A glimpse into the crystal ball: how do we select the memory of the future?

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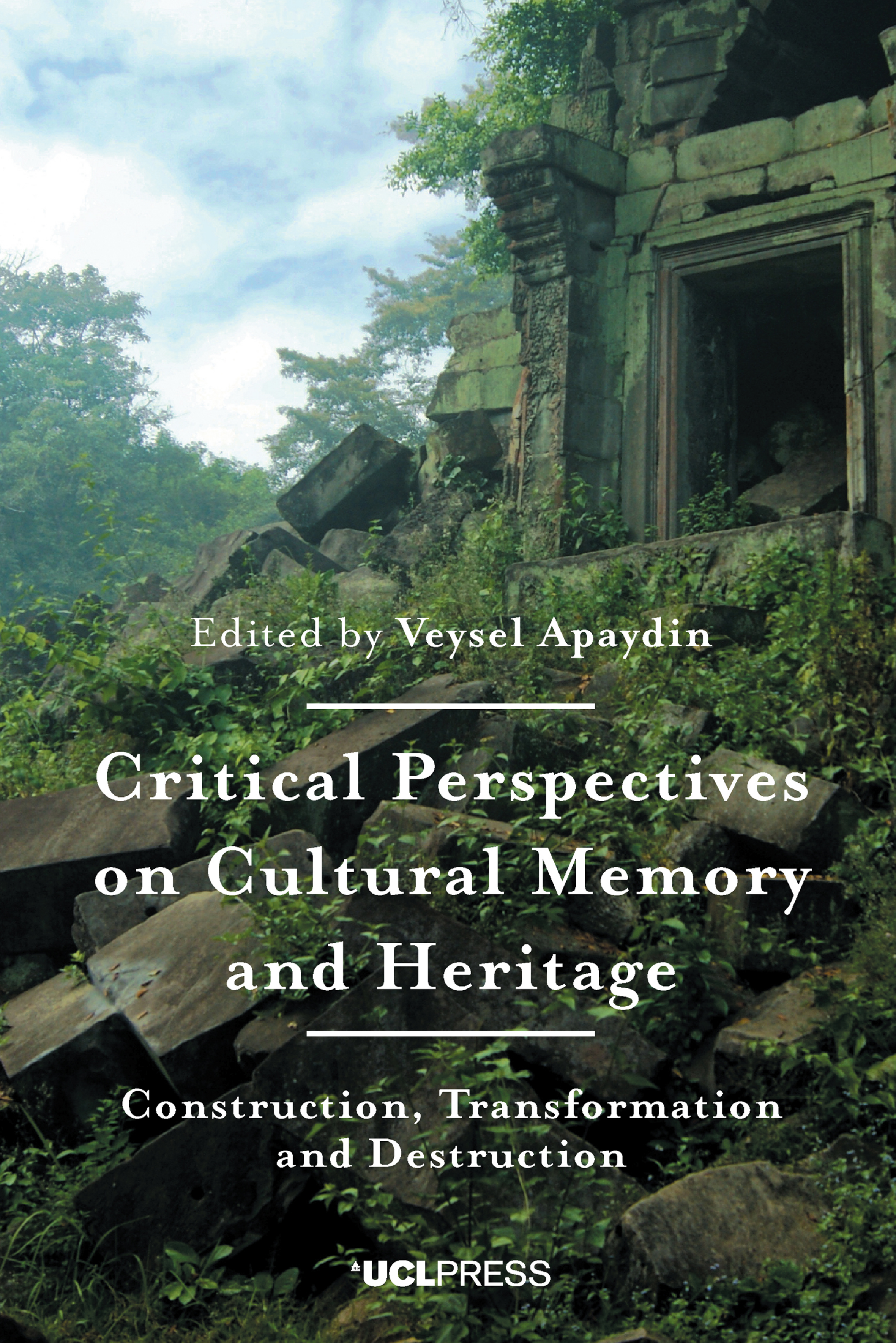

Edited by Veysel Apaydin

Critical Perspectives on Cultural Memory and Heritage

Construction, Transformation and Destruction

UCLPRESS

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For the displaced

Contents

List of figures

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17

A glimpse into the crystal ball: how do we select the memory of the future?

Monique van den Dries and José Schreurs

One of the principal motives of heritage management is the bequest value – the value contemporary people place on resource as something to be handed on to future generations. Heritage professionals work on behalf of future generations, 'who are expected to be grateful' (Holtorf 2008, 125). They consider this stewardship an important duty: the wish to bequeath is everywhere, from the UNESCO World Heritage Convention to national and local heritage policies. This volume is no exception, given the observation in its introduction that cultural heritage, and the memory it embodies, is considered vital for individuals, groups and communities, particularly in forming collective identities, both today and in the *future*.

Given this ambition, one would say that heritage professionals would do their utmost to enable the heritage they select for the future to play this role. But do we, and can we? How do we select the memory of the future? Despite the fact that we work on behalf of future generations and the bequest value is one of our prime motives, the authors' experience relates that the future and those who will receive the bequest do not really play a role in our daily practice. They are not taken into account in decision-making processes, nor do they sit at the decision table: they are not empowered.

We believe that in a volume concerned with memory, identity, conflicts and destruction, we also need to reflect on our actions in terms of preventing and mitigating conflicts – not just now, but also in the future. The reason for doing so is that the heritage we protect today, the decisions we make in the present, can become a potential source of conflict in the future. Back in 2003, Cooke already warned that the inexorable expansion of the heritage burden does *not* have to be 'gratefully accepted by future generations as a precious, unalterable and inalienable bequest' (Cooke 2003, 77). We therefore use the invitation to contribute to this volume as an opportunity to reflect upon our practice of selecting archaeological monuments and its possible impact on future generations. In our opinion the archaeological sector in the Netherlands should give this more thought than it has hitherto done.

To start with, we could ask ourselves whether contemporary heritage managers can actually decide about the memory and identity of the future. However, such a philosophical debate would go beyond the scope of this volume. Alternatively, we may approach the question from our experience as heritage professionals, expected to act as stewards and to teach students to take on this role. We wonder how durable the choices we make in contemporary heritage management actually are. What strategy is deemed successful, and for whom: for us, for the heritage, for future generations, or for all three?

If we want to take this moral duty – working in the service of the future – seriously, rather than merely accepting it as a rather meaningless buzz-word (see Van den Dries 2015), we have to think of ways critically to assess this inter-generational sustainability. But so far it does not seem to be a serious field of study. We do not know what the bequest value really means. How do we see those who will receive the heritage bequest, and how can the stakes of the future be incorporated in our practice? With the exception of the critical volume by Cooke mentioned above (Cooke 2003), which reflects on the growth of heritage in Ireland and the burden it would put on future generations, there is little literature on the issue. While it is more widely present in environmental studies, a literature search yielded little in relation to heritage management. Only Högberg et al. re-opened a discussion on the matter (Högberg et al. 2017). Their interviews with heritage professionals in various countries across the globe confirmed that the future is not thought about a lot – mostly because it is considered difficult to conceive of ways in which to address issues relating to the future (Högberg et al. 2017).

The authors of this chapter believe that we *can* address such matters and take a look into the crystal ball, or at least try to do so. We will illustrate this by following the value-based approach to heritage. It provides us with arguments into why we should take the future recipients of our bequest into account, enabling us to consider them as a stakeholder group whose perspective we may assume. Our stage will be the designation of national monuments, our most precious gifts to the future.

Theoretical context: the values-based approach

Much of our heritage management practice is grounded in the values-based approach. It departs from the idea that in our Western society, heritage – be it tangible or intangible – only exists if people care, if anyone values it. Values give things significance (Avrami et al. 2000, 7). Or, to cite Howard: 'people and their motivations define heritage' (Howard 2003, 7). Most heritage therefore is the result of the fact that people care, and want to keep and safeguard it.

It is from this perspective that we acknowledge that the reasons why people care can vary strongly from one individual to another, and usually differ from one object, site or historic event to the other. Consequently the values associated with heritage can be of all sorts and more than one at a time. As values may differ from one stakeholder or rights holder to another, they are often dissonant. As a consequence, heritage can be strongly contested. It may provoke local, national and even international conflicts, of which this volume shows some painful examples. Conflicts may be expressed as local protests over planning decisions, but they can also lead to intentional destruction of cultural heritage, disrupting relationships between communities or nation-states.

In the hope of avoiding or mitigating conflicts, many scholars have stressed in the past couple of decades the importance of including multiple stakeholders in defining heritage values (see, for instance, Smith et al. 2010 for an overview). This need for democratisation, social inclusion and empowering those who will be affected by heritage decisions is a widely accepted principle that is echoed in (international) policy documents on cultural heritage – even though our day-to-day practice is often not yet fully tuned to it.

A second point of departure is that all of this applies not only to present-day society but probably also to societies of the future. According to Howard, 'things actually inherited do not become heritage until they are recognized as such' (Howard 2003, 6). As heritage is continually recreated (Avrami et al. 2000, 14), identification plays a vital role in its construction. This suggests that unless societies cease to value heritage at all, future generations will also be making choices concerning what they consider their heritage. In fact, they may have even more heritage to choose from than we do, as they will have a longer past. As such, we have no reason to believe there will be no conflicts over heritage in the future, nor that heritage destruction will cease to occur. However, today's heritage managers seem to assume that not much will change (see again Högberg et al. 2017), perhaps because they implicitly think of a not so very distant future (idem). Yet this is an unrealistic assumption. It is actually very likely that the values which future generations may attach to heritage will change (see also Holtorf 2011). However, we do not anticipate such a development.

Support for the expectation that concepts of value are very likely to change can be found in the fact that 'our generation' attributes already different values to heritage (either buildings, sites, landscapes, objects or intangible heritage) than former generations did. This becomes apparent when we compare, for example, the 1964 ICOMOS Venice Charter – which considered preserving and revealing the aesthetic and historic values of a monument a principle aim of heritage work – with the 2005 Faro Convention of the Council for Europe, which encourages us to recognise that objects and places are important not for their intrinsic value, but because of the meanings and uses that people attach to them, and consequently the values they represent. Such changes suggest that what present-day society considers important with regard to selecting heritage, along with the values we apply and prioritise, may not be the same for upcoming generations, in the same way that we do not value everything, and for the same reasons, as previous generations.

Survey results among the public also suggest interest in heritage may differ between generations (Kajda et al. 2018; Van den Dries and Boom 2017). Among the Dutch respondents, for instance, we saw significant deviations in the level of appreciation for archaeology between older and younger age groups; 77 per cent of young people (18–24) were convinced that archaeology is useful, against 93 per cent of those aged 60 years and more. Moreover, 81 per cent of older people (60 and older) indicated that they valued having local archaeological remains, compared to a much lower percentage of 65 per cent for the 18–24 age group (Van den Dries and Boom 2017).

A third indication that things change over generations is the fact that contemporary heritage managers, governments, organisations and owners responsible for taking care of the heritage legacy they inherited from the past are not always pleased with all of it. We will discuss this later in this chapter. It is even likely for the procedures of heritage selection and designation to transform into more democratic processes in the future. For example, in cultural heritage management politics and policies strong tendencies can be seen towards empowering stakeholders, public consultation and participatory governance.

From the perspective of a values-based approach to heritage, we would expect attention for those the heritage sector wishes to bequeath material to. However, in practice heritage managers like us try to serve the future and to influence the memory of the past for the future, without showing much regard for what this future may be. Up until now, democratisation attempts are usually primarily motivated by avoiding conflicts in the present. We do not yet think in terms of democratisation of future generations, although they are among our prime target audiences and the ones most affected by our current actions. We do not consider them as stakeholders. Nor do we pay much attention to the idea that things may change in the future. We hardly pause to consider whether future generations will accept what we designate as heritage to be their legacy too. As such, paying attention to the effectiveness of our policies in the long run, and how we may serve the future recipients in the best way we can, is not high on our priority list. To demonstrate our lack of empathy for these recipients further, and to illustrate how such attitudes may annihilate our present-day efforts, we will call in our imaginary 'future friend'.

The imaginary future friend

Imagine a future friend. This is an individual whom you do not know and will never get to know. It will be impossible for you ever to meet this person, as s/he will be born long after we have left the planet. Yet you are determined to buy this person a present, to offer her or him a legacy from the past (both 'our past' and 'their past'). One factor that may complicate your choice is that this person will be responsible for the costs of maintaining your gift during his/her entire life, as s/he is also expected to pass it on to his/her (unborn) descendants.

The principal question is what could motivate this individual to respect the values underlying your purchase, and to keep and even maintain your present? Or, to put it differently, what could you do – right now – to ensure that your intentions will be respected and you will succeed? Would the best strategy be merely to select what you like best yourself, to choose whatever you value most, and simply hope this future friend will like it too – and will be willing to spend part of his or her (presumably limited) financial resources on it in order to pass it on? Or are there perhaps alternative strategies to consider – ones that may increase the chances that we will succeed in our efforts?

Obviously we cannot know what our future friend will consider the best option. If 'the past is a foreign country', to refer to Lowenthal's well-known book (a title that in turn quotes L. P. Hartley's novel of 1953, *The Go-Between*), we may consider the future an extra-terrestrial planet. In fact, we cannot even know whether our imaginary friend will turn out to be a friend. However, we *can* use our own common sense, experience, imagination and creativity to figure out scenarios that are *least* likely to help us reach our goals. If we are required to buy a present for someone we know, someone acquainted with our culture, our common sense would probably tell us the scenario described above is the least likely to have the most successful outcome, both for ourselves and for the legacy that we want to pass on. This is simply because it fails to take any interests of the person receiving the gift into account. One would probably not opt for this strategy.

By imagining what *we* would prefer, we may think of reasons for our imaginary friend to keep and maintain our gift. If *we* were to be bequeathed something, it is quite likely that we would take care of the gift if a) we knew that there is a very special story attached to it; b) we were aware of the buyer's strong emotional attachment to it; c) we knew that it would be valued by a large group of people (a representative group of society); and d) if there was something in it for us as well, for instance if the value of the gift would increase instead of primarily becoming a burden.

In the context of our fictitious narrative, the self-centred attitude ('you are expected to like what I like') could be perceived as rather arrogant. Yet in the practice of heritage selection, of choosing archaeological sites to become monuments, which most of us consider our most precious gifts to future generations, we usually apply precisely this strategy. The experts decide, on the basis of non-emotional, objective (usually scientific) criteria. They do this for good reasons, of course, but these reasons are first of all fed by our own stakes. They lie in the here and now, in part because we have to convince authorities, planners or developers of the need for protection measures. But we hardly explain *why* we prioritise these over other values, or why we value the scientific potential of a site, for instance, more highly than the social value it may have for society. The process has also little to do with emotions: it is all about the rationale behind the selection and the objective, scientific story. This means that an emotional attachment to it by large groups in society is often not considered. And what about the added value of our gifts for those who receive them? How does it gain value for them? We may presume that the scientific potential will bring an increase of value, but it is also acknowledged that precisely scientific value highly depends on changeable trends in research (for example, Groenewoudt and Bloemers 1997, 133) and may suffer the most from devaluation.

In the next section we will look at the practical context of the mainstream selection process of archaeological monuments and see how the stakes of the future recipients of our 'gifts' fit in. The example is taken from the Netherlands, but we assume that most of what we describe applies in essence to many other nation-states.

Selection and designation of national monuments

In the Netherlands, as in many other countries across the world, designation of national archaeological monuments is the exclusive task of the national authorities. In our case the Cultural Heritage Agency (*Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed*, or RCE) designates archaeological sites as national listed monuments on behalf of our Minister of Education, Culture and Science. A site with such a monument status will be legally protected from demolition, at least for some time. The legal mandate for designation decisions is the Heritage Act (9 December 2015), which says in Section 3.1:

> Our Minister, acting ex officio, may designate a monument or archaeological monument which is of general interest because of its beauty, scholarly significance, or cultural-historical value as a national monument.
>
> (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 2016)

The selection of a site, and its designation as a monument, is based on objective criteria. The basis for this was laid down in the 1990s, when objective criteria became essential to negotiate and argue for protection, either in situ or ex situ (Willems 1997; Groenewoudt and Bloemers 1997). The criteria for valuing sites are described – and as such imposed – by the Dutch Quality Standard. These are:

a) the intrinsic quality of a site: that is, its rarity, research potential, group or context value and its representativeness;
b) the physical quality of a site: that is, its integrity and degree of conservation;
c) the aesthetic value and/or historical value of a site.

The last criterion only concerns sites that are actually visible in the landscape. This is hardly the case with newly discovered sites, as these are found by means of excavation or other, less destructive techniques. Next to these criteria, it is furthermore required that the local circumstances are suitable for the long-term preservation of a site. This means that support by local authorities is needed; support by landowners is preferred, but is not strictly necessary.

Over time, the principles underneath the conservation ethos have changed considerably. When the listing of archaeological monuments started, in the 1960s, there was a strong emphasis on protecting archaeological remains that were visible in the landscape, such as burial monuments and dwelling mounts (Van Haaff 2006). As a result of a very active protection policy in the 1970s and 1980s, many of those were listed. In the 90s the focus shifted towards protecting and designating sites with invisible archaeological remains, and to gaining insight into the cache of sites available in the ground (Deeben 2015). The most recent objective of the national preservation policy has been to protect a representative sample of our past as monuments for future generations (Smit et al. 2014).

The result of over 50 years of designating national archaeological monuments is a collection of around 1500 protected archaeological sites. This is at present our principal legacy for future generations. For some years the Cultural Heritage Agency and the Minister of Culture have not been entirely satisfied with the composition of this monument list. The main issue was, and is, that it is not considered sufficiently representative of the past (Schut and Vossen 2009; Smit et al. 2014). Due to the selection legacy of the last couple of decades, which has favoured visible monuments, these are represented best. In particular burial monuments and dwelling mounds dominate the list (Fig.17.1). Ritual places, sites for raw material procurement, sites relating to industry and craft and maritime sites are currently hardly represented (Zoetbrood et al. 2006).

In regard to the historical periods represented, the current list has also few monuments from the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods, the early Neolithic era, the Bronze Age (apart from Neolithic/Bronze Age burial mounds) or the early mediaeval and modern periods (Fig.17.2). The distribution of sites across the country is also considered unbalanced.

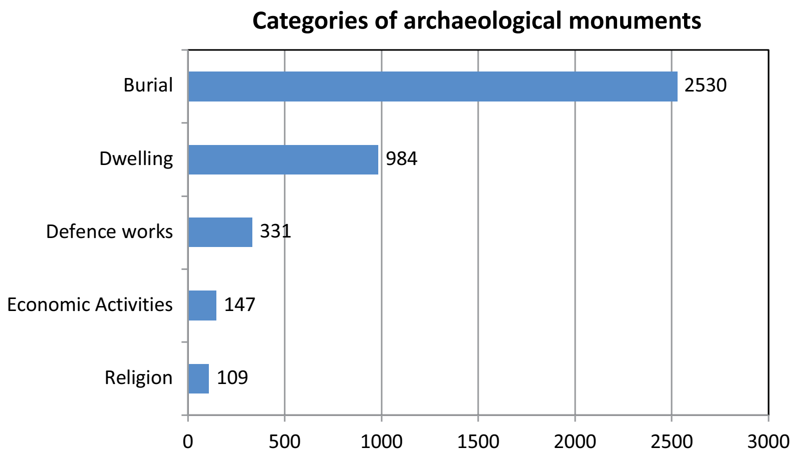

Figure 17.1 The national archaeological monuments of the Netherlands, subdivided into categories (Source: RCE)

The western provinces, with their Holocene geological deposits in which most of the archaeology lies deep beneath the surface, have far fewer monuments than do the eastern provinces, in which most of the visible monuments, such as burial sites, are located (Fig.17.3).

In the last couple of years the Cultural Heritage Agency has placed more emphasis on protecting monuments that are underrepresented. In 2013 it composed a protection programme to designate 28 new monuments (Smit et al. 2014). However, due to the fact that adding sites to the monument list is a long process, certain historic periods and complexes will remain underrepresented for many years to come.

If we look at this designation policy from the perspective of a future recipient, and consider his or her possible motives for respecting our choices, we can identify some additional issues. The first relates to its emotional value, the level of attachment shown to the gift by society. Even though the Dutch Heritage Act (2016) talks about monuments as places 'of *general* interest', the prime motivation for selection remains how sites are valued by professionals for their research potential they offer present-day scholars. Their intrinsic value is thus put first. There is very little emotional value attached to their selection – at least not in a form apparent to outsiders. This also applies to the monuments assigned to the tentative list through the 2013 protection programme – maybe even more so, as invisible monuments have hardly any aesthetic value.

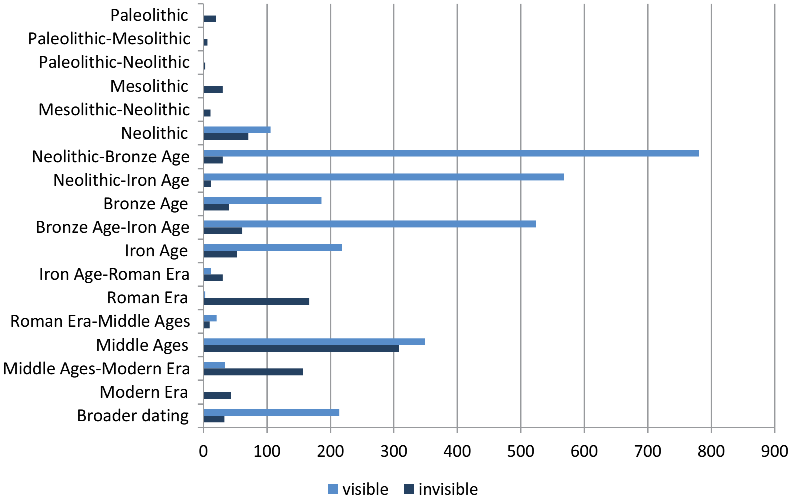

Figure 17.2 The national archaeological monuments of the Netherlands, subdivided into historic periods (Source: RCE)

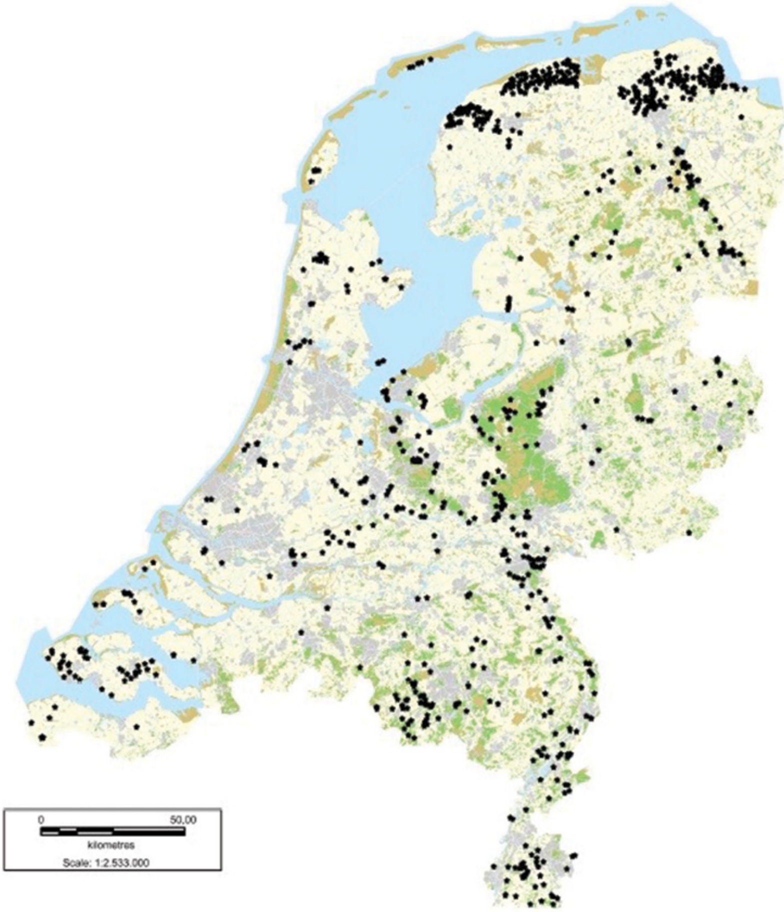

Figure 17.3 The national archaeological monuments of the Netherlands, as distributed across the country (Source: RCE)

Moreover, selections to date have primarily been made in a top-down manner. Even though heritage managers act on behalf of society, this does not help to foster emotional attachment to monuments among large groups in society. The lack of emotional attachment to monuments shown by many ordinary people is illustrated by some recent studies. In Apeldoorn, for instance, it was found that a majority of respondents to a small survey sample had not consciously noticed the archaeological monuments (burial mounds) abundantly present near where they lived (Van Vuuren 2014). Another survey found that if stakeholders think their interests are neglected in the process of constructing archaeological monuments, they may believe that a historic identity is being imposed on them (Amsing 2015, 100).

Another issue with the current designation policy concerns the objective of representativeness and its disconnection with the motive of added value. The authors consider 'representativeness' to be a conservative concept, because present-day heritage managers can only be representative in relation to *their own state of knowledge*. It is, however, very likely that we have so far missed lots of traces from the past. These may be discovered in the future using innovative methods not yet invented – even as we have discovered new things with modern DNA analyses, geo-archaeology and high-tech, non-intrusive instruments. Thinking in terms of representativeness implies we do not select *potential* heritage sites as protected areas – a site we know nothing about, but which may have a good research potential, for example because it has ideal preservation conditions. By failing to preserve and protect such unknown sites, we make it less likely that future generations will be able to discover this unknown. The concept of representativeness, therefore, does not take the interests of future stakeholders, such as the next generation of academics, into account.

If we seek to take the interests of future generations more seriously, we ought to be altruistic and ensure they are also given opportunities for discovery. From a scientific point of view, it could therefore be argued that we should also protect locations with a *potential* heritage value for future generations, and so instal parks of undisturbed areas as 'playgrounds' for future academics. This may be an example of a heritage asset that has the potential to gain value for the recipients of our gift. Even the promise of an increase in value may serve to make such monuments worth keeping for generations in the near and distant future.

Experiments involving stakeholders

The Cultural Heritage Agency is currently rethinking its policy on the designation of monuments and has started the project 'Exploration into Archaeology'. Its new approach maintains that archaeological sites should not be protected for the sake of scientific research alone, but for the benefit of society as a whole. It therefore believes the lack of public attachment to national monuments to be a serious issue that must be tackled. One of the Agency's strategies is to look for the relevance of archaeological monuments to society, and explore how people can benefit from the state's protection of monuments of national significance. It can, for example, transform invisible monuments into places for people to enjoy (Fig.17.4) and/or to generate a living (Fig.17.5).

Another idea is to involve the public in the designation of archaeological sites. The Agency recently experimented with a bottom-up approach involving *Natuurmonumenten,* the Dutch Natural Monuments Society. Normally, this society has no formal role in decision making and selection regarding the archaeological sites, but in the context of the latest designation programme (Smit et al. 2014) it was asked to identify remains from the past that it would prefer to select as monuments.

The Natural Monuments Society is a main stakeholder. It is a non-governmental organisation with about 700,000 members and donors, responsible for protecting and managing about 107,000 ha. of nature reserves in the Netherlands. These parks include a wide variety of cultural heritage, such as fortresses, country estates and archaeological sites. In total the Society manages over 300 sites, dating from the Palaeolithic era to modern times, of which 40 are national archaeological monuments.

In our opinion, this was an interesting experiment. It turned out that of all 27 sites this stakeholder nominated, only three date from early

Figure 17.4 A previously invisible archaeological monument (a Roman fortress), now transformed into a leisure park in Leiden (Matilo). Photograph courtesy RCE.

Figure 17.5 Another previously invisible archaeological monument (a Roman fortress), now transformed into a lively cultural community centre in Utrecht (Hoge Woerd). Photograph courtesy RCE.

prehistory and two from the Iron Age/Roman period. The majority of the sites the Society wished to nominate for gaining monument status (22) date from the mediaeval and modern period. With regard to the proposed categories of sites, it is striking that craft/industry and defence structures dominated the list of *Natuurmonumenten*, the very elements currently most lacking in the official monument list. Equally interesting is that the Society's preference for these sites has turned out to be driven by economic motives rather than scientific values. The sites the Society selected require preservation measures; if they are awarded listed monument status, the national government provides financial support for their maintenance. As four of the nominated sites were actually included in the designation process, the experiment proved both interesting and successful.

To us, this pilot illustrates that by involving another stakeholder group in the selection process of archaeological monuments, different heritage values may be brought to the fore – complementing those that experts in archaeology would prioritise. It indicates that including these stakeholders more widely in the monument designation strategy would yield a greater variety of heritage sites to be considered for preservation.

It also implies that such a process would demonstrate to future generations how these monuments are valued by a large group in society, other than just heritage experts.

Another advantage of such a bottom-up involvement in the designation of the monuments which future recipients will have to care for is that it may foster an emotional commitment, both now and in the near future. As these monuments were not imposed on *Natuurmonumenten* by the state but self-imposed, its employees and members may get a feeling of ownership, responsibility and stewardship. Whether it indeed pays off in the long term remains to be evaluated, but it is more likely that the organisation will respect its 'own' decision of protecting these monuments for many years to come. This seems a more future-proof strategy than imposing decisions of which monuments they are expected to care for.

Apart from *Natuurmonumenten*, other stakeholders are not formally involved in any heritage selection processes. The Cultural Heritage Agency is in the process of asking other professional stakeholders about their interest in getting involved; it seems that a majority has responded positively to the consultation (Vossen and Korf 2018). This corresponds with the findings of students of the Faculty of Archaeology when interviewing stakeholders (for example, Van Vuuren 2014; Amsing 2015). Ordinary members of the public, however, have never been directly involved in any decision making concerning the archaeological heritage and its preservation. We thus lack empirical data on the values and selection criteria that community members would apply and prioritise, were they to be involved in selecting national monuments.

As a result, it is difficult to predict the possible effects of public involvement on the safeguarding of our heritage. We do know, however, that members of the public have sometimes had different interests in the past than professionals may assume. In the earlier mentioned public survey conducted by the NEARCH research group, for example, it was found that interests in archaeology among the public in Europe (Kajda et al. 2018) and in the Netherlands are wide (Van den Dries and Boom 2017). They may not necessarily match the narrow foci local authorities sometimes apply in safeguarding archaeological remains. It demonstrates that without inquiring we cannot know whether our selection of the past represents what society values.

On the basis of the NEARCH survey results, it may also be assumed that, if the public were more aware of archaeological monuments, there might be a greater interest among ordinary people in getting involved in selection policies. Over 30 per cent of the Dutch respondents indicated an interest in being included in decision making regarding archaeology

(Van den Dries and Boom 2017). Although respondents replied to a question concerning local 'archaeological projects', not specifically the selection of monuments, there would seem to be fertile ground for widening community engagement.

Studies on the effects of public participation in other disciplines of conservation management, for instance in National Park management, do show positive effects (for example, Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory, 2002; Wouters et al. 2011). Apart from an improved quality of decision making by agencies, other effects among participants reported by researchers include a greater compliance through an increased feeling of ownership and a greater community advocacy for protection measures. This could well be the kind of emotional attachment that a next generation of stewards may respect. Involving more members of the public would in any case make our monument designation a more democratic process; this would also demonstrate that what we pass on was valued by the transmitting society.

Conclusion

In this chapter the authors aimed to discuss to what extent heritage professionals take the interests of future generations into account while creating memories of the past for the future. We are stewards acting on behalf of the future recipients of our 'gifts', and we may believe we are doing the future a favour. Yet the heritage that we protect, and the decisions we make today, could actually turn out to be a burden for those to whom we wish to bequeath heritage. It may even become a source of potential conflict. The fact that contemporary heritage managers are not always satisfied with what they have inherited from the past, nor with the selections from the past that they pass on, illustrates that we in turn may fail to satisfy future generations. Yet in ordinary practice we do not really acknowledge that circumstances may change over time, as may the values future generations may ascribe to heritage. We scarcely evaluate our policies and actions against our long-term objectives, nor do we anticipate changes that our crystal balls may foretell.

In assuming the perspective of the future recipients of heritage 'gifts', the authors identified four motives that may be required for them to respect the choices of those who have granted them an inheritance and so to continue stewardship of the heritage we bequeath. This is only the beginning; if the heritage sector takes another look into a crystal ball, there may be several more factors to discover. We took these motives as a viewpoint from which we could reflect upon the current Dutch practice of selecting our archaeological national monuments, our principal gifts to the future, and we noted that such motives do not yet play a role in this. We believe that failing to take the perspective of future recipients into consideration risks the loss of our efforts and investment of time, energy and resources – and eventually the heritage we protected as well. Should we therefore not try to be more ambitious in seeking to reach our goals for the future?

The authors believe that an attempt to incorporate at least the interests and potential values of future generations would make our selection of heritage more sustainable in the longer term. It would also comply with the values-based approach to cultural heritage in which most of our work is grounded.

We do not consider this to be a simple process. However, a further democratisation of our practice would seem to offer a valuable step forward that may also address some of the potential motives of future recipients. We illustrated this by means of an experiment conducted by the state service in the Netherlands (RCE), which included an external (non-expert) stakeholder group in the selection process of national monuments. The results reveal that such an approach has the potential to allow other heritage values to be taken into account and to widen heritage selections. It may also foster an emotional attachment and encourage a wider engagement of society. Ultimately, it serves to make our national memory rather more the memory of us all – and therefore maybe also of future generations.

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