Heritage interpretation – reaching beyond our parks

Thorsten Ludwig

Siggen Seminar, 18-20 March 2018
Yosemite National Park, USA
Glacier Point Trailside Museum,
Herbert Maier, 1925
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.

The interpretive triangle

How can we help people to connect to their heritage?
The interpretive triangle

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

- Experience
- Stewardship
- Participation

Meaning

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Meaning: What really matters

How does something become meaningful to us?
Universal concepts are meaningful to almost all people around the world.

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.

London: Bond for International Development: 78
Meaningful concepts are framing facts

9/11 and the ‘War on Terror’

Frames include values

Based on:
Values abolish opposing values

Seesaw effect

Based on:
Values stimulate neighbouring values

Spillover effect

Based on:
Europe at the test bench

dignity
respect
rule of law
solidarity
equality
diversity
pluralism
tolerance
Europe at the test bench

How can heritage interpretation help to change these tendencies?
Interpretation as mediation?

Value A (virtue)
openness

Value B (sister virtue)
conservation

unpredictability
„Non-value“ A

inflexibility
„Non-value“ B

can become

can become

positive tension

negative tension

Interpretation as mediation?

Based on:
Giardino di Ninfa
Italy

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Valuable background reading

www.valuesandframes.org
Valuable background reading

www.interpret-europe.net/material
Through interpretation, I believe heritage can contribute to the building of communities, not just at local level but also on national and European levels. …
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
Engaging citizens through heritage…

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

Michael Glen (IE) 2014 at Senckenberg Museum Germany
Video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=E5xSTKslizI
Thank you

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