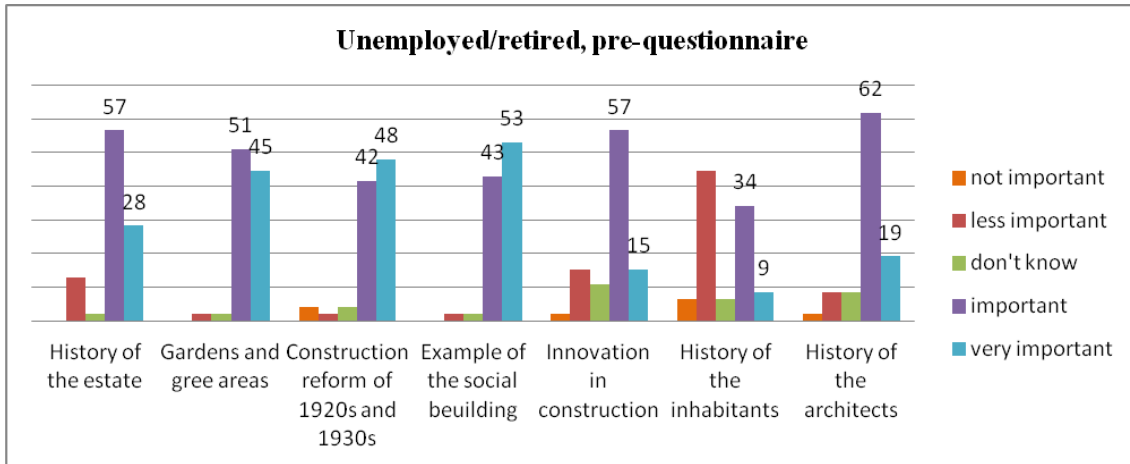
**Appendix 7: Attitudes of the respondents to the aspects of the estate according to their occupational status, the Britz study.**



**Appendix 8: Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance according to age groups**

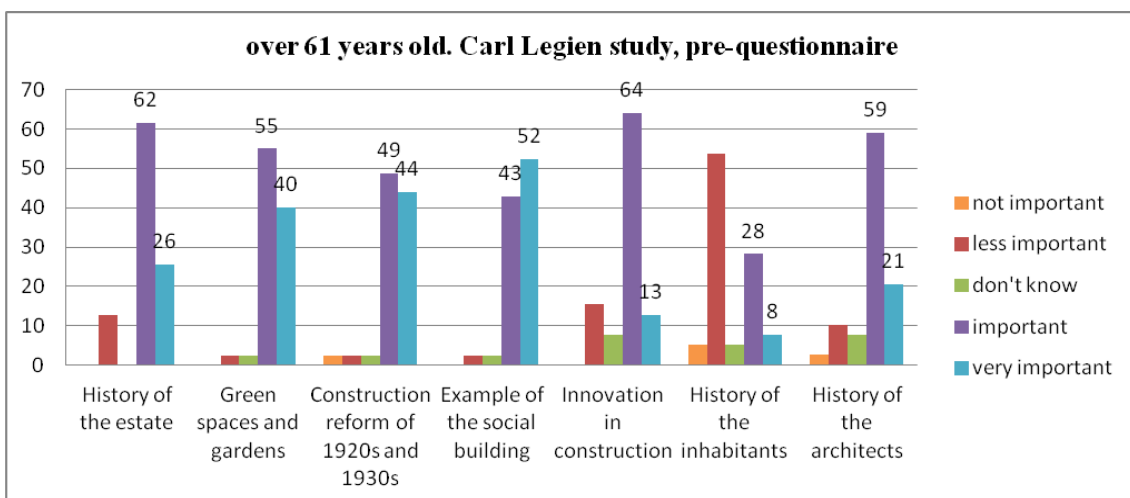
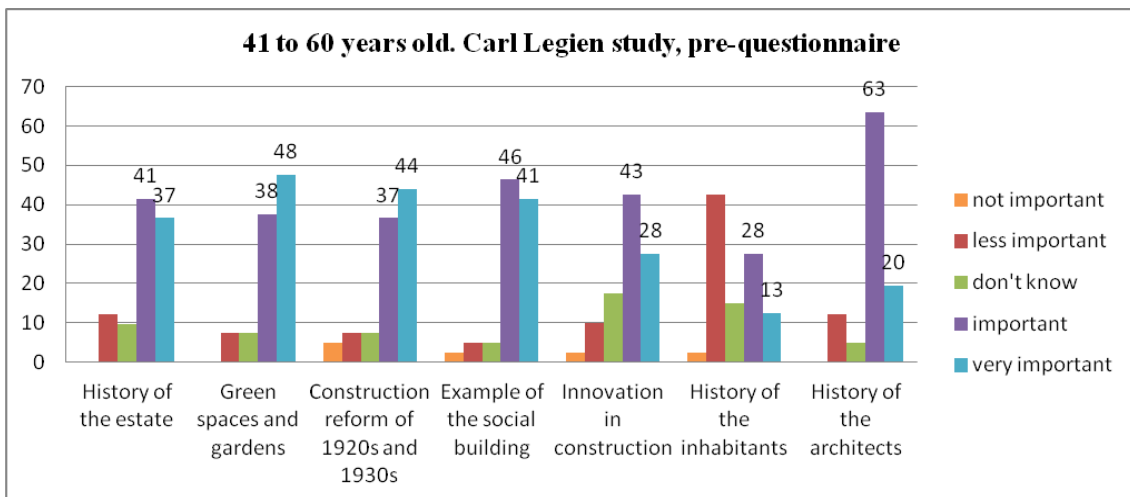
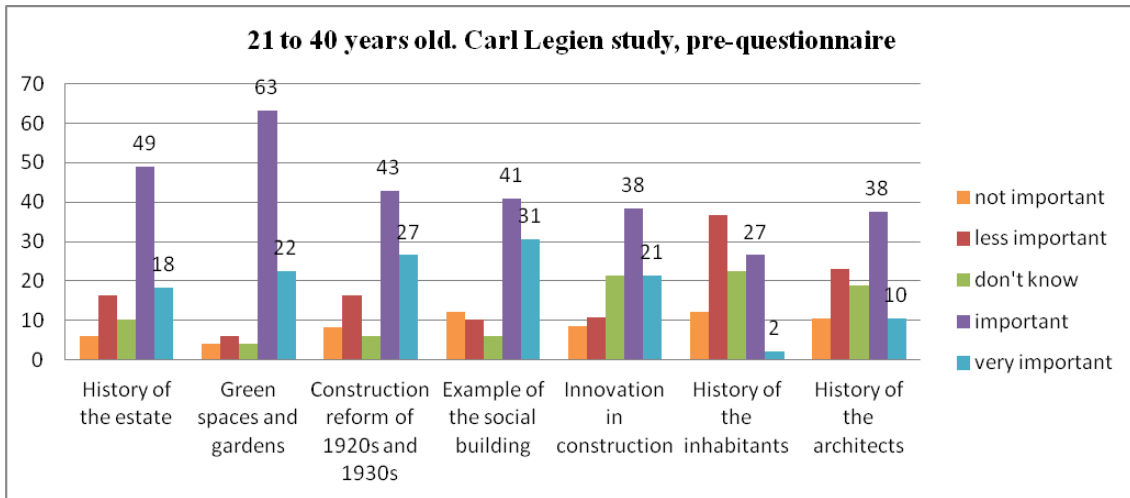


**Appendix 9: Attitudes of the respondents to the aspects of the estate according to the occupational status, the Carl Legien study**

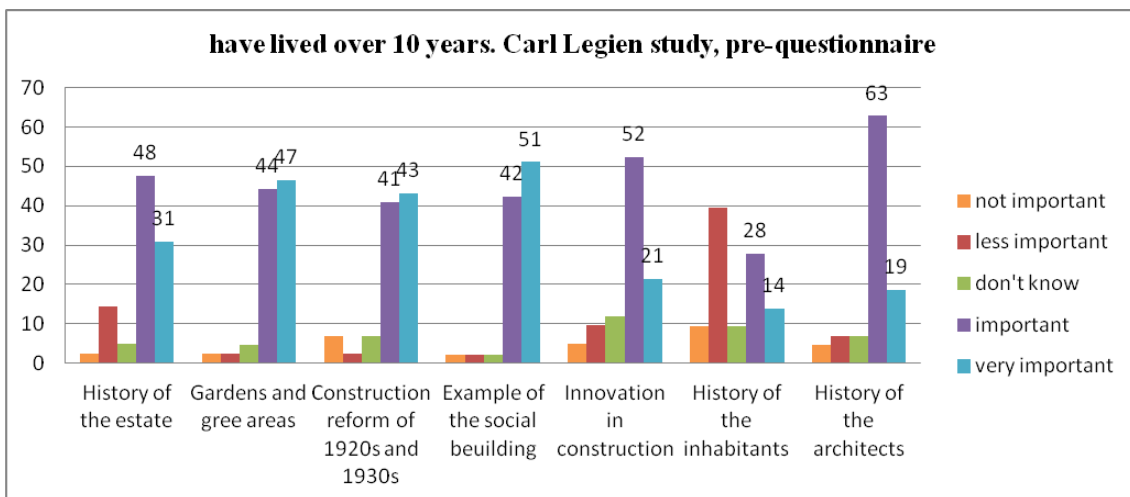
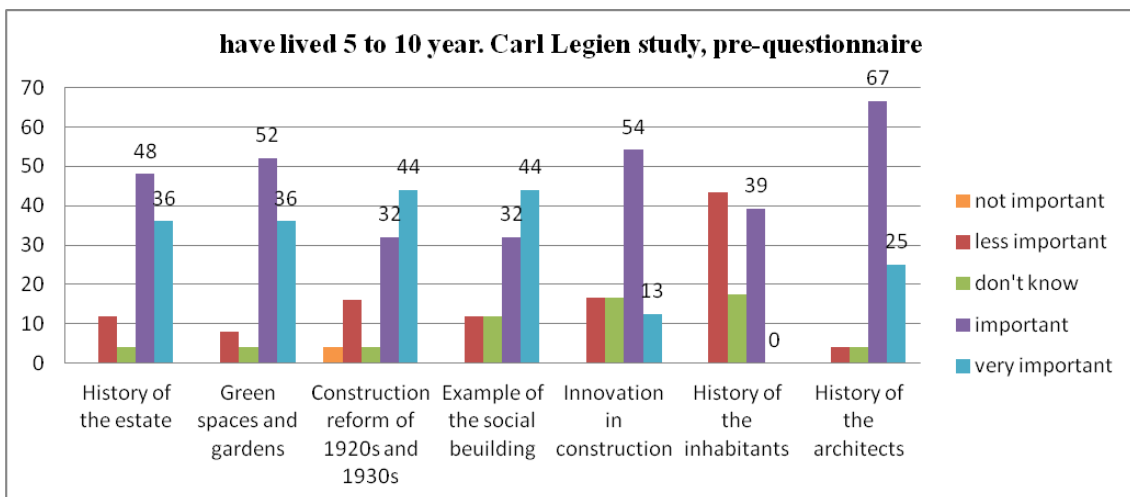
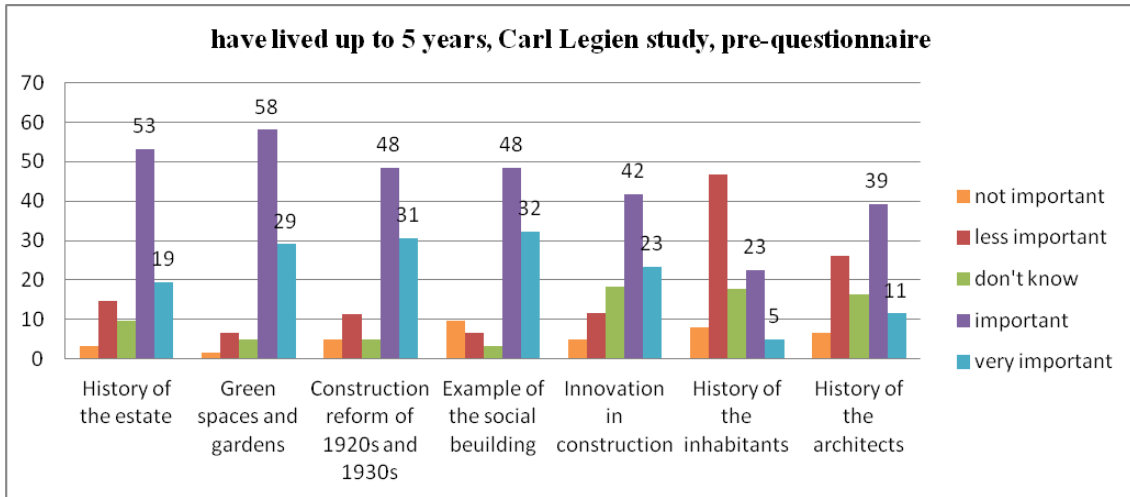




**Appendix 10: Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance according to age groups**

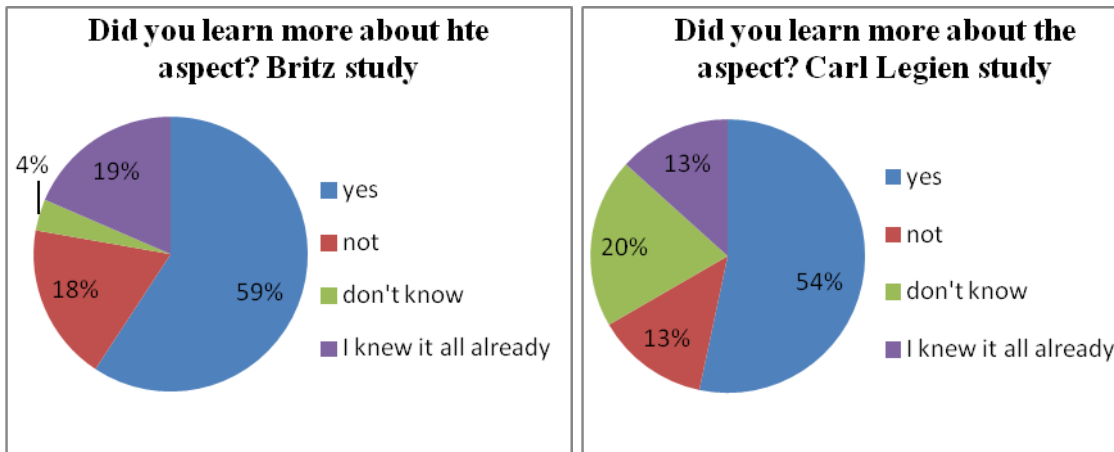


**Appendix 11: Attitudes towards the aspects of the estate significance according to the length of living, the Carl Legien study**

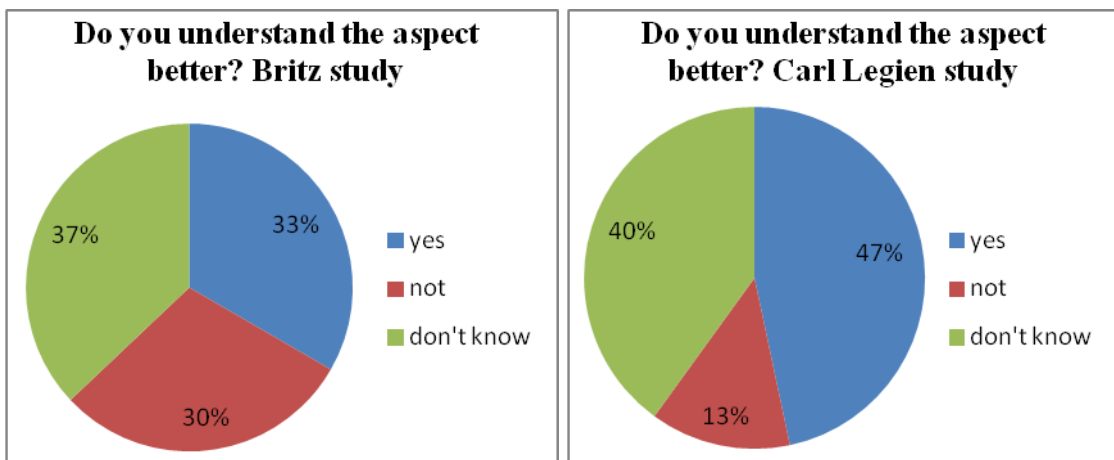


## Appendix 12

Distribution of respondents, who skimmed through the leaflet, according to the knowledge gained from the leaflet



Distribution of the respondents, who skimmed through the leaflet, according to the level of understanding of the aspect



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