THE VOICE OF THE AUTHORIZED HERITAGE DISCOURSE

A critical analysis of signs at ancient monuments in Skåne, southern Sweden

Anders Högberg

The study presents an investigation of a regional authorized heritage discourse, represented by the County Administrative Board on signs set up at ancient monuments and sites in the province of Skåne in southern Sweden. The starting point is a critical analysis of layout, texts and illustrations to ascertain the narratives conveyed by the signs. The results show that slightly less than half of the studied signs work well according to the criteria set up for the study. The result also demonstrates that more than half of the studied signs do not work well according to these criteria. Those that work well give detailed information about the ancient monument or site. The signs that do not work well give inadequate information and risk excluding a majority of the people who read them. The latter signs confirm what so many other discourse analyses have shown, that the authorized heritage discourse to a large extent still privileges the perspectives of a white, middle-class male. The former signs, that is, those that are judged to work well in terms of the criteria applied in this study, show that the authorized heritage discourse does not only offer something that privileges the perspectives of that white, middle class male, but also has the ability to offer narratives with other perspectives.

Keywords: Cultural heritage management, Authorized Heritage Discourse, Information signs, Critical analysis

Conveying information and knowledge at ancient monuments and heritage sites is an obvious element in today's cultural heritage management. This is done, for example, by making ancient monuments and ruins physically accessible, by establishing various forms of visitor centres, by creating historic tourist trails, or by digitizing places and making them accessible via the Internet. The list of methods for conveying knowledge and information could be made long (Danielsson 2006), and several studies have examined aspects of staging and display at major historic sites (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Dicks 2003; Fairclough *et al.* 2008).

But if we look beyond questions of how places, knowledge, and information are presented and made accessible at major ancient monuments and heritage sites (such as those illustrated in figure 1) and ask instead about the content of the information provided at sites which are not staged with the aid of some kind of investment in infrastructure or expensive visitor centre, but merely mediated with the aid of an information sign, it turns out that this form of communication has not been studied to any great extent (see Gustafsson & Karlsson 2004 for a discussion). This study considers the communication of information at sites like this. It is done by means of a case study of signs set up by the County Administrative Board in Skåne in south Sweden at ancient monuments and heritage sites. The study is based on analyses of the appearance of the signs, the composition of the text, and illustrations. The focus is on questions about how information, through the way in which it is composed and presented, can serve to either include or exclude the receiver of the information.

Studies of how ancient monuments have been presented over time have shown that information signs are the most established way through which the heritage management sector communicates at an ancient monument or site. Even though extensive work has been devoted to establishing other forms of communication, most commonly audio guides or different ways of providing on-site access to Internet-based presentations, signs still are the dominant media used to provide information to visitors at heritage sites and ancient monuments. This is often the only information that meets a visitor to the place. In this way information signs and their illustrations and textual content are a significant part of the experience of a visit to a heritage site (Gustafsson & Karlsson 2004; Karlsson & Gustafsson 2006; Lovata 2007).

Studies have shown, however, that when ancient monuments and sites today are made accessible and provided with signs, it is usually done through an official language and an attitude to information and what the information holds that has not changed noticeably in the last few decades (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Lowenthal 1998; Dicks 2003;

Gustafsson & Karlsson 2004; Holtorf 2007; Waterton 2009; Waterton & Smith 2009). This state of affairs has been held up as an example of how the heritage management sector has failed to question the way in which it communicates and selects content in what is mediated through texts, illustrations, and the layout of signs. Studies have shown that this failure has helped to confirm prevailing power relations and to cement established perceptions of what heritage and heritage sites represent and what their function is in today's society (for a discussion see Waterton 2009, 2010). An example that clarifies this is a study by Oscar Pripp (2008). He has shown that heritage sites are often appreciated by visitors but that the information provided at the sites creates a sense of exclusion (Pripp 2008). A powerful contributory factor in this is that the signs are designed in such a way as to convey a sense of belonging that is associated with shared experiences of having grown up in the same cultural or social context. This means that those who do not share this sense of belonging do not recognize themselves in what is communicated at ancient monuments and sites (see Mattsson 2005; Pripp 2008; Waterton 2009 for discussion). The reason for this can most likely be found in the deep roots of the heritage management authorities in the stewardship of an essentialist nationalistic white middle-/upper-class male narrative about the past (Beckman 1993; Pettersson 2003; Burström, Elfström & Johansen 2004; Gustafsson & Karlsson 2004). This is nothing unique to Swedish heritage management (see the discussion in A. Smith 2004; Waterton 2009, 2010). Nor is it exclusive to the heritage management, since it can be found in many parts of Swedish administration and civil society (de los Reyes & Kamali 2005; Pripp 2007, 2008). In her book *Uses of Heritage,* Laurajane Smith has established the concept of the authorized heritage discourse as a way to frame and describe this (Smith 2006; see also Waterton & Smith 2009; Watson 2009; Waterton 2010). In a discourse analysis Smith conducts a critical discussion of the established institutionalization and self-confirming practice of heritage management. She demonstrates that the power over how ancient monuments and sites are communicated and made accessible rests with a small group of professionals: officials, antiquarians, and scholars. She calls this the authorized heritage discourse. This is a discourse that:

> has assumed the face of commonsense, and thereby has become an effective mechanism of social regulation, or a socially regulated way of doing things [...] the social practices of heritage management are regulated not only by the formal legislative texts we recognize as Acts or documents of public policy, but also by a discursive pressure to conform to what appears to be normalcy (Waterton & Smith 2009:13).

a

b

c

Figure 1. Some examples of staged heritage: a) Uppsala mounds in Sweden with a prohibition sign, fence, and visitor centre/museum building in the background; b) the Roman ruins of Baelo Claudia at Bolonia, Spain, with gravel paths, a ramp, fence, refuse bin, and information sign; c) a prominent and badly worn information sign at Mycenae in Greece; d) the terrace on the roof of the Acropolis Museum in Athens, Greece, with the rock of the Acropolis in the background. Photo: Anders Högberg.

This critical discussion of the authorized heritage discourse is linked in many ways to Michel Foucault's studies on the discursive order (Foucault 1993, 2002) and Antonio Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony, that is, how it is from the leading position of those in command – with the preferential right of interpretation – that values are communicated to the rest of society, which in turn interprets and accepts these values as commonsense (Gramsci 1971). In a study of information conveyed through signs at heritage sites, the authorized heritage discourse as a concept is an important starting point, since the study is about how the heritage sector interprets and communicates interpretations.

This text explores how a regional authorized heritage discourse, represented by the County Administrative Board of Skåne, is conveyed in signs set up at ancient monuments and sites in the province of Skåne in southern Sweden. The aim is, figuratively speaking, to analyse how the voice of the authorized heritage discourse makes itself heard. Sweden is divided into 21 counties, each of which has its own County Administrative Board. The function of the County Administrative Boards is to be a representative of the state in their respective counties, and serve as a link between the inhabitants, the municipal authorities, the Central Government, the Swedish Parliament and the central state authorities. The County Administrative Board is the supervisory authority for each county's ancient monuments. According to presentations on the websites of the 21 different County Administrative Boards in Sweden, the commission is:

> to protect, nurture, inform and increase accessibility to the ancient environments, so that both current and future generations can understand and experience the historical heritage (www.lansstyrelsen.se).

The County Administrative Board also reviews applications and grants permits for alterations to an ancient site, and in this role is the authority which controls contract-archaeology excavations in Sweden. The focus of this study is on an analysis on how the County Administrative Board of Skåne, as the major regional authorized heritage discourse representative, communicates through information signs at heritage sites.

The study begins with a brief historical survey of how information signs at ancient monuments and sites in Sweden have been handled since the start of the twentieth century. Then the analysis is presented. The result of the analysis shows that information texts and signs hold formulations and modes of expression which constitute "what appears to be normalcy", to use Waterton and Smith's words from the citation above, but which are in fact deeply problematic. Signs which at first glance give an impression of narrating prehistoric or historic events in fact con-

tain excluding interpretations and conceptions of history together with formulations which cement present-day power roles, in line with what Waterton has defined as a:

> particular way of seeing heritage that privileges the cultural symbols of the White, middle-/upper-classes, and excludes a range of alternative ways of understanding heritage (Waterton 2009:37).

The study also shows that this does not apply generally. Roughly half of the analysed signs contain wordings which, based on the criteria for this study, have been judged to be less exclusive and thus do not confirm prevailing power roles as described by Smith (2006). This indicates a complexity and dynamic in the way the County Administrative Board as a regional authorized heritage discourse communicates. It also indicates an ongoing process of change as regards "what appears to be normalcy", to cite Waterton and Smith (2009:13) once again.

INFORMATION SIGNS AT ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND SITES IN SWEDEN: A BRIEF HISTORY

The information sign is an antiquarian communication method with a long tradition. Although there are examples of sites in Sweden where information was provided as early as the seventeenth century (Wienberg 2008), it was not until the twentieth century that the first official signs were set up at ancient monuments in Sweden. They were warning signs bearing the words "Lagskyddat fornminne" (Ancient monument protected by law). They were part of the management of ancient monuments that began to emerge in the 1920s (Pettersson 2003). The intention behind the signs was to protect ancient monuments from being damaged, for example, by careless earthworks (Gustafsson & Karlsson 2004:89).

With increased motoring in the 1940s and 1950s, together with the Swedish Social Democratic Labour Party's political success in achieving statutory holidays for workers, giving them time for tourism, the signposting of ancient monuments developed. Signs appeared along roads, indicating the way to ancient monuments that were regarded as interesting sights, and signs were set up at a selection of places providing information about the ancient monument.

At the start of the 1970s the Swedish authority Riksantikvarieämbetet (in English the National Heritage Board) began the extensive work of placing signs at ancient monuments. The production of the signs was centralized, with the aim of a standardized national design for the layout and textual content. This meant that mass-produced signs with mi-

nor differences in appearance and textual content were set up at a great many ancient monuments and sites. The consequence was that a sign at an Iron Age grave-field in one part of the country could contain the same information text as a sign at an Iron Age grave-field in another part of the country (Gustafsson & Karlsson 2004:102f). There was little room on these signs for any consideration of the local cultural history or context.

In the mid 1980s there were changes which meant that the work with information on signs at ancient monuments was decentralized to county level, so that the county administrative boards and county museums now had greater influence over the design of the signs. As a result, the signs today look different in different parts of Sweden (af Geijerstam 1998).

Although the content and design of the signs have changed over time, some things have been constant in that they have been taken for granted and remain unquestioned. First of all, the sign itself as a method for reaching out with information on a site was established in the 1920s, and since then it still is the prevailing information method used by the authorized heritage discourse and others (Karlsson 2008). The sign as a method is cemented in antiquarian work in Sweden. What may also be noted is that, even though the content of the signs has changed, one thing has remained constant. The texts contain archaeological or anti-quarian knowledge and information about the ancient monument (Gustafsson & Karlsson 2004:83ff).

INFORMATION SIGNS IN SKÅNE

Skåne is the southernmost province in Sweden (figure 2). In the early eighteenth century Skåne was divided into two counties (*län*), Malmöhus and Kristianstad. In 1997 these counties were amalgamated, and since 1999 Skåne has been a separate region. Since the study presented here is based on a case study of signs from Skåne, I shall mention here briefly how signs have been handled over time in the region.

In connection with the previously mentioned decentralization of the work of putting up signs at ancient monuments and sites in Sweden in the 1980s, a major sign-making programme started in the two counties of Skåne. This meant that, until 1998, three authorized heritage dis-course actors – the National Heritage Board, the Kristianstad County Administration, and the Malmöhus County Administration – had pro-duced signs in at least three different designs. In addition, there were signs set up by other actors, such as local non-profit heritage associations and historical societies. When the two counties were amalgamated it was therefore considered necessary to take a concerted approach to this

Figure 2. Map of the southern part of Sweden with Skåne, with places mentioned in the text marked.

range of signs, for which a strategy was elaborated by the Skåne County Administrative Board. The aim was a uniform appearance. A logotype was commissioned to show clearly that the signs had been produced by the County Administrative Board. The Board commissioned texts and basic information from actors such as local museums and local heritage associations, and this was transformed by officials at the Board into texts ready for printing on the signs. Illustrators were engaged to produce pictures. It is important here to state that even though some texts and illustrations were produced by others then the officials at the County Administrative Board, the texts were ordered, commented on and approved for printing on the signs by officials at the County Administrative Board. It was thus starting in the 1990s that the majority of all the present signs in Skåne came into existence. This was achieved through a coordinated effort by the authorized heritage discourse actor, the Skåne County Administrative Board.

CRITERIA FOR ANALYSIS

Language is an integral and irreducible element of social practice. The language used to write about, and thus also to talk about, heritage steers the way we perceive ourselves in relation to the way a heritage site and

the information about it is described (Waterton 2009). Therefore, the composition of the language on the information signs is a critical factor that needs to be considered in display analysis:

> […] it is important to consider the style of writing and how this may affect the perception of the subjects. For instance, text written in an academic and scholarly way can impart an elevated status upon objects, emphasizing how special expertise is required to understand them. […] this style have an authoritative voice, which, beyond assigning the objects with a sense of importance and intellectual value, can intimidate visitors and render them more passive in their interaction with the exhibition (Moser 2010:27).

To this I would add that this kind of language also can make the visitor feel that the text is written for another audience than he or she represents, making this person feeling excluded and not part of the narrative mediated by the heritage sector (Högberg 2008b).

In an article about the knowledge-making capacity of museum display, Stephanie Moser (2010) has clarified the many aspects involved both in the presentation of historical knowledge and in the information and narratives about the past. She clearly shows that there is a complex network of factors that interact in the creation of knowledge such as design, colour, light, subject, message, text, layout, and display (Moser 2010:25ff). In a discussion she highlights the creation of ideas in the interaction between visitors and what is displayed:

> Although museologists are all too aware of the power of exhibitions in communicating ideas, there is less recognition of the role museum displays have in creating ideas (Moser 2010:30).

It is thus important to understand that there is an intricate interplay between, on the one hand, information and informing, in this study the act of making and erecting signs, and on the other hand the person who is informed, that is to say, those who visit a heritage site and see, read, and assimilate the content of the signs. This interplay builds on the form and content of the information as well as the prior knowledge of the person informed.

This has to do with questions of representativeness in the form of relations between what is institutionally pointed out and what is individually experienced (see the discussion in Jönsson 2008). Historically this has not been considered any great problem. Swedish heritage management has pointed out what is considered representative, and through laws and education this has been turned into individual experience and part of the collective memory of Swedish schoolchildren and thus also a collective memory shared by all those who have attended Swedish com-

pulsory school (Nordgren 2006; Eliasson 2008). Even if the relationship between the official and the individual was formerly not viewed as problematic in heritage administration, research has shown that many people perceive it that way. The official has been turned into the norm that is regarded as representative for everyone, whereas in fact it excludes many people (Gustafsson & Karlsson 2004; de los Reyes & Kamali 2005; Pripp 2006). This is illustrated, for example, in the results of the government inquiry into the orientation of the focus on the industrial heritage from the end of the 1990s. In the final report it was noted that the image of Swedish history presented by the assembled stock of historic buildings paints a distorted picture of the different social strata of history. What was selected as representative is a narrow selection of what could potentially have been chosen. There is an under-representation, for example, of groups from the working population: women, children, various ethnic minorities, the sick, the poor, and people who deviate from the norm in various ways (Hofrén & Jönsson 1999:29ff). To this we can also add the fact that patterns of migration within and to and from Sweden have changed radically during the period when signs have been used as means of communication at heritage sites. The countryside is being depopulated and the metropolitan regions are expanding; the cities have far-reaching social and economic segregation, and the population today has a larger share of people not born in Sweden. With this as a starting point, the ambition here is to explore whether the information signs have the potential to exclude or not (Hegardt & Källén 2011).

From all the different angles of the study of the interaction between the information and the informed which Moser (2010) highlights, I have investigated aspects of layout and the composition of text and images on the signs. This is done on the basis of a set of criteria concerning linguistic expression, picture composition and content in order to survey potentially excluding formulations (see Waterton 2010 for a discussion of authorized heritage discourse and exclusion). The layout and appearance of the sign have been analysed according to the criteria of uniformity, including how the text and images are arranged and how the sign is mounted. The texts and images on the signs have been analysed in terms of the criteria of the composition of the language, assumptions about prior knowledge, contradictions and illustrations. These four criteria concern, in different ways, language as a social practice.

The criteria *the composition of the language* concerns whether the text on the signs is matter-of-fact, straightforward, and easy to understand, or is instead muddled and full of technical terms. The assumption is that if a text is straightforward, clear, and easy to understand, there is little risk that a person who reads it will feel that it was written for

someone else. If the text is muddled and uses technical jargon, there is a serious risk that the sign will be perceived as having been written for someone else, giving a sense of being excluded (see e.g. Lind Palicki 2010 for a discussion of officialese and exclusion). What is or is not straightforward and easy to understand obviously depends on the reader's prior knowledge and therefore cannot be easily defined in advance. The criteria selected to define a text as easily comprehensible are that it should be clear in its sentence structure, should not contain dangling modifiers or mixed tenses, and should explain any technical terms that are used, or else use technical terms in a context which makes them comprehensible. Simplification has not been chosen as a criterion.

The criteria *assumptions about prior knowledge* concern whether the text on the sign refers to things that are not explained; it is instead taken for granted that the reader knows something in advance. These are often things that many people have as the same cultural capital and share as experiences of childhood in Sweden and having attended a Swedish primary school. In other words, they are taken for granted as part of a shared or imagined cultural hegemony. They are things that are usually regarded as a general body of knowledge common to everyone, but in fact they are more or less specific to the social or cultural community in which a person was brought up (de los Reyes & Kamali 2005).

Under *contradictions* I consider things in the texts that contradict each other and thus make it harder to understand what the sign is supposed to convey. The idea is the same as for the composition of the language. If the text is difficult to grasp because of contradictions, there is a greater risk that someone will not understand what the sign is intended to communicate and thus feel that the text was written for someone else (Lind Palicki 2010).

The *illustrations* are analysed as regards what the illustration says about the distant past. Since several illustrations show people acting in different roles, the actor perspective is in focus (Arwill-Nordbladh 2001). This means that the study examines who the illustrated people represent regarding age and gender, what they are doing, how they act, and who is given different actor roles.

THE ANALYSED INFORMATION SIGNS

In the 1970s and 1980s it was above all at the most magnificent ancient monuments that signs were set up in Skåne, for example, at Iron Age grave-fields, medieval ruins, and Neolithic stone monuments. Since then other sites have been given signs successively, such as churches, historic

buildings, historically interesting landscapes, and other historic environments. Specially composed sites together with tourist attractions, such as picturesque roads, have also been given signs. Today there are 679 information signs at ancient monuments and heritage sites in Skåne. There have been no detailed studies of who visits the heritage sites with information signs in Skåne. The few studies that have been conducted elsewhere show that there is great variation. Visitors to ancient monuments are young, old, women, men, live in the locality, or are Swedish and foreign tourists (Gustafsson & Karlsson 2004). In the absence of detailed surveys, we may assume that this variation in visitors to heritage sites applies here too, that is to say, a varied range of persons read the signs selected for this study.

About fifty signs from different places in Skåne were included in the analysis (Högberg & Persson 2012). The ambition has been to analyse signs from different parts of the region and from different types of monuments and sites. The signs included in the study were all set up from the 1990s onwards.

Layout

The majority of the signs are in A3 landscape format. They are laid out in the same way and look identical, with minor variations. The layout of the signs is usually based on a division of the space into three columns. There is always a heading at the top, above the first column. The heading usually contains the name of the ancient monument or a classification of the monument as a type. The signs bear a text in Swedish consisting of a lead paragraph and body text. The text is usually set in two or three columns. The lead paragraph is always placed at the top left. A condensed version of the text is translated into English and German. At the top right there is sometimes an illustration. Occasionally there is a simple caption or a reference to the person responsible for the illustration. Along the bottom edge of the sign runs a timeline, either divided from 10,000 BC to the present or from AD 1000 to the present, depending on the date of the ancient monument or site. The logotype of the Skåne County Administrative Board is sometimes placed at the top right of the sign, sometimes at the bottom right. Some signs have no logotype but instead a symbol in the form of Saint John's Arms, indicating a place of interest, with "County Administrative Board" written below it. The majority of the signs have a text in the bottom right corner saying that the sign was produced by the Skåne County Administrative Board, along with details of how to contact the Board. If a sign was produced in cooperation with some local association or the like, there are sometimes additional contact details (figure 3).

Figure 3. An example of how information signs in Skåne are laid out, from Malen in Båstad in north-west Skåne. Despite some minor differences, all signs have a similar appearance, which makes them easy to recognize when visiting a site.

The signs are designed in such a way as to be clearly recognizable. This means that, if one has seen signs before, one immediately recognizes the sign when visiting a new site. This recognition effect is reinforced by the fact that the signs are mounted to similar steel stands, at roughly the same height, and with the sign sloping at a similar angle.

The signs are designed to show clearly that they were produced by one and the same authorized heritage discourse actor – the Skåne County Administrative Board. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) has shown that a uniform display such as that exemplified by the signs from Skåne, helps to manifest the authority of the County Administrative Board and in the uniformity of the layout signal that it is the County Administrative Board which controls the information given at the site.

Language and illustrations

Each sign is unique in its content, and it is impossible to present them all here in detail (for a detailed presentation of the signs, see Högberg & Persson 2012). To make the presentation of results as lucid as possible, I have divided it into sections. First I sum up what the signs communicate in the form of narratives. This is followed by examples showing what I consider a sign that works well and one that does not work well,

assessed in terms of the criteria defined for this study. These examples are provided with the purpose to clarify on one hand the criteria for the study, and on the other hand how I have interpret differences between signs. Then follows a qualitative analysis of the sign texts.

The narratives of the signs

The first question to ask in an analysis like this is what kind of narratives are presented to a visitor who reads the text on a sign at an ancient monument or site in Skåne?

Generally speaking, the text is always about the place where the sign has been set up. It usually describes what can be seen on the site, what the place might have looked like at the time the monument was constructed or formed, and what is known about the site in heritage management terms. Through markers on the timeline present at the bottom of all the signs, the monument or site is placed in some period in the past. This is almost always the time when the monument was constructed. This means that if the ancient monument is, for example, a megalithic tomb from the Funnel Beaker Culture, during the first half of the Neolithic around 4000–2900 BC, this period is marked on the timeline. The almost 5,000 years that have passed since the end of the Funnel Beaker culture up to the present day are not considered (see Holtorf 2000–2008), unless archaeological finds from later periods have been discovered on the site.

The sign texts often contextualize the sites, the monuments, and the settings. This is done, for example, by recounting old legends and stories or by selecting old maps and illustrations. This means that the signs communicate an antiquarian and archaeological interpretation of the site, but the texts often also place the site in a historical or present-day context. This is a way of conveying information that gives scope for reflection beyond archaeological knowledge and antiquarian observations. The signs do not, however, convey any ambiguity in the sense that they tell of several different interpretations of the site. For example, I have not found any sign that informs about present-day esoteric or religious perceptions of a site (see Lovata 2007; Karlsson 2008 for discussion).

Many of the signs have texts that can be said to function well according to criteria selected for this study, that is, comprehensible texts that are clear and straightforward, with clear sentence structure, no dangling modifiers or tense mixing, explaining technical terms, without contradictions, with no words or terms taking shared references for granted, in the form of something that is regarded as general knowledge, and with images and text working well together. In other words, the texts on these signs are easy to read and contain few wordings that

confuse or complicate understanding. What these signs have in common is usually a text that describes what is known about the site, how it was used, what it looked like, with brief information about the period that is pointed out as being important for the appearance of the site, for example, a few short sentences about the Bronze Age (1800–500 BC) on signs at Bronze Age barrows. These texts also repeatedly mention historical legends, local narratives, or myths about the site.

The texts are constructed in several different ways; none can be said to be more representative than any other. To give the reader an introduction to the signs and also an idea of what I consider to be a text that works well, and the opposite, one that does not work well, and to examine this in greater depth, I shall give two examples. The sign considered to work well is from a site called Malen in Båstad, north-west Skåne (figures 3 & 4). The other is from a site called Stjärneholm in central Skåne (figure 5). The entire texts are reproduced below, followed by a discussion of what I think makes them work well, or not work well. Note that the assessment of "work well" and "not work well" is in relation to the criteria set up for this study. I make no claim to general assessments or assessments by any other criteria. Note also that this assessment is related only to the signs that have been studied.

Figure 4. The sign at Malen in Båstad, with the Bronze Age mound in the background. For the text and layout of the sign see figure 3. Photo: Anders Högberg.

The information sign at Malen

The sign reads:

Around 1900 Malen became popular for bathing and taking the waters, and a settlement with villas, boarding houses, and restaurants grew up. In 1903 the first bath-house with adjoining restaurant was built. Bathing was naturally the central feature, with long white beaches, bathing huts, and cold-bath houses, but at least as important was the fresh air from the sea and the coniferous forest, and the taking of the waters. A small water pavilion was erected where fresh spring water was served, or mineral water from a dozen other spas. A specially employed doctor looked after the guests, prescribing everything from bracing forest walks to refreshing baths. Malen grew to become a separate community through time. To the east the character of a bathing resort survives, with large detached houses and boarding houses in spacious plots. One can see many examples of the imaginative architecture of the early twentieth century.

Malen consists of the area from the now mostly drained river Iglabäcken (the Lyckan square) to the west to Stensån in the east. The word *mal* means coarse gravel and polished stones on the shore. Before the coming of the bathing resort, the land was considered rather poor, consisting mainly of outlands used for grazing and collecting seaweed. Sand erosion was a major problem, and pine trees were planted at the start of the nineteenth century to bind the sand in the eastern part. A forest warden was employed and a house was built for him at the edge of the forest. The house, called Roxmansgården after the last forest warden, was one of the first at Malen. It was demolished in 1988 but has now been rebuilt on the same site.

During part of the Stone Age, the small rise on which you are standing was the shore of the sea known as the Litorina Sea. Between about 6000 and 3000 BC the masses of meltwater from the ice sheet, together with land uplift, had created a landscape where the shoreline changed several times, leaving long, narrow ridges. Along virtually the whole coast of the Bjäre peninsula we can see these beach ridges located 5–15 m over the present sea level. These were (and still are) good locations for dwelling sites, and it is highly likely that Stone Age people lived here for periods of varying length. The main street in Båstad – Köpmansgatan – was partly built on one of the former shores of the Litorina Sea.

Bronze Age people also used the beach ridges at Malen. The elevated ridges were ideal for building monumental burial mounds on, and the beach meadows gave excellent grazing for the animals. In addition, conditions were good

for hunting, fishing, and gathering. The coastal location also made the area attractive for contacts with the outside world.

Several burial mounds still survive, both in among the buildings and in the Malen forest. Beside the sign, on one of the beach ridges, Bronze Age people built a burial mound. It has not been excavated, but we know from other Bronze Age mounds that several people were buried in it over a very long time – the Bronze Age and the start of the Iron Age. Perhaps there is also a Stone Age grave in the ground under it. On the eastern edge the mound is reinforced with a stone wall. It was added during the time when the famous restaurant "Malens Havsbad" was situated here (1905–1987). The restaurant played a significant part in the expansion of the bathing resort.

The text is good for several reasons. The language flows smoothly. There are no contradictions in the text. When difficult terms are used, such as the Litorina Sea, it is done in a way that explains the term. There are few references to knowledge that is left unexplained because everyone is expected to share it. The text explains complex changes over time in a way that makes the reader feel more than less included.

By beginning with why Malen has been a popular place, the reader is brought into the recent past, which still sets its stamp on the place today, that is, as a tourist attraction and bathing resort. By referring to things that can be seen in the landscape, such as beaches, coniferous forests, villas, and boarding houses, the text roots the history of the place in its cultural environment. The reader is gradually moved in the next paragraph to the time just before the creation of the features that characterize the place today. This gives a starting point in the reading from which we are taken further back in time. This is done in the next paragraph when we are thrown back thousands of years and learn about the postglacial natural processes that shaped the geological landscape of the place. Here the text embraces a larger area, so that Malen becomes a part of the landscape of the entire surrounding peninsula.

The direct address – as in the wording "the small rise on which you are standing" – gives the reader a sense of presence in the text. The way in which Stone Age people are introduced in the text transforms a description of natural processes and landscape into preconditions for habitation sites. By linkage to the present, what we see today is connected to what existed back then. Through repeated references to natural features – the beach ridges – the text brings the reader forward in time to the Bronze Age. We have to wait until the last paragraph for the first mention of the Bronze Age barrow in front of which the sign stands. By then the reader has an idea of the narrative, and it is easy to understand the context of the mound in the cultural environment. By ending with an explanation

of the stone wall at one edge of the mound, the text ties up the narrative in a lucid, instructive way, leaving the reader in the period where the reading started, the time when the place became what it is today.

By conveying clear information and knowledge in a language that flows nicely, the understanding of the content is made easy. By creating a narrative that takes the reader between different periods and different sizes of space, the text creates an understanding both of the ancient monument where the sign stands and of the cultural and natural environment of the area. The sign is thus a clear example of a text that includes the reader.

The information sign at Stjärneholm

As a counter to this example, I can cite properties that cause a sign text to function badly. Here I mean texts that are unclear, confusing, and contradictory. They contain many different forms of codes, signals or assumptions that the reader shares the same pre-understanding as the author. This makes the signs more rather than less exclusive. As an example of a sign featuring many of these properties I have selected the one from the castle ruin of Stjärneholm (figure 5).

Figure 5. The sign at the Stjärneholm castle ruin.

Skåne is a province with a high density of castles, more than 150 castles from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Castle building has "old" traditions, as early as the Late Iron Age simple strongholds were built for refuge – hill forts. In the tenth century came the first offensive strongholds, the trelleborgs, with military manning. During the Viking Age simple defensive ramparts were also constructed at some trading places. Cavalry was introduced in the twelfth century.

The Danish seneschal Mogens Gyllenstjerna had Stjärneholm built in the first half of the sixteenth century. The castle was not primarily a defensive structure. It could be better compared to a late medieval manor house, but moats and drawbridge kept the peasantry and unwanted guests away. We know that the structure was not yet completed in 1554. In 1613 the castle became the property of "Predbjörn Gyldensten" and was made subject to Svaneholm. Stjärneholm was demolished in the years 1613–27.

In the north part of the castle islet there are remains of a main building with two wings. The surviving foundation walls show that the west wing and the north range have had cellars, still a couple of metres deep.

The courtyard was about 2 metres above the water level of the moat and a ramp leads towards the site of the drawbridge. The rampart outside the moat prevents the water in the moat, which is higher than the surroundings, from running out into the low-lying land south of the castle, which was part of Lake Näsbyholmssjön before it was drained. Within the area there is an interesting flora, for example, with plenty of cowslip, the early purple orchid, and the red-listed species Rampion Bellflower which is a cultivated plant previously grown for its tasty root.

The language is muddled and full of obscure technical jargon. Terms such as "offensive strongholds" and "trelleborgs" are employed with no explanation. The Late Iron Age is mentioned although this period is not shown on the timeline on the sign. Cavalry is mentioned, but what this has to do with the Stjärneholm site remains unexplained. The history of the castle is presented in a chaotic way. It says that the castle was not completed in 1554. The reader wonders why it was not completed, if there is any special significance in being told that, and is left wondering when it was actually completed. We also learn that the castle was demolished during the years 1613–1627, but we are not told why it took fourteen years to demolish it. Nor are we told what happened between the completion of the castle (and we do not know from reading the sign whether it ever was completed) and its demolition.

Past and present are mixed in a way that causes confusion, for example: "The surviving foundation walls *show* that the west wing and the

north range *have had* cellars, *still* a couple of metres deep" and "The courtyard *was* about 2 metres above the water level of the moat and a ramp *leads* towards the site of the drawbridge".

Danish names and titles are mentioned, but Skåne's history as a part of Denmark is left unexplained. This makes it incomprehensible reading for anyone who does not know that Skåne was once a Danish province.

The text is confusing to read because terms such as "seneschal", "peasantry", and "red-listed" are not explained, and proper names such as Svaneholm and Näsbyholmssjön are mentioned in a way that presupposes that the reader knows what these names represent. If you do not know that, you are not a part of the world of knowledge communicated by the sign.

The overall impression of the text is more obscurity than clarity, more confusion than order. The text is spiced with so many oddities that it leaves more questions than answers. The terminology it uses requires a pre-understanding that few people share. In this way the sign is a clear example of a text that can easily make a reader feel that it was written for someone else.

Qualitative analysis

I shall now proceed from examples of individual signs to present a more general and synthesizing picture. I do this with the aid of a qualitative analysis of the composition of texts and images on the signs. The starting point for the analysis is a detailed reading of the texts on the signs together with an analysis of the illustrations on the signs. Slightly more than half of the sites with analysed signs deserve some comment on the basis of the four criteria on which this study is based, i.e. the language, assumptions about prior knowledge, contradictions, and the illustrations. This means that just under half of the studied signs required no comment and are thus deemed to work well in terms of the four criteria on which the study is based. Those signs that have provoked some comment according to the criteria set up for this study have been analysed from a qualitative point of view. The analysis has elucidated four different aspects of exclusion: exclusion through regionalism; exclusion through gender distribution and representation; exclusion through assumptions about prior knowledge; and exclusion through inability.

Exclusion through regionalism

In the timeline at the bottom of all the signs (figure 6) the year 1658 is marked, that is, the date of the Treaty of Roskilde. That was the peace treaty concluded between Denmark and Sweden after the Swedish king Karl X Gustav (1622–1660) had accomplished an unexpected manoeu-
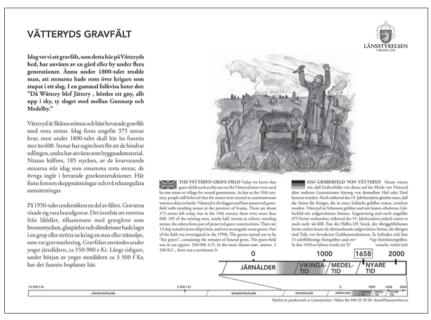
Figure 6. All the signs have a timeline. It is divided into either 12,000 years (as in the example in this figure) or 1,000 years. In both cases the date 1658, as can be seen in the enlarged part of the timeline, is always marked as the only specific year on the timeline, which otherwise marks only periods. In the enlarged part of timeline these periods are Iron Age (järnålder), Viking Age (vikingatid), Middle Ages (medeltid) and modern times (nyare tid).

vre by marching his army over the ice of the frozen Belts and was thus able to threaten the Danish capital, Copenhagen. Denmark capitulated, and in the treaty Sweden demanded a large amount of Danish territory, including Skåne, which came under Swedish rule. The date 1658 is marked on the timeline, whether that shows 12,000 or 1,000 years. It must be emphasized that this timeline is found on *all* signs in Skåne, not just the sample analysed here on the basis of the criteria chosen for this study.

Highlighting a single date, 1658, on a timeline that is otherwise divided into hundreds or thousands of years, is an over-explicit signal that this date is considered very important for the people who made the sign, that is, the County Administrative Board of Skåne. But the date is left without explanation. Otherwise the timeline shows periods such as the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, and the Iron Age, with the start and finish marked in centuries or millennia. This clearly indicates that these are established periods. But the year 1658 sticks out and begs for an explanation, yet none is given. What those who see this date understand, however, is that it is a coded message to anyone who understands its

meaning. In this way it is also a message to those who do not understand the meaning of the date, saying: "We know something that you don't know." In this way it is clearly a way of using history to exclude people.

I live in Skåne and I know that 1658 was the year when Skåne became Swedish. I also know that the date is used as a political symbol by extreme regionalists and separatists to mark the year when they think that Skåne was "occupied" and to clarify that "we" in Skåne are still "under Swedish occupation" and that the best thing would be if "we" either become an independent region or went back to being the eastern province of Denmark (see Peterson, Fryklund & Stigendal 1988 for discussion).

The year 1658 is also used by much less extreme regionalists as a marker and a code to emphasize a sense of community within movements – political and civil – that seek to position themselves against what they regard as an excessive concentration of Swedish political power in the capital, Stockholm. In these contexts the date is used to stress that Skåne is distinct from the rest of the country, with its own history and its own traditions, and deserves special treatment in the form of regional self-determination (Peterson, Fryklund & Stigendal 1988; Nielsen 2006). This regionalism is particularly evident at the political regional assembly in Skåne, where speeches repeatedly cite this date as epoch-making. This form of regionalism is nothing unique for Skåne, but can be seen in many parts of today's Europe (Peckham 2003; Bauman 2004).

If you do not know what the date 1658 represents, both historically and as a present-day political symbol, or if you do not share the values of the regionalism symbolized by the date, then the date 1658 only serves to confuse. It clearly signals that those who do not share the meaning of the code, or those who do not know what the year symbolizes are not a part of the community who do know what 1658 symbolizes or share its coded meaning (which is also usually the very point of this type of symbolic codes). This, in combination with the fact that several of the texts on the signs mention that it was Danes who made their mark on the place in one way or another (as in the example above on the sign at Stjärneholm), without explaining that Skåne was once a part of Denmark, is an obvious example of the use of history for exclusion. It reflects a use of history with its roots in nineteenth-century nationalism, and several studies have shown that this is a seedbed for radical extremism, xenophobia, stigmatization of the Other, and exclusion (Bonnett 2004; Mattsson 2005; Nielsen 2006).

It is important to point out here that this is a use of history that no one working today at the County Administrative Board can be personally held responsible for. What the information signs at ancient monuments in Skåne look like is a consequence of a long-established prac-

tice. This practice has included the idea that it is important to mark the year 1658. That is not how it is today. No one that I have spoken to at the Skåne County Administrative Board defends the presence of that year on the timeline. I have interviewed the person who was in charge when the timeline was added to signs. I asked her why 1658 is marked. It turned out that she had never thought about it being there. It was initially a firm of design-architects that was commissioned to draw up a proposal for the design of the signs, and that firm produced the timeline. Presumably the date 1658 was already marked then. Since that time no one has reflected on it (Sonja Wigren, 20 July 2011). But as long as the year 1658 is included on the signs, it is the voice of the authorized heritage discourse that is speaking, even if no one defends it. The date is there and it serves to exclude.

Exclusion through gender distribution and representation

There is a skewed distribution of men, women, and children in the illustrations on the signs (figure 7). There are 33 illustrations in total in the analysed material. Of these, 14 show people, 56 individuals in all. Of these, 28 are unidentifiable figures, 14 are men, 9 are women, and 5 are dead figures. There are no children on any of these illustrations. The majority of the women, 6, are seen in two pictures which are historical photographs in black and white. If we remove these two photographs from the analysis, and only look at illustrations representing time periods before the introduction of photography with portable cameras, we are left with 3 women illustrated.

This means that prehistoric people are mostly illustrated as figures of unidentifiable gender. When people can be identified more specifically, it is men that we see. Prehistoric women and children are represented with fewer individuals than dead people.

All but one of the men in the illustrations are active in the sense of performing some form of work or task requiring physical labour or acquired skills. They carry weapons, use a grindstone, bury a dead person, blow a horn, and so on. One man is illustrated doing nothing except looking on while a body is being buried. None of the three women are doing any work of this kind. One is sitting watching over a dead body and two are standing together with the (apparently) passive man watching a burial. This means that the men's work and activities that are depicted require physical strength, movement, or acquired skills to perform. The women's work and activities require emotional participation and sitting or standing still.

The numbers of men, women, children, and dead people in the pictures on the signs reflect a skewed distribution as regards gender and
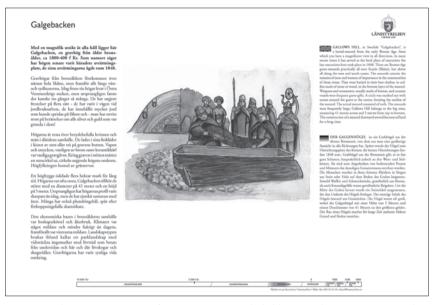
Figure 7. The representation of men, women, and children on the signs is unequal as regards their numbers and what the different individuals are doing. The illustration shows two of the three women who are illustrated on the signs in the analysis where the context is prehistoric.

age, which helps to confirm present-day gender roles and unreflected perceptions of who is (and was) active in society (Wright 1996; Arwill-Nordbladh 2001). The fact that children are not visible in the pictures or mentioned in the texts is also a clear example of how we today view history. Several studies have show that children were a noticeable part of prehistory and history, but that little of this is reflected in narratives of the past as told by the authorized heritage discourse (Sofaer Derevenski 2000; Kamp 2001; Lillehammer 1989, 2005; Högberg 2008a). Because the signs so clearly confirm established perceptions of the gender and age of the people who were most active in the past, they are examples of the use of history for exclusion. People that we know to have performed important actions are left out of the narratives, then as now.

Once again it is important to point out that there is no single person at the Skåne County Administrative Board who is consciously working to confirm the prevailing gender-power order. The signs as they look today, as pointed out above, are consequences of a long history of administration. But it is also important to point out that no one before has reacted to the representation of gender and age in the pictures, which clearly shows that the authorized heritage discourse is incorporated in society's patriarchal power structures (Faludi 1991).

Figure 8. This sign says: "The estate owner had the right of patronage over Skurup church and thus had the right to collect tithes from the peasants of the parish …". This formulation is obvious enough to many people, but for those who have not had a Swedish schooling there is a great risk that they will not know what tithes are.

Exclusion through assumptions about prior knowledge

The sign texts use a number of terms with a meaning that is common knowledge for the majority of those who share experiences of having gone to school in Sweden, but difficult to understand for those who do not share these experiences. These are terms like peasantry (*allmoge*), tithes (*tionde*), and catechetical examination rolls (*husförhörslängder*) (figure 8). Many people learned the meaning of these concepts during school lessons in history and religion. Many share the experience of a primary school visit to an open-air museum or a local homestead museum, where they were able to enter the old buildings and hear tales about bygone peasant society. Those who once lived in those houses are what is associated with the term "peasantry". Those who share these experiences have also heard stories about stern clergymen coming to the home to question the family about their knowledge of the catechism, and about toiling peasants who had to starve because the church demanded a special tax, the tithe. The terms are perfectly comprehensible for those who share these experiences. But if one does not share these experiences, it is hard to understand these terms. They need to be explained. Other studies have shown that concepts like these, if they are

not explained, contribute to a feeling that the text was written for some-one else (Pripp 2008).

Another way of using concepts on the signs is more metaphorical. There are descriptions of finds in graves and grave goods as "things to take along on the journey" or ceramic vessels with "food for the journey". A sign can have a text with an example like this: "The dead person was buried in his clothes and provided with grave gifts such as weapons, tools, ornaments, and perhaps pots with food and drink for the journey". Many people share the metaphorical sense of life after death beginning with a journey, often to a realm of the dead. For these people, a sign talking about food and objects for the journey is perfectly comprehensible. But there are also many people who do not share this
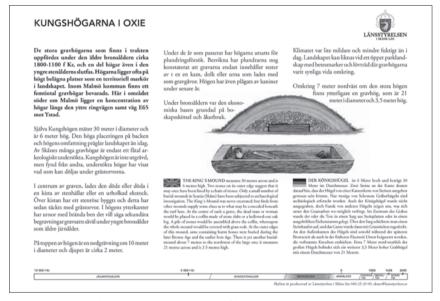

Figure 9. At Kungshögarna in Oxie, a group of burial mounds on the outskirts of Malmö in south-west Skåne, there is a sign with a lot of strange wordings. Apart from the use of the park metaphor (see the discussion in the text), there are also obscurities such as the mixture of plural and singular: "The mounds are often located in high places as a territorial marker in the landscape". Is it all the mounds together that are a marker, or are there many markers in the form of separate mounds? And where would the mounds be located if not in the landscape? There are other oddities: "Urns with cremated bones that is secondary burials were buried in both the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age." Secondary burials are not buried; they are already in the earth. The sign also says: "The mound has also been tormented by rabbits in recent years." A mound cannot be tormented. Living things are tormented, and the barrow is not a living thing. And how does the writer of the sign know that the rabbits came there "in recent years" and not before? These are some examples of how the wordings in a sign text contribute to vary-ing degrees of confusion for the reader.

metaphorical interpretation of life after death as a journey. For them it is not a metaphor but something requiring an explanation. A good example of such an explanation is the wording: "Grave gifts for a continued life or for the journey to a realm of the dead are often found in the grave". No metaphors are used here. Instead both grave gifts and the journey are explained in a simple and comprehensible way.

Another example of a metaphor, chiefly used for descriptions of what the Bronze Age landscape looked like, is the term "park landscape". One example comes in the text on the sign at the Kungshögarna barrows in Oxie, in south-western Skåne (figure 9). There we read: "The landscape can be compared to an open park landscape." This is a metaphor that many people will understand, but just as many will not. First of all, one may wonder what kind of park is meant; is it, for example, a baroque park or an English park, or is it perhaps a castle park, a crown park (a Swedish term for a state forest), a folk park, or a national park that is intended? Secondly, for a person who grew up, for example, in Iceland, in the Kalahari, in Mumbai, in the mountains of Sweden or Norway, or somewhere where parks are not an everyday occurrence, this is not a metaphor but something that demands an explanation. A good illustration of how this can be handled is the following example: "This type of landscape is sometimes called a park landscape of extensive meadows with deciduous trees which were grazed from the underside, and here and there deciduous woods and forest curtains". This is a good way to explain the term park landscape, which otherwise tends to be used in texts in a way that presupposes that everyone understands it.

Exclusion through inability

Several signs have texts with contradictions, dangling modifiers, mixed tenses, and jargon. These are more or less obscure. Some are comprehensible, others contain sentences that cannot be understood. Here is one example, taken from a sign at a ruined castle: "The stone house of Mölleröd became an austere variant of a type of castle in the more refined Renaissance spirit." This is virtually incomprehensible. It is very difficult to grasp what the writer is trying to say with this sentence. As with all obscurity, there is a risk that it is not perceived as the sender's inability to express him- or herself, but as the receiver's inability to understand.

CONCLUSIONS

Some fifty signs from Skåne in southern Sweden have been studied according to layout, the language, assumptions about prior knowledge,

contradictions, and the illustrations. The results show that the layout is uniform and as such clearly signals that it is the County Administrative Board who is the sender of the information and manifests that it is the Board that controls the information. Many signs satisfy the criteria of this study well. These are signs with straightforward and simple language. The text has no dangling modifiers or contradictions. Technical terms and difficult concepts are used in such a way that they are explained.

The result also shows that many signs are unclear, with linguistic defects, incorrect sentence structure, and contradictions. Moreover, many signs try to communicate knowledge through obscure language and assumptions about a shared pre-understanding, which excludes many potential readers. Several signs, for example, mention Danish names without explaining Skåne's history as a part of Denmark. The distribution of men, women, and children in the illustrations on the signs is skewed. Men are in the majority, almost always portrayed as physically active, in motion, or doing something that requires learning skills. Women are few in number, passive, or doing things that do not need the same acquired skills as the activities exercised by men. Children are absent. More dead people than women are seen in the illustrations of prehistoric activities on the signs. Many signs use terms or metaphors that require belonging to a specific social or cultural community to understand, a community that can be crudely defined as "having a Swedish schooling". This is highly problematic, considering that in the town of Malmö in south Skåne, for example, more than 170 different languages are spoken today by people who have moved here from all over the world, and hence therefore have not attended Swedish primary school. It is also problematic given the fact that foreign tourism is increasing in Sweden and that heritage sites are popular attractions for tourists, who normally have not attended Swedish compulsory school. Many signs have texts with dangling modifiers, mixed tenses, and jargon.

To sum up, it can be said that the signs that work well give detailed information about the ancient monument or site. The signs that do not work well give inadequate information and risk excluding a majority of the people who read them. The latter confirm what so many other discourse analyses have shown, that the authorized heritage discourse to a large extent still privileges the perspectives of a white, middle-class male (Waterton 2010; Hegardt & Källén 2011; Källén this volume). The latter, that is to say, the signs that work well in terms of the criteria, show that the authorized heritage discourse not only offers something that solely privileges the perspectives of that white, middle class male, but also has the ability to offer narratives with other perspectives.

DISCUSSION

During the many years when Sweden has had institutionalized heritage management, the values of ancient monuments and sites have changed, having been renegotiated in interaction with changed trends, needs, and wishes in civil society (Pettersson 2003). And as long as archaeology has been a part of heritage management in Sweden, there has been discussion of how the practice should be designed (Carlie & Kretz 1998; Pettersson 2003; Lagerlöf 2008). In line with international discussions about future issues in heritage management (Kristiansen 1993; Smith, L. 2004, 2006; Holtorf 2005, 2007; Fairclough 2008; Fairclough *et al.* 2008; Jensen 2008; Waterton & Smith 2009; Harrison 2010), the content of the dialogue has changed over time in relation to, and as a part of, the development of other discussions of public policy (Pettersson 2003). In the last ten to fifteen years, these discussions have to a large extent concerned changes in the basic values and societal mission of antiquarian practice. As in other sectors of society, the Swedish debate has focused on questions such as increased citizen influence on antiquarian practice, the importance of dismantling the old nationalistically coloured heritage management, alternative narratives which the sector must communicate, the importance of seeing the potential to incorporate new sites in heritage management, and the development of communicative measures and practices for joint creation in the work (Beckman 1993; Burström, Winberg & Zachrisson 1996; Burström 1999a, 1999b; Grundberg 2000, 2004; Burström, Elfström & Johansen 2004; Gustafsson & Karlsson 2004; Karlsson 2004, 2008; Högberg 2004, 2006a, 2006b, 2008b; Karlsson & Gustafsson 2006; Svanberg & Wahlgren 2007; Synnestvedt 2008).

In Sweden these discussions have crystallized most noticeably in the nationwide project "Agenda Cultural Heritage", a collaboration between Sweden's 21 county administration boards, county museums, and the National Heritage Board, which ran 2001–2004. The project discussed the direction of heritage management in the future. The aim was to increase the democratic foundation and impact of the work, with the aim of changing the day-to-day practice. Although the project has been criticized for its debatable premises (Wall 2005), the results have laid a good foundation on which antiquarian practice in heritage management in Sweden can stand when working with matters concerning the changed mission in society (www.agendakulturarv.se; Holtorf 2006).

It can thus be noted that in Sweden today there is a well-published body of research findings and practical experiences to use in developing everyday antiquarian work. The results of the analysis presented here,

however, clearly show that the work of change that has been initiated in heritage management takes time to implement. Yet despite the published results of research projects, debates, and the lessons of practical experience, heritage management evidently has difficulties finding ways of working in a practice whose task today is to develop the activities in line with other goals of public policy (Kritz 2010; Gustafsson & Karlsson 2011; for an international discussion of these issues see Waterton 2010; Waterton & Smith 2010). The discussions that have been conducted about changes in the basic values and public mission of antiquarian practice have not yet had their full impact on day-to-day practice. A conclusion to be draw from this is that the cultural hegemony that the authorized heritage discourse has built up during its history of administration takes time to change.

Several researchers within critical heritage studies have proposed that heritage must be understood as a process (for discussion see Waterton 2010). This does not mean neglecting its material properties, but understanding heritage as materiality, i.e. analysing the interaction on issues of how heritage is constructed and shaped by people, at the same time as heritage constructs and shapes people. This includes a move away from heritage as only a concrete entity, to also seeing it as something done, as a verb (Smith 2006). As Emma Waterton has expressed it:

> [...] as space can be encountered in a process of "spacing" and nature in a process of "naturing", so too can heritage be experienced and encountered in a process of "heritaging" or as a social practice (Waterton 2010:5).

This means that the signs at ancient monuments and sites in Skåne not only should be seen as a way to provide information for visitors to the places. The signs *make* the place. This "making" is done by the way the authorized heritage discourse has chosen to present the site on the sign with information and illustrations. This "making of the place" takes place every time somebody reads the text or looks at the pictures on the sign. It is in the interaction between this person's pre-understanding and the information sign and its content that the understanding of the ancient monument or the site is created, an understanding which places the site or the monument within a present-day political, social, or cultural context. In this way, the authorized heritage discourse controls how the site or the monument "comes into existence" through the official sanctioned narratives which "make the place" and transform the site and the narrative into what appears to be normalcy. Hence, a critical understanding of heritage must consider the cultural, social, and political work it does in contemporary societies (Waterton & Smith 2009). Based on the results of the analysis of what the authorized heritage discourse in the

form of the Skåne County Administrative Board communicates through information signs at ancient monuments and sites, it may be concluded that the signs "do" quite a lot:

- At all the sites they communicate a regionalism based on an essentialist idea of Skåne as a unique region with a special history. This regionalism is most clearly symbolized in the date 1658, which acts as a code that excludes many people.
- At several sites the prevailing gender-power order is confirmed through the choice of actors (men) portrayed as representative and active, in contrast to the actors (women and children) who are portrayed as less representative and active.
- Several sites have sign texts communicating a content that requires the shared experience of having attended Swedish primary school to understand.
- Other sign texts contain contradictions and technical jargon which confuse more than they enlighten.
- At several sites there are signs which provide balanced and multifaceted information about the ancient monuments there.

This is how the voice of the authorized heritage discourse is heard through information signs at ancient monuments and sites in Skåne in southern Sweden today.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Anders Högberg
Linnaeus University
Archaeology, School of Cultural Sciences
391 82 Kalmar
Sweden

REFERENCES

Arwill-Nordbladh, E. 2001. *Genusforskning inom arkeologin*. Stockholm: Högskoleverket.

Bauman, Z. 2004. *Europe: An Unfinished Adventure. (Themes for the 21st Century.)*. Oxford: Polity Press.

Beckman, S. 1993. Oreda i fornsvängen. In: Anshelm, J. (Ed.). *Modernisering och kulturarv*. Pp. 25–40. Stockholm.

Bonnett, A. 2004. *The Idea of the West. Culture, Politics and History*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Burström, M. 1999a. Kunskapssyn och arkeologisk förmedling. *Kulturmiljövård* 1/1999. Pp. 4–8. Stockholm: Riksantikvarieämbetet.

Burström, M. 1999b. Cultural Diversity in the Home Ground: How Archaeology Can Make the World a Better Place. *Current Swedish Archaeology*. Vol. 7. Pp. 21–26.

Burström, M, Winberg, B. & Zachrisson, T. 1996. *Fornlämningar och folkminnen*. Stockholm: Riksantikvarieämbetet.

Burström, M., Elfström, B. & Johansen, B. 2004. Serving the Public. Ethics in Heritage Management. In: Karlsson, H. (Ed.). *Swedish Archaeologists on Ethics*. Pp. 135–147. Göteborg: Bricoleur Press.

Carlie, A. & Kretz, E. 1998. *Sätt att se på fornlämningar. En teoretisk och metodisk grund för värdebedömning inom kulturmiljövården*. University of Lund Institute of Archaeology Report Series No. 60. Lund.

Danielsson, R. 2006 *Handbok i fornminnesvård*. Stockholm: Riksantikvarieämbetet.

Dicks, B. 2003. *Culture on Display. The Production of Contemporary Visibility*. Glasgow: Open University Press.

Eliasson, P. 2008. Kulturarv och medborglig bildning i den svenska grundskolan. In: Jönsson, L.-E., Wallette, A. & Wienberg, J. (Eds.). *Kanon och kulturarv. Historia och samtid i Danmark och Sverige*. Pp. 184–200. Utgiven i samarbete med Centrum för Danmarksstudier vid Lunds universitet. Stockholm: Makadam förlag.

Fairclough, G. 2008. New Heritage, an Introductory Essay – People, Landscape and Change. In: Fairclough, G., Harrison, R., Jameson, J. H. Jnr & Schofield, J. (Eds.). *The Heritage Reader*. Pp. 297–312. London and New York: Routledge.

Fairclough, G., Harrison, R., Jameson, J. H. Jnr & Schofield, J. (Eds.). 2008. *The Heritage Reader*. London and New York: Routledge.

Faludi, S. 1991. *Backlash. The Undeclared War against American Women*. New York: Crown.

Foucault, M. 1993. *Diskursens ordning. Installationsföreläsning vid Collège de France den 2 december 1970*. Vol. 15 of Moderna franska tänkare. Stehag: Symposion bibliotek, B. Östlings bokförlag.

Foucault, M. 2002. (1972). *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. London: Routledge.

af Geijerstam, Jan. 1998. *Miljön som minne: Att göra historien levande i kulturlandskapet*. Stockholm: Riksantikvarieämbetet.

Gramsci, A. 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. (Eds. Hoare, Q. & Smith, N.) New York: International Publishers Co.

Grundberg, J. 2000. *Kulturarvsförvaltningens samhällsuppdrag. En introduktion till kulturarvsförvaltningens teori och praktik*. Gotarc Serie C. Arkeologiska Skrifter No. 33. Institutionen för arkeologi. Göteborgs universitet: Göteborg.

Grundberg, J. 2004. *Historiebruk, globalisering och kulturarvsförvaltning. Utveckling eller konflikt?* Serie B. Gothenburg Archaeological Thesis No. 28. Institutionen för Arkeologi. Göteborgs universitet: Göteborg.

Gustafsson, A. & Karlsson, H. 2004. *Plats på scen. Kring beskrivning och förmedling av Bohusläns fasta fornlämningar genom tiderna*. Uddevalla: Bohusläns Museum.

Gustafsson, A. & Karlsson, H. 2011. A Spectre is Haunting Swedish Archaeology – the Spectre of Politics. Archaeology, Cultural Heritage and the Present Political Situation in Sweden. *Current Swedish Archaeology*. Vol. 19. Pp. 11–36.

Harrison, R. (Ed.) 2010. *Understanding the Politics of Heritage*. Manchester & New York Manchester: University Press.

Hegardt, J. & Källén A. 2011. Being through the Past. Reflections on Swedish Archaeology and Heritage Management. In: Lozny, L. R. (Ed.). *Comparative Archaeologies. A Sociological View of the Science of the Past*. Pp. 109–135. New York, Dordrecht, Heidelberg & London: Springer.

Hofrén, E. & Jönsson, L.-E. 1999. *Betänkande av Utredning om förslag om formerna och den närmare inriktningen av satsning på industrihistoriska kulturarvet*. SOU 1999:18. Kulturdepartementet. Stockholm.

Högberg, A. 2004. Historiemedvetande och uppdragsarkeologi – tankar om alternativa kunskapsmål. *Meta* 2004(3):3–18.

Högberg, A. (Ed.) 2006a. *För en kritisk & konstruktiv kulturmiljöforskning: Riksantikvarieämbetets FoU-verksamhet 2001–2005*. Stockholm: Riksantikvarieämbetet.

Högberg, A. 2006b. Kulturmiljöpedagogik och ledarskap. In: Riddersporre, B. (Ed.). *Utbildningsledarskap – nu och i framtiden*. Pp. 67–102. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Högberg, A. 2008a. Playing with Flint: Tracing a Child's Imitation of Adult Work in a Lithic Assemblage. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*. Vol. 15. Pp. 112–131.

Högberg, A. 2008b. Community Archaeology – en samskapandets arkeologi. In: Burström, M. (Ed.). *Arkeologi i förorten*: *Berättelser från norra Botkyrka*. Södertörn Archaeological Studies 7. Pp. 119–140. Huddinge.

Högberg, A. & Persson, E. 2012. *Nya och gamla berättelser. Ett pilotprojekt om att tänka nytt om gestaltning av och berättelser om fornlämningar och kulturmiljöer i Skåne län*. Länsstyrelsen Skåne län. Rapport 2012:01. Malmö: Länsstyrelsen.

Holtorf, C. 2000–2008. *Monumental Past: The Life-histories of Megalithic Monuments in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Germany)*. Electronic monograph. University of Toronto: Centre for Instructional Technology Development. http://hdl.handle.net/1807/245.

Holtorf, C. 2005. *From Stonehenge to Las Vegas. Archaeology as Popular Culture*. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.

Holtorf, C, 2006. Should Heritage Management be Democratized? The Denkmalpflegediskussion in Germany. In: Aronsson, P. & Alzén A. (Eds.). *Demokratiskt kulturarv? Nationella institutioner, universella värden, lokala praktiker*. Skriftserie / Tema kultur och samhälle, Linköpings universitet. Pp. 103–115. Linköping.

Holtorf, C. 2007. *Archaeology is a Brand. The Meaning of Archaeology in Contemporary Popular Culture*. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Jameson, J. H. Jr. & Baugher, S. (Eds.). 2008. *Past Meets Present. Archaeologists Partnering with Museum Curators, Teachers, and Community Groups*. New York: Springer.

Jennbert, K. 2004. Ethics in Archaeological Practice. In: Karlsson, H. (Ed.). *Swedish Archaeologists on Ethics*. Pp. 327–347. Lindome: Bricoleur Press.

Jensen, B. E. 2008. *Kulturarv – et identitetspolitisk konfliktefelt*. Copenhagen: Gads forlag.

Jönsson, L.-E. 2008. Mitt och allas kulturarv – politisk risk och resurs. In: Jönsson, L.-E., Wallette, Anna. & Wienberg, J. (Eds.). *Kanon och kulturarv. Historia och samtid i Danmark och Sverige*. Pp. 262–274. Utgiven i samarbete med Centrum för Danmarksstudier vid Lunds universitet. Stockholm: Makadam förlag.

Kamp, K. A. 2001. Where Have All the Children Gone? The Archaeology of Childhood. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*. Vol. 8. Pp. 1–34.

Karlsson, H. 2004. *Försummat kulturarv. Det närliggande förflutna och fotbollens platser*. Lindome: Bricoleur Press.

Karlsson, H. 2008. *Ekornavallen. Mellan mångtydighet, demokrati och etnografi*. Lindome: Bricoleur Press.

Karlsson, H. & Gustafsson, A. 2006. Among Totem Poles and Clan Power in Tanum, Sweden. An Ethnographic Perspective on Communicative Artifacts of Heritage Management. In: Edgeworth, M. (Ed.). *Ethnographies of Archaeological Practice*. Pp. 137–147. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B. 1998. *Destination Culture. Tourism, Museums, and Heritage*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kristiansen, K. 1993. The Strength of the Past and its Great Might. An Essay on the Use of the Past. *Journal of European Archaeology* 1992,1. Pp. 3–32.

Kritz, A. 2010. *Kriterier för bedömning av kvalitet i uppdragsarkeologin*. Stockholm: Riksantikvarieämbetet.

Lagerlöf, A. 2008. På arkeologiuppdrag i norra Botkyrka – om minnen och utgrävningar. In: Burström, M. (Ed.). *Arkeologi i förorten. Berättelser från norra Botkyrka*. Södertörn Archaeological Studies 7. Pp. 37–52. Huddinge.

Lillehammer, G. 1989. A Child is Born. The Child's World in an Archaeological Perspective. *Norwegian Archaeological Review*. Vol. 22.2. Pp. 89–105.

Lillehammer, G. 2005. Archaeology and Children. *K.A.N. Kvinner i arkeologi i Norge*. Vol. 24. Pp. 18–35.

Lind Palicki, L. 2010. *Normaliserade föräldrar. En undersökning av Försäkringskassans broschyrer 1974–2007*. Örebro: Örebro universitet.

Lovanta, T. 2007. *Inauthentic Archaeologies. Public Uses and Abuses of the Past*. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press.

Lowenthal, D. 1998. *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mattsson, K. 2005. Diskrimineringens andra ansikte – svenskheten och "det vita västerländksa". In: Reyes, P. & Kamali, M. (Eds). *Bortom Vi och Dom. Teoretiska reflektioner om makt, integration och strukturell diskriminering. Rapport av Utredningen om makt, integration och strukturell diskriminering*. SOU 2005:41. Pp. 139–158. Stockholm.

Moser, S. 2010. The Devil Is in the Detail. Museum Display and the Creation of Knowledge. *Museum Anthropology*. Vol. 33(1). Pp. 22–32.

Nielsen, T. C. 2006. Erindrings- og identitetspolitik i en grænseregion. Findes øresunsre-
gionen og kan dens historie fortælles? In: Alzén, A. & Aronsson, P. (Eds.). *Demokratiskt
kulturarv? Nationella institutioner, universella värden, lokala praktiker.* Tema Kultur
och Samhälle. Skriftserie 2006:1. Linköpings universitet. Pp. 164–172. Linköping.

Nilsson, B. & Rudebeck, E. 2010. Arkeologiska världar. In: Nilsson, B. & Rudebeck,
E. (Eds.). *Arkeologiska och förhistoriska världar. Fält, erfarenheter och stenålder-
splatser i sydvästra Skåne.* Malmöfynd 19. Malmö Museer, Arkeologienheten. Pp.
13–82. Malmö.

Nordgren, K. 2006. *Vems är historien? Historia som medvetande, kultur och handling
i det mångkulturella Sverige.* Fakultetsnämnden för lärarutbildning, Umeå univer-
sitet, Karlstads universitet.

Peckham, R. S. (Ed.) 2003. *Rethinking Heritage. Culture and Politics in Europe.* Lon-
don: I.B. Tauris.

Peterson, T., Fryklund, B. & Stigendal, M. 1988. *Skånepartiet. Om folkligt missnöje
i Malmö.* Lund: Arkiv.

Pettersson, R. 2003. *Den svenska kulturmiljövårdens värdegrunder. En idéhistorisk
bakgrund och analys.* Skrifter från forskningsprogrammet Landskapet som arena,
7. Umeå universitet. Umeå.

Pripp, O. 2006. Den kulturbundna kulturen. Om strukturell uteslutning i kulturlivet.
In: Kamali, M. (Ed.). *Den segregerande integrationen. Om social sammanhålln-
ing och dess hinder. Rapport av Utredningen om makt, integration och strukturell
diskriminering.* SOU 2006:73. Stockholm.

Pripp, O. 2007. Kulturens soppstena. *Mångfald är framtiden*, SOU 2007:50. Pp. 262–
282. Stockholm.

Pripp, O. 2008. Lokala och globala kulturarv i Botkyrka. In: Burström, M. (Ed.). *Arke-
ologi i förorten. Berättelser från norra Botkyrka.* Södertörn Archaeological Stud-
ies 7. Pp. 99–118. Huddinge.

de los Reyes, P. & Kamali, M. (Eds.). 2005. *Rapport av Utredningen om makt, inte-
gration och strukturell diskriminering.* SOU 2005:41. Stockholm.

Smith, A. T. 2004. The End of the Essential Archaeological Subject. *Archaeological
Dialogues.* Vol. 11(1). Pp. 1–20.

Smith, L. 2004. *Archaeological Theory and the Politics of Cultural Heritage.* London:
Routledge.

Smith, L. 2006. *Uses of Heritage.* London: Routledge.

Sofaer Derevenski, J. (Ed.) 2000. *Children and Material Culture.* New York: Routledge.

Svanberg, F. & Wahlgren, K. 2007. *Publik Arkeologi.* Stockholm: Historiska Museet.

Synnestvedt, A. 2008. *Fornlämningsplatsen. Kärleksaffär eller trist historia.* Gotarc.
Series B, Gothenburg Archaeological Theses. Göteborg.

Wall, Å. 2005. Agenda kulturarv. Viktiga målsättningar men diskutabla utgångspunk-
ter. *Fornvännen* 2005:43–45.

Waterton, E. 2009. Sights of Sites. Picturing Heritage, Power and Exclusion. *Journal
of Heritage Tourism.* Vol. 4, No. 1. Pp. 37–56.

Waterton, E. 2010. *Politics, Policy and the Discourses of Heritage in Britain.* Hamp-
shire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Waterton, E. & Smith, Laurajane. (Eds.). 2009. *Taking Archaeology out of Heritage.*
Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Watson, S. 2009. Archaeology, Visuality and the Negotiation of Heritage. In: Waterton, E. & Smith, Laurajane (Eds.). *Taking Archaeology out of Heritage*. Pp. 28–47. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Wienberg, J. 2008. Det hotade grevskapet – Per Brahe den yngres minnesmärken. *Fornvännen* 2008/4:260–278.

Wright, R. P. (Ed.). 1996. *Gender and Archaeology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Internet

Agenda Kulturarv. www.agendakulturarv.se. Last accessed 15 July 2011.

Länsstyrelsen. www.lansstyrelsen.se. Last accessed 15 October 2012.

Personal communication

Sonja Wigren, telephone conversation, 20 July 2011.