

# Heritage interpretation – reaching beyond our parks

Thorsten Ludwig

Siggen Seminar, 18-20 March 2018



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Yosemite National Park, USA  
Glacier Point Trailside Museum,  
Herbert Maier, 1925

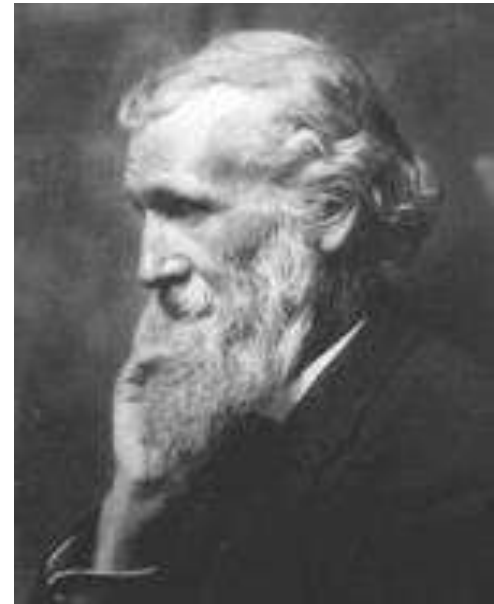


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# John Muir

“ I'll interpret the rocks,  
learn the language of flood,  
storm and the avalanche.  
I'll acquaint myself with the  
glaciers and wild gardens,  
and get as near to the heart  
of the world as I can.



*John Muir 1871 in Wolfe, L. (1978) The Life of John Muir.  
Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 144*



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# The interpretive triangle



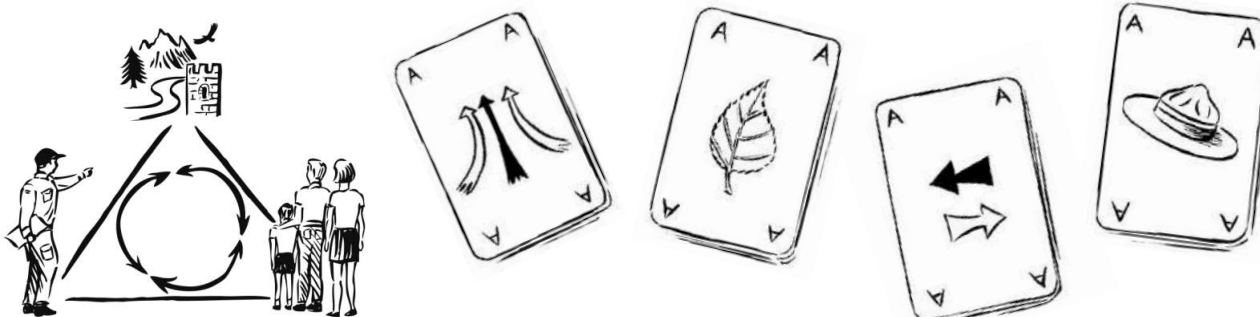
How can we help people  
to connect to their heritage?



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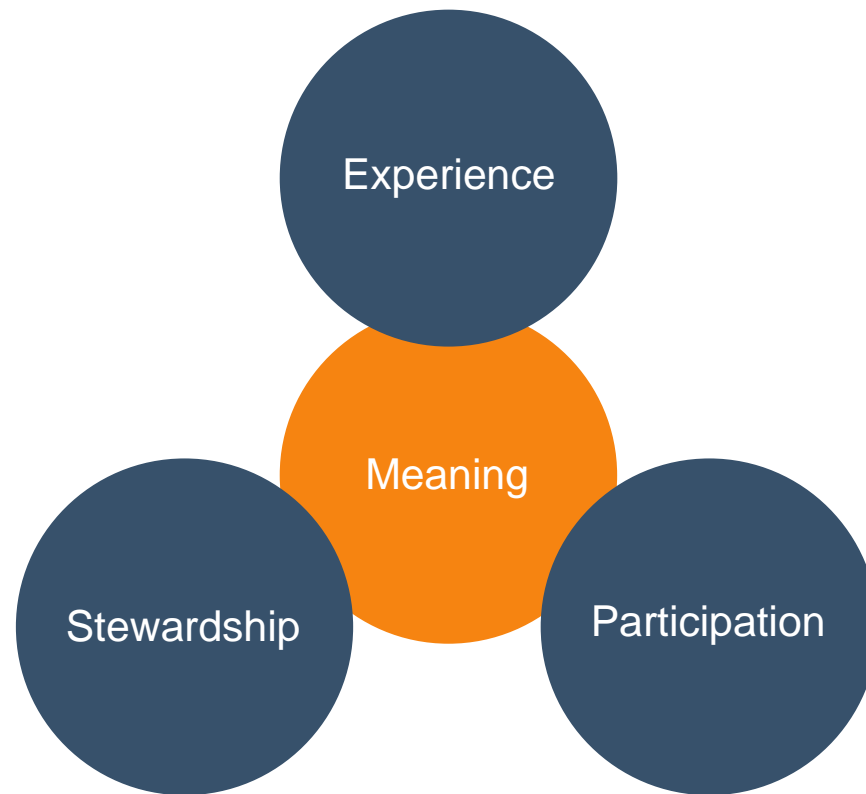
# The interpretive triangle

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



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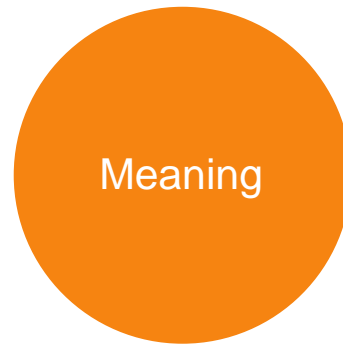
# The interpretive triangle



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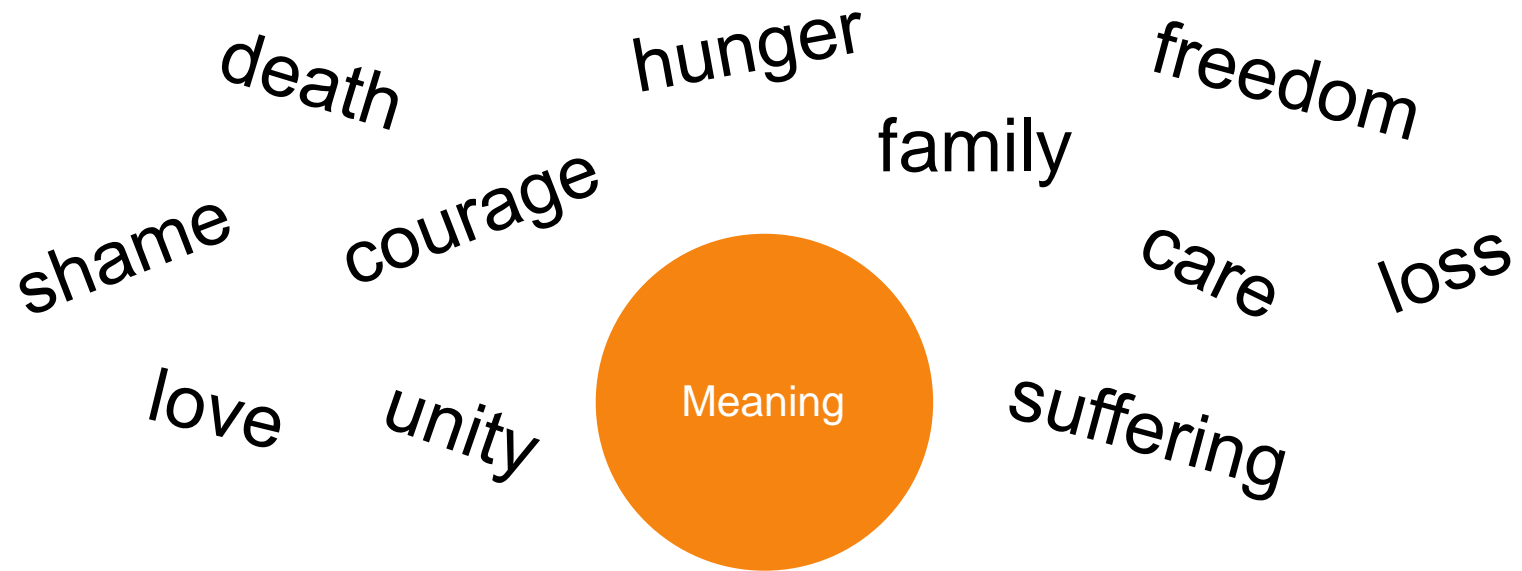
# Meaning: What really matters

How does something become  
meaningful to us?



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# Meaning: What really matters



Universal concepts are meaningful  
to almost all people around the world.

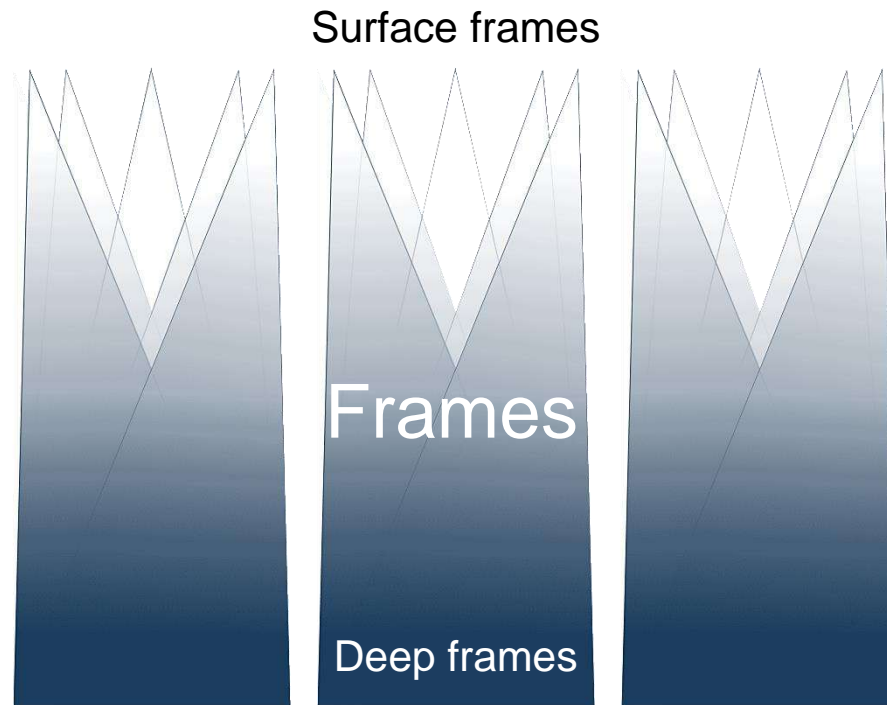
*Brown, D. (1991) Human Universals. New York: McGraw-Hill*



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# Meaningful concepts are **framing** facts



## Home

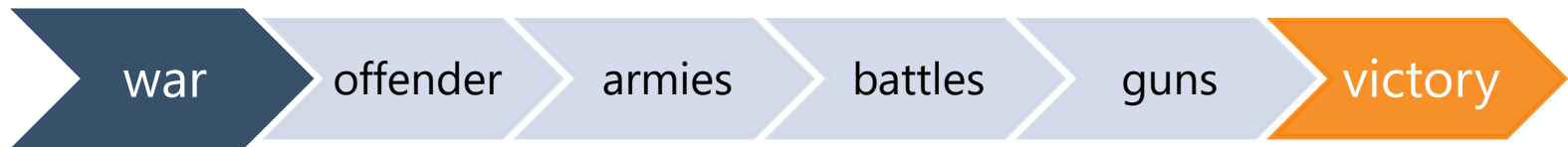
could consist of a house and garden, a room with a table, chairs, a cupboard etc...

...but in fact 'home' could mean much more to us.

*Darnton, A. and Kirk, M. (2011) Finding Frames  
London: Bond for International Development: 78*

# Meaningful concepts are framing facts

## 9/11 and the 'War on Terror'

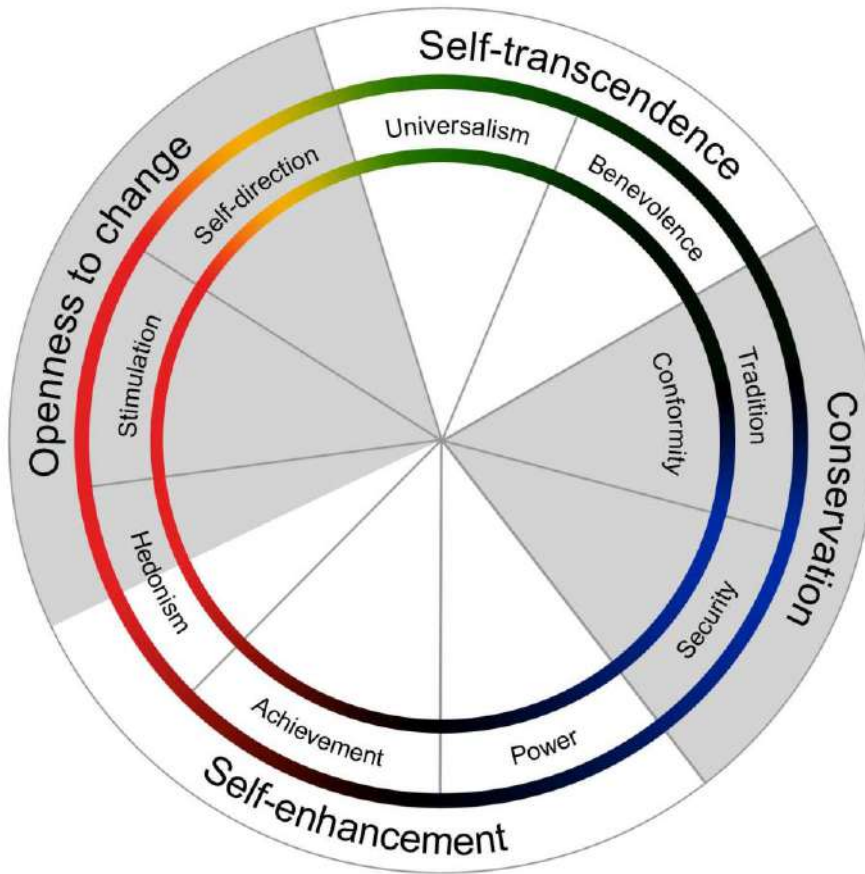


*Brought up by Lakoff, G. (2008) The Political Mind. New York: Penguin*



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# Frames include values



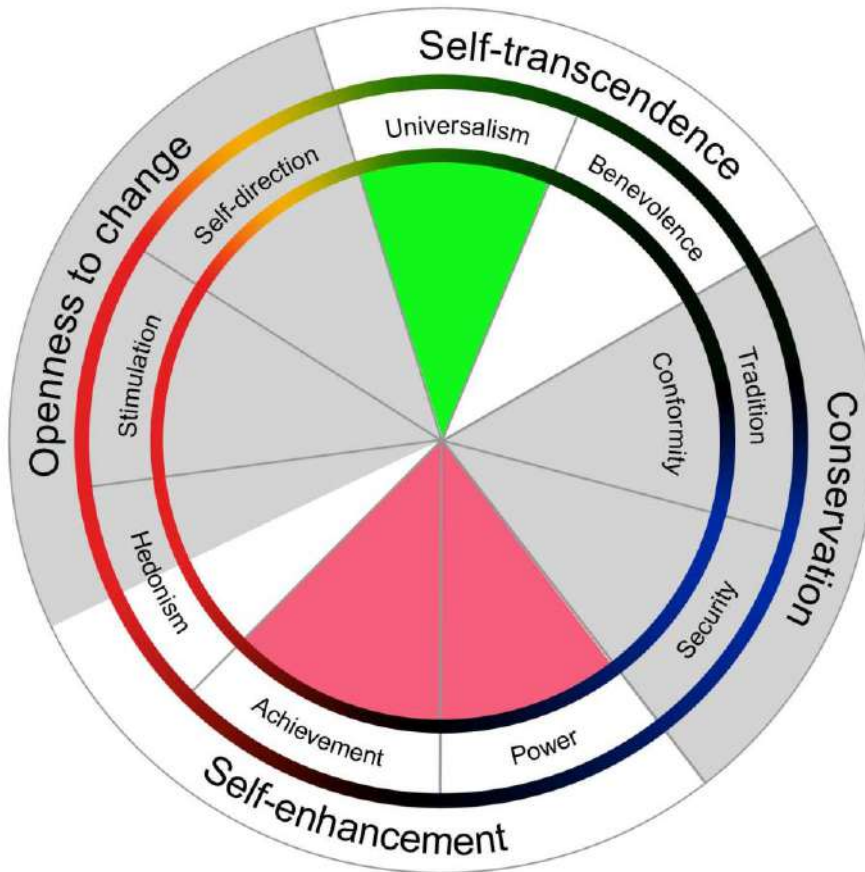
Based on:  
Schwartz, S. H. (1992)  
*'Universals in the content  
and structure of values:  
theory and empirical tests in  
20 countries'*. In  
*Advances in Experimental  
Social Psychology* (Vol. 25).  
ed. by Zanna, M. New York:  
Academic Press: 1-65



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# Values abolish opposing values

## Seesaw effect



Based on:

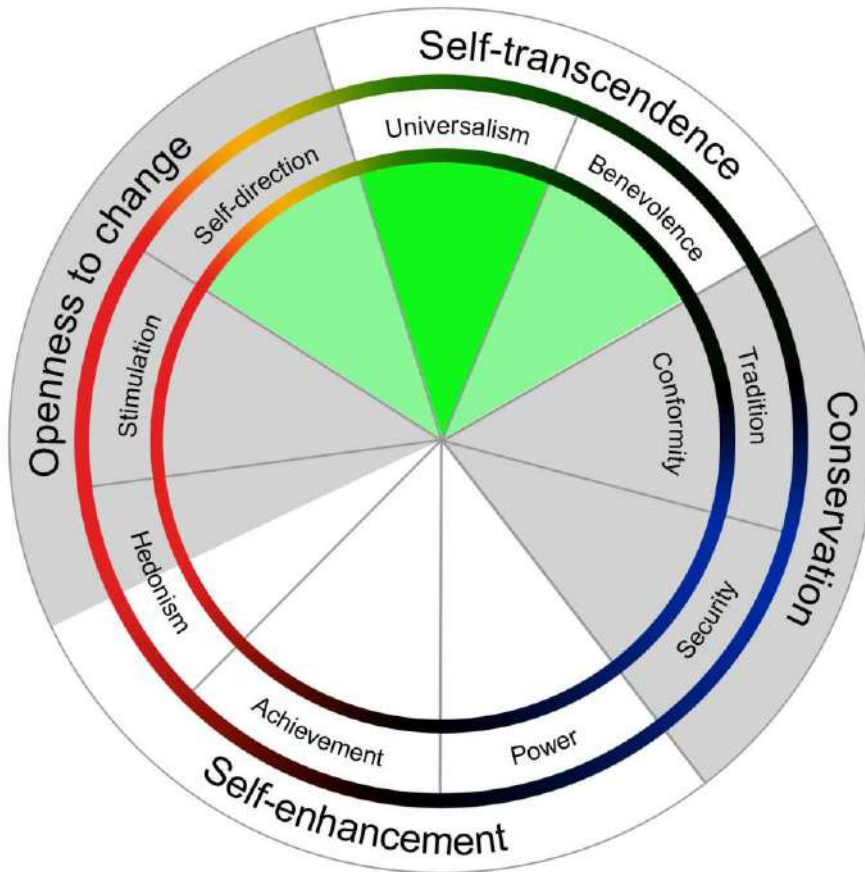
Schwartz, S. H. (1992)  
*'Universals in the content and structure of values: theory and empirical tests in 20 countries'*. In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 25). ed. by Zanna, M. New York: Academic Press: 1-65



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# Values stimulate neighbouring values

## Spillover effect



Based on:

Schwartz, S. H. (1992)

*'Universals in the content and structure of values: theory and empirical tests in 20 countries'.* In

*Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 25). ed. by Zanna, M. New York: Academic Press: 1-65



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# Europe at the test bench

*dignity*

*respect*

*rule of law*

*solidarity*

*equality*

*diversity*

*pluralism*

*tolerance*



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# Europe at the test bench

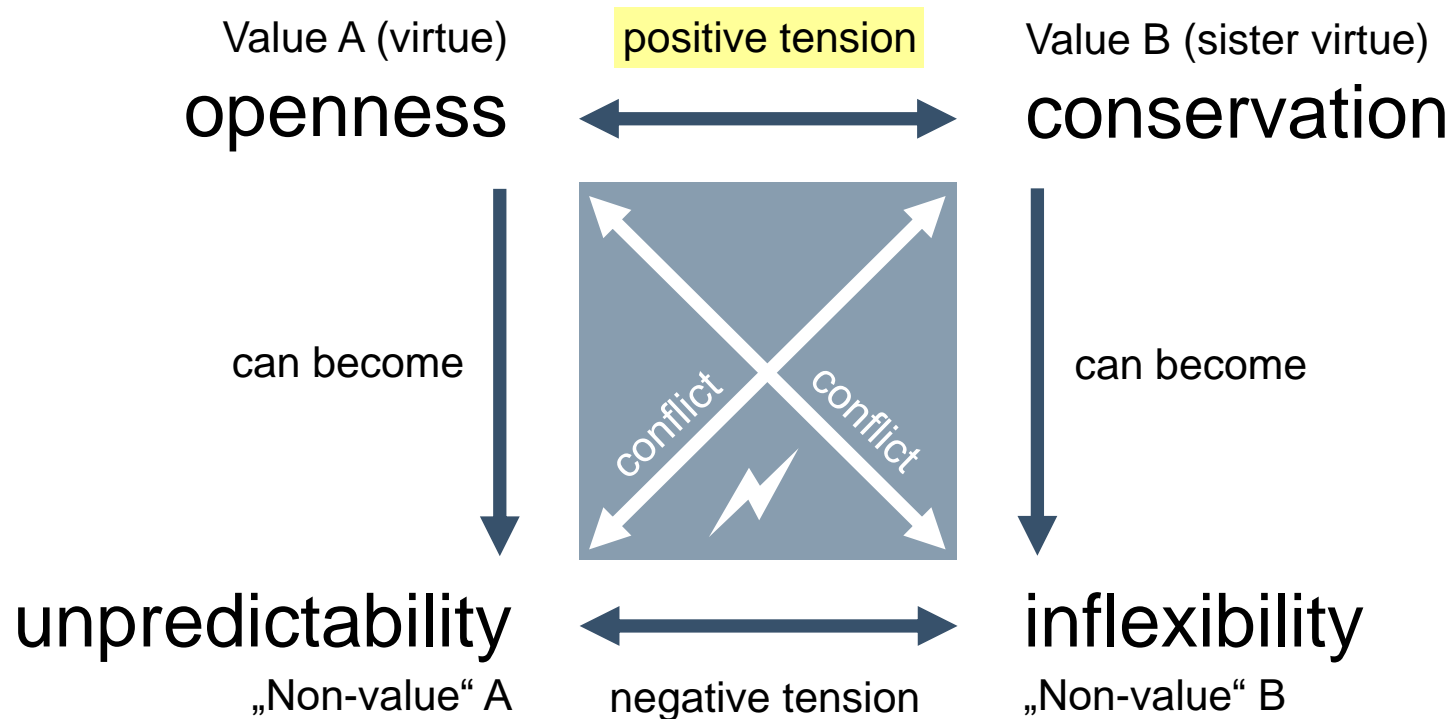
dignity  
populism  
equality  
respect  
nationalism  
diversity  
rule of law  
protectionism  
pluralism  
solidarity  
euroscepticism  
tolerance

How can heritage interpretation help  
to change these tendencies?



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# Interpretation as mediation?

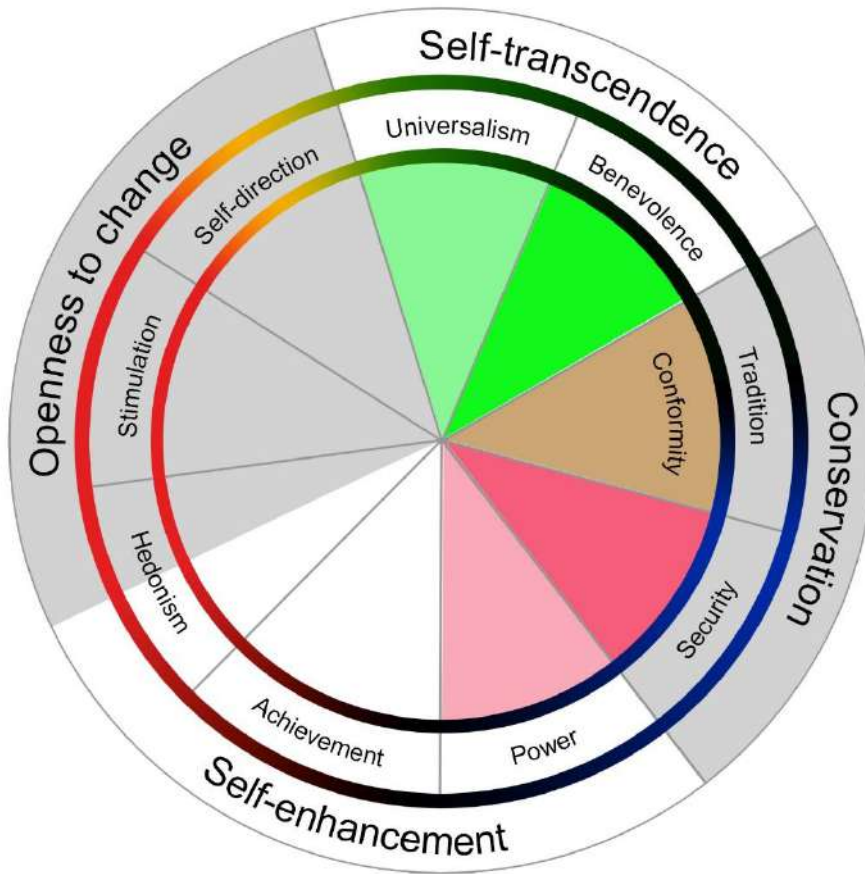


*Based on: Helwig, P. (1965) Charakterologie. Stuttgart: Ernst Klett*



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# Interpretation as mediation?



Based on:  
Schwartz, S. H. (1992)  
*'Universals in the content  
and structure of values:  
theory and empirical tests in  
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*Advances in Experimental  
Social Psychology* (Vol. 25).  
ed. by Zanna, M. New York:  
Academic Press: 1-65



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Giardino di Ninfa  
Italy





# Valuable background reading



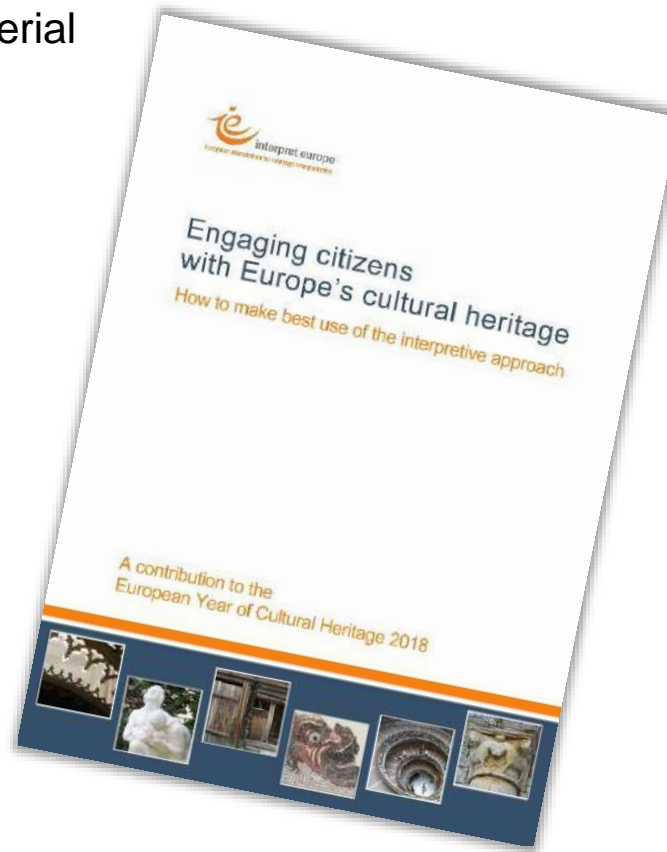
[www.valuesandframes.org](http://www.valuesandframes.org)



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# Valuable background reading

[www.interpret-europe.net/material](http://www.interpret-europe.net/material)



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# The role of heritage interpretation

“ Through interpretation,  
I believe heritage can contribute  
to the building of communities,  
not just at local level but also  
on national and European levels. ...



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# The role of heritage interpretation

“ ... Bringing citizens closer to their heritage is about bringing them closer to each other, and this is an important step towards a more inclusive society.

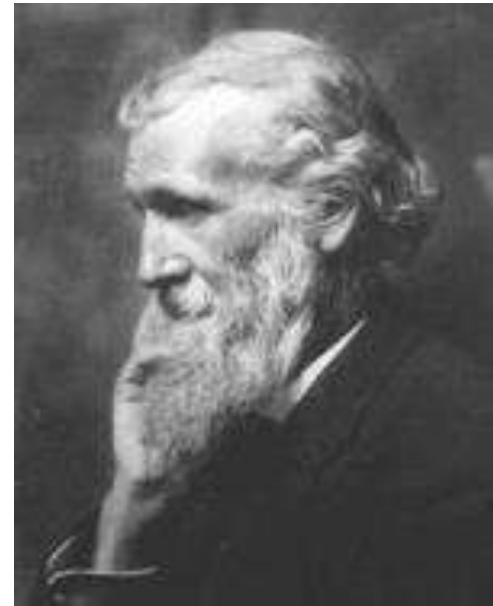
*Tibor Navracsics*



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# Engaging citizens through heritage...

...does not mean  
interpreting heritage for  
them but encouraging them  
to search for their own  
deeper meaning.



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# Shared European heritage



*Michael Glen (IE) 2014 at Senckenberg Museum Germany*

Video: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=E5xSTKslizI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E5xSTKslizI)



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# Thank you

[thorsten.ludwig@interpret-europe.net](mailto:thorsten.ludwig@interpret-europe.net)

Picture credits:

Wearsunscreen (2), Sierra Club (3, 23), Ludwig (15)



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