

Communication Model for Built Heritage Assets Going from Knowing to Identification

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ABSTRACT The Communication Model of Built Heritage Assets (COBA) refers to several scientific theories in the realm of learning and cognition. The idea of the COBA-Model is to support and stimulate a more professional heritage communication and a more efficient use of existing resources. Thus, the identification of citizens with their Built Heritage Asset should be increased in order to get their support in allocating more resources to and preserving cultural heritage. It shall also improve the visitor experiences and in doing so enhance the impacts and benefits from different learning situations. At the first level, the identification process only touches the social identity. Over the course of the next stages the citizen will become more actively involved. Finally, at the expert level at stage five, the expert multiplier is enabled not only to communicate the heritage asset and its values, its characteristics and context but to make adequate decisions. Additionally, these stages should help to broaden the horizon of heritage practitioners and stimulate new ideas as well as unconventional ways of heritage communication.

KEYWORDS heritage, communication, interpretation

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Cultural Heritage, Communication and the Discursive Turn

Rodney Harrison has provided a synopsis of the current academic discussion on cultural heritage and how it has changed in his Chapter 'Critical Heritage Studies and the Discursive Turn' (Harrison 2013). The 'discursive turn' that he describes is linked to a several seminal works, e.g. David Löwenthals (1988) book *The Past is Another Country*, Samuels publication *Theatres of Memory* from 1994 or *The Heritage Industry* by Hewison (1987). Harrison sees that in the beginning of the 20th century heritage started with a positivist notion, where the best places and artefacts were selected to be preserved. In different times it changed what was perceived as the best (Harrison 2013). In the context of celebrations for the European Architectural Heritage Year in 1975 European heritage preservation reached a climax in Europe. Legislations and institutions were set up. International organisations namely UNESCO and ICOMOS started already in the 1960s to promote the concept of Outstanding Universal Values as a framework to select heritage site on an international level.

Heritage communication was and still is widely influenced by the conceptual frameworks that have been developed in the US during the 1960s by the US National Park Service and cumulating in Freeman Tilden's book *Interpreting Our Heritage* (1957). The main idea was, that by a dualistic understanding 'nature' and 'past' were separated from the people in the present (Harrison 2013) and therefore they need to be 'translated' to be understood by the people. To manage this translation tools like brochures, signposting, visitor centres, and most important guided tours were needed. The messages to be conceived were at that time controlled by national institutions respective: the US Government, who prioritised and chose what was deemed to be important and subject of learning for the visitors. This 'top-down' approach in the development of narratives can still be found at many heritage sites around the world (Ripp and Göttler 2017). After the discursive turn in heritage studies (Harrison 2013) the academic discussion was more concentrating on how heritage was defined, who were the practitioners and what knowledge-power relations are in place. A debate how heritage has been (ab-) used to support national narratives for example in the field

or archeology (Trigger 1980) or historiography in connection with national narratives (Hobsbawn and Ranger 1983) led to a number of publications that were focusing on issues of representation in the concept of cultural heritage. Harrison (2013) suggests to focus more on the interconnectedness of people, things and their environments in connection with cultural heritage. This notion is already a step towards the understanding of heritage as a system rather than only focusing on sites, artefacts and their respective qualities. The 'discursive turn' in heritage studies also leads to strong arguments for a stronger integration of different academic disciplines and a stronger collaboration. While in the beginning of the preservation movement few disciplines and mainly those focusing on technical aspects were involved, with the intellectual discussion during the last decades many more disciplines contributed to the field (Ripp and Rodwell 2015). The year 1975 was the beginning of more serious efforts to communicate heritage values to an audience beyond experts and decision makers. The concept of heritage interpretation also influenced the growing awareness for the relationship between asset, communicator and target group as Goodey (2006) states: 'With the potential for electronic media, and an increasing involvement of stakeholding communities ... it should be possible to raise the visibility of interpretation, linking conversation, the community and education to a level where the successes of the 1970s can be repeated.' Principle 9 in the *European Charter of the Architectural Heritage* from 1975 states: 'Integrated conservation cannot succeed without the cooperation of all ... the public should be properly informed because citizens are entitled to participate in decisions affecting their environment ...' (ICOMOS, 1975). From then onwards, the perception of the role of citizenship in heritage management and communication changed. In the 21st century the focus-shift from the preservation of individual monuments through later ensembles reached another peak with the ratification of UNESCO's *Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscape* (UNESCO 2011). Today Cultural Heritage is more and more understood in a holistic way '...as a social and political construct encompassing all those places, artefacts and cultural expressions inherited from the past which, because they are seen to reflect and validate our identity as nations, communities, families and even individuals, are worthy of some form of respect and protection.' (Labadi and Logan 2015, xiii) The result of this changed perception is that a larger variety of stakeholders are relevant: previously being merely viewed as affected stakeholders citizens in all their variety were now more frequently described as

an important target group due to their impact on political and socio-economic decisions and developments. Moreover, the ways of communication have changed: the digitalisation of knowledge and information simplifies the access to more elaborate information and democratises the availability of specific subject-oriented knowledge (Borgmann 2010). Furthermore, the various possibilities that derive from digital technologies pose a severe impact on the presentation of information and its perception. Within the 'traditional' field of heritage, there was limited awareness on how definitions of heritage, actors and knowledge-power relationships have been influencing classical 'top-down' concepts of heritage communication (Fielden 1957, Harrison 2013). The case for the integration of a broader range of academic disciplines and an interdisciplinary approach has been made by different authors and institutions (Golinelli 2005, Shalaginova 2012, Harrison 2013). One way this fruitful, potential innovative cross-sectoral collaboration could contribute, is to enhance the understanding of cultural heritage and get a more detailed idea of communication patterns and communication processes. The COBA-Model—Communication of Build Heritage Assets was developed with this background and not only takes innovative tools of communication into account, it also refers to the five strategic objectives of the World Heritage Convention, which UNESCO declared in the Budapest Declaration (2002), including the 'Five Cs' from 2007. COBA supports especially two of the 'Cs', Communication and Community and as a secondary benefit: Capacity Building. Implementing the COBA-Model helps to increase public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage and empowers people to get involved. So the role of the individual and the community are strengthened and this is an effective instrument implementing the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 2002/2007).

In the specific field of cultural heritage the digital revolution and the democratisation of knowledge and expertise led to an even more heterogeneous group of stakeholders, e.g. institutions, NGOs, public and private media as well as private citizens. For instance in Germany the process became apparent through the establishment of the international Master's degree World Heritage Studies (BTU Cottbus 2016) at the BTU Cottbus in 1999 and the implementation of the official UNESCO 'World Heritage Day' in 2005. Europe is preparing at the moment for a second edition of the European Year of Cultural Heritage. A broad consultation process implemented by the European Commission is accompanying the development of the program and specific activities that will take place around Europe

in 2018 (Ripp and Rodwell 2016). The implementation of the well-established WHS program has stimulated together with other initiatives the ongoing scientific interest in the subject. The interest of local communities is for example in Germany facilitated through events like the annual World Heritage Day or the European Heritage Days, which are highlighting the growing interest in cultural heritage. In heritage networks like the Organisation of World Heritage Cities, the topic of heritage communication and connected to this participation is gaining much interest (Ripp and Göttler 2016). With this new popularity and enlarged understanding of cultural heritage, one of the remaining questions is: How can we design and implement efficient and effective heritage communication? How can we focus on the special needs of different target groups? In Regensburg, the discussion about this topic became more intense during the elaboration process of the World Heritage Visitor Centre in 2011 and has continued until it reached today's state of art. To have a theory-based model in the framework of the Herman Project the COBA Model has been developed and tested, as it is described at the project's website. (<http://www.herman-project.eu/>)

Current Situation

Based on our current literature and practical experience and recurring to communication activities that refer to built cultural heritage, three trends can generally be described:

1. The number of communication activities has increased and diversified. In almost every World Heritage city the assets are documented and explained. This information concerning the asset is available and accessible (Ripp and Göttler 2016, Graz 2013, Quedlinburg 2013).
2. The number of professional and private actors has increased, especially following the growing stakeholder involvement activities that started in the early 1970s. All in all, the number of involved actors has risen.
3. Communication flows tend to refrain from being one-directional thus leaning towards a more dialogue-oriented and interactive structure. Heritage is now subject to a large variety of communication tasks carried out in a multitude of ways by many different methodologies. Cultural heritage and its values are communicated through guided city tours, exhibitions, websites, leaflets, books, smartphone apps, websites, games, art lessons in school and many more activities and channels. Nevertheless, many of these actions are developed in a rather unreflective manner. The decision regarding a strategy and which tools are to be used is often based

on experience and assumptions as opposed to documented evidence. Reflection concerning the internal goings-on at the psychological and sociological level of the recipient is rather rare. Therefore, it influences the process of developing actions quite randomly. That is why the first and main objective of this paper is to explain how the COBA was developed and structured. Secondly, it will also be shown how it can facilitate the communication of built heritage assets. In addition, the different stages of the model will be outlined.

Objectives and Use for COBA

The research questions for this article are: What model can we use to enhance heritage communication? How can this model integrate different assets points to stimulate learning? And how can we stimulate not only rational knowledge but also the identification with the asset on a more emotional level? In order to answer these questions and to professionalise heritage communication, we turned to sociology and the term identity first. Identification with heritage is of utmost importance if we want citizens to value heritage assets in the first place or even gain and give more resources to cultural heritage. Without the identification of citizens with the cultural heritage these objectives are very hard to achieve. This poses the question: How can we achieve a higher level of identification?

Heritage and Identity: A Sociological Approach Sociological Definition of 'Identity'—Krappmann and Mead

Tourists give the perfect example for the power of emotional bonding to a place, country or event to built heritage. Emotional relationships arise, when we take something personal. So to facilitate the target group's identification with the built heritage asset it is essential to take the serial stages of the human identification process into account. The COBA refers to several scientific theories in the realm of learning and cognition, but mainly to sociologists Lothar Krappmann and George Herbert Mead. The COBA-Model takes into consideration that identification is something genuinely personal and is highly influenced by internal and external factors, such as the specific cultural and intellectual background, personal interest and circumstances of being confronted with the object of identification. It also integrates the 'Sensory Stimulation Theory' by Philip Johnson-Laird (Johnson-Laird 1983), which states that 'really efficient learning occurs when the senses are inspired and ... greater

learning takes place when multi senses are stimulated'. Thus, multi-sensory learning is one of the most successful ways to address target groups of different ages (Forbes 2003) and leads to better results (Hattie, 2011). In this context, the action-oriented and holistic educational approach seems to be particularly promising. Furthermore, the COBA-Model completes theoretical reflections with concrete, action-orientated proposals for the use of media or methods at the different stages of the communication process. As Johnson-Laird (1983) states: 'the individual personality consists of many elements ... specifically ... the intellect, emotions, the body impulse (or desire), intuition and imagination'. It also refers to the fact, that identity arises always with regard to a different 'other'. To learn that this 'other' and the person itself have a common heritage that they both value is the first step to build a community. So cultural heritage is not to be seen only as a field of individual identification, but also as a canvas where community involvement can be implemented (Buckland 2013). Looking at the COBA-Model, identification with cultural heritage also means the approval of certain values. This gives the communication of built heritage assets a second twist. As Jana Peterkova states: 'Currently the Council of Europe doesn't talk about a unified Europe, but about "the Europe of cultural co-operation", what means to think about Europe with some common principles and values, but at the same time with many different identities on different levels.' (Peterkova, 2003) So the benefit of proper and targeted communication of built heritage is not only the identification with the assets. Beyond this point we build communities who share common values following the premise of mutual respect and acknowledgement.

The Need of Individualised Strategies to Acquire Identification

When dealing with cultural heritage assets one of the objectives clearly is the integration of all stakeholders, e.g. citizens, local and municipal authorities, decision-makers and other relevant groups. Stakeholder support is essential not only to protect and to develop cultural heritage but to raise awareness of the obligation to do so as well. The best way to ensure that the target groups really do care about the heritage is to promote their identification with the cultural heritage. Therefore, the COBA-Model is based on the concept of identity from Lothar Krappman. He states that identity is communicated by interaction and it emerges anew in every communicative situation (Krappmann 1993). According to the objective 'start of a positive identification process' identity consists of a social identity and

a personal identity. The social identity is defined by values and norms of the social environment and it refers to the public role a person inhabits. The personal identity, however, covers the individual self, the private self-perception as well as the definition of how a person perceives itself (Krappmann 1993). The main objective in promoting identification is to implement the heritage asset not only in the realm of one's social identity but also within one's personal identity.

Balanced Identity through Personal Involvement

Consequently, the challenge of dealing with the intrinsic inconsistency of both antagonistic identities (individuality/uniqueness and social expectations/adapted role) in a gradual adapting way to gain a balanced identity arises. The balanced identity concept is an open one. It changes with every new communicative experience. Thus, it is possible that a formerly society-defined part of the identity is replaced by a personal one because the recipient's attitude towards the relevant object has changed. Following this line of reasoning the communicative objective of the COBA-Model is the implementation of an identification with the built heritage assets in both identity counterparts in order for them to form part of a person's balanced identity.

Similar to Krappmann, George Herbert Mead starts with the supposition that identity emerges from social interaction through communication. He states that identity consists of one impulsive I (I) and a reflective I (ME). The ME incorporates and reflects memories and experiences, that can be objectified by the I. Accordingly, there is always a subject and an object within the identity construct. In this context, it is important for the COBA-Model that only those experiences will be remembered within the ME, which are of relevance to the individual as a whole. Altogether, the communicative objective here is to create relevance for the individual with regard to the built heritage assets (Mead, 1968).

Step by Step: From Knowledge to Identification

The COBA-Model consists of five serial stages (Table 1). Each of these stages is to be viewed as a step towards increased and intensified identification with the built asset. There is no strict distinction between the levels and the process from one level to the next cannot always be organised linearly. For the identification process at least five characteristic stages can be identified. These are defined by the following indicators: The attitude of the person

Table 1 The Communication Model for Built Heritage Assets (COBA).

| Development | A. Attitude towards Heritage Asset | B. Social and Personal Identity | C. Progress of Proficiency | D. Role of Citizen | E. Level of Involvement | F. Communication | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| | | | | | | Method | Media example |
| 1. Definition | Identify | Social identity | BASIC Name | Recipient | Auditive Visual | Presentations Interviews | Exhibitions Flyer Articles |
| 2. Awareness | Being conscious of | Social identity | BASIC Describe | Recipient | Auditive Visual | Presentations Interviews | Exhibitions Flyer Articles |
| 3. Exploration | Being informed | Social identity Personal identity | ADVANCED Put into Context | Recipient Stakeholder | Auditive Visual Motoric Haptic | Discussions Interactive use of media | Multimedia (e.g. Visitor Centre) |
| 4. Participate | Being able to act | Social identity Personal identity | ADVANCED Know Functional Context | Multiplier Recipient Stakeholder | Auditive Visual Motoric Haptic In social context (interact) | Reactive Instruments Events Workshops Competitions Interactive use of media | Audio guides Apps Film |
| 5. Transference | Communicate | Balanced identity | EXPERT Holistic | Multiplier Experts (internal and external) Stakeholder Lobbyist | Auditive Visual Motoric Haptic In social context (interact) | Networking at expert level Conferences Presentations Workshops World Cafés | Audio guides Apps Film |

who passes through the stages of being a recipient, stakeholder, multiplier, expert, lobbyist and who—within the model—is neutrally called ‘citizen’ (A), the state of identification (B) and proficiency (C) and the level of involvement (D). Step (E) focuses on the communication efforts, which meet the needs of the citizens during a specific phase. Additionally, it addresses the methodologies that can be applied (Figure 1).

Concerning the target group, the overall system begins at the level of a simple recipient with very limited rational knowledge (1) and ends at the level of a highly informed and involved expert (5) (Figure 2) with regard to the chosen Cultural Heritage Asset. Besides being useful in encouraging persons with different backgrounds to get involved, COBA illustrates the acceptance of a certain heritage asset with regard to a specific target group. In the following, the different stages of COBA will be described in detail (Figure 2).

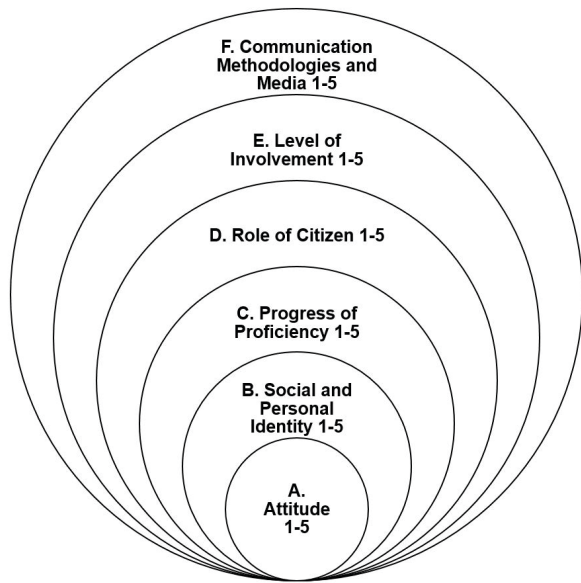
Definition of Heritage Assets (1)

At the first level, the citizen as a recipient has little knowledge about the cultural heritage asset. So far he or she can

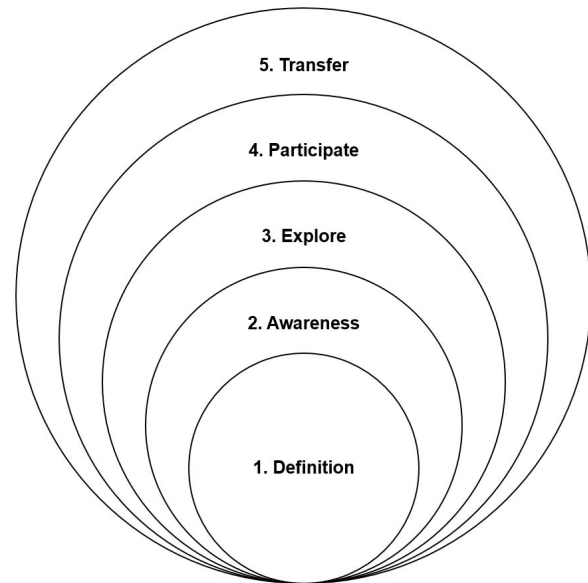
only name and roughly define it. We use the term heritage asset here, as described earlier, in a holistic way. It can also be something intangible, an artefact, etc. The identification process only touches the social identity, e.g. the citizen in his or her role as a pupil or someone who is addressed at a cognitive level only. This state of involvement is widely spread among the target group in ‘first contact’ situations. In Regensburg, we addressed this target group with flyers or articles. To raise their curiosity, we mainly provide audio-visual related activities such as guided tours through the visitor centre or presentations at school.

Awareness of Heritage Assets (2)

At the second stage, the citizen becomes more active, the consciousness and the background information about the asset increase. The motivation to learn more is already there, passive knowledge turns into more active and descriptive skills. Although the basic role is unchanged, the citizen is capable to explain fundamental information about the assets and address citizens with less or no background knowledge. The media and methodologies applied



1



2

Figure 1 Elements (A to E) of a citizen's identification process lead to targeted communication (Source: the author).

Figure 2 The attitude (1 to 5) of a citizen indicated the status of the identification process (Source: the author).

here are similar to the ones adopted at the first stage but comparatively more elaborate. A typical example for this part of the identification process is a pupil who gives a simple lecture at school about the heritage asset. All the same, the character of the communication and the senses involved remain audio-visual.

From Knowing to Doing (3)

The next step results in the citizen claiming a more and more active role. Action-orientation becomes an important aspect of the involvement. The personal interest rises while information is not only received but actively looked for. This development is important as it illustrates that, at this point, the personal identity is involved as well thus enabling the citizen to view information in a certain context and develop educated opinions and points of view concerning the heritage asset. Step by step, the citizen transforms into a stakeholder. By now, the level of involvement and tools of communication have a likewise advanced character: together, methods, media, and senses addressed form a holistic approach, which will be extended and diversified at the next two 'expert levels' resulting in increased 'action-orientation'. The partners of our World Heritage Days mainly offer activities belonging to that stage: people can explore medieval craftsmanship, learn the process of paper production, and measure the height of an old church. Particularly for younger citizens (future stakeholders) this approach is very valuable.

Action-orientation and self-commitment (4)

Here, the most important difference to level 3 is the transformation of citizens and stakeholders into multipliers. Due to their knowledge about the functional context, these persons are able to participate and be decisive about questions concerning the heritage asset. Assuming the citizen has a lot of contact with the issues related to the heritage assets motivation to learn as well as experience and interest in it increases. Thus, the identification process is leaning towards a balanced identity. At this level, the advanced multiplier introduces a new dimension: the impact of group learning and the sustainability of shared learning experiences. This dimension strengthens the identification process at the personal level even if the social experience takes place in an official or rather formal environment. The fourth level e.g. is the role a working group member 'Asset XY for children' might inhabit.

Expertise and Assimilation of Asset (5)

The most elaborated level of COBA is the expert level at stage five. Having reached that, the expert multiplier is not only able to communicate the heritage asset and its values as well as its characteristics and context but also to make adequate decisions. By 'being the asset', the expert feels entitled to transfer knowledge to persons from another level. Thus, the multiplier is no longer a mere multiplier and stakeholder but a decision maker for the asset. In short, a lobbyist. The objective here is not to make all citizens experts with regard to every built heritage asset.

It is however, to raise curiosity and interest in all types of persons whose help and support we need for the development and preservation of built heritage.

COBA therefore systemises the experiences collected during the city of Regensburg's first 10 years of being a Heritage Site. Communicating the idea of a global shared heritage led Regensburg to the implementation of a Visitors Centre (URBACT 2010). This place was created to provide information at different levels depending on who is visiting and on the person's foreknowledge. So COBA is already applied since May 2010 without having been formulated as a concept (Hauer 2015).

Summarising the above, the COBA-Model's structure allows both: the definition of the target group's level at a certain time and a recommendation as to which actions can be applied and what kinds of media and methods can be used in order to advance them to the next level. Furthermore, it helps to decide which level would be appropriate for a certain target group.

From Theory to Practice

The COBA-Model can be applied in different ways: For the scoping of heritage communication processes, for the evaluation and the improvement of these.

The easiest way to utilise it is in combination with a specific heritage communication task. In this context, the model can help with the identification of the target

group's current stage as well as help to choose the appropriate methodologies. It is especially helpful for the design and scoping of any communication process related to heritage in our modern holistic understanding, that is including intangible aspects, processes, etc. beside the built heritage. Moreover, in combination with media, it can enhance the knowledge and identification with the heritage asset. Therefore, given that the chosen methodologies are appropriate, the COBA-Model can be used to design, reflect and evaluate the process. In a wider framework, the model can provide guidance to an overall evaluation of the communication situation and the definition of specific communication tasks. This also includes hints as to which methodologies are the most reasonable to apply. Additionally, the COBA-Model can be drawn on to explore the demands and interests of specific target groups and develop communication strategies accordingly. This demand-driven approach is rarely used in heritage communication. However, many references exist, which prove that learning results can be improved given an enhanced intrinsic motivation (Heckhausen 2010). Ultimately, the COBA-Model can be involved e.g. in the process of setting up a heritage interpretation plan for a cultural heritage site, museum, or a significant listed building. With the correct use of the different levels outlined above, the current situation and the target groups can be identified. Furthermore, it can help to make decisions with regard to the next logical

Table 2 Civic participation process during the elaboration of the management plan (2010).

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|----------------------------|---|-----------------------|--------------------|--|
| Project Description | Elaborating the Management Plan for Regensburgs World Heritage Site, a civic participation process was set up in order to raise awareness and to learn what citizenship expects from being a heritage site. Participants should also develop working fields, objectives and actions. The process had two phases: first phase served merely for informative and capacity building purposes, in the second phase participants attended a moderated workshop, in which they could find and formulate their ideas how a heritage site should be managed recurring to the particular working fields. | | | |
| | Target group | Coba level | Methods | |
| Information Phase | Citizens | Before: 1 After: 2 | Interview Flyer | In this phase the heritage management went on the street to offer actively information about the management plan and urban heritage. Personal interviews were essential to gain trust and to raise interest. Supported this was with a flyer which invited to the 'Citizen's Dialogue' in Phase 2. |
| Workshop Phase | Citizens | Before: 2 After: 4 | Workshop | In the 'Citizen's Dialogue' people were invited to share their opinion on how the site should be developed and to work out 'actions' that could be integrated in the management plan. Not all were implemented. |
| Focus | This project's objective was to actively link the development of the heritage site with the citizenship. It required efforts especially in the first phase to raise the necessary attention. The personal approach was the best and most individualizable method. In the second phase the approach was more academic and so were the outputs. The actions of the citizen's dialogue completed the actions found by the interdisciplinary working group management plan before. Moreover two representants of the citizenship were elected, who now participate in all working group meetings. | | | |

Table 3 Activities for families during World Heritage Days (2007–2014)

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|----------------------------|--|-------------------------|---|---|
| Project Description | World Heritage Days once a year allow more specific communication. So because not necessary to explain the overall idea again every year, communication can focus on one or two aspects referring to the heritage site. In Regensburg for instance we put The old Stone Bridge on the agenda in 2013. In 2016 we implemented a ‘Best of...’ program, which is why the examples are taken from that year. 2017 we chose the thematic field of modern architecture in historic surroundings. | | | |
| | Target group | Coba level | Methods | Explanation |
| | Children | Before: 1 After: 2 | Heritage rally | The rally had three stops, where the children should answer simple questions about World Heritage, the Synagogue and the had to find the Heritage Day symbol in a augmented reality system. |
| | Young adults | Before 1 After 2 | Open air print with street art artists | The open air activities focus on raising awareness. The T-Shirt print was offered side by side of the information desk of the World Heritage Management. |
| | Interested adults | Before 2 After 4 | Open air re-enactment of different historic scenes referring to Regensburgs history | This group re-enacts scenes from every day life and explains what they are doing. They are all scientists and give historically correct answers. The information given is specific though. |
| | Experts | Before: 2 After: 4/5 | Exhibition about ‘50 Years of Altstadtfreunde Regensburg’, an NGO which is very active in monument protection | This is expert level. The association of the Altstadtfreunde interferes if plans or projects concernig city development take in their eyes wrong direction. In the past they have prevented a lot of bad influence from Regensburgs Old Town. |
| Focus | World Heritage Days are events for the whole family and citizenship. So the program also is very multifaceted to reach the target groups individually. | | | |

steps and as to which methodologies need to be applied in order to reach them.

Examples in Regensburg are civic participation process during the elaboration of the Management Plan (2010), activities for families during World Heritage Days (2007–2014), and communicating the values of the Old Stone Bridge (2014), the Porta Praetoria and the New Synagogue (current).

- Civic participation process during the elaboration of the Management Plan (2010)

Principles of the COBA-Model were implemented throughout the dialogue phase. The participating representatives of the citizenship were to a high percentage categorised at COBA level 3. After the process most of the participants ascended to level 5 (Table 2) (Mühlmann 2009).

- Activities for families during World Heritage Days (2007–2014)

At World Heritage Days, which are celebrated once a year at the first weekend of June, the focus of communication are families, children and young adults. These target groups require a specific approach, which acknowledges their individual experience with built heritage: workshops, guided tours and certain activity

programs take that fact into account. One very successful activity every year is a workshop, in which the participating kids can build models e.g. of bridges from sweet wafers or corn sticks. COBA facilitates the use of a World Heritage Site as a didactic tool (Table 3) (Memminger 2014, 130).

- Communicating the values of the Old Stone Bridge (2014), the Porta Praetoria and the New Synagogue (current)

Different from the Heritage Days this communication process is ongoing. In all three cases the objective is to keep citizenship informed about restoration processes or building processes, which last longer than a year. Here the COBA Model helps to find out, which information about the particular built heritage is crucial and expected and supports the acceptance of the changes the process may cause (Table 4)(Ripp, Eidenschink and Milz 2011).

Conclusion

Generally, the idea behind the COBA-Model is to support and stimulate a more professional heritage communication

Table 4 Activities for families during World Heritage Days (2007–2014)

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|----------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Project Description | The Project New Synagogue in Regensburg initially started, because a Rotary Club provided the financial resources to launch an architectural competition. After funding was granted by the German Federation, for they declared the new synagogue a premium project. For that reason Regensburg is obliged to communicate the building process and the values connected with Jewish history in an adequate manner. | | | |
| | Target group | Coba level | Methods | Explanation |
| | Children | Before: 1 After: 2 | Rally at World Heritage Day | Participants had to find the correct answers in a thora-quiz and got a stamp in a little workbook. They had to collect three of them to win a small prize. |
| | Adults | Before 1/2 After 3 | Exhibition Guided tours | Both – exhibition and guided tours provide background information about the building process, the specialities referring to history and how they can overcome. Here people are also invited to bring ideas how to support the Jewish community. |
| | Experts | Before: 2 After: 4 | Architectural lectures | Those lectures give an deep insight and provide also technical and religious specialist knowledge. |
| Focus | The overall objective here was raising consciousness about the building process and what this New Synagogue means to the jewish community. Plus: Communication should reflect the specific historical context. | | | |

as well as a more efficient use of existing resources. It shall also improve visitor experiences thus enhancing the impacts and benefits of different learning situations. By pinpointing the different levels of the identification process and linking them to the appropriate methodologies, the horizon of heritage practitioners can be broadened and new ideas along with unconventional ways of heritage communication stimulated. While applying the COBA-Model during a wide range of heritage activities in Regensburg, we found that some principles are important for a successful implementation:

1. A holistic understanding of the heritage at stake.
2. A comprehensive understanding of what communication today is, rather systemic and multi-directional than linear.
3. An interdisciplinary team with different scientific and work-related backgrounds.
4. A flexible mindset rather than a rigorous linear step-by-step approach.
5. The willingness to fully put yourself in the position of the target groups to understand their needs, interests and motivation
6. A systemic view of heritage with readiness to combine different activities and cooperate with a wide range of different stakeholders.

Communicating heritage is a rather complex task with many parameters involved. The most important ones are the members of the community, for whom we want heritage to put to use to improve their quality of life. The COBA-Model can help to achieve this overall objective.

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