PUBLIC INTERPRETATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEO TOURISM IN THE SULTANATE OF OMAN

VOLUME I

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DECLARATION

I declare that this work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted for any other degree. I further declare that this thesis is the result of my own independent work and investigation, except where otherwise stated (a bibliography is appended). Finally, I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and abstract to be made available to outside organizations.

Yaqoob al-Busaidi (Candidate)

Prof. Eleri Jones (Director of Studies)

Dr. Teri Brewer
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Certainly I can not forget that I am very grateful to my family for their unwavering support and understanding. I would like especially to thank my mother, my brothers and my wife. Also, Last and by no means least I would like to say to my father Salim bin Abdullah (May He Rests in Peace), my daughter, Maria, and my son, Abdul Rahman, thank you for being the source of my inspiration in this study and part of my whole life.
The literature demonstrates that archaeological heritage (AH) has been one of the main resources exploited for tourism since the early days of tourism and the communication of this heritage to different types of tourists through public interpretation (PIN) or presentation has become a vital element in constructing its interrelated myriad values. However, a number of controversial issues and challenges face PIN of AH need to be systematically studied in depth. Although, there is a considerable amount of research in PIN in relation to AH, the literature is general and sketchy in nature and integrated with other types of heritage resources, especially natural and living culture. Also, what is more important for this research is that there are shortcomings in studies relevant to the interpretation industry and professionalism in developing countries, including the case study of this research, the Sultanate of Oman.

Although Oman is endowed with rich archaeological heritage, which is one of the major competitive-touristic products for Oman, the general public (i.e. local communities, the visitors, education sector, tour operators, etc) are unable to gain benefits and communicate the values of AH effectively both practically and intellectually. Partially, this is due to the lack of PIN for archaeological resources. Through a case study approach, this research explores the various challenges and issues behind this phenomenon especially that Oman endeavours to develop heritage tourism which represents a competitive source for the development of the tourism sector. Various sources of evidence are utilized, including field visits, governmental documents and interviews. By the end of this research it is hoped that two main aims are accomplished. The first is to identify the main problematic issues facing PIN of AH in Oman, especially in relative to archaeological tourism (archaeotourism). The second aim is to create a practical approach that aims at overcoming or minimizing the impact of these issues.

The research findings point out three main influential and interdependent factors that affect the development and quality of PIN at archaeological sites; i.e.: the physical context; the stakeholders and stewardship context; the socio-cultural context.

By utilizing previous practical and theoretical studies and based on the research findings, a new integrative approach for PIN, Integrated Contexts Public Interpretation (ICPI), is proposed to activate the role of PIN for AH and its wider context. Herein, it is hoped that the sustainability of this valuable heritage and its role as an attractive and beneficial element will be achieved. The posted recommendations at the end of this research provide insight and assisting guidelines for putting the proposed approach into practice. It is also hoped that this research fills a gap in the literature relative to PIN of AH, specifically in developing countries.
## Glossary

### Abbreviations

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<td>ICPI</td>
<td>Integrated Contexts Public Interpretation</td>
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<td>ICIP</td>
<td>Integrated Contexts Interpretive Plan</td>
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<td>MOHC</td>
<td>Ministry of Heritage and Culture</td>
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<td>MOT</td>
<td>The Ministry of Tourism</td>
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<td>NHPL</td>
<td>The National Heritage Protection Law 1980</td>
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<td>OCA</td>
<td>The Office of the Advisor to His Majesty the Sultan for Cultural Affairs</td>
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION
Although the critical significance of public interpretation (hereafter PIN)\(^1\) in communicating and accomplishing the various values of archaeological heritage (hereafter AH), however there are undeniable shortcomings in the available literature, practically and theoretically, in regard to this subject in less-developed countries, including the country that is the focus of this research, i.e. the Sultanate of Oman (hereafter Oman).

PIN is a key tool for communicating AH benefits of a particular destination. Some of the benefits are the development and management of archaeological tourism (hereafter archaeotourism) without compromising the sustainability of the interpreted context. Yet, the literature reveals little about the significant and problematic issues facing PIN of this critical heritage resource, especially in developing countries. Thus, this research is an attempt to fill this gap through a case-study approach\(^2\) which allows for research to be based in practical real-life situations (Hammersley and Gomm 2000, Robson 2002, Blaxter \textit{et al.} 2006) and is useful in analyzing the complexity of phenomena by ‘understanding processes alongside their context’ (Finn \textit{et al.} 2000: 81).

\(^1\) While the term ‘public interpretation’ in this research is exclusive to the public presentation of the experts’ primary interpretation for archaeological heritage, the term ‘interpretation’ is inclusive to include both primary and public interpretations of archaeological heritage (see Section 3.2.3).

\(^2\) Mitchell (2000: 168) identified case study as ‘\textit{the fundamental descriptive material an observer has assembled by whatever means available about some particular phenomenon or set of event’}.\)
This thesis is an exploration of the phenomenon of the lack of adequate and appropriate PIN for AH in Oman. Two main interrelated aspects are extensively examined, i.e. the archaeological resources management and archaeotourism in Oman. Both qualitative and quantitative evidence will be utilized to accomplish an empirical study which is epistemologically constructivist and constructionist in nature (see Chapter Four).

This type of research can be seen as ‘formative evaluation’ (Harts 1998: 46) which aims to make improvements to PIN service, programs, policies and sets of activities in Oman to develop archaeotourism and accomplish other public values for AH, such as education and local socio-economic generation. The following sections will specify the geographical boundary of this thesis and state its main problems, aims and objectives. Also, the following chapters are briefly introduced in the final section.

1.2. THE STUDY AREA

Geographically, the scope of this study will cover Oman which is located at the south-eastern corner of the Arabian plate with an area of 309,500 square km (Ministry of Information 2005: 10). The main focus of this thesis is AH which is chronologically dated to different periods where the selected sites represent a wide range of Oman’s history as far as the Early Bronze Age up to the Islamic era (see Chapter Four).

1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the dawn of history, Oman has been recognized as a land of multi-cultural influences and endowed with rich evidence for this from archaeological sites that are spread all over the country (see Chapter Two). Recent research conducted by
Mohammed al-Belushi (2005) estimated that the number of archaeological and historical sites in Oman until 2004 is about 2831 sites. By looking at Table 1.1 and Table 1.2, it appears the following:

(a) There are about 493 Bronze Age sites, 88 coastal and 405 inland, spread all over the country which represents one of the highest numbers of all AH in Oman. This group includes the World Heritage Sites of Bat, al-Khatam and al-Ayn in Ibri;

(b) The status is the same in regard to the Islamic sites which represent the largest dated group where there are about 653 sites. Amongst this group there are World Heritage Sites such as Bahla Oasis and al-Balid;

(c) There are about 913 archaeological sites which are undated which could have resulted from the lack of systematic research and information. These sites are threatened by natural and cultural factors and may gradually disappear without documentation;

(d) 33.56% of AH is located in al-Sharqiyah region in the eastern part of Oman with about 950 registered sites which some of them are unique to the history of Oman, such as Qalhat, Samad al-Shan, Lizq, Ras al-Jinz, Shir and al-Maysar. Some of these sites have produced plenty of evidence for the importance of Oman since the dawn of history in the Near Easter in general (see Chapter Two). Besides, al-Sharqiyah is one of the most representative examples for Omani people as a seafaring nation and a living example of continuous seafaring traditions for over five thousand years. Yet, there is neither one interpreted site, nor a systematic themed local museum.\(^3\)

\(^3\) For example, the coastal sites of Ras al-Jinz have been excavated since the mid of the 1980s; however there are no interpretive services, especially that some of these sites are situated within the Turtle Sanctuary. The sanctuary is considered one of the hottest spots in Ras al-Hadd area with a major number of tourists annually (Ministry of Information 2004). For instance, in 2002 there was about 11,722 visitors to the sanctuary (Ministry of Information 2004: 189).
Table 1.1: Sites by main archaeological periods in relation to environmental context (modified after al-Belushi 2005: Appendix C.16)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Prehistoric Unspecified</th>
<th>Historic Unspecified</th>
<th>Stone Age</th>
<th>Bronze Age</th>
<th>Iron Age</th>
<th>Pre-Islamic Unspecified</th>
<th>Islamic Period</th>
<th>Modern Time</th>
<th>Unknown Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coastal</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2: Number of archaeological and historical sites in Oman in relation to administrative regions (modified after al-Belushi 2005: Appendix C.11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative Region/ Governorate</th>
<th>Number of Sites</th>
<th>% of sites from total number of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muscat Governorate</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>8.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batinah Region</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>23.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musandam Governorate</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhahirah Region</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>9.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dakhliyah Region</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>9.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharqiyah Region</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>33.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wusta Region</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhofar Governorate</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>8.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown Region</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>5.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>2831</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter One: Introduction

According to Porter (1990), historical and cultural resources are important factors that shape a destination’s competitiveness in the tourism industry. The stock and condition of these resources depend upon a nation’s appreciation of their values and its ability to care for their conditions (Ritchie and Crouch 2003). Herein, the potential of PIN in communicating AH values to the general public is undeniable; thus, it has become a basic element in heritage management and heritage tourism (see Chapter Three).

As Oman is a growing destination which depends on its heritage as a major product in promoting and positioning the country as a destination with unique cultural experience, the development of interpretive infrastructure and PIN as a profession will be fundamental. Currently, in Oman, as in many other developing countries (e.g. Stone and Molyneaux 1994, Goodwin 2002, Leask and Fyall 2006), the prominent goal of archaeological sites management and development emphasizes the physical remains of sites; their relevance to contemporary society and their significance and participation in the history of the country and the human civilization is undefined or poorly recognized.

As the size of tourism and number of visitors to Oman grow, it has become more important to develop archaeological sites through fair, efficient and cost-effective PIN ‘while at the same time allowing a satisfactory visitor experience’ (Ritchie and Crouch 2003: 214). In a country with a strong rich AH, such as Oman, it is expected that PIN plays a major role in communicating this heritage, especially that it represents one of the major competitive-touristic products for Oman (Parsons International Limited 2002). However, the actual promotion of AH is very limited and visitors’ facilities are

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4 In fact preservation, conservation, documentation and registration of AH are some of the major issues facing AH stewardship in Oman (see Chapter Six).
Chapter One: Introduction

limited or located far from the site and are not up to the expected international standards.

Nowadays, there are some attempts in Oman to present part of AH through off-site PIN at some museums (e.g. the Omani Museum, the Land of Frankincense Museum); however there is no on-site effective PIN at any Omani archaeological site. Even within these museums PIN is positivist and information accumulation; it tells very sketchy, disjointed and imbalanced stories (see Chapter Six). Visitors need much more help if they are to communicate, appreciate, understand and protect what they see rather than driving through or around archaeological sites with ‘a passing awareness’ (Stewart et al. 2001: 348) as indeed is happening now. Additionally, although museums represent an important interpretive media and catalyst for archaetourism among the public (Herreman 1998), to date there is no national archaeological museum with international standards in Oman⁵. Presently, the development of this role for museums in Oman represents another major challenge for AH management in particular and heritage tourism in general (see Chapter Six).

Although the Article III (b) of the National Heritage Protection Law 1980 (hereafter NHPL) stated that the national authority concerning heritage is responsible for ‘doing everything that may enhance people’s keenness and concern for preserving national heritage’, yet PIN, both off-site and on-site, is underdeveloped and overlooked at heritage attractions in general, including the World Heritage Sites. In fact, although

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⁵ According to the definition provided by the International Council of Museums’s (ICOM 2003) Code of Ethics for Museums 2006, the term ‘museum’ is used for ‘a non-profit making permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates, and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, the tangible and intangible evidence of people and their environment’.
some of these sites, such as Bat area and its affiliated sites, have been designated as World Heritage Sites since 1988, yet until today there is no master management plan, let alone PIN\textsuperscript{6} and archaeotourism development. Master management plans for such World Heritage Sites as Bahla Oasis and Shisur Wubar have been prepared, however their implementation in the real sense has not been activated by the Omani governmental authorities.

There is a gap in ensuring that what is delivered in reality truly contributes to managerial objectives. For instance, although there is some information on aspects about Bahla Oasis, there is no PIN with measurable objectives and there is a limited opportunity to understand the oasis as a whole where even on-site illustrative panels that communicate its unique universal significance have not been produced yet. In order to communicate intangible \textit{universal concepts} (Beck and Cable 2002a, Brochu 2003, Knudson 2003) about AH, PIN for the tangible materials is critical for both Omanis and non-Omanis.

Also, there is no formal PIN connected to the management plan mission or specific measurable objectives that allow practical evaluative research. Moreover, there are no guiding booklets that present the chronological development of the sites within the oasis in a format that can be intelligibly understood at different levels and in different languages. Furthermore, there are no interpretive guiding maps and sufficient guiding information to enable visitors to orientate themselves, especially that the oasis is inhabited by the locals who like to keep their privacy undisturbed by foreigners.

\textsuperscript{6} Site Manager’s Handbook of the World Tourism Organization (ICOMOS 1993: 49) mentions that ‘successful interpretation and effective presentation of a cultural site begin with a vision and a plan’.
Another issue is that as Oman is currently in the initial process of building up its heritage tourism industry, so public awareness and local community involvement as key stakeholders is crucial\(^7\). Giving practical meanings for AH within the contemporary life of communities is a basic demand. For instance, in the United Kingdom ‘for many sites, the key to their future protection lies with local authorities, acting within the framework set by central government’ (Cadw and Royal Commission 1999: 8). To give more specific example, in Wales it appears that ‘an increasing number of monuments are looked after by local key-keepers’ (Humphries 2006: 71)\(^8\). However, according to the informal piloting research, in Oman there is a public apathy about AH because the role of both local authorities and local communities in promoting sustainable archaeotourism has not yet been activated.

In Oman, a vast proportion of the general public knows precious little about archaeology or its results and much less how it might apply to their own lives. For instance, the economic value of AH resources via PIN is underdeveloped with no promotional guiding books, thematic maps and trails, souvenirs, local guides, fund raising activities and programs, special events and the like. Also, utilizing archaeological sites in formal and informal education is understated in Oman, although the teaching of national history is one of the major subjects at the public schools and modern teaching methods call for the use of first-hand experience in teaching history via archaeological evidence (see Stone and Molyneaux 1994). It should be remembered

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\(^7\) This has been supported by international agreements such as Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage (ICOMOS 1990) and International Cultural Tourism Charter (ICOMOS 1999).

\(^8\) Also, in the United States of America, the maintenance of archaeological programs still depend on the realization of the public significance of cultural resources (Moratto and Kelly 1978, McManamon 1994).
that these aspects are critical, especially for local communities’ development and awareness (see Chapter Three).

By Royal Decree 69/1981, the Omani government approved its membership of the 1972 UNESCO Convention for Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. Once a convention has been ratified, states have the duty to enshrine the obligations set out in these international conventions. In this way international law cascades into regional and national legislation which is then binding on related institutions. Herein, PIN becomes a vital part of any master management plan as this is supported by the mentioned convention (World Heritage Centre 1972: Article 5, e). However, this is almost never implemented as in many other less developed countries ‘where tourism and visitor management policies are poorly developed and have a very basic level of on-site PIN (or even none at all)’ (Shackley 1998a: 9). Part of the issue is that research programs and feasibility studies aiming to study the possibility to link archaeological sites with other tourism development plans have not been devised yet.

Furthermore, when Oman made its great development in the early 1970s, a major change also took place in people’s lifestyle which resulted in rapid desertion of many traditional settlements (Costa et al. 1999, Mershen 2006). Therefore, due to modernization processes, much of AH faces increasing threats from some arbitrary development plans which have been endangering archaeological sites, notwithstanding the existence of NHPL (al-Busaidi 2004). For instance, a cursory reading for the written literature about the ancient Magan culture in Oman (see Section 2.7) shows that our information is mostly based on sites that are currently threatened by the modernization
processes (see chapters five, six and seven). In the wake of rapid development, only some historical forts have been preserved and partially developed as tourist attractions throughout the country.

To say more, the AH of Magan culture, which has a five thousand years history and is still alive, represents one of the major historical features in Oman, a living historical record and a national symbol for continuous grass-rooted socio-economic activities, such as seafaring and copper mining. This might explain why ‘Magan’ is a popular commercial name in Oman where there are over than 154 registered trademarks using this term (Khalid al-Nabhani: personal communication: 29/January/2006), e.g. Magan College, Magan Hotel, Magan Bank, Magan Travel Agency, Magan Automobiles, Jewellery of Magan.

In spite of this, there is no adequate PIN for its archaeological evidence, including the World Heritage Site of Bat. Why have the ancient mining sites alongside Wadi al-Jizzi, such as Arja, al-Bayda and Lasil, never been developed as tourist attractions? This is despite the fact that mineral resources, including copper, are one of the wealth of Oman and they were probably the most propulsive force for its development in the third millennium B.C (David 2002). Suffice it to say that al-Maysar-1 settlement produced more ancient copper ingots in 150 years of excavation than any other in the entire Near East, including Iran; moreover, its copper surpluses are unparalleled in other Arabian Gulf countries (Weisgerber 1983, 1992).

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This threat encouraged the researcher to consider Magan as a focal issue in the argument about AH interpretation to the public in Oman.
If cultural heritage resources in Oman, including archaeological sites, represent competitive touristic attractions and an indispensable part of Oman’s past and present then why is there no PIN for these resources, not even for the World Heritage Sites. This might suggest that there are critical factors and serious challenges await resolution, sophisticated planning and appropriate management relative to PIN for AH. This is the primary focus of this thesis. Also, this research will try to investigate if the current status of PIN for AH in Oman is basically driven by economic objectives, rather than by a concern for the community and heritage resources\textsuperscript{10}. Based on the research findings and guided by the published literature, an interpretive approach for AH in Oman will be proposed to promote sustainable archaeotourism. This is beside the fact that eventually ‘without interpretation, countries and locals lose some of their heritage’ (Knudson \textit{et al.} 2003: 13).

### 1.4. PRINCIPAL AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The issues discussed in Section 1.3 can be studied from various perspectives depending on the main purpose of a given study, however in regard to this thesis in particular, there are specific aims and objectives which the researcher hopes to attain by the end of research period. The following sections will identify the research agenda for this study.

#### 1.4.1. The Aims of Study

There are two interdependent aims for this thesis. The first one is to improve PIN of heritage resources in general, and AH in particular, especially in Oman at a theoretical and practical level. The second aim is to develop archaeotourism in Oman as a niche

\textsuperscript{10} This issue has been discussed by Bramwell and Lane (1993).
market through PIN in order to communicate myriad values of AH without compromising its integrity. More emphasis will be placed on issues challenging archaeological attractions development, management and sustainability which in return influence the quality and effectiveness of PIN as a profession in Oman.

All in all, it is hoped that the final results of this study would help in supporting key governmental objectives for the tourism industry which are to utilize heritage resources as touristic attractions and catalyze outbound and inbound tourists without compromising their sustainability (Ministry of National Economy 2001, Parsons International Limited 2002, O’Carroll 2002). Also, it is hoped that this study could assist in promoting and implementing NHPL which aims to ‘enhance people’s keenness and concern for preserving national heritage’ (Royal Decree 6/1980: Article IIIb). This is in order to construct positive shared meanings and communication bridge between the public and AH in Oman to accomplish adequate levels of awareness and give credit to local communities as essential interpreters, actors and shareholders in archaeotourism development.

It should be mentioned here that although the main focus of this research is the on-site PIN of AH, the study will also shed light on the current status of off-site PIN, especially museums, due to their interdependency. For instance, museums are commonly accountable for managing archaeological fieldworks and research and systematically conserving, preserving and data recording about archaeological remains (see Chapter Three). Yet, what is more important for this research is that museums have the potential

1.4.2. Research Main Objectives

The mentioned aims in Section 1.3.1 will be pursued through the following four strategic objectives which are:

1.4.2.1. Objective One

This objective is fundamental to the research process where its main aims are to:

- provide a summary and undertake a critical review of related extant literature in regard to the potential of PIN in communicating AH values, in particular to the general public; more emphasis will be placed on PIN and archaeotourism. The exploration of the current state of knowledge practices in PIN will help in determining some of the luminal areas that have not yet been enough studied by professionals and scholars in PIN;

- establish and define linkage amongst the various related issues to PIN of AH in particular, and to learn how this research is related to the previous works of other scholars in PIN;

- provide initial explanation for the phenomenon in question during the informal piloting phase as well as identifying data sources that other scholars have used; and

- explore best practices relative to PIN of AH to provide a basis for the development of an alternative approach to PIN appropriate to the Omani context.
1.4.2.2. Objective Two

Based on objective one and the fieldwork in Oman the main aims of this objective are to:

- audit the current status of AH management and archaeotourism in respect to PIN of AH. The audit will include the local setting or the micro-context of the selected AH (e.g. the physical environmental impact) and the macro-context (e.g. the national policy, plans and stewardship). In addition to on-site PIN, the current off-site interpretive services and practices, especially at museums, will also be audited due to their significance in archaeotourism (see Chapter Six);

- tease out and define the major gaps and limitations that inhibit the development of PIN of AH in Oman by utilizing primary sources of evidence, including interviews, governmental documents and field observations;

- help in determining the main current priorities and steps that need to be taken by the AH stewardship and archaeotourism stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Heritage and Culture (hereafter MOHC) and the Ministry of Tourism (hereafter MOT); and

- assist the accomplishment of both objective three and objective four.

1.4.2.3. Objective Three

Guided by both objectives one and two, the main aim of this objective is to propose a functional public interpretive approach suitable for AH in Oman. The approach will endeavour to improve the quality of PIN for AH resources and its usage for different purposes, including archaeotourism, while simultaneously sustaining them for future needs and generations. Also, the approach aims at providing an example for quality PIN, improving the performance of PIN industry in general and achieving competitive
advantages. It is hoped that the proposed approach will elucidate the potential of PIN in its wider sense. This objective is taking into consideration the contextual divergence (i.e. geography, culture, education, etc.) which exists between Oman and other areas.

1.4.2.4. Objective Four

This objective will utilize the gathered data in objectives one and two to accomplish three main goals which are to:

- evaluate and discuss the practicality, validity and effectiveness of the proposed approach in objective three guided by the research findings (Chapter Nine);

- post guiding recommendations to develop PIN as a profession in Oman in general, and in relation to AH in particular, as well as to strengthen the applicability of the proposed approach by pointing out major required initiatives and most stressing priorities (Chapter Ten); and

- pinpoint some research gaps and suggest research oppurtunities relative to the subject matter of this research based on the final outcomes of this study. It should be remembered that PIN is only one aspect of more pervasive issues in archaeotourism management and development in particular, and heritage tourism in general.

1.5. LAYOUT AND CONTENT OF THE THESIS

The discussion in the following chapters will basically focus on achieving the above-outlined four objectives in Section 1.4. Since it is important for the readers of this thesis to understand the factual context of the investigated phenomenon where the research has
been conducted, **Chapter Two** describes the Omani context from various aspects, such as geography, administration, social and cultural aspects.

The **third chapter** achieves the first objective of this research where a wide range of literature is reviewed which is relevant to the subject matter of this study, PIN of AH and archaeotourism. Also, part of the literature is utilized as needed to support the argument in different parts of this thesis. The **fourth chapter** discusses the selected epistemology, theoretical perspectives, methodology and methods used to accomplish the above-described objectives.

The outcomes of the research findings are described in-depth and in dialectical approach in chapters five, six and seven to showcase the factors that influence the quality and effectiveness of PIN in Oman. To explain, **Chapter Five** portrays those problems relative to the physical context of the selected archaeological sites mentioned in Chapter Four. Also, **Chapter Six** demonstrates the issues which are relative to the stakeholders and stewardship context, specifically in regard to the managerial realities of AH management and archaeotourism in Oman.

As for **Chapter Seven**, it illustrates the impact of the socio-cultural context in relation to PIN of AH in Oman which seems to be a strong influential factor, not to mention its critical driving significance for the development of PIN for all heritage resources in the country. Based on the research findings, and guided by the available literature and practices, **Chapter Eight** conceptualizes and delineates the proposed approach and its model for PIN of AH in Oman taking into account the unique Omani context.
Chapter Nine is an attempt to evaluate the suggested approach against the Omani context and to provide clearer objectives and sensible explanations for why the suggested approach is workable and important for the quality improvement of PIN of AH in Oman in particular. Finally, and to strengthen the approach applicability and enforce its effectiveness and intended values, some recommendations are posted in Chapter Ten. Also, the chapter reviews the aims and objective of the thesis and identifies its major findings. Moreover, it emphasizes the research contribution to PIN in theoretical and practical sense at large. Furthermore, it suggests other research enquiries to the subject matter of this thesis.
2.1. INTRODUCTION

As the quality and effectiveness of PIN is the product of its own context, this chapter works as an introduction for the current Omani context. Also, AH cannot be isolated from its surrounding natural and cultural factors which, at various levels, do affect the sustainability, significance and function of its resources. Therefore, this chapter aims at providing a brief description for the geography, geology, environment, demography, history of archaeological research and administrative setting for AH management and archaeotourism in Oman.

2.2. THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

2.2.1. The Geography

Oman is located in the extreme southeast corner of the Arabian Peninsula (Figure 2.1), with an area of 309,500 square km (Ministry of Information 2005). It lies between latitudes 16° 40' and 26° 20' north and longitudes 51° 50' and 59° 40' east (Ministry of National Economy 2008).
Figure 2.1: A map shows the geographic location of Oman (Ministry of National Economy 2003b).

Its coastline stretches for over 1,700 km, from the Arabian Sea and the entrance to the Indian Ocean at its south-western extremity, to the Gulf of Oman and Musandam in the north where it overlooks the Strait of Hormuz and the entrance to the Arabian Gulf (Figure 2.2) (Ministry of Information 2005). In addition, there are those islands which are located in the Arabian Sea, such as Masirah in the east and Hallaniyat in the south. Oman shares borders with the Republic of Yemen to the south-west, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the west, and the United Arab Emirates to the north (Ministry of Information 2005, Ministry of National Economy 2008).
Figure 2.2: A map shows the main governorates, regional boundaries, regional centres, major asphalted roads, and the international boundaries (After Ministry of National Economy 2008: 3).
2.2.2. Topography and Geology

Oman possesses rich diverse landscapes which are a product of Oman’s varied climate and unique geological history (Harrison 1976, Ministry of Information 1977, 2005, Hanna 1995). Three major features for the physical environment of Oman are mountains (e.g. Musandam), sand desert (e.g. al-Wusta region) and long coastal plains (e.g. al-Batinah plain) (Figure 2.3).

The topography of Oman varies from the jagged mountains in the north, reaching up to 3000 m, to the plains in the central part, where elevations are from 100 to 300 m, to the coastal plains near or at sea-level (El Baz 2004). The northernmost tip of Oman is occupied by the jagged Musandam Peninsula and the rest of northern Oman is occupied by the rugged al-Hajar Mountains that lead eastward to al-Batinah plain. Al-Wusta region in central Oman includes various important geological areas such as the Huqf and Umm as Samim plains (El Baz 2004). Southern Oman encompasses the Dhofar Mountains that lead to a plain which tilts toward ar-Rubu al-Khali or the Empty Quarter basin of central Arabia. The highest elevation of Oman is attained by Jabal Shams in al-Hajar Mountains (El Baz 2004). Alluvial fans of rivers and sediments at the base of the mountains formed al-Batinha plain as a result of the deposition of materials carried by surface water (Hanna 1995).
Caves have been created in various regions in Oman by water that dissolves limestone rock as it is the status in al-Hotta Cave and Majlis al-Jinn Cave which is one of the largest subterranean caves in the world (Hanna and al-Belushi 1996). The Dhofar Mountains of southern Oman form flat-lying layered cliffs that descend to a coastal plain; on the eastern edge of the mountains, close to the coastal plain, sinkholes and caves are common in areas of softer carbonate rock (El Baz 2004). In
its geological recent past Oman lays at the margin of an ocean— a fact supported by the discovery of dark coloured Samaiya l ophiolites, which are volcanic rocks from that ocean, locally rich in copper and chromium (Hanna 1995).

To the west, the largest sandy plain of Oman lies along the western border at ar-Rubu al-Khali basin which displays a variety of sand dune forms which depend on the amount of sand, wind direction and local topography (El Baz 2004). Due to this geographic diversity, Oman is considered as one of richest countries in flora, fauna and minerals in the world (Harrison1976, Qidawi 2004, Ministry of National Economy 2008).

2.2.3. Climate

The climate is determined mainly by its location on the eastern side of the Arabian Peninsula. It is characterized by mostly clear skies, light winds, warm dry winters and hot dry summers. In the central desert the annual relative humidity is very low, ca. 40%, in the north ca. 60% and in the south 70% (El Baz 2004). Oman’s rainfall is irregular at an average of 100 mm, but around 80% of this evaporates, while approximately a further 5% flow into the sea, however, Dhofar region in the south catches the Indian Ocean monsoon that falls between June and September, al-Kareef season (Ministry of Information 2005). During the monsoon season, the number of tourists increases, especially from neighbouring countries, however most tourists visit Oman during the winter between October and April (Parsons International Limited 2002).
2.3. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

According to the 2003 national census, the population is about 2,340,815 in Oman; about 559,257 of these are expatriates who represent 23.9% (Ministry of National Economy 2004b: 6). The population density is 7.6 person/km² where Muscat region and al-Batinah coast are the most densely populated regions with about 55% of the population are concentrated in these regions as shown in Figure 2.4. Also, it appears that the Omani society can be described as young where 56.2% of its members are under 25 years old (ca. 1,424,284) (Ministry of National Economy 2005b).

Figure 2.4: Percentage distribution of population in Oman by regions (Left: Data from the Ministry of National Economy 2004b) and age pyramid for Omani population according to 2004 statistics (Right) (Modified after the Ministry of National Economy 2005b)

Oman is an Islamic country and Arabic is the main official language for the majority of its population, yet English is widely used and spoken in the country. One-third of Omani citizens are students of one kind or another (Ministry of Information 2006). To decrease illiteracy in Oman, literacy and adult educational programs began in 1998 to teach adults where there were 375 literacy classes with over 6,000 students
(Ministry of Information 2004: 134). In the 1980s, higher educational institutions began to appear in Oman such as Sultan Qaboos University, which was opened in 1986 and now educates Omani students to the highest levels in a wide range of disciplines (Ministry of Information 2004), including archaeology and tourism. Sultan Qaboos University is expanding its scientific and academic research programs and its research and consultancy services are used by all government and private institutions, including MOHC and MOT.

2.4. THE ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM AND STRUCTURE

Since the 23/July/ 1970 His Majesty the Sultan Qaboos has been the Head of State, the highest and final authority and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and the Royal Oman Police (Ministry of Information 2006). In 1970 Oman had little physical and administrative infrastructure. Over the past three and a half decades the transformation of Oman, Renaissance, has seen the establishment of a comprehensive infrastructure, services and industries.

Oman consists of four governorates, Muscat, Dhofar, Musandam and al-Buraimi (Figure 2.5) and five regions, al-Batinah, al-Dhaihirah, al-Dakhiliyah, al-Sharqiyyah, and al-Wusta. Each governorate and region is further divided into districts or wilayats headed by a district governor or wali (Ministry of Information 2006). The governorate of Muscat, the capital, is Oman’s political, economic and administrative centre.

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11 A department for archaeology was established in 1993 and another one for tourism in 2001 at the College of Arts and Social Sciences.
12 The Governorate of al-Buraimi was recently established in 2006 (Ministry of Information 2007), therefore its geographical borders has not been determined or shown yet.
13 A plural for wilayah or a district; the total number of districts is 60.
2.5. THE MANAGERIAL SETTING OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

2.5.1. Archaeological Resources Management

In Oman the current heritage management in general is centralized at national level under the direct management of national political executive. In regard to AH in particular, there are three main governmental bodies which are committed to manage AH and develop archaeological resources which are: MOHC, MOT and the Office of the Advisor to His Majesty the Sultan for Cultural Affairs (hereafter OCA)\(^{14}\).

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\(^{14}\) It was established in 2002 by the Royal Decree 9/2002. There are two headquarters for the Office in Muscat and Salalah. In regard to AH, besides the effort which has been done to conduct archaeological research in Oman (e.g. Dhofar and Salut), its main duty is to manage the group of World Heritage Sites which were inscribed in 2000 under the name “the Land of Frankincense Sites”,...
2.5.2. A Brief History to AH Research Development in Oman

There is a sparse literature about the history of archaeological research management and development in Oman (e.g. Costa and Tosi 1989, Tosi 1989, Potts 1990, 1998, al-Belushi 2005). Although, archaeologically, the Near East is seen as the cradle from which civilizations initially spread (Hodder 2003), the archaeology of Oman Peninsula (Oman and UAE) remained ephemeral and one of the least explored areas. Until the 1970s, AH of Oman was unknown to archaeologists, however with the onset of renaissance from 1970 onwards there has been a gradual unfolding of Oman’s antiquity (Abdul Nayeem 1994).

According to Costa and Tosi (1989: 9), ‘archaeological investigation started in the late fifties mostly as extension of projects conducted in neighbouring countries’. There are a myriad of interrelated reasons for this status, such as: the lack of developed education system and media; limited communication and isolation from other foreign countries; harsh environment to work in; and unstable socio-politic and socio-economic conditions. Even those early works ‘appeared in fact of limited value because they were lacking a defined context of cultural and historical reference’ (Costa and Tosi 1989: 9).

namely the frankincense trees of Wadi Dawkah and the remains of the caravan oasis of Shisur Wubar and the affiliated ports of Khor Rori and Al-Balid (Ministry of Information 2005: 118).

15 Examples for some of the early researches were those of Miles (1877, 1901, 1910.) and Cleveland (1959a, 1959b, 1960).

16 Potts (2003: 9) wrote: ‘The fact remains that, within the field of Near Eastern archaeology worldwide, Arabian archaeology is rarely taught as a specialty, and when it is taught, more emphasis is likely to be given to Bahrain, Yemen, north-western Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, than to the U.A.E. and Oman’.

17 According to Tosi (1989) the first archaeological excavation in Oman had been organized by Dr Wendell Philips for the American Foundation for the Study of Man at Khor Rori.
Tosi (1989) mentioned that the real archaeological works or the ‘New Archaeology’ in Oman began in the 1970s when systematic archaeological surveys and investigations were conducted by international archaeological professional teams. A Department of Antiquities\textsuperscript{18} was created in 1973 under the Ministry of Information and Culture and foreign expeditions were encouraged and supported financially from the Omani government (Costa and Tosi 1989). It was during this period when the Danish expedition under the direction of Karen Friefelt in the winter of 1975/76 started working at significant sites, such as Bat (Gentelle and Friefelt 1989). Also, another important archaeological survey in the early 1970s was held by Harvard Expedition (Hasting \textit{et al.} 1975).

Some of the archaeological works from the 1970s onwards were stimulated by rediscovering and looking for the Land of Magan which was mentioned repeatedly in the Sumerian and Akkadian cuneiform texts between the reign of Sargon and that of the Neo-Sumerian dynasties of Isin and Larsa; ca. 2350-1800 B.C (Tosi 1989: 135). Such published works as \textit{The Copper Mountain of Magan} by Peake (1928) and \textit{Looking for Dilmun} (1970) and \textit{Dilmun and Makan}? (1962) by Geoffrey Bibby, had inspired archaeologists to conduct intensive archaeological works in the inland and coastal regions in Oman. Some examples for the inland sites include the archaeological survey and excavations which were conducted by the German Expedition in the late 1970s and 1980s at Wadi al-Jizzi in Sohar and al-Maysar (Weisgerber 1978a, 1978b, 1980, 1981, 1992). As for the coastal sites, a good example is Ras al-Hadd/ Ras al-Jinz Project which was started by a joint French-

\textsuperscript{18} Directed by Andrew Williamson, a British archaeologist (Tosi 1989).
Italian expedition in 1985; since then seasonal excavations have been annually continued up to the present (Cleuziou and Tosi 2000).

In 1976 the Ministry of Omani Heritage was established by Royal Decree 12/1976 which nowadays, and according to Royal Decree 10/2002, it is called MOHC. Four years after its inception, NHPL was issued in 1980 under the Royal Decree 6/80. Also, after the establishment of the Ministry ‘foreign archaeological research has been encouraged and co-ordinated with the aim of increasing the collection of the data [about archaeology of Oman] through any possible resources of scholarship’ (Costa 1989: 98).

Also, during the 1970s, the Department of the Antiquity endeavoured to record archaeological sites, especially since it was clear that the development processes in the country were more rapid than systematic research (e.g. Hasting et al. 1975, de Cardi 1976, Doe 1977). These works focused more on prehistoric sites, meanwhile other periods, such as the Islamic, ‘looked strangely and unconvincingly poor…simply neglected and unexplored’ (Costa and Tosi 1989: 11)\(^\text{19}\). In fact, even today, although Islamic sites represent the largest group among other archaeological sites in Oman (Table 1.1), it is a less known period in Oman’s AH. Some of the early few works were the surveys and excavations in Sohar area\(^\text{20}\) and its hinterland (al-Batinah region) which historically was a major source for natural resources, e.g.

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\(^\text{19}\) According to Tosi (1989: 137) Oman has been attractive for the two main streams of prehistoric research ‘For the cultural ecologists is an ideal testing ground to evaluate the impact of adaptive pressure on culture evolution, while for those more orientated towards historical-cultural perspective it provides a linkage to the earliest historical tradition on maritime trade in the Indian Ocean’.

\(^\text{20}\) In 1959 Cleveland, R. published ‘Preliminary Report on Archaeological Soundings at Sohar (Oman)’.
agriculture and minerals\textsuperscript{21}. As well, research was carried out by Costa (1979)\textsuperscript{22} in the Islamic city of al-Balid in Salalah, Dhofar region.

Some of the scientific outcomes of these works have been published on the \textit{Journal of Oman Studies} since 1975 by the Ministry of Information and Culture, as well as in other national and international publications. Up to date, almost all these research are published in non-Arabic academic publications, such as the \textit{Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy} and \textit{Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies}. Additionally, they were meant to address the professional archaeologists rather than the general public; besides ‘many remained unpublished or had only a limited circulation’ (Costa and Tosi 1989: 11). Although, today there is no one particular detailed chronology for AH in Oman as a main reference\textsuperscript{23}, yet, Table 2.1 suggests a basic chronology based on various related literature (e.g. Yule and Weisgerber 1989, Potts 1990, Abdul Nayeem 1996, Cleuziou 2002, Frifelt 2002a, 2002b, Zarins 2001).

\textsuperscript{22} An earlier descriptive research for al-Balid was done by Carter (1846).
\textsuperscript{23} Cleuziou (1989) referred to Karen Frifelt (1975) and Maurizio Tosi (1976) who proposed the first attempts to summarize the chronology of proto-historic Oman.
Table 2.1: Oman’s Main Archaeological Periods

Al-Belushi (2005) has divided the development of AH management in Oman into four main periods. The first period started from ancient times to the year 1969 AD. The second started from 1970 to 1975 when His Majesty, the Sultan, acceded to power in 1970. The third period from 1976 to 1979 is marked by the establishment of ‘The Ministry of Omani Heritage’ by the Royal Decree, 12/1976. As well it witnessed the first signs of cooperation between Oman and international organisations where in 1977 it became a party in the 1954 UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (Royal Decree

Al-Belushi (2005) believes that the fourth period from 1980 to the present represents the most important period due to the following reasons:

a) The establishment of legislation, e.g. National Heritage Protection Law 1980 (NHPL).

b) The development of administrative structures and duties of the archaeological organisations was in 1980 when a new administrative structure for the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture was introduced by the Royal Decree 73/198024.

c) Appearance of new governmental organisations concerned with the preservation and conservation of the historic environment, such as OCA, Diwan of Royal Court, the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and MOT.

2.6. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AH IN OMAN

The richness and significance of Oman’s history have been evidenced by AH diversity and uniqueness which has been one key motivators for many travellers to visit Oman, the land of precious frankincense and the land of ancient Magan. This has been confirmed by such sources as the early travel accounts (1838 - 1959), travelogues (1996 - 2001) and travel brochures (2001) as described by Mohammed al-Habsi (2004). Although the human settlement in Oman started from the

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24 The Directorate General for Heritage and Culture was established in Dhofar Governorate.
Paleolithic periods, about one million years ago (Zarins 2001), archaeological evidence show that animal domestication and settled communities were not established till about the late 5\textsuperscript{th}/early 4\textsuperscript{th} millennium B.C at such areas as Ras al-Hamra in Muscat (Cleuziou 2002). Also, by this time there has been development of cairn burials, Hafit Type, in Oman which are common archaeological features of the Omani cultural landscape, e.g. Ras al-Jinz, Bat (Potts 1990, Cleuziou 2002, Frifelt 2002b).

During the Bronze Age (3\textsuperscript{rd} millennium B.C), a trade network between the ancient Oman and other cultures in the Near East had been already established (Potts 1990, 2005). The natural resources and raw materials, such as copper and diorite, were extracted from such sites as al-Maysar and Wadi al-Jizzi (Weisgerber 1980, 1981). Also, agricultural settlements appeared in many coastal and interior sites in Oman, especially in al-Hajar region (Orchard 1995). Also, another type of more sophisticated collective tombs in construction, Umm an-Nar type\textsuperscript{25}, became widely used on the Oman Peninsula and can be observed at many archaeological landscapes e.g. Bat, Bahla, Ras al-Jinz (Frifelt 2002b) (Figure 2.6). In fact, and according to Tosi (1989), the funeral architecture, made of towers and stone cairns, represents the most striking characteristic of pre-Islamic antiquities in Oman; they represent like landmarks of ancient settlements. Archaeological remains from the second millennium B.C have been discovered at some archaeological sites, such as Wadi Suq, al-Wasit, Nizwa, Ras al-Jinz and al-Maysar, where settlements and graves have been founded (Potts 1990).

\textsuperscript{25} First discovered in Umm An-Nar Island, Abu Dhabi (Frifelt 1991).
As for the Iron Age, which is a lesser-known period in the history of Oman, it is represented by such sites as Lizq and Samad (Potts 1985, Yule 1999). According to Potts (1985: 81), ‘beginning in the Neo-Assyrian era, and continuing through the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenian periods, the Akkadian name for Oman was Qade’, when a king named ‘Pade’ sent tributes to the Assyrian emperor ‘Assurbanipal’ around 640 B.C.

During Samad period, 400 B.C, which overlaps with the Selucid and Parthian periods in the Late Iron Age, and as the incense trade network flourished in the southern part of Oman, such archaeological sites as Khor Rori and Shisur Wubar became vital sites for the caravan routes where archaeological remains, such as military and civil architecture, have been found (Zarins 2001, Avanzini 2002a, 2002b). According to some scholars, during this time, Oman was called by Persian kings ‘Mazun’ (Potts 1985: 88) or ‘Mazoon’ (Yule and Weisgerber 1989: 10). Also, based to several historical resources, ‘dating from this period is the Omani national epic story of Malik bin Fahm al-Azdi who left Yemen with his tribesmen for central Oman, the heart land of Samad culture’ (Yule and Weisgerber 1989: 12).
In addition to the archaeological findings, historical classical authors, Greek and Latin sources, developed a clear picture about the significance of Dhofar region during the Late Iron Age period (Zarins 2001). For instance, the account of a Greek book named *Periplus of the Erthraean Sea*, 1st century AD, referred to an ancient harbour called ‘Moscha’ in Dhofar which might be Khor Rori (Avanzini 2002a, Zarins 2002).

Furthermore, the archaeological findings from this period and research from several sites, such as Masirah, Wubar Shisur and Khor Rori, confirm the religious, linguistic, political, socio-cultural and economic various influences of such cultures as south Arabic States (9th/8th BC- 0 AD), Seleucid/Hellenistic (300 B.C- 0 AD), Parthian (0 AD- 250 AD) and Sasanian (250-650 AD) (Zarins 2001). In fact, the study of the Iron Age period and pre-Islamic cultures in southern Oman is strongly linked to the history of south Arabic states, such as Main, Saba, Qataban, and Hadramawt, as it appears in various archaeological findings such as inscriptions, pottery and architecture (Zarins 2001, Avanzini 2002a). For instance, politically the kingdom of Hadramawt developed a policy centred on wars and agreements with local people, and economically the kingdom participated directly in sea-trade by founding the port of Sumhuram as part of the frankincense trade in Dhofar region (Avanzini 2002a).

The Omanis were among the first to embrace Islam in 630 AD and since then ‘Oman became a stronghold of Islam, helping to spread the faith to south-east Asia and to eastern and central Africa’ (Ministry of Information 2004: 20). In the Islamic
period, the incense and copper trade continued to grow and the network expanded to include the Far East countries, such as China, as this has been confirmed by the archaeological evidence found at Sohar Fort, Arja, Qalhat, Shisur and al-Balid (Costa 1978, 1979, Costa and Welkinson 1987, Kervran 1992, 2004, Zarins 2001).

In the early 16th century, the Portuguese trading empire sought to extend its influence and to reduce Oman’s control over the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean trade route; thus, the Portuguese troops captured some of the coastal areas for 150 years until they were defeated by Al-Ya’aribah Dynasty, 1624-1744, (Ministry of Information 2004: 20). During the reign of this dynasty, the Omani fleet was the dominant naval power in the western Indian Ocean which was the start of considerable Omani interest in East Africa (Ministry of Heritage and Culture 2002).

In 1744, the founder of Al-Busaid Dynasty, Ahmed bins Said, was elected to expel the Persian invaders and restore the national unity in Oman (Ministry of Information 2004). During Al-Busaid Dynasty, the sea trade reached its greatest extent during the reign of Said bin Sultan (Ministry of Heritage and Culture 2002) and by the 19th century, Oman was an imperial power, expending its territory across the Arabian Gulf and into East Africa where it controlled the island of Zanzibar (Ministry of Information 2004: 23).

Oman’s unique AH has been dramatically influenced and driven by its geographical and geomorphologic contexts which allowed the evolution of ‘an indigenous culture for survival’ (Abdul Nayeem 1996: XXIII). As in many areas in the ancient world,
the environment was an integral part of Oman’s prehistory where shorelines, mountains and desert were the three main environments in Oman where AH have been formed, reformed and deformed\textsuperscript{26}. Both the criterion and opportunistic samples listed in Chapter Four are good examples for these influential environments such as Ras al-Jinz, Shir, and Shisur Wubar.

The geographical setting was mainly a driving factor for making Oman a seafaring nation which by the third millennium B.C was known as the land of Magan or Makkan (see Section 2.7). Also, the strategic location between the continents of Asia and Africa was an effective factor where ancient trade routes related Oman to other contemporary cultures, such as the Land of Sumer in Southern Mesopotamia, Dilmun in Eastern Arabia and Melluha in Pakistan (Cleuzioue and Tosi 2000, Possehl 2003). This has resulted in cultural enrichment and diversity and has established some types of commercial and cultural network exchanges amongst these cultures which would have included unavailable local commodities such as bitumen for boat construction (Cleuziou 1992).

In addition to the copper mines, settlements, tombs and caves, the rock art can be considered as one of the most significant archaeological features in Oman which represents a historical reference for the environment and lifestyle in the past. Different styles of rock art can be found in the mountains, e.g. Jabal al-Akhdar (Preston 1976) and caves alongside water streams as in Shenah (Insall 1999) and different parts of Dhofar (al-Shahri 1991, King and al-Shahri 1999). The scenes in

\textsuperscript{26}For instance, Tosi (1975: 194) mentioned that ‘the availability of both farm and marine resources has made al-Batinah region one of the cornerstones of human settlement in Oman’.
these rock arts depict such elements as symbolic decorations, animals, plants, boats, anthropomorphic and epigraphic figures (Figure 2.7).

Figure 2.7: Petroglyphs from Shenah depicting animal-like figures (by researcher)

One of the main characteristic features for AH in Oman is that many ancient settlements (i.e. industrial, agricultural, residential, etc) were established alongside water streams called wadis27 as it is the case at Arja (wadi al-Jizzi), al-Maysar (wadi Samad), Bat (wadi al-Ayn) and Bausher (wadi Bausher). Due to the availability of water and cultivable soil, there is clear evidence that oasis agricultural settlements on the interior side of al-Hajar region have been established in the foothill zones since the third millennium B.C and still as in the modern al-Hajar oasis towns (Orchard 1994, 1995, Orchard and Stanger 1999). Again, here water is ‘a constant reference point in the determination of the settlement model and the degree of demographic concentration’ (Tosi 1975: 187).

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27 A plural for a wadi.
This has been confirmed by another important living AH in Oman which is the ancient irrigation system or \textit{aflaj}\textsuperscript{28} which their origins may date back to more than 500 A.D (Costa 1983, Wilkinson 1985) or even earlier where archaeological evidence at such sites as al-Maysar and Bat suggests their existence as early as about 2500 B.C (Weisgerber 2003). These \textit{aflaj} are directly associated with intangible and tangible Omani living traditions, particularly in the north\textsuperscript{29}.

In addition to the direct and indirect influence of the environmental and geomorphologic factors, other features for the Omani AH are:

- The large archaeological landscape in Oman is a common feature which is clearer in the rural and peripheral areas as it is the case at Shenah, Arja, Qalhat and Bat. This is not surprising especially for the ancient oasis settlements since during the third millennium B.C human occupation was continuous over the whole piedmont strip from al-Dhahirah region to al-Sharqiyah region over a total distance of 350 km (Tosi 1975).

- As some areas in Oman, such as the Oasis settlements (Orchard 1995, Orchard and Stanger 1999), have been continuously or sporadically occupied through the ages, this has resulted in AH diversity in type and chronology. This chronological continuity is observable at some sites, such as Bat, Bahla and Bausher, which enriches the cultural landscape and probably communicate a better experience for both interpreters and visitors.

\textsuperscript{28} Plural for a falaj.

\textsuperscript{29} For their universal outstanding values, \textit{aflaj} represent an exceptionally well-preserved form of land use. Five \textit{aflaj} with other associated buildings (e.g. mosques, sundials, houses) were inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2006 which are Falaj Daris, Falaj al-Khatmeen, Falaj al-Malki, Falaj al-Muyassar and Falaj al-Jeela (World Heritage Centre 2006).
Authenticity is another characteristic where the major part of AH of Oman has not been exposed to the rapid development processes similar to the status of Bausher in Muscat. Here, a large number of its archaeological features have been destroyed in favour of building new modern constructions (Costa et al. 1999). The remote location of many archaeological sites was, and still, a main factor in preserving a major number of sites as is the case in Shir and Shenah.

Archaeological features in Oman are situated in harmony with other geomorphologic and topographic components within the wider environmental and cultural landscape. For instance, a major part of the above-mentioned tombs were built by local environmental materials, particularly limestone which was the predominant construction material in ancient Oman (Guba 1995). Also, many types of ancient earthen structures were excavated at such settlements as Ras al-Jinz (Cleuziou and Tosi 2000) and al-Maysar (Weisgerber 1992, 1980). Since then, the use of earthen materials has been a continuous tradition through the ages in Oman as forts, castles, defensive walls and historical quarters or harah, evidence this. The homogeneous nature of AH makes it an integral part of its wider surrounding context rather than being an isolated senseless ruin.

Since the distribution of natural resources was not homogenous this has led to the interchange with other regions possessing complementary resources, such as the interrelationship between the coastal and inland areas, e.g. Bat and Ras al-Jinz (Tosi 1975, Cleuziou and Tosi 2000, Frifelt 2002a).
To demonstrate the significance of Omani AH and the potential of its PIN the following section will present Magan culture briefly which has been selected as one measurement for the criterion sites discussed in Chapter Four.

2.7. MAGAN CULTURE

It is mentioned in Section 2.6 that through history, Oman has been known by various names such as Magan\textsuperscript{30}, Qadi, and Mezoun. Beside its geographic strategic location, the accessibility to, and availability of natural resources, such as frankincense, minerals and marine resources, have had various impacts for the ancient inhabitants of Oman which allowed the evolution of the land of Magan during the third millennium B.C.

Magan culture represents one of the main AH testifying to Oman’s deep-rooted history and as a culture of its own from the ancient past to the present. In order to elucidate more accurate picture and enrich the subject matter of this research Magan culture was chosen as an essential example for the current status of PIN of AH in Oman. Its selection as one measurement for the criterion sites stems from its scientific and historic significance for the ancient history of the Near East in general and Oman in particular. Also, some of the archaeological sites with national and universal outstanding values, such as Bat, Ras al-Jinz and al-Maysar, are considered as physical cues for this culture.

Hansman (1973) mentioned that the problem of identifying the location of Magan is particularly confused because Old Babylonian and Sumerian references seem to

\textsuperscript{30} The terms Magan and Makan are used synonymously in the literature where in Sumerian cuneiform tablets it is known as Magan and in the Old Akkadian’s as Makkan (Hansman 1973, Potts 1990, 2000).
place this region at the lower end of Persian/Arabian Gulf while texts of the Late Assyrian period indicate Egypt and Nubia/Ethiopia. Magan was called the mountain of copper where it seems almost certain that from the Umm an-Nar period\(^3\), c.2500-2000 B.C, down to the days of the First Babylonian Dynasty the Sumerians obtained their copper from Oman (Peake 1928, Potts 1990). Analysis of late third millennium B.C objects from Ur in southern Mesopotamia confirmed that they were made from the copper of Oman and revealed the grass-rooted foreign trade maybe earlier before any text records (Weisgerber 1981, Berthoud and Cleuziou 1983).

In addition to copper, Magan was a highly plausible candidate for supplying chlorite and diorite (David 2002). The royal statuary of the late third and early second millennia B.C is often sculpted from diorite and gabbro where royal records indicate a source for this dark stone in Magan (Potts 1986, Guba and Yule 2001). There are some scholars who think that the term ‘Magan’ means in the Sumerian text the ‘body of the ship’ to emphasize Oman as the land of seafaring nation and its reputation in building boats through ages (Ministry of Heritage and Culture 2005) as well as the long-time maritime traditions and history of Oman (Thapar 1975, Oates et al. 1977, Casper 1976, 1992, Cleuziou 1992, Gogte 2000, Ratnagar 2004).

Weisgerber (1983) supports the identification of prehistoric Oman with the Magan of historical sources based on such facts as 1) the richness of Oman’s mountains in diorite and copper; 2) building remains which evidence to developed social organization, farming and irrigation; and 3) the existences of intercultural

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\(^3\)The term Umm an-Nar culture has been adopted to define the proto-historic assemblage unearthed for the time in the early 1960s on the Island of the name lying just off Abu Dhabi (Tosi 1976).
intercourses with other region in Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley as evidence show (e.g. seals, pottery, beads).

2.8. THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

Although natural gas, mineral, agriculture and fisheries sectors represent the key industries in Oman because of their major economic and social importance, yet the fact remains that Oman’s economy mainly depends on oil which in 2005 accounted for 65% of the General State Budget’s revenues (Ministry of Information 2006).

To counter instability in global oil prices, it is common with other petroleum-based economies in the region that the country has been seeking economic diversification through other sectors, such as tourism, in order to provide long-term economic stability (Sharpley 2002). In Oman the development of the tourism sector has been viewed as a leader to the activation of other sectors; it is considered as one of the major dimensions of the vision for Oman’s Economy, Oman 2020, which involves setting up the appropriate conditions for economic diversification (Ministry of National Economy 2001, 2007). The long-term objectives for the sector’s vision are:

- Making Oman a major hub and starting point for tourists coming to the region and the neighbouring countries.
- Raising the relative contribution of the sector to 5% of GDP.
- The private sector should undertake a leading role in tourism activities and to raise the Omani workforce participation to 80% of the total workforce in the tourism sector.
In order to fulfill these objectives, a law for tourism was established by the Royal Decree 33/2002. Later, the Royal Decree 61/2004 set the first step by establishing the Ministry of Tourism and appointing its Minister. Also, external consultants and international advisors have been employed in preparing the guiding strategies in order to achieve the tourism sustainability and economic growth, industry partnership and unique experience for visitors and innovation in promotion.

There have been some studies carried out on the long-term development of the tourism industry in Oman which aim to make it a competitive destination, such as *The Final Priority Action Plan for Tourism Development in Oman*, was prepared in 2002 by Parsons International Ltd. Also, there is the *Tourism Marketing Strategy* which is basically a marketing program designed to promote a distinct national logo ‘Oman-the Essence of Arabia’ (Sweeney 2002). In addition, International Development Ireland Ltd (IDI) has been engaged to provide support in implementing strategies and action plans in cooperation with the private sector (Ministry of Information 2005).

One of the important projects relative to this research is the *Physical Master Planning Services for Ras al-Hadd and Ras al-Jinz* which was prepared in 2004 to develop the area of Ras al-Hadd and Ras al-Jinz Turtle Reserve to become one of the main attractions in Oman (Ministry of Tourism 2004b). Also, there is an ongoing project, started in 2001, which aims at the restoration and enhancement of

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32 Before this inception, the tourism sector was managed and developed by the Directorate General of Tourism at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
about twenty two forts and castles\textsuperscript{33} from all over Oman to become tourist attractions (Ministerial Decision 110/2001). The project is managed by the Department of Forts and Castles in MOT. Furthermore, MOT plans to restore and revive the old mountain passes by creating designed trekking trails\textsuperscript{34}.

According to \textit{The Final Priority Action Plan}, ‘Oman is anticipated to play a significant role in diversifying and expanding tourism experiences available within the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, GCC’ (Parsons International Limited 2002: 7). Unlike Dubai which is a close competitive destination, Oman could be described as a peaceful, relaxing and authentic holiday experience’ (Sweeney 2002: 19) which was confirmed by the visitors’ survey 2001/2002 (Ministry of National Economy and Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2003). Therefore, nowadays, one of the major issues confronting MOT is the development of heritage-based tourism which is a focal strength for Oman as a growing competitive destination in the Middle East (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2001, Parsons International Limited 2002). However, and according to the report of the \textit{Sixth Five-Year Development Plan} (2001-2005) it is stated that:

\begin{quote}
The Omani Heritage components have not been fully utilized, to serve the tourism and recreation sector, up to a level consistent with the significant progress witnessed by the tourism sector in the Sultanate.
\end{quote}

(Ministry of National Economy 2001: 126)

\textsuperscript{33} Their stewardship was transferred from MOHC to MOT in 2001.
\textsuperscript{34} The first phase of the program covers six passes in Jabal Shams, Misfat al-Abriyeen, Jabal al-Akhdar (al-Dakhiliyah region), al-Awabi (al-Batinah region), Wadi Tiwi (al-Sharqiyyah region) and Riam Mutrah area in Muscat (Ministry of Tourism 2005a, Ministry of National Economy 2007). Unfortunately, in the present, issues such as the lack of facilities, security, specialized tour guides and the alike encounter those people who are interested in trekking ancient routes (Jacelyn Cabaltera: personal communication: 10/01/07; Salim al-Maskari: personal communication: 09/01/07, Reinhard Siegl: personal communication: 20/September/05 and 13/01/06).
A critical part of this issue is the lack of PIN which its role in communicating the various values of heritage in general is undeniable as discussed in Chapter Three. As for AH in particular, its significance for the tourism sector in Oman, both the mass and special interest, is well defended by the research findings (see chapters six and nine), especially that the niche market is very supported by the Omani government as a result for the increasing demand, especially from the Western European market and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, GCC (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2001, Sweeney 2002). For instance, the Inboun Tourism and Outbound Tourism Survey 2001/2002 (Ministry of National Economy and Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2003: Table 1) shows that the tourists from the GCC countries increased from 600,000 in 2001 to 717,000 in 2002 and the number of European tourists increased from 172,000 to 205,000 in 2002. In this regard, AM34 mentioned:

I can tell that a majority of the tourists who come to visit Oman come with the objective of learning about the heritage, the culture and the history of this country...That is what people come for. So if you have a general interpretation of archaeological and heritage sites of Oman and make them clearer to the travelling public, I think it will elicit a great interest in the destination.

This is not surprising as BX6 included the following:

Given Oman’s key role in the efflorescence of civilization and the documented success of other countries in deriving significant returns from the sensitive interpretation of their own archaeological sites, it is evident that the potential exists in Oman for substantial returns to be derived through archaeological tourism.

This implies the fact that archaeotourism in Oman is developing (AM25, AM21, AM31). However, the majority of respondents emphasized that practically this
cannot be accomplished till AH resources are developed for visitors through interpretive services (AS4, AS9).

2.9. SUMMARY

Briefly, this chapter highlighted the environmental, demographic, administrative and historical settings of the Omani context. Also, a short account for the history and development of archaeological research in Oman was provided with a special reference to some of those sites which are selected as units of analysis.

The settings are indispensable driving factors in the development and management of PIN of AH. For instance, it has been described above that the environment has influenced the formation, diversity and uniqueness of AH in Oman. Also, the current managerial and demographic facts have direct or indirect impacts on PIN of AH in Oman as this is confirmed by the research findings in Chapter Six.
CHAPTER THREE
LITERATURE REVIEW

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3.9 SUMMARY
3.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter it is intended to achieve the first objective of this thesis, the literature review and analysis. Although this chapter focuses on PIN of AH, however it was necessary to review some related issues to heritage PIN in general and its relation to tourism in particular.

The review is oriented to address those issues which are mainly linked to the interpretation of archaeological resources and their wider contexts in which they are located, including such aspects as stewardship, socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political characteristics. This will enrich the discussion in the following chapters and provide a robust and coherent context which will back up recommendations for future directions to develop the potential of PIN and sustainable archaeotourism in Oman.

3.2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOURISM: CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS

Before proceeding to the discussion about the potential of PIN of AH in archaeotourism, it is important to provide conceptual definitions\textsuperscript{35} for AH and archaeotourism suitable for the subject matter of this study.

\textsuperscript{35} According to Bernard (2000: 36) Conceptual Definitions are ‘abstractions, articulated in words that facilitate understanding’ and Operational Definitions consist of ‘a set of instructions on how to measure a variable that has been conceptually defined’.
3.2.1. Archaeological Heritage and the Wider Context

Basically, there are differences in meaning between past, history and heritage. According to Graham et al. (2000) the term past is concerned with all that has ever happened, whereas history is the attempt of successive presents to explain selected aspects of the past and heritage is a view from the present, either backward to a past or forward to the future. In this sense AH interpretation can be defined as a collection of multiple views about past events or cultures based on present tangible and intangible evidence in order to construct a sense of human history and benefit its values for myriad purposes.

Article (1.3) of the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage 1992 states that AH includes ‘structures, constructions, groups of buildings, developed sites, moveable objects, monuments of other kinds as well as their contexts, whether situated on land or under water’ (Council of Europe 1992). In this context, any archaeological site is not limited to a discrete location distinct from its surroundings; however it is connected to its wider context or its bigger concept.

36 A wider definition is given by the International Council on Monuments and Sites, ICOMOS (1990: Article 1: 12), which is ‘That part of the material heritage in respect of which archaeological methods provide primary information. It comprises all vestiges of human existence and consists of places relating to all manifestations of human activity, abandoned structures, and remains of all kinds (including subterranean and underwater sites), together with all the portable cultural materials associated with them’.
Chapter Three: Literature Review

(Copeland 2006). This means the consideration for a wider cultural landscape\textsuperscript{37} or historic landscape\textsuperscript{38} patterns to which it is inextricably tied (Macinnes 2004).

An archaeological site should be viewed ‘dynamically as the present state of a continuing process of landscape evolution rather than as an isolated and a static phenomenon’\textsuperscript{39} (Price 1994: 288). The Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage (ICOMOS 1990) referred to the fact that the intangible heritage or ‘the living traditions of indigenous peoples’ are essential components in interpreting AH and convey its universal values to the public. This is vital in creating the sense of continuity and interrelationships between people, events and places through time and transmitting this to visitors (Taylor and Altenburg 2006). Therefore, in this research, beside the tangible materials of a particular archaeological site, the attached intangible heritage is considered here as indispensable part of any AH in PIN provision.

3.2.2. Archaeotourism as a Core and Peripheral Industry

History has become an increasingly marketable resource where the remembrance of time past is a worldwide growth industry\textsuperscript{40} known as the ‘heritage industry’ (Jenkins 1992: 1). In addition to natural history, buildings, artefacts and cultural traditions, this

\textsuperscript{37} According to the Operational Guidelines of UNESCO (World Heritage Centre 2005) cultural landscapes are cultural properties and represent the ‘combined works of nature and of man’. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal. In geographical studies the concept of cultural landscape is used to mean the physical landscape and human interaction with it or the interaction of natural and cultural aspects within a particular region (Aplin 2007).

\textsuperscript{38} Darvill et al. (1993: 564) used the term relic cultural landscape for ‘a piece of natural or artificial scenery containing remains relating to a particular form, stage or type of intellectual development or civilization’. Also, the historic environment can be used to mean what generations of people have made of the place they lived (English Heritage 2000).

\textsuperscript{39} For example, ‘Stonehenge is not just the monument itself, but a ritual landscape including over 450 scheduled monuments spanning many millennia and sited over many hectares’ (Bath 2006: 163).

\textsuperscript{40} World Tourism Organization estimates that 37% of trips involve a cultural and heritage component (Boyd 2002: 212).
industry ‘has come to include those things which can be portrayed for promotion as tourism products’ (Prentice 2003: 174). Archaeological resources and symbols, as one of the heritage resources, have been extremely utilized by this industry to promote a particular destination, for the mass or special interest tourists and developed as a niche tourism known as archaeotourism (Carr 1994, Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996, Hoffman et al. 2002, Kamp 2003, Prentice 2003, Arden 2004, Walker 2005). According to Hodder (1995b: 277), archaeotourism could mean to ‘experience the thrill of time’.

Jewell (2005: 45) believes that ‘it is from archaeological research that the tourism industry constructs interpretation for the visitor to heritage sites’. AH has been utilized by interpreters probably from at least 460 B.C when some self-employed guides were available at the Pyramids of Egypt (Dewar 2000: 175) or from the ancient Greek times when almost every town had its own expert local guide or ‘periegete’ (Stewart et al. 1998: 257). Also, the association between historic buildings, travel and education was well established before the sixteenth century, ca 1560s, onwards in the form of the Grand Tour (Towner 1985, 1995, Light 1995, Richards 1996, 2001, Baram and Rowan 2004).

Archaeotourism can be classified under the wider terms cultural tourism and heritage tourism (Ashworth and Tunbridge 2000, Richards 2001, Hughes 2002) which are commonly and interchangeably used in the literature (Alzua et al. 1998). For example, while Richards (2001) defines heritage tourism as covering the consumption of the

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41 As a term, heritage became common in the 1970s in Europe, and through the 1980s expanded increasingly to include other aspects and to be used for commercial purposes (Prentice 2005: 244).
cultural products of the past as covering contemporary culture, the living heritage, Prentice (1993) used the term to include both natural and cultural attractions.

Hughes (2002) suggested a framework for cultural tourists which is a modification of Silberberg’s distinctions (1995) of identifying several ranges of interest in the heritage or cultural attractions and activities. Two useful terms for this study are *culture-core* tourists\(^{42}\), and *culturePeripheral* \(^{43}\) tourists (Figure 3.1) \(^{44}\). Culture-core refers to those tourists who have chosen to travel to a destination in order to ‘see or experience a particular aspect of the culture’ which is at the core of the visit (Hughes 2002: 170). In this sense, for AH to be a core source or the primary element, it needs to be ‘the key motivation for visitation to a destination’ (Ritchie and Crouch 2003: 68). As for culturePeripheral, it means those tourists who will be away from home primarily for other reasons where AH for instance ‘is not at the core of the visit but is outside that, at the periphery’ (Hughes 2002: 170).

\(^{42}\) Based on Hughes’s (2002) classification for cultural attractions tourists, the visitors to archaeological sites can be divided into two categories according to their motivation:
- **Primary culture-core** tourists where the main purpose in travelling to a destination is to visit an archaeological site (greatly motivated).
- **Multi-primary culture core** tourists (motivated in part) where the cultural attraction is of equal importance with some other reasons for the visit.

\(^{43}\) Also, according to Hughes (2002) tourists are identified into two types:
- **Incidental culturePeripheral tourists** where culture is a reason for the visit but secondary to some other reason(s)
- **Accidental culturePeripheral tourists** where culture will not have featured at all in the decision to visit the destination, but they do nonetheless visit a cultural attraction.

\(^{44}\) McKercher and du Cros (2001) identified five categories of cultural tourists: purposeful, sightseeing, serendipitous, casual, and incidental.
Based on the above, and for the purpose of this research, archaeotourism is: a form of heritage-based tourism in which archaeological landscape represents a core-motivation or peripheral-motivation for on-site visits and/or off-site experience, e.g. museums, travelling exhibitions. It also includes all structural aspects (e.g. organizations and policies) as well as operational processes (e.g. marketing and tour guiding) which are relative to AH in a particular area\textsuperscript{45}.

3.2.3. Public Interpretation: a new definition

It is noticed that in the available literature relative to PIN, mostly the term ‘interpretation’ has not been differentiated from the term ‘Public Interpretation’ which is a research gap needs to be addressed. Interpretation as a word is a loose term which has been used by different disciplines and experts depends on the aims and objectives of the subject matter of their research\textsuperscript{46}. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{45} A core motivated tourist could be used to refer more to the niche tourists, while a peripheral-motivate tourist mainly means the average tourists.
  \item \textsuperscript{46} Because PIN as a profession, an industry and an academic discipline has not been developed in the Arabic countries yet, therefore, the term PIN has no synonymous or a matching word. The closest term is \textit{Tafseer}, which mainly refers to the study and explanation of the Holy Quraan and \textit{Hadith}, sayings of the Prophet Mohammed. Another term is \textit{Ittisal} which includes the various communication sciences, in particular the mass media.
\end{itemize}
word ‘interpretation’ is originally a Latin word means ‘explanation’ and ‘translation’; it
refers to three possible meanings; (1) ‘the action of explaining the meaning of
something; (2) ‘an explanation or way of explaining’; and (3) ‘a performer’s
representation of a creative work’ (Soanes 2003: 585).

Defining PIN literally is an open-ended question where it has different meanings and
concepts depends on the background, experience, aims and epistemological
approaches of experts, organizations, groups or governmental authority. Accordingly,
it is difficult to provide and depend on a comprehensive definition for PIN. However, by
looking at most of the proposed definitions they seem more or less close to one another
and mainly focused on six interdependent elements (Figure 3.2) which include the use
of a particular communicative approach to transmit messages about a given object or
subject to audience through media which is hoped to convey various values or
meanings.

47 For example, Hooper-Greenhill (1999: 12) mentioned that ‘In the museum, interpretation is done for
you, or to you. In hermeneutics, however, you are the interpreter for yourself’.
Figure 3.2: The six basic elements of PIN.

Also, an important point to be mentioned is that in the literature the two terms PIN and presentation are often used synonymously; both can be used with the meaning of ‘acceptable presentation to the public’ (Fowler 1977: 185). The first professional definition for PIN was probably introduced by Tilden (1977: 8) who defined it as ‘an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience and by illustrative media, rather than simply communicate factual information’. The main point here is that telling people facts may

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48 For example, the Advisory Group on Presentation and Interpretation to the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission in the UK defined presentation as ‘The art of exhibition through any appropriate means, a monument or site, from arousing the public’s awareness of its existence to the stimulation of the public’s perception and enjoyment of its various features and qualities’ (Binks 1986: 40).
not enthuse and enrich the visitor’s understanding and may not make connection (Taylor 2006: 102)⁴⁹.

Also, Tilden (1977: 9) mentioned that ‘interpretation is an art’ as emphasized by many definitions of other scholars such as Aldridge (1975)⁵⁰, Binks (1986)⁵¹ and Walsh-Heron and Stevens (1990)⁵². Another definition describes PIN as meanings constructive link between places (objects) and visitors (subjects) where it becomes adjunct to the communication industry (Uzzell 1989a)⁵³.

Also, the definition provided by Prentice (1996)⁵⁴ strongly underscores the importance of enjoyment and sustainability as two main goals for any PIN in order to attract visitors, ensure visit repetition and develop a positive attitude. Furthermore, Moscardo (1998: 3) referred to PIN as ‘a special kind of communication that is particularly relevant to tourism and recreation’. A critical point to be explained here is that PIN should ‘integrate resources elements by the shaping of core product’ where the

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⁴⁹In this context, the National Association for Interpretation (NAI), USA, defined interpretation as ‘a communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interest of the audience and the inherent meanings in the resource’ (Brochu and Merriman 2002: 16). A similar definition has been adopted by the Association for Heritage Interpretation (AHI) in UK (see www.ahi.org.uk/www/about/what_is_interpretation).

⁵⁰Aldridge (1975: 4) defined interpretation as ‘the art of explaining the past in relation to environmental and social condition by bringing it to life dynamically, usually in thematic or story form; to increase visitor awareness of the significance of the site visited and the desire to conserve it’.

⁵¹Binks (1986: 45) wrote that interpretation is ‘the art of explaining...to take the facts of archaeological and historical evidence and communicate them in a way which will strike a chord with the visitor’.

⁵²Walsh-Heron and Stevens (1990: 101) defined interpretation as ‘the basic art of telling the story of a place’.

⁵³According to Uzzell (1989a: 5), interpretation is ‘a set of communication techniques of varying degrees of effectiveness in varying situations which can be used to get particular messages across to particular groups of people’.

⁵⁴Prentice’s definition (1996: 55) stated that interpretation is: ‘a process of communication to people the significance of a place so that they can enjoy it more, understand its importance, and develop a positive attitude towards conservation. As such, interpretation is used to enhance the enjoyment of place, to convey symbolic meanings and to facilitate attitudinal or behavioural change’.
intangible ideas and feelings, such as nostalgia and pleasures, are communicated through the tangible elements such as historic sites (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996: 8).

In regard to the meaning of interpretation of AH, Stone (1997: 23) suggested that there is a meeting of four approaches to the interpretation of the past: (1) academic or theoretical archaeology; (2) indigenous views of the past; (3) school history; (4) the past as presented to the general public in museum or historic sites. In this sense, archaeology as a discipline provides the base for different levels of interpretation (Wickham-Jones 1988) and interpretation is an intermediary ‘between different perspectives on the past, and between the specific and the general’ (Hodder 1995a: 196).

Interpretation makes sense of the archaeological evidence (Shanks and Tilley 1987), yet there is a dichotomy between the definition of interpretation used by interpreters and that used by archaeologists. For the former, interpretation emphasizes general understanding which leads to appreciation (Sharpe 1976, Tilden 1977) or what Thompson (1981: 85) called ‘secondary interpretation’.

As for the latter, it refers to the basic examination and analysis of data in order to understand the process that led to the formation of a site or a group of sites (Wickham-Jones 1988, Tilley 1993). Herein, interpretation is ‘an active process of mind, in which evidence is tested against current theories’ (Gathercole 1994: 3). Thompson (1981: 85) called this ‘primary interpretation’ which is in part an educational function and requires different skills from the secondary interpretation and is usually embodied in the
scientific journals or standard handbooks. Also it should fit into existing frameworks of knowledge and it serves basically the archaeological community.

Primarily, interpretation is an ‘expert construction’ which results in a ‘public presentation’ used to construct meanings by visitors called ‘public construction’ (Copeland 2004, 2006). In this sense, archaeological sites are interpreted as they are discovered and they may be reinterpreted at any time for various purposes where part of the experts’ knowledge or account of interpreted details are selected to be presented to the public. So here, the secondary interpretation transmits the primary interpretation, the raw materials, intelligibly to the non-professionals by making it less difficult to be understood, ‘demystification’ (Pearce 1996: 174) through ‘the development of communication strategies’ (Jameson 1999: 12). Herein, PIN becomes the final product where interpreters ‘transmit almost the sum total of knowledge about the past and its relevance to the present and future that the majority of the population will ever receive’ (Stone and Mackenzie 1989: 117).

Stewart et al. (1998: 257) see PIN for AH as ‘the process of making archaeological sites accessible to the public audience’. Herein, interpreters should not interpret for themselves; they should work as ‘brokers’ or ‘intermediaries’ (Uzzell 1985: 167) between visitors and archaeological landscapes which they want to understand or

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55 It begins when an expert, not necessary field archaeologist, has direct experience through handling archaeological objects or sites or indirect experience through the literature or other sources. Here, a construction of the past is formed that will be unique to the expert and mediated through his/her own values and experience (Copeland 2004).

56 It results from the presentation of the expert construction through various interpretive mediums. In this phase, ‘a similar process of construction will take place with visitors internalizing aspects of information, the selection of which is contingent on previous experience’ (Copeland 2004: 137). Here, there will be a process of construction in case of assimilation, or there will be a production of new ones, accommodation (Copeland 2006: 86).
experience. An interpreter here attempts to transform their constructed meanings about a particular subject or object in archaeology by providing ‘catalystic suggestions’ (Wickham-Jones 1988: 187) into a wide spectrum of visitors. These suggestions may lead to the discovery of the past by all and that is how archaeologists and interpreters can work together.

Without disregarding the above-said definitions, and for the purpose of this research, PIN of AH is: a reveal of a primary interpretation\(^\text{57}\) about a given archaeological heritage and its associated wider context in the past and present\(^\text{58}\) through an interrelated communicative system\(^\text{59}\) in an attempt to relate and construct the myriad values and meanings of AH so as to generate a mindful public construction which might provoke a sense of appreciation and protection.

\(^{57}\) These include the professionals and alternative interpretations by other groups such as indigenous people.

\(^{58}\) Through the archaeological evidence, the wider historic landscape, ethno-archaeological studies, etc.

\(^{59}\) People-based and/or design-based mediums.
3.3. A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the wider sense, PIN is far from being a new phenomenon; it is ‘one of the oldest practices for cultural transference in existence’ (Uzzell 1989a: 2). It ‘has been happening ever since people have visited places because they thought them interesting’ (Carter 2001: 3). By the mid-eighteenth century the beginnings of heritage PIN were evident with resources, learning seekers and the intervention of an interpreter (Light 1995). What is more, the nineteenth century represents an important period for the establishment of museums where cultural artefacts from all over the world were gathered and organized for public consumption (Richards 1996). Also, mass edutainment exhibitions rose in London and Paris from the mid-nineteenth century onwards (Light 1995). This includes the establishment of open-air museums which first appeared in Stockholm in 1891 and which can be considered as the forerunners of modern heritage PIN (Walsh 1992, Shackley 1994, Davis 1999).

A formal philosophy of heritage PIN was established by Freeman Tilden, 1883-1980 (Uzzell 1989b, Brochu and Merriman 2002, Merriman and Brochu 2006) who published his premier work *Interpreting Our Heritage* in 1957. Light (1987: 79) mentioned that after the publication of Tilden’s book, ‘environmental and heritage interpretation have become common-place at a variety of leisure and recreational sites’. Tilden’s (1977: 9)

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60 Until 1939 most open-air museums were in Scandinavia, the majority of them were depicting life in rural communities (Blockley 1999). Since 1945 open-air museums have spread in the former Federal German Republic, Eastern Europe and in Britain (e.g. Culleton 1999, Rasmussen and Gronnow 1999, Schmidt 1999, Sommer 1999). Many of these museums join different historical or archaeological ruins with simulation based on archaeological evidence such as the Weald and Downland Museum at Singleton, West Sussex (see http://www.wealddown.co.uk/).

61 Also, Enos Mills (1870-1922) can be considered as one of the American premiers in developing natural heritage PIN (Beck and Cable 2002a, Merriman and Brochu 2006). In the early 1900s he established the nature guiding school in Estes Park, Colorado (Merriman 2005).
six principles still form the basis for much of the interpretive works done around the world (Dewar 2000, Beck and Cable 2002a). However, by the time Tilden was writing in 1957, PIN had become a service supplied by governmental agencies or the public sector (Uzzell 1989a).

Heritage PIN had become a professional and widespread activity by the twentieth century (Merriman and Brochu 2006) when during the so called ‘heritage boom’ in the 1980s visitors sought to learn about and understand the past, using their leisure time in touring heritage (Light 1995: 117). Also, in the 1980s, PIN was gradually adopted by the private sector (Prentice and Light 1994). Parallel to this, there has been a development in the various forms of mass communication which has greatly influenced people’s perceptions of the past (Walsh 1992).

Such issues as illicit trade and black market in antiquities, vandalism and sites destruction, over-consumption of archaeological sites and the lack of trained staff and financial resources, have directed the attention toward the critical issues of PIN. This was confirmed by significant numbers of charters, principles and guidelines which have emphasized the fundamental role of effective and appropriate PIN in cultural heritage sites conservation and appreciation. One of the main aims of the International Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management (ICAHM) is to create understanding and awareness of the importance of AH among the public (Biornstad

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62 The six principles are: Interpretation should relate to visitor, Information as such is not interpretation, Interpretation is an art, The aim of interpretation is not instruction but provocation, Interpretation should present a whole rather than a part and must address the whole man rather than any phase and Interpretation addressed to children should be different from that addressed to adults (Tilden 1977).

63 To mention some, there are Nara Document on Authenticity (1994), the Burra Charter (1999), the International Charter on Cultural Tourism (1999) and the Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China (2002).
1989). Also, one of the main strategic objectives for the World Heritage Committee is to ‘increase public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through communication’ (World Heritage Centre 2005: 7).

PIN is seen as a tool to construct and develop ‘greater understanding of the values represented by the cultural properties themselves, as well as respecting the role of monuments and sites play in contemporary society (World Heritage Centre 2005: 93).

Also, the World Heritage Convention, adopted by UNESCO in 1972 (World Heritage Centre 1972), states in various articles (e.g. 4, 5(d), 22(c), 23) the crucial importance of site presentation and PIN in accomplishing sites’ sustainability. In this context, archaeologists need to explain intelligibly why such sites are vital if they are to reduce illicit trade and black market as well as site destruction in developing countries, such as Peru, this is considered a main issue in archaeology (Bonavia 1984).

Currently, although there is a proposed draft for the ICOMOS Ename Charter for the Interpretation of Cultural Heritage Sites (ICAHM 2006, ICOMOS 2006a), however it has not yet been approved (John Jameson: personal communication: 01/08/2007). The existence of such proposal indicates the critical values of PIN. This has been confirmed by the establishment of the International Scientific Committee on Interpretation and Presentation (ICIP) by ICOMOS in 2005 (ICOMOS 2006b). Nowadays, heritage PIN is considered as a central component of tourism in general, and ‘modern heritage

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64 One main reason is the high worldwide demand for cultural artefacts from Peru (Lindsay 2006).
66 International Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management: http://www.icomos.org/icahm/.
67 ICIP mainly aims to ‘define the basic objectives and principles of site interpretation and presentation in relation to techniques and application of technologies, authenticity, intellectual integrity, social responsibility and respect for cultural significance and context’ (ICOMOS 2006b).
tourism’ in particular (Light 1995: 117), as well as leisure and public relationship industries (Uzzell 1994). Yet, Dewar (2000: 180) mentioned that ‘an examination of the history of guiding and interpretation shows it still to be a nebulous profession with little or no anchor’.

Uzzell (1998c: 187) thinks that PIN ‘has not been well served over the years because those responsible for its development have failed’. For instance, in the USA ‘interpretive programs are disconnected form resources management’ (Merriman 2005: 36). According to Binks (1986) archaeologists and archaeological communities do not seem to have gone in for PIN to the same extent as the preservation of sites and landscape (see Section 3.4). Compared to the poor PIN of these assets, the conservation and maintenance is of the highest standards (Cleere 1984). Stone (1997: 27) mentioned that archaeology communities need to understand that a very important element of PIN is to help people to be in touch with the past in order to keep the integrity of human-beings in a rapidly-changing environment.

Also, Uzzell (1998a) suggested that a serious attention is required to be directed to the development of theories that address major areas of practices such as the problem of place, the problem of time, personal memories, collective representations, visits as social experiences and the diversity or unifying role of PIN. Furthermore, Uzzell (1998a: 23) asserted that PIN will only become truly effective when it is built upon firm theoretical and research-based foundations.
ICOMOS admits that in few countries around the world is there sufficient national money allocated for educating and hiring staff for the professional care, maintenance and presentation of these sites (ICOMOS 1993: vii, Shackley 1998a). Ironically true, these sites are constantly and increasingly used in national tourism marketing, however conservation is usually the last operational process to be included in national budget and the first to be cut (Walker 2005). World Heritage Sites must be managed in a way that sites are preserved and sustained for future generation and made accessible for its education and enjoyment (ICOMOS 1993: vii). However, finding the proper balance between these two missions challenges World Heritage Site managers.

3.4. PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY AND PIN

Public archaeology is one of the essential elements in AH management (McManamon 1994, Lea and Smardz 2000, McManamon and Hatton 2000) and perhaps ‘the most rapidly growing segment of the archaeological enterprise’ (Pettigrew 2007: 25). The term ‘public’ can mean ‘all those people who do not regard themselves as professional curators or archaeologists’ (Pearce 1996: 133). To Wickham-Jones (1988: 187), the difference between the public and specialists is that the latter ‘bring specific knowledge, methods of analysis and desires and expectations to visit’.

The relation between PIN and the public comes from considering AH as a public trust which leads to ensure public right and accessibility to archaeological sites and research. This is in order to enrich people’s understanding and add to their enjoyment of the historical landscape (Binks 1986: 42). One main reason for developing PIN is probably

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68 In his article, Fowler (1981) discussed that in relative to the interest, the public can be divided into minority (specialists), and majority which includes people with some awareness, and people with no interest in the past or archaeology.
the great rise in expenditure on archaeological sites which makes it necessary for the public to understand and be updated about archaeology (Thompson 1981, McManamon 1993, McManamon 1994, Boniface 1995, Davis 1997).

An important point to be mentioned here is that ‘the information from all significant archaeological sites should be of interest to the public, but not necessarily the sites themselves’ (Davis 1989: 97). The meaning of any archaeological site to the public depends upon the site and which portion of the public is talking about (Pokotylo 2007). Most people are interested in the past to some degree and archaeology provides important evidence of the past (Renfrew and Bahn 1991), yet archaeology has been blamed for discouraging the interested public by its over-technicality and complexity (Baker 1983, Selkirk 1986, Robb 1998). Wickham-Jones (1988) thinks that this occurred because of professional neglect of PIN which resulted in depthless surface interpretation or entertainment to draw more visitors.

Part of the misunderstanding for archaeology is that popularization has never seen as a main element of the archaeological process (Binks 1986, Shanks and Tilley 1987, Pinter 2005). Also, Jameson (1999) and Stone (2005) pointed out that the current approaches to archaeological interpretation have not been made readily available for public consumption which might result in ‘self-satisfaction on the part of archaeologists’ (Davis 1997: 86). Aldridge (1975) differentiated between interpretation for casual visitors and conservation education in relation to time, approaches and presented information which results from different points of views or expectations. Fowler (1986:

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69 For instance, in a comparative study between the students of University of British Columbia and the general public, Pokotylo (2007: 14) found that the student are ‘much more interested in archaeology and slightly more likely to consider it relevant in contemporary society’.
7) mentioned that if archaeology is to perform in public there is a need to do it in the public’s own terms ‘that is packaged to entertain, to divert, to stir, as well as to inform’, performance archaeology.

Few archaeologists see the need to be professional presenters to the public; yet the fact is when archaeologists interpret a site they do it in an informative presentation filled with suitable archaeological facts (Wickham-Jones 1988) while visitors want to know why they dig in a particular site, where and what are the fascinating archaeological findings. This means that ‘visitors want a dialogue, but the starting points and motivations between them and the professionals are vastly different’ (Davis 1997: 86). PIN is essentially a heuristic process involving discovery and stimulation that enables and encourages visitors to learn and explore by themselves (Aldridge 1975, 1989). That is to say, many archaeologists are still uncertain about the best way to provoke public interest in archaeology (Pokotylo and Mason 1991) which is crucial in PIN to develop a mindful visitor behaviour to ensure that the intended messages concerning the interpreted site were properly received and understood (Tilden 1977, Moscardo 1996, Ham 2007) and thus achieve constructive interpretive experience (Uzzell 1988). These aspects must be envisaged, understood and accounted to achieve effective PIN plans.

There are those archaeologists who would keep the general public away from archaeological sites; they see the increasing interest in visiting ancient monuments as a form of corruption (Aldridge 1989, Kamp 2003) which could cause cultural damage and physical ‘tourist erosion’ (Cleere 1984: 129). Therefore, ‘some of the resistance to the

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70 e.g. the Pyramids in Egypt, the Acropolis in Athens, Stonehenge in UK, and the prehistoric painted caves of Altamira in Spain.
use of marketing in countryside interpretation rests on a belief that marketing necessarily means boosting visitor numbers’ (Robinson 1989: 51). Seeden (1994a) thinks that publicity can increase the destruction of archaeological sites and illicit trade by attracting people to them in search of buried treasure; however the potential benefits in informing society at large must outweigh such concerns (McManamon 1994, Stone 1997).

Another argument is that archaeologists assume that heritage is in danger not only because of external pressures, e.g. developers, but from the heritage industry itself due to the abandonment of the values of the stewardship, scholarship and sense of identity (Hewison 1989). Fowler (1989: 60) raises the serious questions about promoting the so-called heritage as it has led to the creation of ‘phoney heritage’ or ‘antiqued’ sites and artefacts by giving an old appearance and illusion that the presented heritage is a real significant history and part of the past, ‘antiquing’. This has been called the ‘heritageisation’ of the past (Walsh 1992), the ‘heritization’ (Pearce 1996) or the ‘commodification of history’ (Smith 2003). Steven (1989) explained that heritage has been sucked in by tourism, public relations and marketing professionals, redefined, reconstituted and repackaged to become an exercise in details (see Section 3.5.2).

Hollowell-Zimmer (2003: 35) argued that ethically the greatest danger of archaeotourism ‘may be its blatant promotion of a consumerist valuing of the past’. There is a general idea that people wish to know about the past (Lowenthal 1985), however, Wickham-Jones (1988: 193) argued that the public interest in ‘visiting the past has been quickened’. Cossons (1989b: 16) predicted that heritage tourism ‘will be
increasingly pushed toward serving’ and hence consumption become dominant rather than production (Pretes 1995). In this status, tourists are ‘cultural consumers’ rather than ‘cultural producers’ (Tilley 1989: 280). Increasingly, there is more competition from other recreation and leisure places, it is imperative that heritage sites develop, promote and market their services and facilities to encourage and guarantee new and repeat visitation. Thus, Robinson (1989) mentioned that a visitor-centred approach is vital to ensure the survival of the resources, e.g. the English Heritage (Eastaugh and Weiss 1989).

Also, the influence of mass media cannot be underestimated; they can shape the ways in which history and heritage are seen by the public (Binks 1986, Schouten 1995, Pettigrew 2007). The use of mass media, such as television and internet, has had a major impact in stimulating and fostering interest in archaeology (Merriman 1991, Pokotylo and Mason 1991, Keen 1999); nonetheless, the pressure of commercialism are invasive and only a few better-known periods tend to be chosen, e.g. the Vikings or the Romans in Britain (Wickham-Jones 1988, Henson 2000). As well, Fowler (1986) indicated that although there are various archaeological magazines, their impacts on the public have been insignificant. Besides, nowadays reading for young people is a secondary means of collecting information; their resources of learning are basically

71 The survey of Gero and Root (1994: 25) for the National Geographic magazine’s volumes between the years 1900-1985, shows that the archaeological content of National Geographic magazine reveals in various ways that archaeology is interpreted to build and promote nationalist ideology.

72 One way to do this is by utilizing some high-tech applications in design-based interpretive programs. Some of these applications are the creation of a digital landscape and 3D reconstruction, virtual tourism. Hodder (2003: 1) mentioned that ‘experiments in using the internet to involve more communities in the process of interpretation have been at least practically successful’. Currently, although the investment is high in using such applications in PIN, but the knowledge of how people learn from these media is not clear enough (Taylor 2006: 107), e.g. the British television series Time Team (see http://www.channel4.com/history/microsites/T/timeteam/index.html).
focused on the visual impact which means that venues, such as museums, is not only poor, but incomprehensible (Schouten 1995).

Another part of this discussion is that it should be remembered that any archaeological digging is a form of destruction and the dissemination of the findings as widely as possible is a crucial way of preserving, documenting and reviving an excavated site. Ucko (1996) thinks that there is a need for fundamental revolution to liberate archaeology findings from being monopolized by those who control it from their positions of authority. This has resulted in the isolation of the findings and inaccessibility to all but the privileged who refuse re-interpreting or reconstructing archaeological sites, even in the limited sense. Also, this has resulted in the public perception that archaeologists represent a conservative and anti-development group. Therefore, McManus (1996: xiii) assured that ‘intellectual access to an informed sense of the past and of the continuation and variety of human life lies at the heart of all archaeological interpretation to the public’.

Archaeologists could do more to make archaeology better understood and more enjoyable which would certainly involve a change in the relationship between the archaeological community and the public (see Section 3.7). In this context, Hodder (2003: 2) referred to the fact that today many archaeologists would accept the definition of archaeology as ‘a mode of enquiry into the relationship between people and their material pasts’ instead of ‘the study of the past through its material things’. Since people do not talk about things they are not interested in or that have no meaning in their lives
or experiences, one main function of PIN is to relate to audience by illustrating how the past is relevant and meaningful to the present (Lowenthal 1998, Ham 1992).

Lowenthal (1985) argued that one of the past-related benefits is familiarity and recognition, to make the present familiar. The past interpretations could work as educational tools to instil values, validate tradition, confirm identity and make sense of the present (Lowenthal 1985). Herein, archaeology could become ‘a medium by which we may alter our understanding of the past and its relations to the lived present’ (Tilley 1993: 25). In this sense, Aldridge (1989: 85) stated that ‘without an appreciation of our cultural history we cannot understand the significance of human events, discover the meaning of the world stage, or any of its manmade phenomena’. Herein, PIN becomes a clarifying tool that ‘makes history real’ (Schouten 1995: 25), a means of experiencing the past history in the present (Smith 2003). This is vital to develop a supportive constituency, awareness and protection where archaeologists need to explain why sustaining the past is essential. This is because there are those who ignore the importance and relevance of prehistory to our present or they think it is improper to think about the link of prehistory to the present (Daniel 1988).

Pokotylo and Mason (1991) think that people are interested in archaeology, however most are uncertain about what archaeology is which makes them sometimes uncomfortable (Davis 1997). Thus, Hodder (2003: 2) suggested that ‘dialogue, collaboration and multivocality on their own are not enough…rather changes are needed

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73 Lowenthal (1985) included six categories of past-related interconnected benefits that encourage and motivate people to visit heritage sites in general; these benefits are (1) familiarity and recognition, (2) reaffirmation and validation, (3) individual and group identity, (4) guidance, (5) enrichment and (6) escape.
in the ways in which we work as archaeologists’. Lowenthal (1994: 303) emphasized that ‘increasing public involvement demands new perspectives on collecting and custodial care, display and commemoration’. Education concerning the protection and preservation of archaeological sites must include more than claiming that it has priceless values; ‘to interpret is to act’ (Hodder 1995a: 197). This is because large complicated ruins are difficult to be understood without historical and comparative knowledge that most visitor to archaeological sites lack (Thompson 1981: 29). Ucko (1996: x) argues that despite the welcome growth in ways of enlivening site visits and attempt to combine entertainment with education, many of the significant questions still remain under researched and therefore poorly understood (see Section 3.10).

McManamon (1993: 133) recommends three categories of information that could be of use to on-site PIN; they are: (1) established sites available for visits; (2) excavations underway and available for visits; (3) opportunities to participate in legitimate, scientific, excavations and laboratory works. Certainly, the excavated site on its own would not have attracted public concern and visitors (Miket 1996), therefore, a good on-site PIN of the archaeological dig could assist in raising awareness, good public relations and good for generating money income and support for future works (Binks et al. 1988, Pearson 1993, Hoffman et al. 2002). This can be accomplished by providing ‘on-site sensory experience where people are invited to participate in a creative, enjoyable and communicative process of encountering the past’ (Gyimothy and Johns 2001: 249).

74 Tubb (2003: 419) who conducted an evaluation study of the effectiveness of interpretation within Dartmoor National Park, UK, in reaching the goals of sustainable tourism development concluded that ‘the High Moorland Visitor Centre did make a contribution to visitors’ knowledge and awareness’.
Also, Aldridge (1975) referred to the importance of on-site interpretive centre\textsuperscript{75} to communicate the significance of sites values. Therefore, opening archaeological sites and research to the public view and critique, especially the local community, could add multiple voices and dimensions to archaeological interpretation. Furthermore, Potter (1997) endorsed the idea that in-situ interpreters specialized in archaeology are more qualified to present information which they are familiar and involved with, rather than the average tour guides. Thus, Stone (1997) assures that archaeologists, who take the responsibility of PIN of AH, must not be penalized in their careers by seeing such work as less important than other archaeological aspects. Fritz and Plog (1970) and Daniel (1988) argued that although archaeologists are the best qualified people to interpret ancient remains and make them relevant to the modern world, yet they have become scared that archaeology will be developed increasingly into a pure tourism industry. In this case, the amateurs, publicists and propagandists might be left in possession where archaeology, with few exceptions, is usually presented as ordered to be passively viewed by visitors where there is no challenge or participation (Hodder 1986).

For instance, it is arguable that one reason for the popularity of alternative or pseudo-scientific interpretations for AH is that archaeologists ‘are leaving the public behind and that the void that they are creating is being filled by alternative archaeology’ (Schadla-Hall 2004: 263). Therefore, Stone and Mackenzie (1989: 118) emphasized the need for those who research the past to be in touch with educators and interpreters to ‘impart and distinguish between what is known, what can legitimately be inferred and what is a

\textsuperscript{75} Interpretive centres differ from information centres in that the latter are created basically to provide visitors with travelling information (e.g. accommodation, visited places and transportation), however the former plays as an interactive centre (i.e. learning, edutainment, orientation) (see Brochu 2003).
complete fabrication’ (see Section 3.6.3). Parallel to this, if access to archaeological findings and communication are not available, then the public runs the risk of archaeological interpretation being prejudiced (Stone 1997).

The other case in this issue is that the lack of the understanding on the part of the public may lead to the lack of protection and preservation of archaeological sites (see Section 3.7.1). For instance, in Lebanon, the public seems to be satisfied to sit back and watch the destruction of archaeological sites (Seeden 1994a). Therefore, if the archaeological community is not ready or sufficient for the need of the heritage industry, then the danger is that it seeks elsewhere which is ‘the road to heri-tat’ (Wickham-Jones 1988: 192). For such reasons, ‘modern archaeology must recognize and confront its new role, which is to address the wider community’ (Ucko 1994a: xii) and confront the industry if they are to control over their own profession. As a result, in Australia for example, ‘community-based archaeology’ has aimed at the involvement of indigenous people in ‘a broader dialogue with archaeologists and archaeological practices’ (Greer 2002: 282).

Archaeological interpretation is no longer the unquestioned field of the archaeologists. Certainly, this is not to say that commercial PIN is bad, but it is essentially important to ensure that planning for PIN is ‘a cooperative activity involving many others’ (Goodey 1996: 304) and a ‘multidisciplinary approach is usually necessary for any measure of success’ (Bradley 1982: 83). Millar (1989) and Smith and Staniforth (1999) see PIN as a key to a successful partnership between those who are in charge of cultural resources management and archaeologists, and those planning tourism developments. Thus, Little (2004: 269) suggested that ‘archaeologists working with interpreters have to be
prepared to learn enough to understand their colleagues’. Herein, it should be remembered that archaeotourism is ‘a form of tourism; it is not a form of cultural heritage management’ (McKercher and du Cros 2002: 6).

Furthermore, Wickham-Jones (1988) reminds archaeologists to make sure that their updated information, which is the raw material of PIN, continues to serve as the groundwork for future PIN, as well as good partnership and communication with professional and their commercial colleagues and PIN profession. This is fundamental to provide for a broader accurate exchange of high quality information (McManamon 1993, McAndrews 2007) and to avoid the impact of growing commercialism in archaeotourism (Wickham-Jones 1988, Robb 1998). Also, one good reason for partnership is that the financial implications of the modern tourism industry ‘provide a whole new set of criteria for what we should preserve and why, which have very little to do with scientific archaeological enquiry’ (Fowler 1981: 66). For instance, in Scotland, most archaeological works today are undertaken by commercially-funded companies and commercial archaeology is largely driven by planning conditions, not research or educational objectives; this has been justified by ‘the mitigation of development impacts for the public good’ (Toolis and Carter 2005: 10).

Moreover, heritage changes overtime in the way it is presented and the public reacts to its interpretation. Schouten (1995: 26) assured that these changes have nothing to do with ‘scientific evidence’, but with the creation of new realities which are both

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76 Increasingly most of the archaeology done in the United States and the majority of the archaeologists are involved in contract archaeology, a part of cultural resource management (McGuire 2003).

77 A practical example of this is provided by the current PIN at Braehead Iron Age Dig in Glasgow, undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group (Toolis and Carter 2005).
recognizable and understandable by the public. Also, Schouten (1995) included that visitors today are careless about details; concurrently they are more sophisticated and critical of what is presented to them and more outspoken in their opinions. As many authors have concluded that this is often subjective to factors, including cultural background, personal upbringing, previous experience and personal interest (e.g. Veverka 1994, Moscardo 1996, Stewart et al. 1998, McKercher 2002, Knudson et al. 2003). For instance, Beck and Cable (2002a) referred to the influence of ethnic and religious backgrounds, especially in developing countries, in perceiving the use of natural and cultural resources\(^78\). Also, Ham and Weiler (2007) confirmed the relationship between sociodemographic characteristics of visitors and on-site interpretive experience.

### 3.5. PIN VALUES.

James (1986) mentioned that mostly, archaeological sites seem to be set apart from the ordinary daily life; a site remains a regular one until identified as a monument which represents the first step in PIN. Then the site becomes a function of all other ideas and values such as aesthetic/artistic, associative/symbolic, historic/information and economic/utilitarian\(^79\) (Lipe 1984). In addition to its function as one source for the past, AH is a multi-purpose resource in its own right; it becomes a tourist attraction for a wide range of visitors, a focus for community identity, a valuable resource for formal and informal education and the basis for the economic regeneration of an area (Millar 1989).

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\(^78\) This point is practically confirmed by the research findings in Chapter Seven.

\(^79\) It is important to mention that the last value depends upon the three previous values. Certainly, many archaeological sites have an economic value which has little or nothing to do with ancient activity, and much to do with perceived modern industrial and social values (Pearce 1996:172).
In order to construct and communicate these benefits and values, the provision of appropriate PIN is essential as a multi-purpose tool\textsuperscript{80}. The following sections will briefly describe this in relation to five aspects which are: 1) education; 2) edutainment; 3) pride and identity; 4) making valuable interpretive experience and 5) economy.

### 3.5.1. Educational Value

PIN as such is an educational experience for its own right since ‘in its original form heritage PIN was primarily an educational activity’ (Prentice and Light 1994: 204) (see Sections 3.2). Archaeology ‘opens up the potential for developing new educational applications’ (McManamon 1994: 70) by providing hands-on experience and activities, as well as developing thinking skills in general and scientific reasoning in particular (Prince 1982, Stone 1997, Hoffman \textit{et al.} 2002). It is in this sense, PIN of AH could provide examples for teaching in a wide variety of subjects, e.g. history, arts and ethnography (Colley 2000, Fagan 2000, Lea and Smardz 2000, Planel 2000), by using appropriate interpretive programs for local and national school groups and those studying local or regional history.

By presenting the past through school curricula and practical activities, students will enjoy mentally and physically and benefit from a better understanding of how the past is interpreted by archaeologists and related to the present (Prentice 1995, Stone 1997, Prentice \textit{et al.} 1998, Keen 1999)\textsuperscript{81}. This could engender a positive attitude toward

\textsuperscript{80} Light (1987) suggested eight reasons for providing PIN which are: (1) education and self-fulfillment; (2) entertainment; (3) visitor management; (4) satisfying the demand for countryside interpretation; (5) marketing; (6) influencing the attitudes and behaviour of visitors; (7) propaganda and public relations; and (8) economic development regeneration. Additionally, two other objectives are attracting and holding attention and knowledge restructuring (Lee 1998).

\textsuperscript{81} Therefore, in Canada teachers have seen the value of archaeological methods as tools for exploring the relationship between evidence and interpretation (Stone and Mackenzie 1989).
archaeology among young audiences and consequently assist in its continuity as a profession (Killebrew 2004). In addition, the learning about the past through different teaching tools children are clearly learning about themselves (Dieudonne 1999). Therefore, in the United Kingdom assistance for the education sector is being provided by English Heritage and other agencies (Brisbane and Wood 1996)\(^\text{82}\).

Certainly, as PIN needs to consider the age of its audience (Tilden 1977), i.e. children or adults, interpreters should consider different methods to achieve a better understanding and appreciation within a formal education environment. Yet, Zimmerman et al. (1994) warned that continued attempts to communicate AH in schools without reference to the constraints, priorities and requirements of educationalists will merely confirm the view of the latter that archaeology has no role within school curricula. Zimmerman et al. (1994) explained that archaeologists want to teach archaeological skills and ideas in the classroom, while educationalists look for the means to stimulate the educational rather than archaeological development of students. Thus, a shared collective perspective between these two groups should be established to create an appropriate learning environment by following constructivist cognitive approaches (see Section 4.3.3).


\(^{82}\) See www.english-heritage.org.uk/.
children (Aldridge 1975, Ham 1992). In informal education, interpreters have a responsibility to make the general public thinks about the future of AH in the middle of a daily changing world by making sites and excavations accessible and enjoyable (Binks 1986). This is important as nowadays an interest in life-long educational and cultural tourism pursuits has become a powerful motivator for travelling (Ballantyne 1998) and tourists are more experienced and educated (Poon 1993) (see Section 3.4).

### 3.5.2. Edutainment Value

The combination of learning and entertaining has been referred to by Moscardo (1998: 5) as ‘educational leisure’ and by Urry (2002: 136) as ‘edutainment’ where education and entertainment are becoming merged. Through various media, PIN should provide entertainment for visitors (Millar 1989, Knudson et al. 2003) and enhance the enjoyment of a visit where interpretive facilities can make the visit easier and direct visitors to the most spectacular views (Herbert 1989, Light 1995). However, it should be remembered that entertainment is not PIN main goal, but it is a way to communicate its focal message ‘in the sense that it holds its audience’s attention’ (Ham 1992: 8).

Certainly, the educational aim is most specific for high interest groups, e.g. archaeologists, historians, school parties, as part of their learning process, however, most visitors are leisure-oriented and do not come to be formally-educated; they are ‘using their leisure time and are in a leisure frame of mind; they are sporadic in their visits and certainly not a committed or captive audience’ (Herbert 1989: 196). Schouten (1995: 21) mentioned that most visitors to heritage attractions are looking for

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83 Planning of the Viking Jorvik Centre at York recognized these facts as Herbert (1989: 196) mentioned where the sequence has been designed to build up comprehension cumulatively with a limited number of clear take-home messages.
an experience rather than the hard facts of historic reality. Therefore, emphasis has been placed on the entertainment values of interpretive media (Ham 1992, Prentice and Light 1994) which is similar to what Pine and Gilmore (1998: 97) called ‘the experience economy’ where the utilization of advanced technology to provide tourists with an interactive holistic experience has become an integral feature of an attraction.

Also, through PIN, archaeotourism can develop a climate of conservation awareness through different types of edutainment and the enjoyment approaches at attractions (Millar 1989). Yet, some argued that by giving the type of interpretation techniques used, PIN should be seen as part of the entertainment industry; the risk here is that the medium will become the whole message (Uzzell 1989a: 5) and dominate the professional’s view of PIN (Jenkinson 2004).

Urry (2002) mentioned that when people travel to new places they gaze upon or view a set of different scenes or landscapes; they direct their attentions to features of culture, heritage and landscapes that separate them from their daily life experiences. Similarly, Bramwell and Lane (1993: 77) argue that in such cases there is the danger of creating charming tourist landscapes where PIN is used to create ‘tourist spaces’ (Urry 2002: 9) that mainly concentrate on the recognizable, spectacular and the unusual ruins and artefacts that capture the imagination – ‘the tourist gaze’ (Urry 2002), as this is what visitors are presumably are looking for.

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84 The tension in the dual role of heritage PIN as educator and entertainer is illustrated in the two volumes of *Heritage Interpretation* which is edited by Uzzell (1989).
Today, edutainment PIN is more evident in the growth of theme displays, staging of events, re-enactment and elaborate models of light and sound effects (Herbert 1989). Yet, as Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996) argued the objection here is that these are neither accurate in historical details, nor even relevant to history in some cases as long as the fantasy of the participant is not disturbed by such matters. Herein, heritage is ‘as authentic as any other product of the creative imagination’ (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996: 65). The danger of this is that the main value of archaeological sites will be compromised in some way (Graham et al. 2000) (see Section 3.4).

Also, Potter (1997: 43) criticized edutainment as ‘passive interpretations’ when they become one way of presenting data to passive audience85. In other words, the main achievement of such audience is to appreciate the skills of the presented information without anticipating or being active participants or questioning the presented point of view. Thus, interactive PIN is encouraged where the audience become ‘cultural producers’ than ‘cultural consumers’ (Tilley 1989: 280) which could provide better opportunities for people to appreciate the past and value it.

3.5.3. Pride and Identity

Uzzell (1998a: 20-21) indicated that there is no doubt that PIN leads to a group identity. Consequently, a powerful motivation for PIN of many archaeological sites has been to provoke a sense of shared identity since it is now widely argued that archaeology ‘emerged as a scientific discipline in the context of nationalism’ (Hodder 2003: 125). This could mean that ‘ancient monuments are effective in promoting an identity’ (Voss

85 Potter (1997) discussed that passive interpretation ‘assumes that people care about the past, without ever acknowledging that caring about the past is an issue worthy of examination in its own right’. 
1987: 85). Also, PIN of AH has the potential to ‘play a significant role in the construction of a sense of heritage for local members of any community’ (Levin et al. 2005: 408) and to sustain ‘a sense of place’, especially in the increasingly globalized world (Shackel 2005: 33). It has the essential to foster ‘topophilia’ or ‘an affective bond between people and place’ (Tuan 1974: 4).

According to Hodder (1995a: 195), ‘archaeological remains help people to maintain, reform or even form a new identity or culture in the face of multinational encroachment, outside power or centralized government’. In particular, interpreting these remains with a national significance is an incentive element in the construction of a ‘common identity’ (Pretes 2003: 125) or perhaps an ‘imagined community’ (McLean and Cooke 2003: 153). PIN may serve to enhance a person’s sense of historical or place identity, as well as it may instil gender, ethnic, class or generation identity (Uzzell 1996, 1998a) (see Section 3.6.3).

PIN can communicate AH and other cultural resources of a particular area to become a source of pride (Ashworth 1994, McLean and Cooke 2003). In the same context, Bramwell and Lane (1993: 74) mentioned that the establishment of positive attitudes and values through PIN brings more rewarding interactions between visitors and cultural heritage which might stimulate the hosts’ pride in their heritage and their present ways of life. Nevertheless, studies show that while heritage PIN can be a source of pride, it can be also a spark for ethnic conflict and dispute (Uzzell 1998a) (see Section 3.6).
3.5.4. Making Valuable Interpretive Experience

Visitors to heritage attractions are buying experiences (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996, Shackley 1998b). Thus, it is important that interpretive programs encourage visitors to ‘live’ and not ‘consume’ culture which impedes the development of thinking (Hodder 1986: 175). In this context, Thompson (1981: 29) stressed that any presentation is required to satisfy both the physical and intellectual needs of the visitors. Uzzell (1998b) draws a distinction between two interrelated types of experiences at heritage sites: the ‘heritage experience’ and the ‘psychological experience’. The former is related to the heritage itself where ‘the experience is located outside the person, the pleasure comes from being in proximity to heritage’ (Uzzell 1998b: 241). In the latter type, the ‘experience focuses on the individual who seeks to satisfy personal and social needs, wishes and preferences’ (Uzzell 1998b: 241).

Some scholars (e.g. Binks 1986, Uzzell 1989a, Ashworth 1994, Stewart et al. 1998, Uzzell 1998b, Carter 2001, Levine et al. 2005) emphasized the importance for any heritage destination to develop a sense of place. Herein, PIN can play a major role in achieving this by providing and broadening interactive travelling experience at the visited sites (Archer and Wearing 2003, Ham and Weiler 2007) and communicating their ‘big concepts’, the context in which they are situated (Copeland 2006). Archaeologists have moved away from the study of individual elements in a landscape to a more holistic approach and wider characterization for the wider historical landscape (Macinnes 2004, Bath 2006). Similarly, interpretive planning is ‘being considered at wider geographical scales other than simply a single site’ (Cooper 1991: 229).
This means PIN ‘should aim to present a whole rather than a part’ (Tilden 1977: 9); a complete and clear picture about the interpreted topic and in connection with its context. The term ‘whole’ could mean that PIN should go ‘beyond simply pointing something out of its context’ (Prentice 1996: 58) as it aims at revealing and relating meanings of the interpreted object or subject (Tilden 1977) rather than merely providing information (Keirle 2002: 172). Basically, ‘every historic site is linked to a natural resources base that can be fruitfully interpreted’ where the environmental setting gives AH its function (Beck and Cable 2002a: 69). The big picture of the cultural landscape becomes more visible when utilizing archaeological and historical sites differ in their physical features and estimated periods to illustrate the chronology and diversity of a particular region’s heritage.

To Copeland (2006: 89), ‘making sense of the parts once the whole has been seen is often more effective than trying to build the whole from the part’. Therefore, Copeland (2006: 89) encourages the presentation of ‘panoramic views of the site and guided routes that enable the visitor to get an image of the whole site’. To accomplish this effectively, using thematic PIN is a good approach to create a holistic perspective about a particular interpretive provision (Aldridge 1975, Knopf 1981, Ham 1992, Tarlton and Ward 2006) (see Section 3.8.1).

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86 Beck and Cable (2002: 47) commented on the concept of ‘a perfect whole’ mentioned by Tilden (1977) when they said: ‘it is important not to misconstrue this principle to mean that interpretation should present the whole - to not leave anything out. It would be impossible[…] because we would find ourselves facing an infinite web of information…visitors could not receive the whole [and] are limited by their short-term memories and attention spans’.

87 Therefore, the Ename Charter (ICOMOS 2007) emphasized the importance of interpreting cultural heritage sites in relation to their wider social, cultural, historical and natural settings.
Also, Jafari (2001: 4) connected between visitor’s experience and presenting a wider narrative context where the narration of the story ‘should sample the landscape in a comprehensive way through the site and sighs’. Herein, interpreters must attempt to view archaeological sites not as a place to visit and a place to do things, but more importantly, they should work to accomplish a total satisfactory or ‘total visitor experience’ (Uzzell 1989a: 9) which depends on all the links in ‘the travel experience chain’ (Ritchie and Crouch 2003: 213), i.e. facilities, services and interpreters. This is important to generate visitor satisfaction and ‘favourable word-of-mouth’ advertising that is essential to both competitiveness and sustainability (Ritchie and Crouch 2003: 213). This is because the physical product of historic sites is ‘rarely exchanged but an experience is, the core product’ (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996: 8) which could be conveyed through thematic PIN.

In addition to the whole context, from a theoretical perspective, PIN should consider every single visitor as ‘a whole person’ (Beck and Cable 2002: 52) or ‘the whole man’ (Tilden 1977: 9) who needs to be addressed as a whole where human needs are an important area and they should be addressed holistically in PIN (Tilden 1977)\(^8\) (see Section 4.3.3). This is critical as ‘it can directly affect our interpretive planning strategies for programs and services’ (Veverka 1994: 14). Communication with visitors may start even before the on-site visit where interpretive programs and services should include off-site promotion to create expectation, on-site orientation to establish familiarity, on-site involvement to communicate heritage values and off-site

\(^8\) Based on the hierarchy of needs provided by Maslow (1970) human’s first need begins with physiological needs and moves up to self-actualization needs.
reinforcement to reinforce positive perspectives developed during the visit (Grimwade and Carter 2000).

Stewart et al. (1998) argue that a good on-site PIN would attract visitors to spend considerable time to develop ‘a field of care sense of place’ which is a variable value depends on each individual at a certain place in a certain time. Therefore, understanding visitor profiles is an important aspect where evidence shows that different types of people respond differently to PIN because they have their own arrays of interests and preconceptions (Ham 1986, Ballantyne 1998, Moscardo and Woods 1998, Uzzell 1998b Stewart et al. 1998, Tubb 2003). Prince (1982) and Binks (1986) explained that visitors to ancient monuments are from a broad spectrum of socio-economic, socio-cultural and educational background groups.89

A relative aspect to this is the use of appropriate communicative media or ‘representation formats’ (Copeland 2004: 138) which perhaps represent the most important aspect of presenting archaeological sites to the public.90 They can be classified into two major types: live interpretation (Howard 2003) or people-based mediums (Risk 1994) and design-based interpretation or non-personal mediums (Velarde and Allen 1994, Howard 2003). The decision about which techniques to use

89 Moreover, ‘the size of the potential audience and the characteristics of the various groups will vary according to factors such as location, time of year and type of site’ (Binks 1986: 41).

90 Aldridge (1975) identified three of the features for a successful media which are communicating the message effectively, allowing the visitors to feel at ease and involved, and allowing participation in some circumstances.

91 Copeland (2004) referred to Bruner (1966) who classified the media into three main categories: (1) enactive/action representations, (2) iconic/visual representations, and (3) symbolic, words and numbers which are the main communicative tools.
should be ‘appropriate for the setting, the particular type of audience and the story the manager wishes to tell’ (Uzzell 1994: 300).

Wickham-Jones (1988) indicates that as the available media become more sophisticated; so new interpretation techniques are developed to improve the use of all senses\(^\text{92}\). Uzzell (1998b) argued that there is a fear that the use of sophisticated techniques in PIN will become a replacement experience; it will become the reason for the visit when it should be a means to an end. Tilden (1977) reminds us that an essential role of PIN is to promote encounters with real objects and experience. Also, PIN is about quality not quantity where visitors’ reactions to the ‘over-educating’ (Carr 2004: 435) messages of PIN or ‘over-interpretation’ (Bramwell and Lane 1993: 76) may lead to disinterest or trivialise the subject matter (Moscardo 1996, Stewart et al. 1998, Staiff et al. 2002).

### 3.5.5. Economic Values

Using cultural attractions as a resource for tourism development and promotion has become an important element of public policy. In fact, heritage ‘is the most important single resource for international tourism’ (Graham et al. 2005: 31) where ‘heritage tourism has become big business’ (Prentice 2005: 243). Thus, it is not surprising that English Heritage promotes archaeological sites as it is reported that historic attractions are responsible for a significant amount of tourism revenue where an estimated of 63 million visits were made and £34 million in visitors’ spend alone (Cowell 2004). In fact,

\(^{92}\) For example, the use of a new system of interactive storytelling, developed by the Ename Centre for Public Archaeology Heritage Presentation in Belgium, enables visitors to create their own stories as they explore the information contained in database (Pletinckx et al. 2003).
the survey chart of 1999 shows that visits to historic properties represent 56.9% of tourist attractions (English Tourism Council 2000).

This might due to the fact that people ‘seek security and stability in their past’ (Jenkins 1992: 1). Therefore, PIN has been used to promote the past as one way to escape the stress of ordinary daily life routine and complicated post-modern societies (Cleere 1989, Schouten 1996) where the past offers an alternative to unacceptable present (Lowenthal 1985). In this context, Daniel (1988) argued that prehistory is interesting to the general public because of its remoteness or ancientness and the romance and chance of discovery. However, beside escapism and aestheticism, some scholars (e.g. Lowenthal 1985, Hewison 1987, Merriman 1991, Fowler 1992, Gero and Root 1994) believe that nostalgia is utilized to promote and market a romantic heritage which sometimes can be unrealistic. Therefore, in his work *The Representation of The Past*, Walsh (1992) reminds us to be more careful and critical about the engagement of the past and its link with our present.

Alongside this growth of heritage consumption in tourism, PIN became a basic element where it ‘has been regarded as a novel way of pepping up tired tourist attractions’ (Uzzell 1994: 293). For those who work in the heritage tourism industry, sophisticated marketing is fundamental to enhance the attractions of many archaeological sites, even those with little interpretive displays. Increasingly, PIN is seen as a ‘value-added product’ (Uzzell 1989a: 3) or ‘a means of product development’ (Prentice and Light 1994: 206) in the tourism industry’; something that can be added to an attraction to give it additional appeals to visitors. In this term, Prentice and Light (1994: 205) mentioned
that heritage sites interpretation ‘can be strongly promoted to emphasize in the mind of potential consumers the distinctiveness of a visit’ to these sites’.

In this sense, PIN goals are no longer merely to engender conservation behaviour and communicate a public relations message; it serves market-oriented and marketing conscious by considering visitor needs (Uzzell 1989b, Prentice and Light 1994, Brochu 2003). It plays a major tool for destination branding, positioning and creating image (Morgan and Pritchard 1998). For instance, English Heritage established an Interpretation Department in 2002 which ‘formed part of a larger marketing division and sat alongside…with retail promotional and special events teams’ (Hems 2006: 190).

Also, PIN forms a part of a general strategy to contribute to more general economic development and regeneration in some areas (Light 1987). Wickham-Jones (1988: 185) considers PIN as ‘the skill that can bring out the economic value in the past’ in a sense that it enlivens archaeological sites. In this sense, some scholars (Uzzell 1989a, Cooper 1991, Pearce 1996, Goodey 2006) argue that in the past, the advantages of an archaeological site from the public display and access point of view have played a role when decision about archaeological excavations or surveys have been taken; however, this attitude is changing significantly, and that archaeological work programs are now becoming one element in larger policy, including the regeneration of rundown urban area, the encouragement of local enterprises and an interesting visitor focus. Yet, a crucial point discussed by Wickham-Jones (1988: 185) is that the main goal of PIN for AH should not be based merely on ‘value for money’ and financial accountability motives at the account of its sustainability, but this should be a part of the heritage
tourism not totality. Thus, Uzzell (1994: 300) assured that PIN ‘should not be either consumer-led or resources-led’, but it is vital to create a balance between appealing PIN and meaningful PIN, i.e. infotainment displays.

3.6. CONTEMPORARY CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES IN PIN

Baram and Rowan (2004: 8) mentioned that ‘presentation of the past is seen as a long-term issue for archaeology’ which due to various major insisting conflicts discussed in details by many scholars. In the following lines four issues are presented and selected for their connection to the subject matter of this research which are (1) PIN and AH Conservation; (2) PIN and the Reconstructed/Constructed Past; (3) PIN and the Excluded Past; (4) PIN and Authenticity.

3.6.1. PIN and AH Conservation

Archaeological sites, like any other heritage assets, are in the middle of a conflict between conservation and the heritage tourism industry, the need of resources and the need of visitors and investors (Little and McManamon 2005) (see Section 3.4). It is obvious that heritage management should ensure that one complements the other. It is well known that one main aim of PIN is to assist in conserving the historic heritage (Aldridge 1975); however, what we choose to interpret or not to is ‘a fundamental dilemma common to all of those empowered to communicate about the past’ (Stone and Mackenzie 1989: 113).

Inevitably, there is a tension between the aim of enhancing visitor’s experience and that of less destruction or disturbance to the site (Herbert 1989). There are those who believe that the preservation ethics should be attached to the concept of ‘preserved as found’
(Pearce 1996: 173). On the other hand, there are those who support rehabilitation of sites and argue that conservation includes the addition of new contexts that may be created for the site ‘in which it may function as something more than just a ruins’ (Pearce 1996: 173) as in Flag Fen\(^ {93}\) near Peterborough (Pryor 1989) and the Jorvik Viking Centre\(^ {94}\) in York in the UK (Yale 2004).

Some authors argue that some heritage sites require no PIN, they can speak for themselves or discovered without assistance (Howard 2003). Similarly, Price (1994: 288) argued that the conservation policies should not aim to recreate past living conditions, but to prevent further decay of archaeological sites and that ‘minimal intervention is required to leave the visitors free to form their own images and assign their own values’. Price (1994: 286) believes that ‘if a site is to be preserved, the challenge is to find technical conservation measures compatible with appropriate ascribed values’. For instance, one of the conservation methods is designing a protective shelter which might represent ‘a statement that the site is cared for, the visitors are welcome and that there is a long-term financial commitment’ (Palumbo 2001: 35).

However, the protective shelter could affect negatively in the aesthetic values of archaeological sites (Price 1994: 287) and may cause damage, such as crystallization and the detachment of decorated surfaces because of temperature and humidity fluctuation (Palumbo 2001).

Also, some scholars challenged the view that PIN is always a good thing, and the more, the better. Cleere (1984) and Howard (2003) explained that one side of PIN is

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\(^{93}\) See http://www.flagfen.com/.

\(^{94}\) The visitors to Jorvik Viking Centre in York can visit other attractive places such as quaint medieval street, beautiful buildings, and quality shopping (see http://www.jorvik-viking-centre.co.uk/).
encouraging people to travel and increasing number of tourists in a given sites which produces environmental damage and degradation (see Section 3.4). Furthermore, Bramwell and Lane (1993: 76) argue that there is a danger of over-interpretation which could mean providing PIN at time and in places where it is unnecessary or intrusive which may diminish the sense of a place. Herein, PIN may contribute to misperceptions (Hoffman 1997) or misinformation (Beck and Cable 2002a) and the ignorance of the surrounding reality of the place and create new forms of landscapes that are physically isolated from the original context (Bramwell and Lane 1993) (see Section 3.5.2).

Designing PIN to become a heuristic tool is important (Aldridge 1975) where a broad range of resource types, the large and small, are thematically connected to communicate the big context of archaeological landscape (Hoffman 1997). This might survive large tracts of ancient landscape and show a sensible sequence of features from the past to the present (Pearce 1996: 177)(see Section 3.5.4). Also, McLoughlin et al. (2006a: 8) emphasize that ‘groups of heritage sites can exert significant influences on national policy decisions’ than individual sites. This means that the responsibility of conserving sites does not prevent them from being interpreted in enjoyable way, nor does it mean that PIN is all about money and entertainment.

PIN is about achieving a sense of appreciation and respect for the qualities of the site and recognition of a conservation role (Howard 2003) and thus, interpreters must assure that the consequences of PIN will not compromise the conservation of AH. Herbert (1989: 195) argued that ‘any form of interpretation should fit the setting as closely as possible’ where facilities, for instance, should be subservient to the nature of the
interpreted location. In line with this, Aldridge (1975) suggested that any interpretive plan should consider: (1) hyper-sensitive areas where there should be no PIN at all; (2) exploration of optimum carrying capacity; (3) the nature of visitors’ problems; and (4) an appraisal of site significance.

One of the main arguable topics is the value of PIN as a conservation tool where the assumption that PIN leads to understanding, appreciation and protection respectively (Tilden 1977). This suggests that those visitors who understand more about the fragility of the heritage, and the methods by which it is cared for, are likely to respect and value it more (Cossons 1989a: 194). In contrast, Uzzell (1989a) argued that Tilden’s saying has at its root a psychological model of attitude and behaviour change which has been the subject of increasing debate and research in psychology.

Uzzell (1989a: 13) discussed that ‘this model has appeal, if only through its intuitive logic and simplicity’, but ‘more thoughtful consideration will suggest that it is problematic’. The role of PIN in changing attitude and behaviour still one of the fundamental areas that requires systematic research because ‘psychologists have had considerable difficulty in specifying the link between attitude and behaviour change’ (Uzzell 1989a: 13). Therefore, the assumption that good PIN always leads to attitude changes is not guaranteed according to empirical research in psychology where the sense of places, for instance, changes over time and from one generation to another (Uzzell 1998a) (see Section 3.8.1).
3.6.2. PIN and the Reconstructed/Constructed Past

The preservation of on-site archaeological ruins is still a sort of a challenge for experts because they are ‘structures which are in an advanced state of deterioration’ (Stubbs 1995: 73). Accordingly, to control this, active maintenance, preservation interventions and conservation approaches have been suggested by experts. Also, the importance of these interventions is that some archaeological ruins are not appealing and meaningless if not invisible to the non-specialists, a point which is frequently overlooked in the conflict of responsibilities between the various stakeholders (Price 1994). One of the conservative approaches is the reconstruction of AH which represents a controversial issue in PIN (Jameson 2004).

Article (7) of the Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage (ICOMOS 1990) stated that ‘reconstructions serve experimental research and interpretation’, however, they should be carried out with great caution and take account of evidence from all sources in order to achieve authenticity and sustainability of AH. Therefore, Pearce (1996: 173) assured that one of the main basics of any conservation work ‘is the understanding of the site in its original whole, its context and its history’.

Stone and Planel (1999: 1) argued that ‘the past in fact cannot be reconstructed as it is actually happened, but rather it is continually constructed by individuals or groups [who] choose to interact with it’ based on contemporary interpretations of the past. What is important here is that because of our modern cultural belonging and environment, people can never envisage the actual past of prehistoric sites, artefacts and the original art as those people who actually lived or created them (Lowenthal 1985,
Fowler 1992, Walsh 1992). Ucko (1996) explained that the environment and the people of the past were surely different from the present, and they worked in a different context and socio-cultural environment, thus, PIN is merely creating a contemporary experience which related to current interpretation of past processes.

Another point is that there is no one past, knowable and acceptable to everyone; however, there are many interpretations of the past to which people choose to subscribe for different reasons (Owen 1996, Stone and Planel 1999). Therefore, opponents to reconstruction, claim that it is unhistorical or not authentic since some of the work is based on subjectivity and speculation (Yale 2004). The decision process of reconstruction itself involves sometimes difficult steps, especially in multi-phase sites where relating the reconstructed works to the physical context is sometime a challenge.

Also, the reconstructions for experiments or academic research, fashionable in the 1970s, is one of the methods which later were utilized in PIN and gradually developed to what is known as ‘experimental archaeology’ (Blockley 1999: 21). It aims to ‘explore the processes by which the archaeological record may have been created’ (Stone and Planel 1999: 4). It can be used to demonstrate processes, ways of living or skills from the past, such as pottery making and firing, flint knapping, arrowheads retouching, smelting and hunting (Sansom 1996, Lewis 2005). Coles (1979) believes that experiments in archaeology bring us closer to understanding human behaviour in the past.

95 Coles (1979: 36) identified the experimental archaeology as ‘a discipline which approaches archaeological remains in a questioning way, and attempts to understand what ancient man was doing, how he was doing it, and why he was doing it’. Also, Coles (1979: 36) identified three levels of experimentation which are stimulation of artefacts or a building; process and production methods used in the past; function of the artefact.
Nowadays, the aim of much experimental archaeological scientific or academic research has been developed into PIN for various purposes, such as in Hjerl Hede\textsuperscript{96}, Denmark (Keen 1999) and the Butser Ancient Farm, UK (Reynolds 1999)\textsuperscript{97}. In fact, in many sites the most effective tool to attract visitors and enliven an archaeological site is a continuous program of experimental archaeology and displays as it is the status at the dwelling sites in \textit{Jura}, France (Petrequin 1999). Yet, a difference should be emphasized between experimental archaeology which is basically a research-based tool for primary interpretations and demonstration or re-enactment activities which are used for presentational, educational and recreational purposes (Outram 2008).

Carr (1994: 66) acknowledged the role of reconstruction as a means of generating revenue, but ‘the threat comes from superficiality, from bolting modernity onto antiquity with no concern for the evolutionary nature of the use of structures’. The commercial value of construction sites might obtain a political dimension as authorities become aware of the potential of these sites for giving a boost to the local economy and generating revenue, such as the Irish National Heritage Park, Ireland\textsuperscript{98} (Culleton 1999) and oNdini, the old Zulu capital in South Africa (van Schalkwyk 1999). At the latter, visitors were attracted by the construction itself rather by the limited visible remains of the real site or the real past where it has become a ‘politic place’ and could be easily used to fan the difference between Zulu and non-Zulu in South Africa (van Schalkwyk 1999: 280). In this sense, reconstruction is an invaluable way of reaching and inspiring different sections of the community; it is a powerful tool that needs to be used with

\textsuperscript{97} See http://www.butser.org.uk/.
\textsuperscript{98} See http://www.inhp.com/.
integrity and imagination that could act as a catalyst for community pride and sustainable tourism (Blockley 1999).

For those who support reconstruction, they believe it can be one solution to the negative impact of tourists where replica attractions can be created in the surrounding area of the original site (Clottes and Chippindale 1999). Also, reconstruction performs a useful edutainment and function and may redirect people away from more fragile original structural remains (Cleere 1984). What is impressive about a reconstruction is not its massive size, however as Blockley (1999: 32) thinks ‘it is more appropriate to invest in opportunities to test ideas…[which] generates powerful memories and infectious enthusiasm that persists for life’. Also, Stone and Planel (1999: 7) emphasize that construction as a tool is more influential where visitors interact with a constructed site in a positive way, which might be impossible, except for few, in case of ‘fragmentary archaeological remains’.

Another argument is whether reconstructions should be created on-site or as off-site replicas99 to show, for instance, how structures and buildings change over time. Merriman (1991) and Blockley (1999) referred to the importance of in-situ reconstructions and developing living museums to convey the sense of the interpreted place and its environmental context which museums might never achieve or compete with (see Section 3.7). Also, as a communication media and hands-on experience, reconstructing the past through demonstration is an appropriate way to attract visitor attention and involve active participation by the audience, as well as face-to-face

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99 In France, there is a main difference between an *archaeoparc* and an *archeosite*; the former can be erected anywhere, but the latter must be located within authentic environment (Stone and Planel 1999).
reconstructed replicas of historic monuments at some distance from their originals, such
as Altamira in Spain, is unlikely to attract the majority of visitors who would wish to
visit original must-seen attractions. Stone and Planel (1999) explain that any created
park can never replace the experience of a visit to the real cave and example of real
Paleolithic art; however, it creates an experience which is larger than the simple
experience of a cave art, thus, it should be seen as an extension rather than an alternative
to the core of the experience.

3.6.3. PIN and the Excluded Past

There are those scholars who described archaeological past, especially the prehistoric,
as ‘the excluded past’, i.e. the hidden past, overlooked past, the pasts of the
marginalized, the ignored and unwanted (e.g. Stone and Mackenzie 1989, Molyneaux
1994, Stone 1997). Many various factors may lead to the exclusion of some parts of the
past in PIN which might result in sort of dissonance and inefficient PIN.

Ucko (1996: ix) explained that for interpreters, it is an impossible complex task to
attempt identifying and then to attempt removing from any archaeological message all
the burden of gender bias, racial or ethnic preconception and subjective evaluation
based on supposed degree of technological progress. Also, political and social changes
over the past decades have opened up and increased opportunities for the interpretation
of controversial (Gero and Root 1994). This is not surprising since archaeology has
been seen as a political practice whereupon its interpretations have become politically-
oriented. This continues ‘to challenge archaeologists and complicate archaeology’
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(Baram and Rowan 2004: 3). It has on occasion become ‘a vehicle for racial oppression and the abuse of human right’ (Ucko 1994b: xiv) as it is the case in the colonial Great Zimbabwe (Ucko 1986). Also, in the United Kingdom, immigrants are denied any significant role in public statement about nation’s cultural past or its present identity (Ucko 1994b)\textsuperscript{100}.

Also, there is the issue of ethnocentrism in PIN as it is the case in the former Yugoslavia (Anteric 1998), Nazi German in the 1930s\textsuperscript{101} (Arnold 1996, Schmidt 1999), the Arabs-Israeli conflict (Lehr and Katz 2003) and the restoration of Babylon in Iraq (Potts 1998, Blockley 1999). Furthermore, Stone (2005: 215) believes that ‘the interpretation of heritage resources by indigenous people have, for varying reasons been ignored or at times, even suppressed’. In this context, Gathercole and Lowenthal (1994) discussed in detail the ‘Eurocentricity’ of historical interpretation which has been dominated by colonists from Europe or North America, and therefore, excludes and marginalizes the colonized ethnic groups. In fact, some archaeologists challenge that such groups have the exclusive right to interpret the past in these areas (Layton 1994). Therefore, sacred relationships and sacred sites, as in Australia (e.g. Ayers Rock), have been historically devalued by Eurocentric discourse (Pfisterer 1999)\textsuperscript{102}.

\textsuperscript{100} Yet, in the last years there has been some active effort in UK to involve several ethnic groups and their culture in interpretive programs and activities (Wong 2002, see http://www.ben-network.org.uk/).

\textsuperscript{101} During the rise of National Socialism in Germany in the 1930s and 1940s, pre-historians were encouraged to interpret European history as political legitimization for Nazi propaganda, i.e. totalitarian archaeology (Arnold 1996, Sommer 1999); as well, open-air museums were created to achieve the state view of pre-history (Schmidt 1999).

\textsuperscript{102} Accordingly, in a country such as Australia, every time archaeologists excavate, they can be accused of showing a strong disrespect toward aboriginal views of the past because ‘it is the Aboriginal belief that every particle of the Australian continent was formed by the Ancestors’ (Ucko 1986: 46).
The exclusive interpretation can also be driven by religious motivations as it is the case between the Maronite Christians and Muslim past in Lebanon (Seeden 1994a, 1994b) and Hindu and Muslim in Bangladesh (Sen 2002). Also, some prehistoric sites in Britain, such as Stonehenge, have been interpreted based on the religious belief systems by such groups as Druids (Voss 1987) and in Turkey where there is ‘little knowledge of historical sequences beyond a simple pre-Islamic-Islamic opposition’ (Hodder 2003: 16). Moreover, PIN of AH can be socially or economically oriented as it is the status with some of the Arab States, which after the collapse of Ottoman Empire, search for foundation, legitimacy and origins for their contemporary national-states by constructing links with the ancient pasts as it is the status with Jordan and Nabbatean civilization or in Lebanon and Phoenician culture (Daher 2006).

A further issue in regard to the excluded past is relative to gender and feminism which is one of the main discussed issues in AH interpretation (Nelson 2004, Jewell 2005). In her discussion, Holcomb (1998: 38) provides evidence to support that PIN of AH is largely reflective of male rather than female values and perspectives. This might due to the fact that in archaeology feminist theories and methodologies remain undeveloped and often vague; they are not adopted widely in the mainstream archaeology’ (Jones and Pay 1994, Nelson 2004). This has been confirmed by Gero and Root (1994) in relation to the presentation of archaeology in the print media for instance. Holcomb (1998: 40) suggests that the feminist heritage interpretation could provide ‘oppositional reading’ to the present cultural inheritance; however, in doing so the explorations and interpretation of gender in archaeology is important. Relative to this, Jewell (2005: 45) discussed the
fact that one major missing component in PIN for AH is 'the acknowledgment and presentation of children and their stories'.

Some scholars justify the past exclusion where, for instance, in their in-depth analysis for the issue of dissonant heritage, Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996) suggested that the interpretation of sites can sometimes evoke certain sensitivity and controversial within a collective memory, such as sites of genocide, battlefields or any other sites classified under the concept of 'dark tourism' (Lennon and Foley 2000). Uzzell (1989b: 33) refers to this as 'hot interpretation', interpretation that hurts (Uzzell and Ballantyne 1998). Uzzell and Ballantyne (1998: 152) suggest that places involve personal values, beliefs, interests and memories will excite a degree of emotional stimulation needs to be recognized and addressed in PIN simply because ‘our minds are not virgin territories and our past experience and decisions influence our future action’.

Because heritage by its nature is not a verifiable truth, not static and opened to various processes of bias, change, critique and distortion (Lowenthal 1985, Davis 1997), therefore, it ‘has no intrinsic values; all heritage values are extrinsic, ascribed and therefore mutable’ (Ashworth 2006: 24). These values are a reflection for the divergence of constructed personal experience which is ‘relativist’ where diverse ways of knowing, distinguishable sets of meanings, separate realities depend on different sets of communities (Crotty 1998). Therefore, Smith (2003: 84) argues that ‘heritage interpretation does not necessarily need to be a faithful representation of historic facts’.
In regard to AH in particular, there is no one individual or collective objective value, account and meaning to the past (Hodder 1986, 1992, James 1986, Ucko 1986, 1994a, 1996, Hall and McArthur 1998, Johnsen and Olsen 2000, Skeates 2000, Benton 2007). The physical remains or the ‘historical reality’ of the past is literally ‘objective’ subject to our ‘subjective’ experience which is certainly reflected in our interpretations (Schouten 1995: 22). This suggests that all types of AH interpretation are value laden; even the so-called ‘neutral approach’ to interpretation demonstrates a values decision (Uzzell and Ballantyne 1998: 154).

There are various groups (e.g. feminist, indigenous and religious) who do not want a past to be explained in a scientific context by archaeologists, but a past that is a story to be interpreted (Ucko 1986, Voss 1987, Layton 1994, Hodder 1995a, Wallis and Blain 2003, Carr 2004, Markwell et al. 2004, Waterson 2005). Hodder (1991: 7) has raised the question of ‘how can alternative groups have access to a past that is locked up both intellectually and institutionally’? Price (1994: 286) mentioned that ‘conflicts of values may arise when public interest does not coincide with that of professional archaeologists’. For instance, Nzewunwa (1984: 106) mentions that in Nigeria archaeological research is still unknown to many communities; the local people are usually fascinated by the finds and do not show any opposition to such projects, however, they do not dig up human burials, as this is considered a disturbance of the peace of dead ancestors.

103 For instance, in the UK, North America, Australia and New Zealand there are confrontations and sensibilities between various groups and archaeologists who each present different interpretations for the past.
To overcome this issue, PIN should encourage a critical evaluation by presenting multiple interpretations of the data and initiate a variety of dialogues that can help making the process of archaeological research more democratic and open. Gathercole (1994) and Schadla-Hall (2004) think that the more interpretive options and plurality of archaeological opinions are available and allowed, the greater the likelihood of correcting bias and eliminating errors where the division between mainstreams and alternatives becomes less clear. In this sense, neither interpretive archaeology, nor PIN, should be manipulated by mainstream parochial archaeologists.

Yet, Pearce (1996: 133) assured that ‘the way in which the past is viewed by the general public, and how those views should or could be changed is one of the most difficult areas to confront modern archaeologists’. For instance, Smith (2003: 90) argues if the site managers are not a member of the group whose heritage is being interpreted; this raises the question of ownership. Bergquist (2001: 188) suggested the term ‘bilingualism of discourse’ which means the inclusion of both the ‘scientific’ and other alternative interpretations derived from ‘religious’ values. These alternatives for interpreting AH formed what is known as ‘alternative archaeology’ (Schadla-Hall 2004: 255) which its version could be much more attractive to some people and it has a larger public than that of academic archaeology (Fowler 1981, Schadla-Hall 2004).

104 Schadla-Hall (2004: 255) defined it as the ‘way in which the public perceives archaeology in the broader sense’. Also, it is called ‘Pseudo-Archaeology’ which ‘covers a broad spectrum of topics sharing in common a non-scientific misapplication, misinterpretation and/or misrepresentation of the archaeological record’ (Fagan et al. 1996: 581-582).

105 Schadla-Hall (2004: 257) includes some examples in alternative archaeology such as the single point of origin for all civilizations is sometimes seen in now drowned civilization such as Atlantis in the West and Mu in the Pacific. Also, ancient monuments, such as pyramids and megaliths, are places where particular force fields are concentrated and are seen as centres of wider zodiacal or other powers.
Therefore, Hodder (2003: 2) pointed out that there has been increased acceptance of the need to collaborate with non-academic ‘fringe archaeologists’ and multivalent alternative interpretations. Today, ‘folk interpretations’ (Voss 1987: 81) and indigenous myths are presented on-site along with the academic archaeological conclusions (Hodder 1995a, 1996, 2003, Pokytolo and Brass 1997). Wallis and Blain (2003) and Taylor (2006) assured that archaeology must not reject other folklores as ‘fringe’, but in an era of community archaeology, transparency and collaboration, respond to them preferably dialogically. In this context, Hall and McArthur (1998: 5) signify the importance of the intangible heritage components which are ‘attached culturally constructed idea and set of values to a wider range of artefacts, environment and cultural forms’. This means that the local culture and the indigenous way of life could become a vital part of interpretive products and attractions (Millar 1999, 2006, Liu and Wall 2006). Moreover, this hermeneutic perspective to interpretation has been supported by Inskeep (1991: 279) in order to ‘convey a more complete historical picture’ and to foster a sense of pride as well.

In fact, archaeologists themselves do need to study the living heritage and alternative interpretations systematically, in an attempt to understand archaeological findings, context and functions in order to develop rich comparative interpretations whether it is primary or public. Therefore, O’Riordan et al. (1989: 184) expressed the role of

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106 According to McKercher and du Cros (2002: 65), the tangible heritage includes ‘all assets that have some physical embodiment of cultural values such as archaeological sites and historical towns, cultural landscape and cultural objects’. Meanwhile, the intangible heritage is ‘the totality of tradition-based creations of a cultural community, expressed by a group or individuals and recognized as reflecting the expectations of a community in so far as they reflect its cultural and social identity’ (McKercher and du Cros 2002: 83).

107 Harmon (2007) argues that the integration of natural and cultural perspectives, the biocultural approach, in natural heritage conservation could have valuable benefits for natural and cultural protected
living heritage in widening our sense about the past. This is one essential reason for the development of an ethnographic approach known as *ethno-archaeology* where historical features, social or cultural records associated with a particular site can be utilized in PIN.

An important point to be consciously considered is that since the constructed alternative archaeology is also subjective in nature, interpreters must distinguish qualitatively between different kinds of alternative archaeological interpretations because ‘some of the alternative views should be strongly challenged on the grounds of their implicit or even explicit ideology or blatant commercial distortion’ (Schadla-Hall 2004: 269). Also, the ‘preservation ethic’ should not be compromised where such active interactions with sites as votive offerings, fire and graffiti damage could threaten AH sustainability (Wallis and Blain 2003).

In regard to visitors, Copeland (2004: 136) thinks that the first phase of presenting archaeology starts with ‘experts’ construction’ which is produced by experts, not necessarily archaeologists. In this sense, it will be important to incorporate some elements of the present conception of visitors and emerging ideas about the past (Copeland 2006). Uzzell (1998b) identifies five factors which serve to influence people’s emotional engagement with either the heritage itself or its interpretation; these factors are: time, distance, experiencing places, the degree of abstraction and area, its community and the conservative community (e.g. managers, anthropologists, geologists, biologists, etc).

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108 It is ‘a research strategy embodying a range of approaches to understanding the relationships of material culture to culture as a whole both in the living context and as it enters the archaeological record and to exploiting such understandings in order to inform archaeological concepts and to improve interpretation.’ (David and Kramer 2001: 2)

109 Therefore, Stone and Mackenzie (1989) encourage that the educational responsibility at Stonehenge, for instance, is to ensure that all different legitimate views of the past are easily accessible to all visitors.
management. Thus, PIN should promote personal reflection, leading to a deeper appreciation and understanding of different viewpoints, attitudes and behaviour (Uzzell and Ballantyne 1998).

Any on-site PIN provided by heritage professionals is only one of the various interpretations that visitors carry around in themselves, as all people have an image of the world which guides their perceptions (Schouten 1995) and ‘subject to internal and external forces’ (Jafari 2001: 4). This led Jenkinson (2004: 24) to assure that ‘archaeologists may have been the interpreter of the site, but the visitor has to interpret the interpretation’. Therefore, there is no reason why the public cannot participate in the process through a critical evaluation of the raw materials provided by primary interpretations.

3.6.4. PIN and Authenticity

Authenticity is a controversial dynamic concept where there is no one clear-cut definition and understating that can answer such questions as what is an authentic interpretation and are there more authentic interpretation than others? A reconstructed interpretive model at archaeological sites could be an authentic experience for some people; meanwhile it represents an antiqued artefact for others. People look for authenticity; they ‘desire to encounter the real thing, to be in touch with first hand experience’ (Schouten 1996: 53), however, as heritage tourism activity increased authenticity becomes a problematic issue in heritage PIN (see sections 3.4 and 3.5.5).
Today, PIN is considered as a critical element in what is called *staged authenticity* by MacCannell (1999, 2004) for ‘tourist spaces’ (Urry 2002: 9) where the heritage itself or/and their contexts have been manufactured\(^\text{10}\). Also, Newall (1987: 131) discussed the term ‘folklorismus’, the invention, creation and imitation of folklore for different purposes outside its original local context, which is utilized in cultural tourism as an interpretive approach for ancient practices or archaeofolklore, e.g. culinary, dancing, songs, handicrafts, in a particular culture.

Carr (2004: 434) stressed that PIN ‘is an opportunity for non-commercial experiences to provide visitors with cultural insights’. Aldridge (1975) and Binks (1986) assert that heritage interpreters are obligated to help visitors imaging the truth accurately as possible and avoid nostalgia, romanticism and spectacular events. In contrast, Craig (1989) believes that PIN is over-concerned with historical accuracy, especially that all heritage values are extrinsic; again, there is no one objective collective interpretation for the past (see Section 3.6.3). Lowenthal (1985: 109) wrote that the past is essentially irretrievable, and what PIN does basically is to combine facts and understanding with ‘an emotional certitude that raises the visitor’s experiential level to a heightened realisation of the past’. This assumes ‘meaning is the sum total of the experience, rather than a string of acquired facts’ (Robb 1998: 590). There is no doubt, that it is impossible to acquire the sense of other ways of life by travelling in time; yet our culture is filled with references to other places and other times (James 1986).

\(^{10}\) For instance, Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996: 54) discussed the misused and misplaced heritage, such as the Egyptian stelae in Rome or Istanbul, where the heritage itself is not altered but ‘the context in which it is placed or presented’. Herein, values of heritage contradict one another as discussed by Lowenthal (1985) where although the stelae do possibly provide an aesthetic value, however, it was misplaced in a ‘rootless’ status where the sense of place, national identity and pride values are lost. It has undergone a sort of deconstruction and reconstruction processes in unsanctioned contexts.
Urry (2002) criticizes the assumption that authenticity should be the universal goal for tourism because, as Cohen (1988, 2002) argues, tourists are sensitive to varying degrees of authenticity which is a negotiable concept rather than primitive. According to Hill and Cable (2006: 58) most interpreters seek to provide ‘personal authenticity’ for audience based on the fact that ‘people vary in their perceptions of authenticity’ according to their previous experience and values for instance. In this case, some people would argue that authenticity cannot be a static concept even with providing such genuine subjects as AH which has no ‘inherently valuable’ (Moratto and Kelly 1978: 19). This kind of authenticity could be similar to the concept of ‘existential authenticity’ (Wang 1999: 349) which basically depends on tourists own experiences and not the toured object or subject. Accordingly, there can be limitless number of perceptions about the authenticity of an archaeological site.

Also, it has been argued that post-tourists almost delight in the inauthenticity of the normal tourist experience; they find pleasure in the multiplicity of tourist games (Pine and Gilmore 1998). Likewise, Shackley (1994: 397) argued that from a pragmatic view it is ‘the quality of visitor experience that mattered to the tourism industry, not the authenticity of the attraction’. Thus, the constructed authenticity should not be seen as inauthentic unnecessary medium; instead they may represent an important interpretive unit in a given theme as part of the enjoyable and recreational experience, e.g. reconstruction.

Cossons (1989b) mentioned that one of the functions of heritage management is to offer ‘truth’ to visitors, but can the truth survive the power of the tourism industry. Although
it is difficult to balance between the real evidence and the desired attractiveness, an appropriate care is required ‘if the base of the past is to remain founded in fact’ (Wickham-Jones 1988: 185). This is because the more the level of exploitation of the past, the more the pressure to create more of it. This leads us to the existence of the fake alongside the authentic heritage. For instance, Pearce (1996) argues that one practical problem of intelligible demonstration sometimes means that various elements found in separate chronology or phases have to be presented as coexisting; there is always certain degree of unreality. Thus, Robb (1998: 582) endorsed the view that heritage sites can be considered as ‘dreamlands’ of another kind.

The continuous role of governmental institutions in the funding of heritage PIN should be changed where the private sectors need to have appointed responsibilities. According to Cossons (1989b: 20) the changed role may offer more flexibility for PIN and probably ensure the maintenance of the ‘true heritage’. Smith (1989) sees the decline in governmental funding and support as a great deal of pleasure, as it will force heritage organizations to become more visitor-oriented and hence provide a better service for the public. After all, it depends on various factors at an organization; however, the main thing is to be aware of is that there is a need for ‘a balance between the conflicting demands and commercialization and scholarship’ (Uzzell 1989a: 7).

3.7. ON-SITE EXPERIENCE AND OFF-SITE EXPERIENCE

Beside archaeological sites, museums and exhibition displays are one of the most traditional ways of archaeological interpretation and communication with the general public (Davies 2000), however, albeit the existence of advance in the methods and
technology of displays, museums still reach only a small proportion of the general public (Stone 1997). For instance, Merriman’s (1991) survey in Britain shows that museums are one of the least enjoyable means of finding out about local history, instead the three most popular means were: visiting the site or area alone, having a guided tour and watching a television program about it. Merriman (1991: 117) explains that ‘these are all united by the fact that they provide more of a feeling of context than museums do’.

Potter (1997: 37) refers to the importance of bringing museums out to archaeology, out to the field where ‘archaeology can be a museum experience in and of itself…instead of seeing archaeology as a generator of museum specimens or as a topic for museum exhibits’. Archaeological parks can be considered as ‘museums without walls’ (Miket 1994: 39) in which part of their basic aims is ‘to preserve a landscape, to reconstruct history, to present an environmental message or to preserve traditional skills for the future’ (Blockley 1999: 22). In this sense, on-site PIN represents ‘a potentially crucial intervention strategy in achieving stated conservation objectives’ (Madin and Fenton 2004: 123). Aldridge (1975: 9) noticed that off-site PIN ‘may or may not succeed in arousing in its audience wish to conserve an area, but will almost certainly arouse a desire on their part to go and see it’.

Another issue is that it is true that museums ‘are places where memories and histories meet, even collide [which] can be an emotional experience’ (Kavanagh 1996: 13), yet, some would argue that many museums avoid conflict and controversy and focus on ‘soft history’ (Swarbrooke 2000: 425), the history that does not hurt. Tilley (1993: 3)
assures that to ‘give an interpretation there is a need to provide reasons and conditions for understanding it as such, to be able, in effect, to experience it in a particular way’.

Davis (1999) talked about the role of eco-museums, such as folk-life museums, in communicating the sense of a particular place and its community environment through its various activities. It can provide a unique opportunity for PIN through living history\textsuperscript{111}, workshops and placing objects in their wider contexts (Blockley 1999). Presenting the past in such ways fulfils the desire and emotional attitude of those people who are attracted to old ways of living which provides the appeal of PIN (see Section 3.5.5).

Also, Davis (1999: 226) argued that in contrast to traditional museums, eco-museums have the potential to promote ‘holistic interpretation’. Herein, PIN is used to provide both ‘context’ and ‘meaning’\textsuperscript{112} for the observer (Tilden 1977: 8). Also, tours of archaeological sites, active or closed, provide ‘a sense of place’ that is usually hard to capture in exhibitions (Davis 1997: 93). Archaeological sites are naturally ready-made museums that are successful in conveying to the public a sense of time passed (Craig 1989: 110). Except for few, most museums reduce objects in a showcase to a picture in a book (Schouten 1995). In fact, the dug up object might become an entirely ‘new artefact’ (Leone 1981: 5). AH cannot merely be translated through texts and objects

\textsuperscript{111} Mills and Tivers (2000) described living history presentations as ‘sites where live actors participate in the telling of a story of the past’ (quoted in Tivers 2002: 187).

\textsuperscript{112} Wickham-Jones (1988: 186) mentioned that Context must relate to both time and place; no site exists in isolation. It must relate a site to both its natural and its human surroundings as they would have appeared in the past and it must provide a sense of period; Meaning must present the site in terms of the human actions that led up to it. These may be easily understood by the modern observer or they may be less easily understood. They may relate to domestic activities still in use such as cooking, or they may lie outside the sphere of experience of today, e.g. the manufacture of stone tools.
behind glass in museums; objects might remain meaningless and uninteresting if its resources are displayed without their contexts. In this sense, Keen (1999) emphasized that although films and books may be able to create a fuller picture, a reconstruction site has the advantage that visitors can interact with it physically.

Archaeological parks\(^{113}\) or even a single site allow visitors to benefit their senses in various interpretive media (Addyman 1994, Prentice 1996, Jones 1999, Hoffman et al. 2002)\(^{114}\) and interact with the wider historic landscape (Copeland 2006) (see Section 3.5.4). Therefore, Aldridge (1989: 64) emphasized that on-site PIN represents ‘the core of interpretation’ because it is ‘about place and the concept of place, about putting people and things into their environmental contexts, restoring provenance to artefacts that have lost their roots so that their significance can once more be seen’.

Uzzell (1998a: 15) described PIN in many museums as ‘typically past-oriented’ where they present the past in isolation from the present, and the challenge is to devise ways of bridging the gap between past and present. On-site visits are much closer to providing visitors with why an area has been designated of a special significance or uniqueness and considered deserving of special treatment and protection. It is most effective in the field, where archaeological techniques and field evidence are at hand to help both interpreters and visitors to realize more the significance of sites and archaeological process (Pearce 1996). On-site PIN can become ‘the vehicle for giving people access as

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\(^{113}\) The archaeological park is an archaeological site that has been interpreted and opened to the public. It represents a ‘national park’ which is ‘a protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation, including maintenance of ecological integrity, exclusion of resource exploitation, and preservation of spiritual, scientific, educational and ‘recreational values’ (Jameson 1999: 10-11).

\(^{114}\) For examples, see Archaeological Parks in the U.S. available at: http://uark.edu/misc/aras [accessed 21/04/06].
to how data from the past are made into history’ (Leone 1983: 38) by showing the process of historical interpretation and establishing why the past is relevant to the present (Davis 1997).

Davis (1997: 87) considered exhibitions as a ‘poor substitute for ongoing excavations when it comes to teaching archaeological techniques’. Archaeological fieldworks can be an effective way to provoke, relate and reveal the value of a particular archaeological site to visitors by giving them access to intellectual tools used to create historical knowledge (Binks et al. 1988, Hoffman 1997). They provide an explanation of the tools, methods and techniques used by archaeologists (Binks et al. 1988, Skeates 2000).

In fact, it has been argued by Potter (1997: 38) that ‘the strongest argument in favour of on-site interpretation is based on epistemology’. This means that when visitors participate in digging or take a tour of a working archaeological sites or ongoing excavations given by professional archaeologists or a crew member, epistemology is right up front. Besides, sense-on experiences ‘can facilitate the understanding of the social, economic and physical environmental system inherent in a place through the enhancement of learning’ (Prentice 1996: 55). Such experience may result in conveying an ‘effective interpretation’ (Moscardo 1996: 379) which leads to more learning experience, higher satisfaction and great understanding.

Also, direct involvement with sites makes it much easier for the interpreters to answer visitors’ questions in ‘a satisfying and substantive way’ (Potter 1997: 39). Also, Potter (1997) added that archaeological sites as interpretive environment do not distract and
interrupt visitors; it encourages them to focus on the very things that more traditional interpreters consider distraction; interpretive value can be found in almost anything that catches visitors’ attention, such as archaeological equipment or techniques.

More important, here PIN provides visitors with information which helps visitors decide whether or not to agree with the final conclusion about a given site; ‘in this way, historical interpretation becomes a real dialogue rather than a monologue’ (Potter 1997: 38). Besides, archaeological excavations could become a theatre and a social activity context (Tilley 1989). According to Boyd (2002: 226), ‘this level of direct participation is often absent from other heritage attractions’. Moreover, Davis (1997) mentioned that it is hard to recreate in exhibits the excitement and thrill of discovery as in exhibits associated with site visit or ‘the romance of excavation’ (Daniel 1988: 140). An important point to be mentioned here is that there is a strong public interest in archaeology stimulated by mass media; herein PIN is needed to distinguish between fact and fantasy and to balance a common misunderstanding that archaeology is basically concerned with digging up valuable antiquities (Keen 1999).

Based on the discussion in Section 3.4, on-site PIN for AH could address the various issues related to public archaeology, e.g. a heuristic process, public dialogue, constructivist approach. Yet, the creation of an appropriate on-site PIN requires visitor management and considerable coordination between the excavation director and the

115 Potter (1997) provides an example by referring to the archaeological site in Annapolis, Maryland, USA, where he experiences that visitors bring important data or provide perspectives or insight which makes them participate in the formation of historical knowledge.

116 For these reasons, Pearce (1996: 180) wrote: ‘The presentation of open-air sites is one of the most important interfaces between the committed archaeologists and the public, and it need to be treated with a corresponding degree of serious attention’
lead interpreter which sometimes represents a main challenge (see Chapter Six). Pearce (1996) argues that although on-site visits are potentially exciting to the public and worthwhile, in some cases, they have proved difficult to perform for practical reasons like provisional professional edutainment interpretation, sustainability, insurance and safety standards, the shortage of excavation management and other resources, especially for the prehistoric ruins (Price 1994, Stubbs 1995).

Furthermore, to have on-site visitor centres is not always an appropriate solution for providing PIN at archaeological sites because of ‘their establishment and maintenance costs, their physical impact on the atmosphere of the site and an imperfect balance between what there is to see and what can be said about it’ (McManus 1996: xv)\(^{117}\). Also, Davis (1997) suggested that sometimes exhibitions as interpretive mediums are not constrained by time or archaeologists who have specified time to complete the analysis of the site where visitors may see only one point in time and may find it hard to visualize the larger picture. Moreover, Davis (1997) sees that sometimes understanding this epistemological connection is more interesting than knowing archaeological techniques in reaching the aims of PIN.

To sum up, there is no conflict between using on-site PIN and off-site PIN. In practice, they do complement each other. One reason is while exhibits cannot capture the immediacy of archaeological digs, they can show the whole interpretive process, because much of this goes on after excavation is ended and involves increasingly abstract extrapolation from the data (Davis 1997). Therefore, after viewing the exhibit,

\(^{117}\) For such issues, there are some guides specially prepared to help archaeological site managers to achieve a successful visit such as English Heritage publication *Visitor Welcome* (Binks et al. 1988) which describes how the presentation of excavations can be managed and planned.
visitors can continue their exploration on a self-guided tour trail or through specialized interpreter. The constructed experience in the exhibit might be used to help in exploring specific or more detailed aspects within archaeological diggings.

3.8. PIN AND SUSTAINABLE ARCHAEO TOURISM

The role of PIN as an effective tool in sustainable heritage tourism is undeniable (Herbert 1989, Stewart et al. 2001, Wearing et al. 2007). According to Moscardo (1998), this role has been developed to accomplish quality, continuity and balance. PIN has the potential to improve visitor management, local economic, environmental gains and fuller community involvement (Uzzell 1989a, Carr 2004).

Bramwell and Lane (1993) mentioned that one of the main difficulties that may constrain PIN for being a sustainable tool is that interpretation provision for visitors is too often driven by economic objectives as a means for economic development. Herein, there is a fear that when a community or heritage asset is commoditised then ‘the meaning has gone’ (Bramwell and Lane 1993: 75). Cohen (1988) agreed that tourist-oriented community assets frequently might obtain new meanings for the locals, but the old meanings do not thereby necessarily disappear. To accomplish a balanced sustainable PIN for AH, the literature refers to four necessary aspects which are: (1) raising public awareness; (2) the local community as a stakeholder; (3) PIN as a management tool; (4) PIN evaluation.

3.8.1. Raising Public Awareness

As it has been shown in Section 3.4 that effective heritage resources conservation comes to depend more and more on public appreciation, understanding and support of
archaeology; accordingly, the profession must take responsibility to foster ‘an archaeologically well-informed public’ (Herbert 1989). Herein, PIN can be an effective communication mechanism to develop a behavioural change and positive attitudes to conservation (Herbert et al. 1986, Prentice 1993) and to survive socio-economic swings (Stewart et al. 1998). Uzzell (1989a: 14) assured that unless PIN is ‘more effective and attitudes and behaviours are changed, there will not be a heritage, or even a heritage industry, to be critical about’. In doing so, interpretive messages should ‘encourage public participation and stimulate feedback…interpretation must incorporate positive anti-looting messages that foster pride in heritage’ (Hoffman 1997: 83).

Although, some scholars argued that attitude changing does not simply happen by giving people information (see Section 3.6.1); however, in many cases the commonly-assumed dictum of Tilden (1977: 9), that ‘through interpretation, understanding; through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection’, approves its validity (Merriman 2005, Ham 2007). For instance, based on their study titled Interpretation at CADW’s Sites118 in Wales, UK, Herbert et al. (1986) confirmed that interpretive displays increase understanding and enjoyment and stimulate great interest in historical sites119. Also, the development of a trail at the site of Homolovi II, Arizona, opened up the site for the public and increased appreciation of and respect for the

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118 Cadw is the Welsh Historic Monuments organization.
119 Carr (2004: 432) reported that on-site cultural interpretation at Aoraki Mount Cook National Park, New Zealand ‘contributed to raising visitors’ awareness that the landscape has special significance to local, iwi, thus providing a cultural dimension to the visitors’ experiences’.
resources in the area, as well as it stopped major vandalism at the sites (Hoffman 1997). 

Lee (1998) argued that attitude change depends on four elements which are: (1) the perceived credibility of the message source; (2) the message clarity and comprehension; (3) the media used for transmission; and (4) the characteristics of the target audience. This means that PIN should seek to present various perspectives and effective means of communicating heritage to different audience in order to lead to a better understanding and appreciation of past human-beings and activities (Howard 2003, Jameson 2004). The problem is to encourage visitors to recognize their own part in perpetuating and developing ideas about past time. Thus, instead of information accumulation, PIN should aim for provocation (Tilden 1977) and the achievement of mindful visitor behaviour to ensure that messages concerning the site were properly received and understood (Stewart et al. 1998, Ham 2007).

According to Moscardo’s (1996: 383) Mindfulness Model, a mindful state is marked by active mental processing which involves the creation of new cognitive categories; in contrast, a mindless state is characterized by mental passivity and behaviour which involves little questioning or processing of new information. To reach such a state, thinking thematically can create interlinked regional heritage product (Jones et al. 2007) and make it easier for visitors to comprehend and increase the provocation, interest and enjoyment of audience, as well as their ability to recall and apply

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120 This is important as it was reported that 32% of the known archaeological sites on public lands in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado had been looted (Smith and Ehrenhard 1991: xxxv).

121 A PIN is a thematic if it has a focal message which an interpretive plan wishes to convey about a topic (Ham 1992, Veverka 1994, Lee 2002).
information (Moscardo and Pearce 1986, Cooper 1991, Ham 1992, Veverka 1994, Goodey 1996, Levy et al. 2001, Beck and Cable 2002a, Tarlton and Ward 2006). Yet, Lundberg (1997) argues that although the thematic PIN or themeing (Ham forthcoming) has a vital role in communicating and organizing information in comprehensible messages to audience; however, does it finally help the interpreter to achieve the goal of changing audience attitude or perspective?

Instead of presenting factual statements, Lundberg proposed ‘thesis-based interpretation’ which takes the thematic PIN further step beyond the concrete and the already proven knowledge which offers no challenge and no opportunity for a real growth in understanding to audience. Conversely, a thesis-based statement ‘gives them a choice between ways of thinking’ (Lundberg 1997: 16). A good thesis, like a good argument, provokes, stimulates, disturbs and inspires its audience to active participation in the reasoning process of the presented programs which ‘implies that their opinions also matter’ (Lundberg 1997: 17). Herein, PIN ‘should not pre-package the experience to the visitor…but provoke an interest and encourage people to discover for themselves’ (Binks 1986: 41).

It can be said that there is no contradiction between the two approaches, thematic and thesis-based. In fact, they complement one another in a sense that the former has approved its importance in narrowing the focus of a topic, sorting out data and organizing them in a comprehensible way (Lundberg 1997). As for the latter, it does enhance the way that the themed-content is presented and communicated provocatively to the audience. What is important about the thesis-based statement though is that it
connects the selected theme to the larger picture by suggesting ‘how it affects the wider range of audience’s experience, including what they will do or think tomorrow’ (Lundberg 1997: 30).

3.8.2. The Local Community as a Stakeholder: a reciprocal interrelationship

The other element that enhances the value of PIN as a sustainable tool is local community involvement as a main actor and stakeholder in primary interpretation and PIN planning, implementation, management and evaluation. The community is an indispensable agent in the total tourism chain (Murphy 1985, Binks 1986, Inskeep 1991, Ryan and Montgomery 1994, Simmons 1994, Taylor 1995, Jamal and Getz 1995, Fitton 1996, Tosun 2000, Novell and Benson 2005). Also, local communities are mostly included in sustainable development models as a cornerstone of the development processes (Richards and Hall 2000). Thus, competing for the opinion of the public including the locals, is vital for any destination’s competitiveness in the tourism industry (Ritchie and Crouch 2003).

According to Moscardo (1998: 6), ‘local residents can be the harshest critics of the local attractions’. Therefore, Boniface (1995: 28) considers the community as the direct presenters of a cultural site who is ‘serving as host to the visitor’. Also, Inskeep (1991: 278) mentioned that ‘because some types of cultural attraction resources relate to living cultures, socio-cultural impacts can be a particularly important consideration’ (see

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122 In this regard, Sam Ham (personal communication: 13/Feburary/2007) mentioned that ‘Lundberg’s “thesis” idea offered no improvement on anything related to thematic interpretation...Lundberg was beginning to see the difference between a strong theme (one that matters to an audience) and a lame or weak theme (one that doesn’t matter). So she just decided to call a strong theme a “thesis” and a weak one a “theme.” This has been discussed by Ham in his forthcoming book The Thematic Interpretation.

123 According to Ritchie and Crouch (2003: 105), the public includes ‘all of the groups and individuals who are affected by a destination’s tourism development, either materially or psychologically’. 
Section 3.6.3). Thus, it is important that ‘any interpretive strategy must be sympathetic to the needs and interests of local residents’ (Uzzell 1998b: 250).

Field archaeologists, site managers, custodians and museum curators need to adopt a more ‘adventurous attitude’ as enablers to involve the local people in the process of PIN (Blockley 1999: 27). Fundamental to the community development approach is the involvement of people, locals or tourists, in the interpretation process and to be interactively able to question the evidence rather than being consumers of finished products (Tilley 1989).

Bramwell and Lane (1993) mentioned that one of the main potentials for PIN is its ability to increase a sense of ownership amongst communities and share the heritage in their locality with visitors. In this context, Price (1994: 288) argued that ‘the more the public is aware of and can participate in the process of making a site known, the more intelligible it becomes to them and the more likely to be preserved’. Hence, PIN should provoke and engage rather than instruct (Tilden 1977). In this sense, the locals can take an active part in PIN processes which encourages communities to value, sustain and rediscover the cultural resources in their surrounding (McManamon and Hatton 2000). Therefore, training and educating the locals involved in the touristic guidance regarded as a high priority for a sustainable tourism (Black et al. 2001, Weiler and Ham 2002, Orbasli 2007).

Blockley (1999) mentioned that any outreach approach to PIN of AH requires skills in working with communities; in some cases, what the community wants is changing
activities and workshops to encourage them to get connected to sites and repeat their visit rather than building an informative permanent exhibition. For instance, Marshall (2002: 211) referred to the increasing interest in developing ‘community archaeology’ in Australia and New Zealand where ‘at least partial control of a project [is given] to the local community’.

In addition to the social and sustainable growth benefits of PIN for AH sites (Ashworth 1994, Boniface 1995, Fyall and Garrod 1998, Caffyn and Lutz 1999, Shunnaq et al. 2008), it appeared that ‘without the opportunity of an actively promoting public visitation, local communities are also denied possible economic benefits that may accrue’ (Grimwade and Carter 2000: 34). In return, this might affect community tourism in the long-run (Li 2004). This means that any PIN action plan should be justified to the locals on the basis of having several advantages based on multiplier effects by using part of the generated income from tourism and PIN services for other local or national development purposes; PIN ‘not only do its attractions make measurable contribution to national income…at numerous places the whole of the local economy is very much dependent on it’ (Fowler 1981: 66). For instance, Crosby (2002: 376) talked about the values of ‘community archaeology’\(^\text{124}\) in Fiji, where archaeological interpretations have led to improvements in the economic fortunes of the villagers and to the condition of the archaeological sites concerned’.

Another issue is that world-wide, the chosen archaeological sites for PIN have generally been selected for their quality of preservation and/or uniqueness (Wickham-Jones

1988). Much PIN is commercialized, fragmented and unconcerned with local or any social issues (Shanks and Tilley 1987). PIN of AH is about people where the focus should not be only on spectacular archaeological attractions and outstanding interpretive projects. This is critical for AH sustainability, especially that some ruins set within remote and magnificent surroundings; however, they are barely presented to the public or at least to the locals.

Andereck and Vogt (2000) mentioned that promoting archaeological sites through various interpretive media will create a better attitude against local visitors and foreigners. In cases where PIN projects had involved local people in planning, defining and presenting the distinctive aspects of their area, they may have felt a sense of ownership in the industry and more pride (Tabata 1989, Loosley 2005). For instance, Williamson (2004), who worked in PIN of the Iroquoian Longhouse in Ontario in Canada, reported that one of the important results of the aboriginal people inclusion is that sites are being visited by aboriginal tourists.

Community protects and interprets archaeological resources when they regard them as their own and part of their local areas. To empower this, McManamon and Hatton (2000) suggested four aspects to develop supportive local attitudes and actions which are: 1) formal and informal education; 2) national and local statutes or development control; 3) partnership in resources stewardship; 4) the integration of resources interpretation and preservation into local economic development programs. Presently, as discussed in Section 3.4, it is widely accepted that archaeologists, heritage managers and tourism industry developers need to engage in a dialogue with interested parties,
including the locals. Therefore, Hodder (2003: 1) mentioned that 'there has been much involvement of local communities in the construction of visitor centres and site interpretation'.

Another related point is that it should bear in mind that the framework of PIN, which is basically a reflection of the professional aims and objective, ‘empirical scientific approaches of Western academic training’ (Blockley 1999: 26) might not be appropriate to some traditional communities and indigenous people (see Section 3.6.3). Their ideas of a sense of place is based on cultural background; they create their own pasts, not necessarily by consciously rejecting the conventional media (Hodder 1986) or the conventional PIN given, but also by ‘using the material available for their own ends’ (Merriman 1991: 117). Therefore, training indigenous archaeologists could allow a degree of participation, even within the methods set by academy (Greer et al. 2002, Hodder 2003). Also, ‘the narrative that is presented for a heritage experience is one that must appeal both to tourists and the community whose heritage is being sold’ (Levine et al. 2005: 402) or told.

3.8.3. PIN as a Management Tool

PIN could provide the opportunity to a successful management policy at heritage sites (Orams 1996, Knudson et al. 2003). It is central to the heritage sites’ management process and ‘enables us to decide on current management priorities thus avoiding the ill-considered, irreparable loss of heritage resources’ (Millar 1989: 13). This is not surprising since one of the initial motivations for PIN emerged out of conservation goals
as it is ‘a magnificent conservation tool’ (McVerry 2001: 8). Herein, PIN aims to safeguard and present AH to the public safely and intelligibly (Yale 2004).

There is an increasing tendency to use PIN for managerial purposes and regional planning (Uzzell 1989a). This is important as ‘incorporating culturally significant landscapes into the heritage tourism resources requires active management to ensure realistic visitors expectations and appropriate behaviour’ (Carr 2004: 434) and so to reduce management problems. PIN can be used to convey messages and objectives which the managers wish visitors to receive (Herbert 1989, Prentice and Light 1994) (see Section 3.8.1).

Uzzell (1989a) referred to the role of PIN as an educational and controlling tool for soft visitor management and hard visitor management. In respect to the former, Moscardo (1998) discussed that communicating the meanings of a site before visiting could enhance visitor’s experience by: (a) providing information on alternatives and options for various visitors’ expectations, (b) providing information to encourage appropriate behaviours, safety and comfort, (c) influencing where visitors go, and (d) creating the actual experience. Before visiting sites, the use of education and promotion of the conservation ethic could have a positive impact on the sustainable development of the heritage attractions (Mason 2005). Also, Cossons (1989a: 194) suggested that ‘a visitor who understands more about fragility of the heritage and the methods by which it is nurtured, is likely to respect it and value it all the more’. Herein, negative impacts and misbehaviours, such as wear and tear, sticky fingers and graffiti, can be reduced (Moscardo 1998).
In regard to PIN as a hard management tool, it involves physical, regulatory and economic management (Mason 2005). Without the application of resource management techniques, resources will be exposed to erosion in the physical sense and destruction of the atmosphere or special character of a place (Aldridge 1975). This can be avoided by applying such techniques as zoning, pricing policies, traffic limitation, visiting time (see Ritchie and Crouch 2003). Also, some high-tech applications, such as GPS, portable personal computer and web-related interpretations, help in managing visitors and save time, money and effort (Bath 2006), e.g. Archeoguide system\textsuperscript{125}. Prentice and Light (1994) referred to the role of PIN as an effective tool in directing visitations away from sensitive areas of the site. Bramwell and Lane (1993) explain that PIN can influence visitors’ movement and traffic in both time and space. The positioning of facilities can also help to direct visitors towards significant points of interest which they might otherwise miss (Herbert 1989).

Also, PIN can direct visitors from hot spot attractions (Carr 2004) to under-used attractions by promoting alternative interpretive programs, media and attractions by creating historical trails away from sensitive sites (Cooper 1991). For instance, Goodey (2006: 22) referred to the significance of trails as ‘an effective community development device, a means of recording, structuring and presenting a community as it wishes to be seen’. Attracting visitors to places which are less visited by tourists and encouraging their use if appropriate can bring local economic benefits and development

\textsuperscript{125} Archeoguide system is ‘an advanced processing and mobile guiding system addressing the needs of cultural sites’ (Buhalis et al. 2006: 137). It supports visitor’s personalization or the presentation of multiple interpretations depends on the user’s profile. The system assists visitors in navigation around the visited site, while providing additional information and interrelationships with other sites or locations.
enhancement through interpretive facilities, job opportunities and conservation activities (Bramwell and Lane 1993, Pearce 1996, English Tourism Council 2000).

An important point to be discussed here is that the quality of PIN ‘will depend on the skills and enthusiasm of those involved in the management of historic sites at all levels’ (Binks 1986: 44). Moscardo (1997) asserted that creative and problem-solving skills are all referring to the ability to be practical, flexible, analytical and creative in recognising, defining and solving problems. Opposite to mindlessness, mindfulness is likely to result in ‘better judgment and learning, higher self-esteem and control’ (Moscardo 1997: 18). Also, Mallam (1989) referred to the importance of a joint approach between the private sector and heritage stewardship to foster identified and recognized continuous relationships and to compete successfully with the leisure industries; however, without compromising the inherent heritage characteristics and qualities to short-term commercial benefits (Mallam 1989). Thus, AH stewardship should avoid those factors which might result in low standard management for PIN which are listed by Aldridge (1975) as follows:

- Lack of staff, of co-operation between PIN and resources management staff, of research into the effectiveness of interpretive provisions and of understanding of the philosophy of PIN at some decision-taking levels.
- Low priority given to PIN by planning agencies.
- Insufficient of funds available for PIN.

126 Parkin et al. (1989: 109) provide a good example where he wrote ‘visitors to Warwick Castle inevitably have to travel through the town to reach the castle…the visitor journey is attractive, pleasant and easy to take as possible. Clean pavement, tree-lined streets, hanging baskets, attractive street furniture and goods and clear road signing provide a high quality sense of arrival’.
Another important point is that it is essential to have integrated approaches to visitor management where all aspects of visitors’ total experience of a place should be well planned and managed from the arrival of the visitor till their departure the heritage attractions (Parkin et al. 1989). Ritchie and Crouch (2003: 213) called this the ‘visitor’s travelling chain’ which includes aspects such as the core experience and the first impression. As well, one advantage of considering a heritage attraction in its wider context in PIN is that it could encourage people stay longer and spend more money which in return brings economic benefits to the place and people, creates jobs, raises incomes and the general standard of living, not to mention word of mouth benefits (Parkin et al. 1989) (see Section 3.9).

3.8.4. Evaluation of PIN

Modern archaeology is ‘more interested in questioning the validity of any interpretation or presentation of the past’ (Stone 1997: 24). Lee (1998) mentioned that in these days of quality assurance, interpreters must be able to present valid and reliable evidence regarding performance; it is not acceptable to depend on subjective evaluation. Therefore, evaluation research in PIN is important to nurture and improve the quality of interpretive provision and practices (Tilden 1977, Miles 1994) and to increase access and input about the past (Davis 1997). Obviously, clear measurable objectives are needed to determine what a visitor is expected to achieve on a visit (Light 1988, Herbert 1989). In this sense, Copeland (2006: 90) included that ‘clearly, careful evaluation of audience preconceptions is as valuable as post-site experience in designing an interpretation’.
Giving the importance of evaluation in PIN, it is surprising to realise how little research has been undertaken how best to communicate a particular interpretation (e.g. Moscardo 1996, 1997, 1998, Stewart et al. 1998, Armstrong and Weiler 2003, Madin and Fenton 2004, Levine et al. 2005, Ham and Weiler 2006). As an instance, it is popular to assert that hands-on experience is attractive to visitors; however, there has been not enough informed discussion or in-depth research which seeks to investigate this aspect, in particular in regard to AH (Ucko 1996). Also, Stewart et al. (1998: 258) mention that most evaluation studies of PIN have focused on the informal learning that is supposed to occur in the interpretive setting and how much visitors can recall about the provided PIN. Nevertheless, these studies, especially those relative to on-site PIN, tell us little about how people benefit PIN to help them understand the place they are visiting (see Ham and Weiler 2007). Also, sometimes, ‘there are those who think that it is not worthwhile’ (Uzzell 1998c: 187) which might due to the fact that conducting evaluations in PIN is seen as ‘complicated and time-consuming by most organizations’ (Ham and Weiler 2006:1) that requires time, money, expertise. Therefore, it is usually underestimated and underdeveloped in the planning and managing of PIN.

Prentice and Light (1994: 220) discussed the need for a comprehensive and a holistic evaluative approach which considers all the various components and contributions of PIN to the visit rather than considering each part in isolation. Similarly, Veverka (1994) refers to the use of a wider macro-type evaluation, a System Approach, as a way of looking at the entire system of interpretive agencies, sites, facilities and opportunities around the interpreted sites.
3.9. SUMMARY

Briefly, this chapter discussed and presented various issues relative to PIN of AH in general and archaeotourism in particular. Mostly, the discussion was focused on those issues which are expected to benefit and enrich the following parts of this thesis. New conceptual definitions are developed for both PIN and archaeotourism. Also, the various values of and major controversial issues in PIN for AH are presented, especially in relation to the heritage tourism industry. Another important discussion was the critical role of PIN in accomplishing sustainable archaeotourism and constructive interpretive experience for visitors.

The literature shows major shortcomings in various aspects of current PIN research at theoretical, practical and methodological levels (see Wearing et al. 2007). For instance, most of the available literature is focused on developed countries which is partially due to the underdeveloped status of PIN industry and the lack of professionalism, experts and regulations for heritage PIN. Also, in regard to PIN of AH in particular, there is limited research in the theoretical and practical sense such as those relative to defining, planning and delivering interpretive services issues.

Another point to be mentioned here is that most of the available literature in PIN can be described as repetitive in nature where the early theoretical perspectives developed by such pioneering works as Tilden’s (1977) are overused without a real contribution to PIN profession, neither academically, nor practically. Uzzell (1998b, 1998c) assured that generally there are few scholars who have tried to implement Tilden’s principles and who consider the development of the theoretical base of PIN. For example, Tilden
(1977) referred to the importance of using original objects and first-hand experience in PIN, yet authentic experience ‘has received little in interpretation literature despite its importance to practitioners and administrators’ (Hill and Cable 2006: 56).

As well, the research about the significance of addressing the whole person and the vital role and utilization of a perfect whole concept of a particular archaeological site in communicating holistic and myriad values is surprisingly limited. Furthermore, one of the main underdeveloped aspects in regard to PIN in developing countries is the essential importance of the socio-cultural context in PIN, including Islamic countries. As in many other tourism-related researches, in regard to heritage PIN, the differences which exist within and between all communities have been given little attention despite the value to understand social life (Goodson and Phillimore 2004).

Also, the concept and vital role of community-based PIN and its link to community archaeology has not been practically developed as a main tool for sustainable heritage PIN and archaeotourism. Furthermore, the literature shows the importance of developing theoretical and practical research in regard to the consideration of the social experience when interpreting AH to the public. It is hoped that some of these gaps can be filled by the end of this research according to its main objectives.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

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CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

4.1. INTRODUCTION
Through dialectical discussion this chapter elucidates the approaches and methodology used to accomplish the main aims and objectives mentioned in Chapter One. Also, it describes the analytical phase and its final outcomes.

4.2. AN OVERVIEW
Epistemologically, this research is built around constructivist theory. The resulting analysis is interpretive and hermeneutic where the wider context of the phenomenon in discussion is considered and different perspectives are appreciated. Also, socially constructed meanings are seen as driving factors in shaping individuals’ knowledge and perceptions about a particular phenomenon. There are rare studies which shed light on the potential of PIN in archaeotourism by applying constructivist approaches (Copeland 2004) where most studies look at a given archaeological site in isolation from its wider cultural landscape.

A case study approach was chosen as a methodology for this research as the most appropriate to provide in-depth insight where different methods or sources of evidence are utilized. This allows different interpretations for the complicated phenomenon to be understood by the researcher and provide clear background knowledge of particular sites, preferable to entire dependency on field observations (Figure 4.1).
Figure 4.1: The epistemology, theoretical perspectives, methodology and methods of the study (modified after Crotty 1998: Figure.1).

Exploratory qualitative and descriptive methods are utilized to develop the case study used here. Although, the study is based on inductive principles, however, as the research progressed it appears deductive in some parts (chapters eight and nine). According to some grounded theorists ‘generating theoretical propositions or formal hypothesis after inductively identifying categories is considered deductive analysis’ (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 22). Thus, induction can be seen as ‘a theory-building approach’ and ‘associated with a philosophical tradition that ‘the world is socially constructed’ (Finn et al. 2000: 20). Through induction, the researcher moves towards discovering binding principles rather than basing a conclusion on one unit of analysis or a single source of evidence (Gray 2004: 6). This is so important to ensure the research findings reliability and validity.
4.3. EPISTEMOLOGY AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

This section will explain the importance of adopting constructivist and constructionist perspectives in dealing with the research enquiries mentioned in Chapter One.

4.3.1. Constructionism and Constructivism

To start with definitions, Wang (1999: 354) suggests that despite the similarities between constructionism and constructivism, the former stresses ‘the social or inter-subjective process in construction of knowledge and reality, and is often used in conjunction with social constructionism’. Crotty (1998: 58) made a useful distinction between these two terms\(^{127}\) where constructionism includes ‘the collective generation [and transmission] of meaning’ and it ‘emphasizes the hold our culture has on us. It shapes the way in which we see things (even the way in which we feel things) and gives us a quite definite view of the world’. As for constructivism, it can be identified as ‘the meaning-making activity of the individual mind’ and ‘the unique experience of each of us’ (Crotty 1998: 58)\(^{128}\).

The meaning-making here is ‘the process of making sense of experience, of explaining or interpreting the world to ourselves and others’ (Hooper-Greenhill 1999: 12). Copeland (2004: 134) explained that ‘what we experience is a dynamic interaction of our senses, perceptions, memory of previous experience and cognitive processes which

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\(^{127}\) Basically, constructionism as defined by Crotty (1998: 42) means ‘all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practice, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context’.

\(^{128}\) The provided definition by Bryman (2001: 17) for constructionism integrates these two aspects where from ontological position constructionism implies that ‘social phenomena and categories are not only produced through social interaction but that they are in a constant revision’.

shape our understanding of events’. This is supported by the ‘symbolic interactionism’ perspective (Gray 2004: 20) which is part of ‘interpretivism’ intellectual heritage in social research (Bryman 2004: 13).

Epistemologically, interpretivism is closely linked to constructivism (Gray 2004: 20) where there is ‘no, direct, one-to-one relationship between ourselves (subjects) and the world (objects)’. Also, Guba and Lincoln (1990: 148) described the constructivist perspective as being methodologically hermeneutic. In this sense, both constructivists and interpretivists ‘focus on the processes by which these meanings are created, negotiated, sustained and modified within a specific context of human action’ (Schwandt 1994: 120).

Based on the fact that ‘any phenomena cannot be understood without the context in which they are studied’ (Guba and Lincoln 1989: 44), and that ‘findings from one phenomenon can not be generalized to another’ (Patton 2002: 98), meanings in this research are not prejudiced by the researcher; instead they are revised on the basis of experience and social interaction with the context in which the researched subject is existed.

4.3.2. The Collective Constructed Reality

This study explores interrelated factors (the multiple realities) that stand against communicating and constructing personal constructive experience about AH. The researcher is of the opinion that such philosophy and theoretical perspectives,
interpretivism and hermeneutics, are important to deepen and enrich the researcher’s understanding and experiences of the related issues to PIN of AH in Oman; still this does not mean the rejection of other approaches.

Patton (2002: 102) mentioned that a basic contribution of social construction and constructivist perspectives to qualitative enquiry is ‘the emphasis on capturing and honoring multiple perspectives’. Partially, this means the attempt to understand and integrate the desires of stakeholders to heritage management, e.g. conservational, recreational, commercial, educational, socio-cultural, through negotiation between conflicting interests as discussed by Hall and McArthur (1998) (see Section 3.4).

Certainly, various perspectives should be utilized to be a source of enrichment and added value for interpretation and become a bridge instead of a wedge through negotiation and positive cross-cultural exchanges. In regard to heritage in particular, ‘differences do not necessarily make conflict inevitable because heritage can serve different goals with different perspectives, using working methods and instruments’ to reach a common ground (Ashworth 2006: 27). This common ground or collective agreement can be equal to what is known in the social constructed realism as the created realities (Guba and Lincoln 1989) or collective intentionality (Searle 1995). In constructivism, the word reality ‘is made up of the network of things and relationships that we rely on in our living, and on which we believe others rely on too’ (von Glasersfeld 1995: 7).

\[129\] According to Searle (1995), ‘certain aspects of our world come into being as a result of the combined intentionality of those who make use of them’.
In this sense, the extrinsic values of AH, for instance, are socially constructed and ‘to say that meaningful reality is socially constructed is not to say that it is not real… constructionism in epistemology is perfectly compatible with realism in ontology’ (Crotty 1998: 64). The constructed realities can make the divergence to become convergence where different perspectives and powers complement one another to create a big compatible picture or mosaic. This comes from the importance of establishing a collective agreement and factual narration that elucidate the indeterminate picture about why the potential of PIN in communicating AH has been overlooked and underdeveloped in Oman. Consequently, it is hoped that this will assist in developing a suitable Omani context-based approach for PIN.

4.3.3. The Whole Person

A very critical point to be explored in this research is the main factors behind the total dependency on low-cost positivistic approaches\textsuperscript{130} for PIN of AH as initially confirmed by the informal pilot exploration. Herein, PIN is done for visitors where ‘the main flow of information is from evidence to the interpreter and then to the visitor who is expected to internalize the interpretation’ (Copeland 2006: 86) and not examine it against his/her previous constructed experience and values (Figure 4.2).

\textsuperscript{130} For instance, as confirmed in Chapter Seven, under a positivist approach schoolchildren construct their concepts about Magan culture through made-up frozen drawings in a school curriculum rather than field visits and interactive activities or museums where information are presented without a context.
According to Crotty (1998: 42-43), ‘meaning is not discovered but constructed’ by human beings as they interact with the world they are interpreting. Therefore, and similar to Copeland (2004, 2006), the researcher is of the opinion that PIN with a constructivist perspective is more productive to communicate meanings and values of AH. It is the perspective of self-interpretation (Copeland 2006), the self-reported knowledge (Madin and Fenton 2004), elective education (Tilden 1977, Hein 1999) and discovery learning (Stake 1994). Herein, PIN is designed for and by audiences; they become interactive rather than passive audience. In this sense, PIN becomes ‘the process of constructing meaning’ (Hooper-Greenhill 1999: 12).

This interactive communication is what Hooper-Greenhill (2000: 13) called the ‘cultural approach’ which is supported by constructivist explanation of learning, rather than a ‘transmission approach’ (Hooper-Greenhill 1999: 16) or ‘a single one-way trajectory communication’ (Hooper-Greenhill 2000: 15). Hill and Cable (2006: 61) suggested that

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\[\text{131} \] The transmission approach sees communication as a process of imparting information and sending messages, transmitting ideas across space from a knowledgeable information source to a passive receiver (Hooper-Greenhill 1999: 16).
'instead of a linear sender-receiver process, meaning-making is negotiated, with information being created rather than transmitted'.

This explains why PIN should aim at engaging visitors rather than instructing them (Tilden 1977, Aldridge 1989). This means to provoke and relate to archaeology, the public should be challenged and invited to participate, interact and construct in order to make conscious meanings and values (Lundberg 1997, Hein 1999); people become an interpretive audience and create their own personal meanings.

As emphasized in Section 3.2.3, Copeland (2004, 2006) said that the constructivist approach depends on two dynamic interrelated phases, *the expert construction* by archaeologists and other related experts and *the public construction* by visitors. Copeland (2004: 134) argued that if visitors are challenged by PIN, fresh learning experience or insight\textsuperscript{132} may take place or change where ‘learning is most effective when there is a ‘cognitive dissonance’, a contradiction between previous knowledge and the new experience. This goes well with Tilden (1977) who considered the main aim of PIN is provocative and not just instruction.

However, as clearly shown in Chapter Three, the imbalanced dissonance cognitive might provoke negative public construction and a powerful rejection of the presented past via archaeologists rather than understanding and appreciation as ‘a way of seeing is a way of not seeing’ (Crotty 1998: 55). Therefore, Potter (1997: 37) warned us from presenting ‘an interpretation without giving careful considerations to what audience

\textsuperscript{132} Prentice (1996) used the notion of *insight* to connect interpretation and place; it referred to the interpreting and learning experience received by visitors.
want and without giving careful consideration to the social agenda embedded within our own interpretation’.

Both interpreters and visitors of archaeological attractions are culturally-related and influenced by the context. This means there is no value-free PIN or public construction; both visitors and interpreters are exposed to construct and reconstruct their own meanings according to their systems of significant cultural symbols which direct their behaviours and organise their experiences (Crotty 1998). Johnsen and Olsen (2000: 110) conclude that ‘the context of the interpreter affects the interpretation in a negative way by being a source of prejudice and distortion’. That is to say PIN cannot be completely objective, more or less, all interpreters perceive the past subjectively (see Section 3.6.3).

Constructivist approaches admit visitors’ right in interpretation; thus interpreters must connect PIN context to something within the personality or experience of visitors (Tilden 1977, Ham 1992). This is to ‘ensure that both the communicator and the audience share an understanding of commonly used terms’ (Moscardo 1998: 2). In fact, Jenkinson (2004: 22) believes that ‘it is the visitor/user who interprets, in the light of their accumulated knowledge, experience and interest’ (see Section 3.6.3). In this situation, interpreters and archaeologists are encouraged to be mindful of this by allowing and creating new categories and definitions which hopefully lead to provoke an active and positive cognitive dissonance from visitors’ side (Moscardo 1997).
Certainly, this does not mean that PIN should be expected to be always a positive match between visitors’ expectations and the experiences available (Moscardo 1998). To develop their expectations, Tilden (1977) suggested that PIN should address the ‘whole man’ (see Section 3.5.4) or ‘the whole person’ by helping visitors to create a constructive holistic experience (Beck and Cable 2002: 52). According to Maslow (1970: 19), it is important to realize that ‘the individual is an integrated; organized whole…the whole individual is motivated rather than just a part’\(^133\). Pamela et al.’s (2007) study shows that some previous experience and trip-related variables (service quality, visitor satisfaction, and value for money) do work together to affect the destination’s evaluation.

This underlies the significance of addressing audience as a whole and caring for and involving all senses as possible to create a constructive interpretive experience. Therefore, this research will attempt to measure the current available interpretive infrastructures in particular, and other touristic facilities in general, as these represent essential elements in communicating a whole context.

### 4.3.4. The Whole Context: a hermeneutical approach to PIN

In addition to the aim of understanding the factors behind the reliance on positivistic approaches in PIN of AH in Oman, this research will examine the difficulties inhibiting the consideration of the whole context of the interpreted AH to communicate the big

\(^{133}\) To accomplish this, Maslow (1970) has developed a theoretical model of motivation which is based on human needs that include physiological needs, safety, social connectedness, self-esteem and self-actualization respectively.
concept of archaeological landscapes to the public and consequently creating a constructive experience for visitors. As concluded in Section 3.9, Tilden’s (1977) principles have not been adequately researched. For instance, Tilden’s work emphasized the importance of considering a ‘perfect whole’ in PIN; however, only few briefed studies have shed light on this element in regard to AH in particular.

The word interpretation is used in hermeneutics to mean how individuals make sense of things where ‘the process of interpretation focuses on the mental activity of the looker’ and construct meanings (Hooper-Greenhill 1999: 12). Hermeneutics represents an important approach in interpretivism (Crotty 1998) where it ‘provides a theoretical framework for interpretive understanding, or meaning, with special attention to context and original purposes’ (Patton 2002: 114).

One important application for hermeneutics in PIN may answer the question of ‘what are the conditions under which a human act took place or product was produced that makes it possible to interpret its meanings?’ (Patton 2002: 113). Thus, archaeologists need to examine ‘the larger context’ within which a particular site is evaluated (Moratto and Kelly 1978: 24). Both PIN and primary interpretations are meaningless if it is only ‘object-centred’ and without interpretive context; as ‘an object out of context is not readable’ (Hodder 1986: 145). A hermeneutical approach is relativist and related to ‘contextual archaeology’ which means ‘an interpretive strategy based on the claim that all understanding is historically and culturally situated’ (Johnsen and Olsen 2000: 102). Hodder (1986: 143) identified the context as:
The totality of the relevant environment, where relevant refers to a significant relationship to the object – that is, a relationship necessary for discerning the object’s meaning.

The significance of contextual archaeology to the subject matter of this research is that it enriches both experts and visitors’ constructions, provides new insights and enlivens the wider context in which archaeological ruins and objects are displayed. Stake (1994: 242) mentioned that ‘illustration as to how the phenomenon occurs in the circumstances of the particular exemplar can be valued and trustworthy knowledge’. In this sense, Aldridge (1989: 85) concluded that:

Social and cultural elements of our world can only be understood through interpretation of the human condition; one cannot understand and appreciate a place without having some idea of its time context.

Hodder (1986: 124) distinguished between two types of contextual meanings: the structured system of functional interrelationships and the structured content of ideas and symbols. The first represents the answer for ‘What is the function of an object’? and the second probably answers the question of ‘What is the aim of that function? To answer these questions, Hodder (1986: 172) suggested ethno-archaeological research since ‘a dialectical relationship between past and present’ is existed, then the past could be interpreted in terms of the present to understand the context in a wider sense.

According to Fagan et al. (1996: 235), ethno-archaeological approach which is part of the experimental archaeology refers to ‘the collection of ethnographic information to address specific archaeological problems. The approach “checks” the validity of archaeological observations or hypothesises against ethnographic data. These comparisons are often specific’.

In his book The Idea of History, Collingwood (1946) mentioned that historians can discern the thoughts of past agents by rethinking them in their own mind. According to Johnsen and Olsen (2000: 104), this represents Collingwood’s essential concept of reliving or re-enactment in personal interpretation.
4.4. METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

According to the above-mentioned discussion, and in order to audit the current status of PIN of AH in Oman, the researcher endeavoured to gain a comprehensive picture as possible by auditing the various factors, i.e. social, cultural, environmental, administrative, economic, etc, within the Omani context. As mentioned before, this will be managed by using the case study approach which in general tends to be an inductive approach by exploring issues in depth and in context to generate a theory about the researched topic and ‘provides richness and uniqueness in data’ (Finn et al. 2000: 81). It allows the researcher to ‘retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events’ (Yin 2003: 2). The case study here is an exploration of an actual situation, i.e. the lack of PIN for AH, in a particular context, i.e. Oman, to ‘introduce a series of critical issues facing a particular sector’ (Horner and Swarbrooke 2004: 3), i.e. PIN industry and archaeotourism.

According to Denscombe (1998) and Platt (2007), the use of case study has become widespread in social research due to its distinctive characters which emphasize depth of study, the particular, relationship and processes, holistic views, natural settings and multiple sources. Blaxter et al. (2006: 74) added that the case study approach ‘shows the complexity of social life’; it has the capacity to explore and understand social processes and ‘the essential in cross-national research to understanding the meanings attached to particular behaviours’.

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136 It has been argued that because of the complexity of a case study due to its holistic nature, the analysis can become difficult. Therefore, an aware researcher of the researched phenomenon is required (Blaxter et al. 2006). It is maybe worthwhile to mention here that the researcher’s experience in the subject matter of this research and its context, Oman, has been very helpful in overcoming this issue.
4.4.1. Informal Piloting

After identifying the research issues and context, a ‘pilot investigation’ (Wilson 1996: 103) or informal piloting activities were conducted which could help in judging the feasibility of the overall research plan and make modification as necessary (Blaxter et al. 2006). Also, these activities were conducted to prepare for working on Objective Two for this research to help in relating the general theoretical issues discussed in Chapter Three to the specific subject matter of this research, PIN of AH in Oman.

According to Yin (1994: 75), methodologically the pilot data can provide:

- considerable insights into the basic issues being studied; and
- the possible techniques used for gathering data and information about relevant field questions and about the logistics of the field inquiry

All in all, before selecting units of analysis, and preparing for data collection, and for the purpose of refining information collections in regard to PIN, AH and archaeotourism, the pilot survey aimed to:

a. investigate the originality of the research in relation to Oman;

b. estimate the issue which will be encountered during fieldwork;

c. estimate the amount of data and documentation in relation to this research;

d. gauge the geographic proximity of the study area in Oman;

e. select representative archaeological sites and explore their physical and intellectual accessibility (e.g. research, interviewees);

f. introduce the subject of this research and establish confidence and relationship between the researcher and those involved individuals and groups to the enquiry of this research; and
g. facilitate and assist in providing some conceptual clarification for the research design and in developing relevant questions and information collections.

4.4.2. Units of Analysis: Criterion Sites and Opportunistic Sites

As described before, this study takes the form of an exploratory embedded single case study design which involves more than one unit of analysis to provide operational details and serve as a device for focusing a case study inquiry (Yin 1994). In this research, Oman is considered the larger unit of analysis and the smaller units or subunits\textsuperscript{137} of analysis are a compound of archaeological sites from different regions in Oman (Figure 4.3). The analysis process for the subunits, which is done by collecting, organizing and analyzing data, will result in a product or a final case study narrative for PIN of AH in Oman.

Geographic and geomorphologic setting diversity was considered during the selection stage. The study considers the wider context of the selected archaeological landscape – the cultural landscape- instead of focusing on a single site. All in all, some tributes mentioned by Skeates (2000) were considered during the selection stages which are: (1) period; (2) rarity and representativity; (3) diversity of form/ various features and periods; (4) survival; (5) potential; (6) diversity of features from the same period; (7) group value. The selected subunits of analysis, the sites, are classified into two main groups: criterion sites and opportunistic sites (see Appendix One, Table 4.1 and Table

\textsuperscript{137} The case study itself can be considered the major interpretive unit and the selected sites are the subunits that facilitate operational details within the major unit (Yin 2004).
4.2). Mainly, all of the selected sites were used to create the raw database of this case study which is basically necessary to audit the phenomenon under investigation.
Figure 4.3: A basic map for Oman shows the criterion sites (red-coloured) and opportunistic sites (blue coloured).
Before proceeding to the description of the two methods of sampling there are six main points need to be mentioned here which are:

- Since the main focus of this study is not the issues which are related to the primary interpretation and expert construction of AH per se, the selected sites do not cover the entire chronology of archaeological sites in Oman. To exemplify, sites such as Wadi Suq, second millennium B.C, and Lizq, first millennium B.C, are crucial sites in the archaeological chronology of Oman (Potts 1990); however, their potential in the mass heritage tourism is arguably little since they are not physically attractive. Yet, it depends on the aims and methods of the provided interpretation as well as visitor profiles.

- The selected sites provide different archaeological features with different values and exemplify a wide historical chronology to ensure validity, diversity and richness of discussion and representation. They were selected based on what represents the phenomenon most fully and most comprehensible. These sites are able to provide in-depth qualitative analysis; they are commonly known among specialists and more or less known among those people who have some awareness and interest in Oman’s archaeology. Yet, it should be remembered that every archaeological site in Oman is of a special statements of significance in Oman’s history.

- The selected sites complement one another where al-Maysar, for instance, is composed of mining and smelting settlements, Bat and the affiliated sites are inland and mountainous necropolises and settlements and Ras al-Jinz is the furthest coastal sites in Arabian Peninsula with great archaeological discoveries,
though among specialists mostly. Each of these sites reveals particular types of issues different from the others.

- There is a possible direct or indirect connectivity among some of the selected sites which depends on the basic aims and objectives of a particular interpretive approach. For instance, although the on-site physical remains of Shisur Wubar are dated to the Iron Age, the site itself could be linked to the Bronze Age Magan culture through themed PIN if credit was given to evidence which suggests a clear picture of the strong commercial relationship between Dhofar in the south, Magan in the north and the ancient Near Eastern civilizations, particularly Mesopotamia and the Indus valley (Zarins 1997, Cleuziou and Tosi 1997, Cleuziou and Tosi 2000). In fact, Zarins (2001) pushed this relationship further back to the Neolithic Age based on established paleoclimatic/geology evidence.

- In regard to the archaeological sites which feature Magan culture, it should be ensured that this research mainly concern about those sites which are located within Oman, the study area. Should the researcher require reference to any other related sites to the culture from outside, such as United Arab Emirates, they are only utilized for comparative and/or recommendation purposes.

- The World Heritage Sites are considered as one group according to their inscription of the World Heritage List; however, during the analysis stage and discussion they are separately addressed depends on the particular discussed issue and its connection to a single site.
4.4.2.1. Criterion Sites

Since Oman is endowed with countless numbers of national and international outstanding universally-valued archaeological sites, the selection stage was a difficult one because of the long list of those significant national archaeological sites. This was one main reason to consider a ‘Criterion Sampling’ technique (Patton 1990: 176) where sites are selected based on one or more particular measures. Also, these sites can be classified as a ‘Purposive Samples’ which are usually ‘used in the selection of a few cases for intensive study’ (Bernard 2000: 176).

Two main criteria were applied to include a particular site for focused exploration (Table 4.1). The first one is that they must be of outstanding universal values, World Heritage Sites, such as Bat and Shisur Wubar. A sensible reason for their inclusion in the study is that these sites provide a good resource for heritage tourism in general (Shackley 1998a, Leask and Fyall 2006).

The second criterion is that sites must evidence Magan culture which is one of the most significant national AH in Oman (see Chapter Two). Herein, the selected sites can be classified as ‘intensity sampling’ (Patton 1990: 171) which are information-rich sites that ‘manifest the phenomenon of interest intensely’. It should be mentioned here that the researcher had to narrow down many related archaeological sites to Magan culture due to their large number, time limit, accessibility and information availability. Many of the excluded sites are required to be interpreted and presented to the public, but the current selected sites provide adequate insight and experience about the culture. This is

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138 According to Patton (2002: 243), Criterion Sampling means ‘picking all cases that meet some criterion’.
based on previous interdisciplinary scientific research and archaeological works, as well as about the key issues in PIN (Chapter Three).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion Sites</th>
<th>Location/Region</th>
<th>Main Period/s</th>
<th>Archaeological Features &amp; Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-Maysar (M)</td>
<td>al- Mudaibyi/ al-Sharqiyah</td>
<td>Bronze Age</td>
<td>graves, copper producing settlements, furnaces, copper ingots, slag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahla Fort WH)</td>
<td>Bahla/al-Dhakhliyah</td>
<td>Pre-Islamic/ Islamic</td>
<td>Bahla Fort, a mud-brick wall (ca. 13 km), the Grand Mosque, historical quarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bat, al-Ayn &amp; al-Khatam Tower (WH)</td>
<td>Iibri/al-Dahhirah</td>
<td>Bronze Age</td>
<td>tombs, agricultural settlements, irrigation system, ring-wall towers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Land of Frankincense Sites (WH)</td>
<td>Dhofar Region</td>
<td>Iron Age/ Islamic</td>
<td>The ancient port of Khor Rori, the ancient city of al-Balid, the natural reserve of frankincense trees in Wadi Dawkah, and the Iron Age fort at Shisur Wubbar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ras al-Jinz (M)</td>
<td>Sur/ al-Sharqiyah</td>
<td>Bronze Age/Iron Age</td>
<td>mud-brick settlements, burial cairns, seals, incense burners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shir (M)</td>
<td>Al Qabil/ al-Sharqiyah</td>
<td>Bronze Age</td>
<td>tower tombs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: The criterion sites with a brief description (WH = World Heritage Site; M = Magan Site)

4.4.2.2. Opportunistic Sites

During the informal pilot survey stage and the beginning of actual fieldwork, some of the archaeological sites were accidentally selected based on their unique status in regard to PIN of AH in Oman, their national and archaeological significance, as well as their potential, if properly interpreted, for boosting archaeotourism. This type of selection technique is called ‘Opportunistic Sampling’ (Patton 1990: 179) where each one of these emergent ‘opportunistic sites’ represents a unit of analysis and provides a unique opportunity for the research to expand, deepen and strengthen the argument from different perspectives that are not necessarily and adequately provided by the criterion
sites. Also, it can be said that these sites provide the opportunity to: 1) consolidate and establish more validity and reliability, 2) achieve and obtain generalizations pertaining to a population of cases in regard to the discussed issues and 3) illuminate and enrich the discussion and provide a comparative wider view and be sufficiently detailed and comprehensive.

Definitely, there are a countless number of sites with a unique status and economic significance all over the country; however, only five examples were selected (Table 4.2). The field visits to these sites have proved their significance and strong connection to the enquiries of this research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunistic Sites</th>
<th>Location/Region</th>
<th>Main Period/s</th>
<th>Uniqueness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arja</td>
<td>Sohar/al-Batinah</td>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td>- large copper mining and smelting settlements - valuable evidence of the history of Omani metallurgy - rich industrial archaeological landscape - threaten by industrial landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bausher</td>
<td>Bausher/Muscat</td>
<td>Multi-periods</td>
<td>- a rare cultural landscape in the capital, Muscat - threaten by modernization &amp; development processes - rich historical landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qalhat</td>
<td>Sur/ al-Sharqiyyah</td>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td>- the only Islamic port of its type in Oman - unique architecture with Persian influence (e.g., mausoleum) - unique location and rich coastal historical landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shenah</td>
<td>al-Qabil/al-Sharqiyyah</td>
<td>Bronze Age</td>
<td>- extensive beehive tombs from the early Bronze Age - unique petroglyphs - rich rural cultural landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sohar Fort</td>
<td>Sohar/ al-Batinah</td>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td>- unique attractive cultural centre with a strategic location - the only available off-site interpretation for Magan Culture - the only fort with displayed archaeological digs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tawi Ubaylah</td>
<td>Mahadah/ al-Dhahirah</td>
<td>Multi-periods</td>
<td>- a unique example for on-site misinterpretation/reconstruction - large archaeological landscape</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: The opportunistic sites with a brief description
4.4.3. Analytic Generalization

Yin (1994: 47) mentioned that ‘the sampling logic assumes that a number of subjects (sites) represent a larger pool of subjects in the entire case study’, so that data from a smaller number of sites does represent the data that might have been collected from a wider region. It is important to mention here that this logic is applicable as a way to determine occurrence of frequency of a particular phenomenon and establish ‘analytic generalization’ (Yin 2003: 32). In the case of Oman, this is applicable by considering the homogenised social and cultural context of Omani society and centralized political, economic, legal and administrative directorship. For example, the management and development of AH and archaeotourism is oriented to be nationally centralized (see Chapter Two) which creates sort of holistic thinking (Patton 2002) and perspectives similar to what the System Theory is built on.

In addition to this, and to establish more validity, multiple sources of evidence were gathered from respondents through whom the case can be known as closely as possible. Also, the selected sites were selected from various different regions in Oman (Figure 4.3) and cover a wider number of sites to validate and strengthen generalization as possible and propose an applicable approach for the whole country. The point here is that choosing typical ordinary sites as representatives for the phenomenon in focus and studying numerous sites is likely to increase generalization (see Schofield 2000). The systematic selection for the units of analysis is a complementary approach to deal with the problem of generalization (Gomm et al 2000).
Another important element to mention is that according to the electronic Omani Archaeological Sites Information System (OASIS)\textsuperscript{139}, as well as other previous research (Hasting \textit{et al.} 1975, Doe 1977, al-Belushi 2005), it appears that the Bronze Age and Islamic sites in Oman represent the two largest percentages of the total sites of AH. In this sense, the selected sites provide the study with insights about on-site and to some extent about off-site PIN for AH in Oman\textsuperscript{140}. Although the mentioned reason could be enough to create logical, propositional or rationalistic generalization in non-statistical empirical sense (Stake 2000) about the particular case of Oman, yet, generalizing the findings ‘will always fall short of full comprehension’ since time and context are instantly changeable (Lincoln and Guba 2000: 34).

\textbf{4.4.4. Source of Evidence}

The case study ‘deals with a wide variety of evidence’ (Yin 1994: 92) where data are collected from multiple sources but aimed at corroborating the same fact of a particular phenomenon. This is important to construct the validity and reliability of information; therefore, the researcher considered the use of four sources of evidence, triangulation, to corroborate the same fact of the researched phenomenon and establish a reliable chain of evidence (Patton 2002, Yin 2003). The adopted four major sources of evidence are: (1) field visits; (2) interviews; (3) expert survey; (4) documents and archival files. Generally, they were used to:

\begin{itemize}
  \item investigate the current status of PIN, its popularity as a profession and as an industry, as well as its potential in archaeotourism in Oman;
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{139} Prepared by MOHC from 1998-2002.
\textsuperscript{140} This is similar to what Lincoln and Guba (2000: 43) called ‘holographic generalization’ where ‘\textit{any information found in any part must be characteristic of the whole}’. 
Chapter Four: Approaches and Methodology

- audit the competitiveness of AH resources in Oman as tourism attractions through criterion and opportunistic sites;
- point out the main current stakeholders and their sense of stewardship and accountability in regard to the development of PIN and archaeotourism;
- review the Omani governmental legislation, royal and ministerial decisions which are related to AH and their implementation in the practical sense;
- investigate the level of involvement and the implementation of the international conventions and charters, such as the UNESCO, ICOMOS and the World Tourism Organization, in developing the presentation and interpretation of World Heritage Sites;
- gauge the current role of the education system and the national media in Oman in interpreting and presenting AH to the general public;
- understand the amount of interconnectedness and coordination works between AH management and other governmental and private sectors, as well as with local communities at structural and operational level;
- cursory explore the role of current socio-cultural in relation to PIN of AH and archaeotourism in Oman;
- elucidate the level of technical, financial and human resources in relation to the on-site and off-site PIN of archaeological sites in Oman;
- measure the validity and affectivity of the current provided PIN if possible at the criterion and opportunistic sites;
- investigate the ability of implementing particular interpretive methods and research strategies in AH, such as experimental archaeology, site reconstructions and ethno-archaeology; and
help in proposing a practical approach and recommendations to develop PIN of AH and consequently archaeotourism guided by the research findings, literature resources and practices from UK and other countries.\(^{141}\)

The representative sources of evidence were selected in the basis of their greatest opportunity, connectivity and ability to uncover and provide as many potentially relevant categories to the researched phenomena as possible through gained quantitative and qualitative data. All data were collected inductively. With keeping this in mind, the researcher assumes that the greatest opportunities to investigate the research’s inquiry possibly better obtained through first hand experience, through field visits to the selected archaeological sites. As well, this can be accomplished by interviewing the group of people who are involved in studying, managing and developing AH and with those who live in the vicinity of these sites.

Since ‘a systematic approach is one of the characteristics of a good audit’ (Ritchie and Crouch 2003: 256), the sources were used as tools for audit and analysis and guided by Ritchie and Crouch’s (2003: 257-264) constructed model of operational measures of destination competitiveness and sustainability which they called destination diagnostics. According to some authors, this is ‘the most comprehensive and most rigorous of all models of this type currently available’ (Hudson et al. 2004: 82). This model has five major dimensions: 1) qualifying and amplifying determinants; 2) destination policy planning and development; 3) destination management; 4) core resources and attractors;

\(^{141}\) For instance, several field visits were conducted to some of the heritage attractions in Wales, UK, in order to widen the researcher’s knowledge and explore practical interpretation methods. Field visits were made to Blaenavon World Heritage Site, Caerleon Roman Fortress, Cardiff Castle, Caerphilly Castle, Big Pit National Coal Museum, and the Museum of Welsh Life at St. Fagans.
and 5) supporting factors and resources. Some of the measures were adjusted and adapted before data collection depending on their applicability and connectivity to this research objectives, to help in data collection and direct the analysis and discussion toward major issues in PIN of AH in Oman.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUDITING MEASURES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destination audit/feasibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destination development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive collaborative analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring &amp; evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources stewardship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3: Selected measures to guide the audit stage based on Ritchie and Crouch’s model (2003: Tables 11.1-11.5).

Many of the quantitative data were used as indicators to a particular assumption or issue where phenomena extracted from statistical data provided by the involved governmental institutions such as the Ministry of National Economy. Also, by using qualitative data, the researcher strives to understand the phenomenon in question as a whole, a holistic perspective, where the researcher gathered data on multiple aspects to assemble a comprehensive picture as possible and gain insight. This means, the analytical
description for the external context of the phenomenon is essential for overall understanding of what has been observed during fieldwork or in interviews. Herein, the holistic approach assumes that ‘the whole is understood as a complex system that is greater than the sum of its parts’ (Patton 2002: 58).

Also, according to Patton (2002: 60), the use of qualitative research will prevent losing some major factors that might be difficult to identify by using a quantitative approach. Therefore, capturing and documenting interconnections and relationships were part of the conducted fieldwork. In the following parts, a brief description is given for each source of evidence.

4.4.4.1. On-site Visits and Field Notes

Field notes could be ‘the most important determinant of later bringing off a qualitative analysis’ (Patton 1990: 239). The fundamental purpose of field visits is to better understand the selected sites and their wider contexts and gain firsthand experience. In this sense, several on-site visits were conducted to the criterion and opportunistic sites between the years of 2004-2007. The field visits were organized at different times during the course of this research\(^{142}\), in particular to the criterion sites for different purposes in order to construct a holistic perspective and monitor any change in case there are new development projects within or nearby the examined sites. As discussed by Gomm \textit{et al.} (2000), this is important for finding validation and generalization in case study approach.

\(^{142}\) *Less-structured observations* (Foster 1996: 83) were carried out during the informal piloting stage.
Also, according to Patton (1990: 204), field visits may provide the ‘opportunity to see things that may routinely escape conscious awareness’ among interviewees. This means that site observations ‘can be a useful check on and supplement to information obtained from other sources’ (Foster 1996: 59) and they allow the researcher to discover things no one else has ever really paid attention to. Also, they are important to learn about things or sensitive topics that interviewees maybe unwilling to talk about in an interview. For example, the conducted visits to Bahla Oasis, Arja and Shisur Wubar provide and confirm sensitive issues in relation to in-situ conservation and administration. While some of these issues are of a critical concern to the local communities, they have been underestimated by the people who are in charge of these sites.

A Field Note Form (see Appendix Two) was prepared for each visit in order to facilitate the analysis process necessary for objective three and four. The measures in Table 4.3 were considered during the visits. Finally, there are three points which are required to be mentioned which are:

- To increase the reliability of ‘observational evidence’ (Yin 2003: 93), the researcher was joined by other observers, archaeologists or members from the local community who live within the examined area. Practically, this was essential, especially with those sites which are hardly recognized by the average visitors, e.g. Ras al-Jinz2, Arja, and reached without a guiding assistant, e.g. Shenah and al-Maysar. Also, seeking the community advice could help in grounding the findings and PIN congruent with the community perspective and support.
All field observations at both the criterion and opportunistic sites are documented through digital pictures to be retrieved later for this study and other future research.

Due to the time limit and technical problems, the researcher was not able to visit the site of Shir; however, a clear picture was constructed through publications (Yule and Weisgerber 1998) and contact with those experts who conducted archaeological fieldworks in 1995 (e.g. Gerd Weisgerber and Paul Yule) and members from the Department of Archaeology at Sultan Qaboos University who visited and documented the site in 2005.

One group of attractions where heritage tourists seek to rediscover the past are museums, which are significant vehicles for the public construction of the past (Pribeaux and Kininmont 1999) and for the public involvement in archaeology (Merriman 2004). Drawing on this and the discussion in Section 3.7, the researcher incorporated field visits to museums which are expected to provide interpretive services to visitors. In this context, museums are seen as complementary interpretive venues, especially that some archaeological fieldworks are closed and sites are abandoned regardless their values such as al-Maysar. So, in order to audit the current situation of off-site PIN for AH in general, and the selected archaeological sites in particular, main museums were selected; the Cultural Centre Museum in Salalah, the Land of Frankincense Museum, Sohar Fort Museum and the Omani Museum.
An important point to be remembered here is that since the main interest of this study is the on-site PIN, therefore, the audit of the interpretation provisions at these museums is briefly explored and discussed in relation to AH and archaeotourism in Oman.

4.4.4.2. The Expert Survey

An expert survey was designed to include some professionals who managed field archaeological and ethno-archaeological works and who participated in interpreting the history and heritage of Oman through their practical and theoretical research in the past or present. It also includes some experts from those governmental and private organizations which are directly involved in the heritage tourism sector in Oman.

The main aim of the survey is to provide a valuable insight into many aspects of the current status of PIN at AH in practical sense. The descriptive survey is headed with a preamble to provide information about the main aim of the survey (see Appendix Three). Two main approaches were applied to contact the experts. The first one was through structured interviews (see Section 4.4.4.3). The second approach and due to accessibility problems to these experts, the survey was sent through Electronic Mail and for confidential considerations all emails were personalized. The e-mail-survey provided enough time for the experts to explain their comments, especially that the majority of the posted questions are open-ended. Ten experts were able to email the survey back, yet some questions were answered shortly which might due to the lack of knowledge relative to PIN.
4.4.4.3. Interviewing

It is presumed that interviewing as a source of information is reliable and accurate in providing a true picture about the situation we are dealing with. It is considered one of the most common and powerful ways in which ‘both quality and quantity researchers tend to rely on the interview as the basic method of data gathering’ (Fontana and Frey 2005: 698).

The conducted interviews required the researcher to operate on two levels at the same time: ‘satisfying the inquiry of the research as well as asking questions in unbiased manner’ (Yin 2003: 90). The researcher attempted as much as possible to manage all interviews to be personal and face-to-face, though a few telephone interviews were conducted. Also, when needed, some personal communications were managed in order to clarify a particular issue or confirm information regard the various issues in archaeotourism and PIN of AH in Oman.

There are 57 interviews; 47 in Arabic and 10 in English (Table 4.4). There are 39 interviews which were audio-taped by using a digital recorder provided a pre-permission is given to be later saved and transcribed by the research and repeatedly used as needed for this and future research as well. The Arabic interviews were first transcribed by the researcher and then reviewed and translated into English.
The interviewees were selected according to their connectivity and their previous experience and knowledge, as well as their roles in decision-making relative to the management and development of AH resources and archaeological research in Oman. Basically, the interviewee can be classified into four groups:

- those who are involved in archaeological works or studies to one of the selected sites in the past or present, e.g. archaeologists, anthropologists, historians.
- those who are involved in managing and developing the public knowledge of AH in Oman, e.g. government personnel at MOHC.
- those who are involved directly in developing and promoting heritage-based tourism in Oman and abroad, e.g. tour operators and outfitters,
governmental and private personnel from MOT and Bahwan Travel Agency for example.

d. those who represent opportunistic individuals who provide important information in relation to PIN and archaeotourism in Oman, in particular a member from the local community and on-site guards.

The ‘contextual factors’ (Wilson 1996: 96) of the interviewees were considered where such factors as cultural and educational backgrounds are important in obtaining the most out of the interviews. The researcher conducted some on-site interviews at the sites of Bat, Bahla Fort, Ras al-Jinz and al-Balid Park; however, the majority were done off-site through different periods during the course of this study. Since ‘there is no single interview style that fits every occasion to all respondents’ (Fontana and Frey 2005: 703), interviews in this research are one of three types; structured, semi-structured and unstructured.

The use of structured interviewing was limited and not preferable in this particular research because ‘there is very little flexibility in the way in which questions are asked or answered in the structured interview setting’ (Fontana and Frey 2005: 702). There are 13 structured interviews; all of them are conducted in Arabic. Due to the limited time and work atmosphere some focused interviews were planned for a short period of time such as the interview with some of those respondents from MOT and OCA. In this case, the researcher had to focus the interview as much as possible and time was carefully used and managed. Similar to the expert survey, the structured interview questions consist of six main standardized sections; however, in the structured interviews response
rates were slightly higher than the survey; respondents were able to talk more about their experiences and give more comments in relation to the subject matter of the question depends on their backgrounds (Appendix 4A).

The unstructured interview or informal conversational interview is considered the ‘most open-ended approach which maintains maximum flexibility to be able to pursue information in whatever direction appears to be appropriated’ (Patton 1990: 281). According to Fontana and Frey (2005), it can provide greater breadth than do other types given its qualitative nature. Another advantage for this type of interview is the consideration of the contextual factor of the interviewees which allows the researcher to be ‘highly responsive to individual differences and situational changes’ (Patton 1990: 282). There are 8 unstructured interviews (2 English and 6 Arabic). This type of interviewing was partially non-directive and mostly adopted during on-site visits at such sites as Bat and Shisur Wubar (Appendix 4B). No predetermined set of questions was possible since some of the interviewees represent opportunistic samples where there are no designed structured questions; rather, most of the questions ‘flow from the immediate context’ (Patton 1990: 281). Most of the questions in the unstructured interviews were of the open-ended type in which the respondents were asked about the fact of a matter as well as their opinions about a particular point in relation to PIN of AH and archaeotourism in Oman, such as ownership, socio-cultural and socio-economic issues.

Most of the conducted interviews of this research were semi-structured or semi-standardized – like (36 respondents) where the researcher has a list of issues and
questions to be covered (Appendix 4C), but may not deal with all of them in each interview (Gray 2004). Also, some exploratory or probing questions were placed in the interview narrative at appropriate places. Here, additional questions were asked as new issues arise. There are 28 Arabic semi-structured interviews and 8 in English.

The use of this type of interview does ‘allow for probing of views and opinions where it is desirable for the respondents to expand on their answers’ (Gray 2004). This strategy is similar to what is known in the Grounded Theory as ‘Questioning Technique’ (Strauss and Corbin 1990: 76). The purpose of this technique as mentioned by Strauss and Corbin (1990: 77) is to open up the data. This was necessary in order to explore some related issues at the particular selected sites that the respondents are involved in working at.

Some interviewees were asked to propose their own insights into certain aspects, e.g. sensitive sites, Magan culture, AH reconstruction, which could be used as the basis for further inquiries (Yin 2003). Another advantage of the Questioning Technique is to ensure respondents’ awareness of the posted questions or issues during the actual interview especially that as a concept or as a profession, ‘public interpretation’ is almost unknown as a mainstream among those who are in charge of AH management or heritage tourism in general. This is in addition to gain more detailed answers rather than just brief responses which was helpful in enlarging of key interviewees to become an ‘informant’ more than a ‘respondent’ (Yin 2003: 90). Accordingly, it was necessary to allow some kind of flexibility to elucidate some answers in-depth.
Generally speaking, the interviews contain questions which can be described as experience questions, knowledge questions, sensory questions, background questions, opinion questions, probes and follow-up questions, conclusion and recommendation questions (Patton 1990). To avoid problems, such as bias and poor recall, other sources of evidence were corroborated such as archival documents. Beside the three different types of interviewing, some personal communications via the electronic mail or phone conversations were made as it was required to clarify and explore a particular issue related directly or indirectly to interpretation (primary or secondary) as well as to provide more insightful understanding for the subject matter of this research.

4.4.4.4. Documentation and Archival Files

Documents and archival files ‘play an explicit role in any data collection in doing case studies.’ (Yin 2003: 87). They are relevant and essential to many of the selected analytical units such as Bat and Ras al-Jinz. Also, they represent basic sources of information and can give ideas about important questions to pursue through more direct field observations and interviewing (Patton 1990: 233). The researcher can make inference from documents, corroborate and augment evidence from other resources (Yin 2003: 87). For example, newspaper accounts are a good source for covering a certain topic such as the experimental attempt of the Magan Boat Project in 2005.

Access was arranged to examine the files at both MOHC and MOT to be used later for analytical, dialectical and descriptive purposes. Generally, the researcher depended on five sources for the obtained literal documents and archival files which are:
(a) Unpublished official studies and reports in relation to AH and the tourism industry in Oman in general. These materials were obtained from MOHC, MOT, OCA and the Ministry of Information;

(b) Organizational records and administrative files from MOHC, MOT, OCA and the Ministry of National Economy. These files take the form of computer files and records such as Omani Archaeological Sites Information System (OASIS);

(c) Official published studies, census records and visitors’ statistics at museums, forts and castles in Oman. These materials are available from MOT, MOHC, the Ministry of National Economy, Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Regional Municipalities;

(d) Newspaper clipping and other related articles that appear in the local newspaper and journals, such as Al WATAN and OMAN DAILY (Arabic) and TIMES OF OMAN and the OBSERVER (English). This is beside electronic resources such as internet websites and CDs; and

(e) Maps and charts of the geographic and topographic characteristics of sites from The National Survey Authority and The Supreme Committee for Town Planning in Muscat.

4.4.5. Evidence Analysis

The analysis stage of the case study evidence is ‘one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of doing case studies’ (Yin 2003: 109); therefore, the analysis depends on the researcher’s own style of rigour, along with the sufficient presentation of evidence and careful consideration of alternative interpretations.
In the beginning it was necessary to organize information and label the various kinds of information gathered from all sources of evidence in order to start analysis. Since, qualitative analysis is typically inductive (Patton 2002: 453), this early analytical stage involved discovering patterns, themes and categories in data so the study findings emerge out of the data, through the analyst’s interactions with the data.

At this stage ‘open coding’ (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 223) was necessary in order to facilitate the analysis process and figure themes to pursue a wider analysis and discussion in relation to the study inquiries and afford applicable recommendations. The coding procedures are meant to ‘provide researchers with analytical tools for handling masses of raw data’ (Patton 2002: 127) which become more manageable by grouping similar responses under one theme for example (de Vaus 2002). Accordingly, each respondent (expert and interviewee), site (criterion and opportunistic) was abbreviated with a code (Table 4.5). As for documents and archival files they were issues-oriented in classification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>e.g. Sites</th>
<th>Ras al-Jinz = RJ</th>
<th>Bat = BA</th>
<th>Qalhat = QA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g. Respondents</td>
<td>Bose = AM34</td>
<td>Riami = AU6</td>
<td>Wilkinson = BX10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5: Example for coded sites and respondents during the Coding Stage

The next stage, and after coding, the researcher started to make a single source of evidence analysis for every field note, respondent, document and archival file. This means the extraction of different kinds of data as needed from the evidence and located them initially in three separate lists of key issues classified by source of evidence. This means making a matrix of categories and placing the evidence within such categories.
During this stage line-by-line analysis for sources was used through what Strauss and Corbin (1998: 57) like to call ‘analysis through microscopic examination of data’ which was helpful to integrate some of the sub-issues under the key issues within the initial lists (Table 4.5), as well as to create some sort of sense-making among the issues and construct more valid and sensible chain of evidence.

26- Tour Guidance

26.2. Many tour guides don’t speak the required foreign language.
26.3. There are no specialised on-site guides.

Table 4.6: An example from IEL

In addition to this, the main purpose of this stage was to deduct unrelated and inappropriate categories and themes, including deviate data, as well as guide away personal experience by focusing on the given information and discovering dimension of the categories. The initial three lists were refined as new data were added during the course of this research till three final reference lists of key issues were produced which are:

(1) The Interviewees and Experts List (IEL);

(2) The Field Notes List (FNL); and

(3) The Documents and Archival Files List (DAL).

Then a cross-source of evidence analysis was done through the three final lists (IEL, FNL, DAL). Here, again all listed issues from the three lists were gathered based on their similarity and connectivity to one another. During this stage, some sub-issues were merged under related-major issues to achieve more coherence and connectivity.
Likewise, this helped in the reduction for many titles, in particular those which are not directly related to the subject matter of this research.

This stage was the essential one that led to the writing of a case descriptive narrative from different perspectives based on all gathered raw evidences about the units of analysis as well as on related literature to the heritage tourism in Oman (Figure 4.4). The final case study narrative was in the form of a descriptive picture about sites. It offers a ‘holistic portrayal’ (Patton 2002: 450) presented with necessary context for understanding the case of PIN and archaeotourism in Oman.

Figure 4.4: Analysis Stage: (A) Coding and a single source of evidence analysis; (B) Cross-source of evidence analysis and the three lists and (C) the cross-source of evidence-lists Analysis and the case study narrative.
4.5. THREE MAIN FACTORS: PHYSICAL, STAKEHOLDERS AND STEWARDSHIP AND SOCIO-CULTURAL

As discussed above and in Chapter Three that based on the constructivism epistemology, individuals obtain meanings about AH resources through their physical and intellectual accessibility to these resources. During the construction processes, they are influenced by their previous personal experience context and social constructed context. To explain, the interaction of audience with archaeological resources (i.e. objects, sites, images), their local micro context (e.g. facilities, local community) and their holistic macro context (e.g. accessibility, policy) generates the total interpretive personal experience. For instance, Bonn et al. (2007: 345) mentioned that heritage attractions’ physical environment plays an important role in determining visitors’ attitude towards the heritage attraction and their willingness to recommend them to others.

Falk and Dierking (1992) suggested the ‘Interactive Experience Model’ for making sense of the unique complexities of visitors’ interactive interpretive experience within museums. This suggests that a visitor-centred perspective and all experience and subsequent meaning-making are contextual. The visitors are dictated by the interaction of three contexts: (1) the Personal Context of the visitor, (2) the Physical Context and (3) the Social Context of the experience (Falk and Dierking 1992, Dierking 1998). The personal context includes degree of experience, previous knowledge and visitors’ interest and motivation. According to Falk and Dierking (1992: 2-4), this context will be influenced by the social context (i.e. accompanied by a group or alone) and the sense of physical context within the visited space.
Similarly, Stewart et al.’s (1998) approach, mentioned in Chapter Three, emphasized the ‘inter-relationship, complexities and variabilities between visitors, their experiences and the site that is being interpreted’. As well, a ‘holistic approaches’ to PIN are increasingly espoused in planning, managing and evaluating interpretive practices because ‘function and meaning of the parts are lost when separated from the whole’ (Patton 2002: 120) (see Chapter Eight).

This refers to the significance of considering a holistic way in analyzing the phenomenon of the lack of PIN at AH in Oman rather than focusing on the physical evidence or the core attractions, the archaeological sites. This means to explore the main relative effective factors that influence the personal experience of visitors while constructing their own interpretations about a particular site (e.g. physiographic appealing, accessibility, tourism superstructure). Also, such issues as the socio-cultural values in regard to AH and the local community readiness of archaeotourism might be demanding leading factors in the current status of PIN of AH in Oman.

Accordingly, and based on what has been discussed above, guided by the literature review and according to the data obtained from the analytical stage, the influential factors on PIN of AH in Oman can be listed under three major interrelated contexts (Figure 4.5). These contexts are: the Physical Context (hereafter PC); the Stakeholders and Stewardship Context (hereafter SSC); the Socio-Cultural Context (hereafter SCC).
Figure 4.5: The three interconnected influential contexts in AH interpretation in Oman as suggested by the research findings.

Each of these contexts has a micro local impact and macro national or international impact that prevent the development processes of PIN and hence archaeotourism. Certainly, this is also important for the tourism industry in Oman in general since PIN as discussed in Chapter Three represents one part among other parts in the visitor’s travelling chain (Ritchie and Crouch 2003). Figure 4.6 portrays the various interconnected factors listed under their suggested contexts.
Figure 4.6: The various influential factors within the three contexts.

4.6. SUMMARY

In Section 4.3 the epistemological and theoretical perspectives for this research are described where the gathered data will be utilized to explore those interconnected constructed factors in the wider context that could influence the total interpretive experience at archaeological resources. As it has been discussed above, the data of this research are obtained through negotiation with others, appreciation and consideration of their perspectives to reach a collective agreement about the researched phenomenon in Oman. From the interpretive point of view this is necessary to avoid subjectivity as
possible and to build shared constructed realities with involved stakeholders of the phenomenon in question.

Also, the research aims to explore the circumstances restrain the adoption of interpretive approaches that address the ‘whole person’ and consider a ‘whole context’. Also, part of the issue is the need to encourage people to construct their experiences of AH through interactive constructivist media instead of being passive and depending on positivistic messages. As this is not happening in Oman in the present, the study attends to explore the main factors behind this issue.

The case study approach was used to handle the described objectives in Chapter One and to build a practical argument as this method is compatible with the hermeneutics perspective where holistic thinking is required. To explore various aspects about the issue in question several sources of evidence or methods were used, including interviews, expert survey, field visits, governmental documents and archival files. This was very important for the enrichment and validation of the final findings and recommendations. The researcher has attempted to obtain data from those liable stakeholders who are responsible for AH in general, and the selected sites, especially with such people as cultural resources managers, tourism planners and archaeologists.

The final analysis of the obtained data illuminates that the factors, which affect PIN of AH and archaeotourism in Oman, can be categorized under three main interwoven contexts which are PC, SSC and SCC. The next chapters will briefly described the interrelated factors relative to these contexts based on the research findings.
CHAPTER FIVE
THE PHYSICAL CONTEXT OF
ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AND
PUBLIC INTERPRETATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

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5.9 SUMMARY
CHAPTER FIVE
THE PHYSICAL CONTEXT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AND PUBLIC INTERPRETATION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to describe the first influential factor in the current status of PIN of AH in Oman that is PC. The chapter will audit this factor at both the micro-physical context and the macro-physical context with a special reference to the selected sites described in Chapter Four. The former refers to the archaeological site *per se* and the latter includes the surrounding wider context. Based on the research findings, this chapter shows those major related on-site factors that directly or indirectly influence the quality and effectiveness of PIN.

It has been shown in chapter three and four that the constructivist approach suggests that individuals construct their own understanding of the available context in which they interact with; through interacting with the available evidence such as archaeological ruins. Again and again, PC of archaeological landscape does not mean simply individual sites; but it includes the wider context of these sites.

Also, PC here concern about such element as the layout and physiographic appealing of archaeological landscapes and on-site public interpretive infrastructure and superstructure. These play a vital role in constructing personal experience for visitors to archaeological sites, though in different levels. In the following sections, seven major effective factors related to PC were suggested by the research findings; these factors are: 1) The Natural Destructive Factors; 2) The Man-made Destructive Factors; 3) The
Physiographic Appeal; 4) Infrastructure and Superstructure; 5) Interpretive Infrastructure; 6) Guiding Signage and Interpretive Panels; 7) Accessibility.

5.2. THE NATURAL DESTRUCTIVE FACTORS

The natural destructive factors can be classified into two main groups; abiotic environment (e.g. wind, temperature, rain) and biotic environment (e.g. plants, rodents) (Elmahi 2002: 96). According to the findings the factors relative to the abiotic environment are three which are weathering, water Streams and dryness and scarcity of water. This is in addition to the biotic factors. The following section provides a brief description for each of these factors.

5.2.1 Weathering

All selected archaeological sites were exposed to various degree of weathering which depends on their locations and physical context. For instance, Ras al-Jinz, which is a coastal site, is threatened by humidity and salinity since some of its archaeological features are made out of mud-brick (AM33)\textsuperscript{143}.

Also, as in most of Oman, the climate at Bat is harsh and can fracture large rock formations or human artifacts (Brunswig 1989). The status report of Weisgerber \textit{et al.} (2002: 3) shows that ‘the decay of the monuments is recognizable and continues…several times, corrosion and erosion were documented and easily can be observed today in the field’. Also, field visits to the site of Shenah, confirmed that many

\textsuperscript{143} A code represents a particular respondent as described in Section 4.4.5.
graves and petroglyphs are damaged because of weathering processes. As well, this has been confirmed by Insall (1999).

5.2.2. Rain and Water Streams

Respondent AU7 mentioned that one of the natural factors faces Bat is ‘water streams’, *wadis*. This is not surprising since the ancient Bat settlement is situated on an approximately 500 m long sloping outcrop ridge on the southeast edge of the valley (Brunswig 1989: 12). Similarly, the field visit to al-Maysar showed that Wadi Samad has been eroding parts of the smelting settlement. Some archaeological ruins, such as those groups of tombs at Bausher, lay scattered over a water stream, in particular the so called Honeycomb Cemetery (Yule 1999). The case is similar at Shisur Wubar which is located on a large collapsed limestone dome which ‘has been eaten away by water solution’ (Zarins 2001: 99).

5.2.3 Aridity and Water Scarcity

The climate of Oman is semi-arid and varied with humid coastal areas and a hot dry desert interior; the rainfall is generally light and irregular (Ministry of Information 2004: 7). For this reason, the agricultural lands around such sites as Bat and Arja have been abandoned and most inhabitants have moved to neighbouring places. As a result, statistics for 2003 show that the population of modern Bat is 1792 persons and 245 houses (Ministry of National Economy 2005a: 232). As well, due to the scarcity of water nearby the site of Shir it is still nearly uninhabited (al-Shanfari *et al.* 1993, Yule and Weisgerber 1998).
5.2.4. Biotic Environment

Field visits show that two of the main biotic factors that affect PC sustainability of some archaeological remains are plants and rodents. Shrubs of acacia, weeds and other desert plants represent major elements of the landscape at some of the selected archaeological sites, such as the graves at Bat and al-Ayn, and the settlements al-Maysar, Qalhat, al-Balid and Khor Rori. These plants have been dislodging stone masonry at these sites. Besides, some types of animal find graves and other ruins at these sites as good shelters against the high temperature which can reach 48°C in the summer (Ministry of Information 2004).

5.3. MAN-MADE DESTRUCTIVE FACTORS

The research findings show that there are five main threatening factors for AH which are caused by human intrusions which are: (1) urbanization and development projects; (2) deformed physiographic landscape; (3) crossing roads and vehicles; (4) vandalism; (5) reconstruction and restoration deficiency.

5.3.1. Urbanization and Development Projects

The findings assured the critical role of this problem in PC of archaeological sites and accordingly archaeotourism. Cultural resource experts have warned that ancient monuments in Oman are being dismantled at an alarming rate (al-Shanfari et al. 1993). As in other developing countries, ‘the urban explosion in the Arabian Gulf has a direct impact on cultural and environmental heritage’ (Moawiyah Ibrahim: personal communication: 07/June/2006). The report which was prepared by Orchard and Orchard (1997: 21) for MOHC emphasized that:
Inevitably, the presence and continuous development of the modern towns means that the ancient sites are under constant threat of destruction.

Unfortunately, urbanization and development projects, going since 1970s in Oman, are even expanding with new residential and commercial quarters impacting on vernacular traditions, as well as new industrial projects all over the country which have posed critical problems for the conservation of archaeological sites integrity and management. In other cases, the process of spatial development is too fast to be controlled. Development has led to the destruction of countless number sites; some obliterated before being documented.

Currently, and according to NHPL (Article IV), ‘a written official approval by the Ministry or a duly authorized government official’ is required from MOHC before starting any project in Oman. However, the majority of archaeological inspections are rescue-oriented or salvage archaeology as confirmed by AM13 and AM35. In this case, developers and investors are not obligated or encouraged to support any proper archaeological fieldworks or interpretation (BX5). In fact, although it takes a lot of effort and time to issue clearance reports, however, MOHC does not impose charges for any Ministerial service (BX5). BX5 added that there is no continuous financial or logistic support from contractors to conduct proper archaeological excavations and conservation; they are totally rescue works.

Orchard and Orchard’s (1997: 21) report mentioned that ‘it is not at all surprising to find that modern agriculture centres often occupy the same localities as the ancient settlement sites’. Field visits to Bat area show the threat of the present continuous
expansion of the modern town of Bat which means that some ancient ruins are under constant threat of destruction. This has happened before where agricultural activities, palm-tree farms and irrigations systems stand in the place that must once have been occupied by the ancient site. The researcher observed that at least three main towers (1146, 1147 and 1148), similar to the third millennium B.C tower 1145 (Figure 5.1), have been damaged by using their stones in relining irrigation channels. In the northern part of Bat, there are random-built farms owned by some locals who claim private ownership for some areas within the site’s boundaries based on no official documentation (AU7).

![Figure 5.1: The third millennium B.C tower 1145 at Bat area (by researcher)](image)

Again, Orchard and Orchard (1997) reported that one main reason for this problem is that the Ministry of Housing is not advised of the location of Oman’s important archaeological sites and monuments so that early consideration may be given to their
protection should they become threatened by building projects. To give an example, in Muscat area the development of the modern capital of Oman has affected the integrity of some archaeological sites such as Bausher. Here, many archaeological ruins dated to various periods have been replaced by modern buildings without any proper documentation as this has been confirmed by AM3 and AM13. It is clear that the Honeycomb Cemetery at the site ‘was bisected by the construction of the east-west road in 1981, thus, destroying several graves’ (Costa et al. 1999: 28).

Another example is Bahla Fort which is ‘located in a traditional oasis settlement which is evolving at a very rapid pace’ (Guillaud and Michon 2003: 11) where the peripheral urban area is growing up and affecting the visual integrity, authenticity, aesthetic and historical values of the site.

Mining Law 2003 (Royal Decree 27/2003: Article 12 and Article 13.1) emphasizes that archaeological sites should be considered before any mining activities in a given area by coordinating and seeking the advice of MOHC. Yet, the ancient mining sites at Arja were destroyed since ‘mining is a continuous activity; the new mines destroy the old ones’ (AM27). The sites which are dating from between the third millennium B.C to the Islamic period have been destroyed totally (AM9). As confirmed by AM22, all mines were damaged by the Omani Mining Company LLC, except for Lasil due to the mining activities between 1980 -1995 and the use of heavy equipment in mining which made it difficult to watch for archaeological sites (AM2).
5.3.2. Deformed Physiographic Landscape

As field visits show that the deformation of physiographic context of archaeological sites is a serious man-made problem which may lead to serious consequences in the long-term. At Bat (Figure 5.1), Arja, Qalhat and Shenah the electricity installations, poles, cables and fly-tipping of waste are main factors that lead to the deformation of historical landscapes.

According to some respondents (e.g. AM35, AU7), the main sources of this problem are tourists, the local community, building enterprises and local municipality. Also, although Article (XI) of NHPL 1980 stated that ‘it is mandatory to obtain a prior permission before lying electricity cables…whether underground or overhead’, yet, at Shisur Wubar, water pipelines, water pumping engines and electricity generators represent a serious threat for the site integrity, especially that it is located on a limestone ground (Zarins 2001) (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2: The deformed archaeological landscape at Shisur Wubar (by researcher)
5.3.3 Crossing Roads and Traffics

Field visits show that some of the sites’ sustainability and integrity are threatened by major crossing roads and heavy traffic; in particular Bat, Bahla Fort, Arja, Bausher and Qalhat. Meanwhile, others are threatened by internal sub-roads and trespassing vehicles, including Ras al-Jinz, al-Maysar, Shisur Wubar, Shenah, Shir and Tawi Ubarlah.

With regard to Bat, for instance, the current graded road of al-Ayn represents a major threat. Parts of the archaeological features have been now cut by the road which crosses the site itself just near the tower 1145. Moreover, during the visit the researcher noticed many visitors who drive all around the site freely as confirmed by AU7 and Weisgerber et al. (2002).

Similarly, this problem is comparable to the status of Bahla Fort where ‘the site is crossed by a road bearing a heavy traffic which may have a long-term negative impact on the neighbouring structures’ (Guillaud and Michon 2003: 11). As well, the visit to Qalaht shows that its sustainability is threatened by the current crossing road of Qurayat-Sur that runs right across it.

5.3.4. Vandalism

In regard to this issue in particular, and according to the research findings there are three main factors influence the physical appearance of the selected archaeological sites which are: (1) trespassing; (2) stone robbing; (3) visitors’ negative impacts. These will be discussed in the following sections.
5.3.4.1. Trespassing

It is not surprising that trespassing happens based on what has already been discussed in Section 5.3.3. Trespassing has been noticed at Bat, Qalhat, Arja and Bausher where there are no tour guides, no on-site management and no signage or illustrative panels as confirmed in Section 5.7. In addition, people, vehicles and herds of animals, (e.g. camels and goats), cannot be controlled and prevented from entering these sites where there are no fences.

To give an example, BX2 reported that at Bat ‘every day visitors are coming; they drive to the place we are digging’. This is not surprising since so far there are no official pre-requested permits or fee entrance to visit the site (AU7). In fact, some tourists are free to camp within the site during the night (AU7). Also, sometimes, even when the site is protected, visitors ignore the warning notices and enter the site without permits as at Bat (e.g., the northern cemetery). Similarly, trespassing was reported by AS11 at Khor Rori.

5.3.4.2. Stone Robbers

As most archaeological sites are not adequately protected they were damaged by stone robbers who consider ancient monuments and tombs as good, easily-reached sources of stones and gravel for use in new constructions, e.g. houses, roads, irrigation channels and fences. For instance, at Bat ‘due to the stone robbers, no Umm an-Nar tomb stands complete’ (Gentelle and Frifelt 1989). This is not surprising since there is no security; therefore, people continuously pick up stones from the site as this was confirmed by Weisgerber et al.’s (2002) report and respondents (e.g. AM13, AM14, AM33, AU7, AS11).
Also, in respect to al-Maysar, BX2 confirmed that the site was ‘completely destroyed by stone robbers in the early 1980s’. The case is similar at Shisur Wubar (Zarins 2001) and Shenah (Insall 1999).

5.3.4.3. Visitors’ Negative Impact

As discussed in Chapter Three, tourism brings along its own set of ‘negative impacts’ (Moscardo 1998: 6). Field observations at Bat, al-Ayn, Ras al-Jinz, Bahla Fort, al-Balid, Khor Rori, Shenah, Shir and Qalhat show that visitors climb on the ruins and cause damages over time. This problem increases in the absence of site-regulations, tour guidance and on-site guard as it is the status at most of the selected sites.

For instance, at al-Ayn, at least two of the graves are clearly damaged by graffiti which can be seen at considerable distance. Also, AM35 pointed out that there are many tourists who draw and write on archaeological features. For example, field visits to Shenah show that some people vandalized the site by writing or drawing over the petroglyphs as confirmed by BX5. Insall (1999) reported that children scratched new drawings and tried to enhance some of the old ones using stones and paint-sprayed images. Damage was also caused by people simply throwing stones at particular drawings to point them out.

Also, the problem of sticky fingers can be observed at Khor Rori where visitors repeatedly touch the fractured inscribed stone which is situated at the main ancient gate’s wall of the city, which is uncovered. Similarly, at Qalhat the researcher noticed
that visitors had scratched the carved gypsum inside the main mausoleum, Bibi Mariam (Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3: An example for graffiti inside the mausoleum at Qalhat (by researcher)

5.3.5. Reconstruction and Restoration Deficiency

As discussed in Section 3.6.2, reconstruction and restoration methods represent main controversial issues in AH interpretation. The research findings show that one of the issues that influences the integrity of PC of archaeological sites and their interpretations, in particular the prehistoric ones, is their incomplete nature; thus, ‘they require additional information to make them intelligible through physical enhancement of the remains themselves by restoration’ (Price 1994: 284).

In order to control deterioration process, various preservation interventions (e.g. structural restoration and reconstruction) were done at al-Maysar1, Bahla Fort, al-Balid and Tawi Ubaylah. However, it appeared that these maintenance processes were not done properly as the final outcomes show due to various factors explained in Chapter
Six. What is dangerous here is that the interpretive experience for visitors will be constructed from this poor interpretation.

At Bat, there has been some reconstruction work for one of the Um an-Nar ruins, namely tomb 401, where the reconstruction itself was done on the original tomb itself and in isolation from the wider context (Figure 5.4).

![Figure 5.4: The reconstructed tomb 401 at Bat area (by researcher)](image)

Another example of poor reconstruction was pointed out by AM9 and AS2 who referred to the unsuccessful attempts to reconstruct the ancient Islamic furnaces at Ubaylah, located some 31 km from Arja, where the integrity of the context and the physical appearance have been deformed (Figure 5.5). At Ubaylah, there are more than six furnaces which were incorrectly reconstructed by Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC n.d); BX2 criticized this type of deformation for the physical integrity of the site by writing:

A bad example is a UAE TV-film on the copper of Oman, where they constructed completely wrong the smelting furnaces because they did not understand; they made roasting pits to furnaces. The remains still damage the mining site of Tawi Ubaylah in the Wadi Jizzi.
Another aspect in this issue as AM7 pointed out is that ‘the reconstruction must not be visible’. However, field observations at al-Balid showed some deficiencies in the previous reconstruction works which are noticeable from a distance, e.g. the columns at the Grand Mosque. As well, despite the availability of original environmental materials in the region, the infill design does not take into consideration the historical context of the site. For instance, the walkways within the site were surfaced by using modern concrete. According to Feilden and Jokilehto (1993: 92), such designs should be based on a clear and systematic analysis of the historical morphology of the existing fabric and its function in order to re-integrate the site components with its surroundings.

It should be born in mind that ‘the more extensive the intervention, the more we impose our image of the past on a site and condition future interpretation of it’ (Price 1994: 287). For instance, at Bahla Fort there is an extensive restoration which has been in
progress since the 1990s\textsuperscript{144} (World Heritage Centre 1999) and one can see the contrast between the newly-restored and untouched sections of the monument where some parts have not been restored yet (AS2). According to AM14, the physical integrity and historical atmosphere of the Fort is damaged by inappropriate restoration. These observations at Bahla Fort were reported as well by O’Carroll (2002: 12) who included that ‘the design details and standards of finish and authenticity were relatively poor’.

Also, O’Carroll (2002: 12-13) criticized the restoration policy and techniques which are implemented at many historical buildings in Oman where, like al-Balid, most floors are surfaced with modern concrete and stone slabs. Also, modern plaster is used almost everywhere where the antique character of the buildings has become obscured, implying to some extent that the buildings may have been newly built. Besides, the current plastering techniques pose difficulties, e.g. poor adhesion, excessive salt content and rising damp. Some respondents, such as AM12, AM13 and AM33, emphasized the direct influence of such problems on visitors’ interpretive experience.

5.4. THE PHYSIOGRAPHIC APPEAL

Generally, one of the key elements facing archaeotourism is the physical attractiveness of a site. Ritchie and Crouch (2003: 20) mentioned that ‘physical resources play a fundamental role in attracting tourism to a destination’. Moratto and Kelly (1978) included that local community tends to preserve only the attractive and visually outstanding archaeological sites. Field observations and some respondents confirmed

\textsuperscript{144} According to the State of Conservation Report of 1999, ‘restoration works were entirely financed by the Omani Government that, since 1993, invested an amount of more than six million US dollars’ (World Heritage Centre 1999, Michon 2000). At least OR 1.3 million was spent for the restoration of Bahla Fort in Phase II, 1996-2000 (Ministry of National Economy 2001: 126).
this issue in respect to such sites as al-Maysar and Ras al-Jinz which their ruins are often meaningless, especially if they are invisible to the average tourists (AS2, AS4). That is to say, ‘some of the sites have no special attraction for visitors, and no income seems possible’ (BX2). For instance, AM6 stated:

_The nature of Stone Age sites makes them unattractive. There is not much to see; let aside their remoteness. Most of them are without physical standing features, unnoticeable. This is a problem because tourists want to see, to enjoy looking at something physically remarkable._

In regard to Magan culture in particular, AM20 believes that Magan is a period of time, rather than a civilization with magnificent remains as in Egypt or Mesopotamia. A good example for this status is al-Maysar which is considered as one of the most important copper mining settlements with very impressive archaeological findings evidencing Magan culture (Weisgerber 1980, 1992). However, AS5 and BX9 think that for the average person al-Maysar is nothing but scattered ruins.

As for Ras al-Jinz, and according to AM33, after every year of excavation the site (RJ2) is covered with dirt to preserve its fragile mud-brick buildings from natural and cultural destructive factors. Many features of the higher parts of the site (RJ1), located on the hill, are barely visible due to the lack of excavations (AM33). Respondent AM13 mentioned that most visitors to Ras al-Jinz, especially the Omanis, know that there is a long history of archaeological works within the area, but they are invisible or inaccessible.
5.5. LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND TOURISM SUPERSTRUCTURE

There has been a realization that effective PIN does not depend on a single element, but on ‘infrastructural base and recreational context of interpretive provision’ (Uzzell 1989a: 8). Generally speaking, infrastructure and tourism superstructure or ‘non-interpretive services’ (Ham and Weiler 2007: 6) are fundamental in developing the tourism industry (Porter 1990)\textsuperscript{145}. One reason for this is that when there is a lack of growth in facilities ‘tourism stagnates and the place remains unattractive to visitors’ (Din 1989: 546).

In relative to Oman in particular, the lack of basic infrastructure in areas possessing natural and cultural attractions and the lack of leisure facilities are two main challenges facing the tourism industry in Oman (Ministry of Tourism 2004a). This is not surprising since ‘the development of tourism infrastructure in Oman has been heavily centered on new accommodation construction in Muscat with minimal regional development’ (Parsons International Limited 2002: 1). Consequently, this has affected those areas with rich AH regardless of their significance, let aside the peripheral ones. In this sense, Sweeney (2002: 8) mentioned that one of the Oman’s potential products and opportunities lies in archaeology; however, ‘a great deal of investment is needed in infrastructure and facilities, and the development of new products’.

Also, the second report of the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005), included that one of the most important challenges and obstacles in the heritage tourism is the

\textsuperscript{145} According to Ritchie and Crouch (2003: 21), infrastructure ‘covers the subordinate facilities, equipment, systems and processes that provide a foundation for a wide range of economic needs’ and superstructure ‘represents the additional created assets which rest upon this infrastructure and which serve visitor-oriented needs and desires’.
‘lack of service facilities near ancient and historical buildings’ (Ministry of National Economy 2001: 126). This is in addition to the ‘shortage of tourism infrastructure services, especially those of roads, electricity and communication services, etc’ (Ministry of National Economy 2001: 53).

Furthermore, many respondents referred to the shortcoming of infrastructure and tourism superstructure. For instance, BX9 thinks that the infrastructure at archaeological sites ‘hardly existed’. In regard to Bat, for instance, AM32 mentioned that it has not been prepared for tourists yet. In this context, Weisgerber et al.’s (2002: 12) report included the following:

There is no doubt that the third millennium B.C archaeological complex of Bat is predestined to give tourists a representative impression of Oman’s depth in prehistory. But for this purpose, the site still need investment and preparation going further than the pure protection.

The status is similar at Ras al-Jinz as confirmed by field visits. The Final Priority Action Plan for Tourism Development in Oman (Parsons International Limited 2002: 22) confirmed that the ‘existing facilities at Ras al Jinz do not optimise the potential attraction of this location and a substantial upgrade of all public amenities is desirable’.

For some respondents, such as AU4, some sites (e.g. Shisur Wubar) are hard to reach due to their remoteness and difficult physical accessibility where there are no asphalted roads. This is not surprising as two of the main limitations for the tourism development in the southern region of Oman, Dhofar, is that it is ‘remote by road and airport and supporting tourism infrastructure is limited in all areas’. This has been confirmed by the
Chapter Five: The Physical Context of AH and PIN


In some cases, the remoteness of a site from the major cities in a region is not the main reason. For instance, Bahla Fort is located in an active area demographically and economically (AM6) and considered one of the most visited touristic destinations in Oman (Parsons International Limited 2002). Yet, the report of Guillaud and Michon (2003: 10) mentioned that one of the weaknesses at Bahla Fort is that ‘visitors’ facilities are limited or located a bit far from the site and not up to the expected international standards’. This has been confirmed by field visits to Bahla Oasis. In fact, although there is a master management plan for the oasis prepared by W.S. Atkins International and Co. (2001), it has not been practically implemented yet where ‘the integration of the site in tourist tours has not been already prepared’ (Guillaud and Michon 2003: 10).

Some respondents, such as BX5, illustrated that part of the issue is that the development companies or exploiters are not obligated to develop archaeological sites which are located within their planned areas. Other respondents, such as AM34, mentioned that a possible reason for the issue in discussion is that because ‘the industry is growing up from small beginning’. Another reason is that the development of these areas depends on the government priorities and financial resources (AM31).

### 5.6. LACK OF INTERPRETIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

On-site PIN for archaeological sites is meant to explain missing features and provide a context for visitors in which they can interact with the visited archaeological site and
construct an insightful interpretive experience. As discussed in Chapter Two, providing information is not by itself expected to result in communicating effective interpretive experience, improving behaviour and developing a care ethic. PIN is required to provide a positive and memorable experience (Moscarod 1998) which depends partially on a careful planning for appropriate ‘interpretive services’ (Ham and Weiler 2007: 6) and ‘interpretive infrastructure’. According to the proposed final draft of Ename Charter (ICOMOS 2007: 3), the interpretive infrastructure refers to:

> physical installations, facilities, and areas at, or connected with a cultural heritage site that may be specifically utilized for the purposes of interpretation and presentation including those supporting interpretation via new and existing technologies.

In regard to this issue in particular, respondents mentioned that in general the current interpretive infrastructure and services at archaeological sites are unavailable or very poor (e.g. AM18, AM13, AM30, AS1, AS3, BX1, BX5, BX7, BX8, BX9). This has been confirmed by Sweeney’s (2002: 13) report which included that:

> There are currently no tourism Tourist Information Offices in Oman and the only ready access to independent information on the ground is a narrow range of leaflets at mainly hotels.

For instance, BX2 talked about Qalhat and other sites saying:

> Unfortunately, I do not know of any public interpretation on site/in situ, except a small inscription at Qalhat\(^{146}\). I know of no bill board with information. Most visited Tower tombs of al-Ayn near Bat have no explanation.

One possible reason for this could be that the main purposes of the current archaeological works in Oman are scientific and not PIN (AM15). For example, AM13

\(^{146}\) This inscription is currently taken off as the field visit showed.
pointed out that despite the long history of excavations at some archaeological sites, such as Ras al-Jinz, yet there is no on-site PIN. Also, the case is the same with Bausher despite its location in the capital of Oman (AS6).

BX9 thinks that ‘the biggest relevant project [to PIN] was at al-Balid, where an attempt was made to appeal to the public’. Field visits to the site show that, except for the on-site museum, the previous and current development works are not focused on PIN provision, but beautifying the landscape and enhancing the scenery (see Section 5.3.5). For example, the walkways have not been built according to an interpretive theme, but to enjoy walking through archaeological ruins.

It should be born in mind that the development of archaeological sites as attractions does not necessarily mean the development of PIN. Visitors might be satisfied with services but have not communicated the intended message by the site management due to the lack of effective interpretive media and programs. AM21 thinks that ‘all the presentation from al-Balid is poor now…because many of the artefacts were collected and nobody explained them’. Also, AU3 criticised the current on-site PIN at the site and commented:

*First of all, there aren’t materials really available for people. So often they are talking about the plan and having things together for tourists…there is so much talk about doing that in the office [OCA]…but it hasn’t really come into the action. Second, there is a lot of work here, a lot of work. At this point now, when people come here they have no idea what they are looking at…You need to identify archaeological feature, but that does not mean that you interpret them necessarily.*
Similarly, at Khor Rori ‘visitor amenities and interpretive facilities in this area are required as a priority’ (Parsons International Limited 2002: 34). This was confirmed by AM18 who said:

*I have been to Samharam [Khor Rori]. It was a very disappointing experience...I did not get information about it. I could not understand the site or what it was about. I did not come out with any interesting story that I can tell. It was not at all interpreted.*

Also, AM18 talked about the importance of creating interpretive facilities at such archaeological sites as Khor Rori which is located in an active touristic area, Salalah, AM18 said:

*I have to think that Salalah is a family destination. Interpretation should care for people. If I have a family destination, I should have activities for children; I should have things that children could do in the site. I should be able to interpret the site in a way that is appealing to that kind of particular audience, but it wasn’t like that.*

Chapter Three and Section 4.5 discussed that PIN and its context have an effective social role on visitors (Dierking 1998, Stewart et al. 1998). Thus, it is not surprising that some respondents asserted that the current status of archaeological sites discourages families, children and groups from visiting (e.g. AS9, AS13).

5.7. DIRECTIVE SIGNAGE AND ON-SITE INTERPRETIVE PANELS

One of the problems facing on-site PIN at archaeological sites in Oman is the lack of off-site and on-site directive signage and on-site illustrative panels which are probably the most common form of interpretive services.
5.7.1. Directive Signage

In visiting the selected sites, as well as drawing on respondents’ comments, it was possible to come up with at least six problems concerning the road signs at archaeological sites which are: (a) non-existence; (b) insufficient; (c) indistinguishable from other signs; (d) removed; (e) vandalized; (f) misspelt.

To provide some examples, AM28 thinks that one of the constraints connected to PIN of AH in Sohar, including mining sites, is that there are no on-site and off site guiding signs. The case is similar at Khor Rori (AM7) and al-Balid (AS11). Also, AM6 noticed that at Bat there are no enough guiding signs where the road sign is located about 17 km from Bat and about 24 km from al-Ayn tombs. According to AS3, the problem is that ‘it would be difficult for the average visitors to find it by themselves; there is no one straight road’.

Field visits to Bat and Ras al-Jinz show that some road signs have been stolen or vandalized. Also, there are some signs which are miswritten or misspelt, such as the sign of Ras al Jinz and Wadi al-Ayn. Moreover, archaeological sites signs were not distinguished from other road signs. Additionally, the researcher noticed that there are no on-site guiding signs to prevent visitors from driving on archaeological ruins as is currently happening at Bat, al-Maysar and Arja (see Section 5.3).

5.7.2 Informative Panels

On-site interpretive panels are imperative in building the tourist experience and ‘function to cement the bond of tourists and attractions by elevating the information
possessed by the tourist or privileged status’ (MacCannell 1989: 137). Field visits confirmed that only informative warning panels are available at all of the selected sites (Figure 5.6); there are no interpretive explanatory panels.

Figure 5.6: The only available panel or warning notice at the surveyed archaeological sites in Oman (left) except for the frankincense sites where the type is posted according to the site (right).

The researcher noticed that these warning panels are: (a) inefficient; (b) insufficient; (c) damaged; (d) removed; (e) misplaced or inaccurately located; (f) rusty/not durable panels; (g) no multi-language standardized panels.

In general, BX2 talked about the inefficiency of the warning plate as an interpretive media. For instance, AM18 thinks that the informative warning signposting at al-Balid ‘does not make you understand’. As well, BX5 mentioned that ‘some people vandalized archaeological sites by repeatedly misplacing or taking off on-site warning panels’.

Orchard and Orchard’s (1997: 21) confirmed this by saying:

Although the Department of Antiquities provides Warning Notices advising the public that it is against the law to damage the ancient sites, these Notices are by themselves not enough to prevent stone robbing or
the clearance of land for house building or agriculture. In some cases, the Department’s Notices have simply been removed and destroyed.

### 5.8. ACCESSIBILITY

Stewart *et al.* (1998: 257) defined the PIN of AH as ‘the process of making archaeological sites accessible to the public audience’. According to Din (1989: 546) low accessibility is a good indicator of underdevelopment situation in a destination. In fact, ‘access is a critical factor and a major potential barrier to travel’ (Prideaux 2002: 381).

The research findings showed that part of the issue facing PIN of AH in Oman is the lack of physical and intellectual accessibility to and within archaeological sites which has been evidenced by the lack of guiding signage and safety (AM13). In regard to the inspected sites in particular, basically, there are three main problems observed: (1) remoteness and physical difficulty; (2) lack of guiding information; (3) official pre-permission; (4) safety (Table 5.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Ubaylah</th>
<th>Arja</th>
<th>Sohar Fort</th>
<th>al-Khatam</th>
<th>Bat</th>
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<th>Ras al-Jinz</th>
<th>Shisur Wubar</th>
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*Table 5.1: Four accessibility problems in relation to the selected sites*
5.8.1. Remoteness and Difficulties

Remoteness here means all those sites which are located far or isolated from a major city or active area with relatively a reasonable level of infrastructure and tourism superstructure. Difficulties can be related to high expenses and/or lack of necessary equipment and transportation to a particular site. The cost of travel in terms of time and distance can prohibit people visiting remote archaeological sites. Findings show that there are four particular sites which are influenced by this factor: Qalhat, Shenah, Shir and Shisur Wubar.

This problem has been expressed by AM36 and AS4 who explained that some sites are located in remote regions. AM19 added that some of them are located nearby graded roads. A field visit to Shenah, located northeast of al-Qabil, showed that although there is a graded road, the area itself is isolated from other active urbanized areas. Transportation from major cities to Shenah and vice versa is barely available and expensive. Probably, one major reason for this is the low population density where there are only 166 people with 28 houses spread over a large scattered area (Ministry of National Economy 2005a: 272).

As confirmed by AU4, the case is similar with Shisur Wubar in the south of the Empty Quarter about 170 km north of the city of Salalah where there are ca. 95 people and 19 houses (Ministry of National Economy 2005a: 148). AM21 commented by saying: ‘You have wonderful sites in southern Oman, but nobody can get them, very remote, very difficult’. It has been mentioned that ca. 15% of Oman’s area is mountainous.

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147 From the main Salalah-Nizwa road, just nearby Thamrit, visitors need to drive ca. 30 km inside the desert before they reach the site itself.
Chapter Five: The Physical Context of AH and PIN

(Chapter Two) with a major number of archaeological sites spread all over this area. For instance, the towers of Shir are located in the eastern Hajar Mountains which are very rough in nature, and owing to the inaccessibility of the area, it is still nearly uninhabited (al-Shanfari et al. 1993). The site is ca. 1600 m above the sea level where there is ‘hardly any soil and farming is impossible’ (Yule and Weisgerber 1998: 186). Due to these factors ‘their location was not known at first, and without the aid of a helicopter, it is difficult and nearly impossible to reach’ (al-Shanfari et al. 1993: 15). In fact, until recently, the local inhabitants are partially dependent on helicopter drops and lifts for food, water and building materials (al-Shanfari et al. 1993).

Also, as confirmed by field visits, some respondents referred to the importance of driving experience and using 4-wheel drive vehicles to reach to some sites, e.g. Qalhat (AM35, AS5).

5.8.2. Guiding Information

Field visits and respondents confirmed that the absence of guiding information, such as websites, reliable guiding books, information centres and maps about archaeological sites, represents another essential problem. This is especially true if the sites are remote or not physically visible for the average person, such as Ras al-Jinz, the petroglyphs at Shenah, Arja and al-Maysar.

The recognition of the physical features at these sites with large historical landscapes becomes more difficult as it is the case at Shenah. Here, the beehive tombs and petroglyphs are located far from one another. At least 15 inscriptions were located by
Insall (1999: 235) which are difficult to be found by foreign visitors without previous knowledge or guidance.

Also, the physical accessibility to the mining and smelting settlements at Arja and al-Maysar is not difficult to reach but to realize the physical features of these sites (AS2, Sulaiman al-Marjabi: personal communication: 18/January/2006). According to AM9, ‘there are only a few people who know their exact locations’. In fact, BX2 claimed that Gerd Weisgerber, a German expert in ancient metallurgy, is ‘the only one who knows most of the Omani old metallurgical and mining sites in Oman’.

5.8.3. An Official Pre-permission

For the moment, four of the inspected archaeological sites require an official pre-permission, namely Ras al-Jinz; the tower 1145 at Bat; Bahla Fort; Khor Rori. Field visits to Bat area show that for protection purposes, the tower 1145 is closed. In order to access the site visitors need a pre-permit from the Department of Antiquities at MOHC (AU7).

Also, in the present and according to the Ministerial Decision 55/2006 of the Ministry of Regional Municipalities, a written pre-permit from the Ministry is required to visit the Turtle Sanctuary at Ras al-Jinz where the archaeological ruins are located as well. Similarly, due to on-going restoration and archaeological works at Khor Rori, sometimes visitors require obtaining a pre-permit from OCA before visiting which depends on various circumstances because the site has not been opened officially (AS11).
5.8.4. Safety

The research findings show that there are six sites which are affected to differing extents in respect to safety issues, i.e. Shir, Shisur Wubar, Arja, Bahla Fort and Sohar Fort. In regard to Shir, this is grounded on the discussion in sections 5.8.1 and 5.8.2. As for Wubar Shisur, the factors in sections 5.3.2 and 5.8.1 raise the issue of visitor’s safety due to the mentioned critical condition of site fragility and remoteness (AM21). This is serious, especially in the absence of on-site conservation plans as confirmed by AU4.

At Arja the safety issue plays a very crucial factor as it is the case at other ancient mining sites in Wadi al-Jizzi. This due to the long mining activities since the 1980s which have resulted in creating big fragile open mining pits as this emphasized by AM9 and AM22, as well as by field visits, especially that there are no guiding signs or clear warning panels, safe trails, security or well-informed guides. Although the local municipality has attempted to surround some of these area with fence; however, these fences have been vandalized.

Another problem at these mining sites is that the whole area now is contaminated with chemical and industrial remains (AM9) where sulphur oxide and other gases are emitted from the open pits. This is in addition to the problem of discarded equipment, by-product wastes and dumped construction concrete. Part of the issue as described by AM2 is that as in many other areas in Sohar unfortunately many industrial projects do not comply with the criteria set by the Ministry of Regional Municipalities or the national laws in regard to mining activities (Royal Decree 27/2003) or environment protection (Royal Decree 114/2001).
Moving to Bahla Fort, based on field visits, and confirmed by O’Carroll’s (2002: 12-13) assessment report, ‘no safety rails for stairs have been provided which is an essential requirement for visitors’. As for Sohar Fort, and due to those problems mentioned in Section 5.3, both visitors’ safety and the site itself are at risk. The ICOMOS Charter – Principles for the Analysis Conservation and Structural Restoration of Architectural Heritage (2003: 3.5) included the following:

*Each intervention should be in proportion to the safety objectives set; thus, keeping intervention to the minimum to guarantee safety and durability with the least harm to heritage values.*

5.9. SUMMARY

In this chapter the researcher has shed light on the current physical context for AH and PIN in Oman, the first factor which might influence the communication of ‘the whole context’ and accordingly the interpretive experience of visitors when they encounter archaeological sites. It was noted that some of the factors are related to the site *per se* or the micro-physical context, e.g. weathering, physiographic appeal and graffiti, whereas others are connected to the wider context or the macro-physical context, e.g. accessibility, safety and infrastructure.

Based on the research findings, the above-described factors are expected to influence the constructed interpretive experience which is part of the total travelling experience in its wider sense, including the image of archaeotourism in Oman. Also, the physical condition of a given site might decide the type of PIN, off-site or on-site, such as the case with al-Maysar and Ras al-Jinz as suggested by some respondents. Although these sites are essential to interpret Magan culture for instance, their physical remains are not attractive, especially for the average tourists.
Also, PC is strongly interconnected to SSC as it will be discussed in Chapter Six. For instance, the more the site is physically damaged, the more PIN might cost in term of money, time and effort before welcoming visitors. Based on the research findings, the next chapters will attempt to elucidate some of the controversial problems that are directly or indirectly responsible for the current status of PIN for AH in Oman.
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CHAPTER SIX
THE STAKEHOLDERS AND STEWARDSHIP CONTEXT

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a descriptive narrative of the analyzed data relating to the impact of SSC in Oman in PIN of AH with a special reference to archaeological resources management and archaeotourism. It is intended to compare stakeholders’ perspectives and understand the similarities and differences between the views of those involved agencies in developing heritage tourism in general and archaeotourism in particular.

As Figure 6.1 shows, and according to the findings, there are three major influential stakeholders in the current status of PIN at archaeological sites which are the governmental sector, the private sector and the local community. Yet, the influence of each stakeholder is variable depending on their direct or indirect involvement in managing and developing these sites; however, they do affect one another as this is clearly discussed in this chapter.
Before discussing the various relative issues to this context, it is important to mention that according to Ritchie and Crouch (2003: 75), ‘resources stewardship is a concept that stresses how important it is for destination managers to adopt a caring attitude to the resources that makes up the destination’. As from archaeological community perspective, the Society for American Archaeology (2004: Principle 1) stated that archaeological resources stewardship should aim to:

\[
\text{Work for the long-term conservation and protection of the archaeological record}^{148}\text{ by practicing and promoting stewardship of the archaeological record. Stewards are both caretakers of and advocates for the archaeological record for the benefit of all people; as they investigate and interpret the record, they should use the specialized}
\]

\[\text{i.e. ‘in situ archaeological material and sites, archaeological collections, records and reports’ (Society for American Archaeology 2004).}\]
knowledge they gain to promote public understanding and support for its long-term preservation.

6.2. PIN AND AH MANAGEMENT IN OMAN

Based on the research findings, it appears that the current managerial realities of AH and archaeotourism are major inhibitors for the development of PIN for AH in Oman. According to the cultural heritage and development report, produced by the World Bank (2001: 18) in regard to the Middle Eastern countries, there is an organizational weakness where governmental institutions are ill-equipped, understaffed and underfinanced. Also, other problems can be summarized as follows:

- Cross-sectoral cooperation with other sectors and ministries is sporadic and piecemeal rather than strategic.
- These institutions appear to suffer from a lack of integration of their activities into a wider development approach.
- The decentralization to regional authority is developing where the management and development is difficult to be carried out from the capital city only.
- Many touristic resources, including archaeological sites, are located in the rural regions which do not yet possess the resources required to maintain and manage them.
- Institutional weaknesses result from the absence of social contract between the government and the locals.

In regard to AH management in particular, and based on the findings there are seven interconnected driving factors which are: (1) lack of public archaeology and community archaeology; (2) lack of archaeological data and materials management; (3) insufficient
archaeological research development; (4) lack of experimental archaeology and reconstruction; (5) on-site management and PIN; (6) PIN of AH and museums; (7) lack of professional archaeologists; (8) lack of financial resources. Each of these will be covered in turn in the subsequent sections.

6.2.1. Lack of Public Archaeology and Community Archaeology

The previous chapter highlighted major man-made factors that influence PC of archaeological landscape and its wider context in Oman. Unless there is an attached value, AH as such has less or no practical function in people’s life. In Oman, archaeological sites are unusual places for people to visit. As described by James (1986: 47), ‘they seem to be set a part from the ordinary round of [their] lives’. According to some respondents (e.g. AM5, AM12, BX7, AS1, AS11), the lack of active public and community archaeology programs in Oman is one main reason why there are no or limited organized materials, events and activities aim to raise the awareness of public about AH and foster sense of pride among the locals throughout experience and participation.

The majority of the public are not aware of archaeology because they have not been informed and updated about scheduled sites, particularly the ones with universal and national values. BX5 assured that currently archaeological sites are mostly visited by specialists where there are no programs to organize visits to ongoing archaeological excavations for students or visitors. Accordingly, there is only a small group of people who pay attention to archaeological sites for their scientific values (AM9). Some respondents provided evidence from their experience work about the lack of
community-based archaeology. For instance, at Ras al-Jinz, people ‘have not been educated for archaeology’ (AM33). Similarly, AM21 talked about this problem in regard to al-Balid who thinks that ‘…the government needs to educate people, particularly about the old sites. Most people in Salalah have no idea that people have been here for almost a half million years.’

In fact, many locals do not know that they live in or near archaeological sites of national or universal values. For instance, AM9 emphasized that ancient mines and furnaces in Sohar are hardly recognized by people or companies; thus, their destruction can happen intentionally or accidentally. Surprisingly, there are few people from Sohar who know about the ancient mining sites at Lasil although it represents the main symbol of Sohar (AM28).

Also, at a national level, Magan culture for example, has not been interpreted to the public properly (AS2). From his long experience in the Arabian Gulf’s archaeology, Waleed al-Tikriti (personal communication: 09/March/2006) wrote:

I do not think that Magan culture is well presented and interpreted in Oman or the UAE archaeological sites. Some sites, however, have signs briefly explaining the sites but not the culture. These sites, like Umm an-Nar (closed for the public), Hili, Bat and more, deserve to be site museums.

AM20 and AS9 confirmed that except for some informative knowledge, the public has not experienced Magan through physical evidence and interactive experience. AM8 explained this by saying:

There are now a lot of works of publication about the monuments of ancient Magan civilizations; the location of Magan and so on, but these
are mostly scientific publications which are not acceptable for the public.

In line with this, Daniel Potts (personal communication: 02/May/2005) thinks that ‘the question is not so much what Magan was really about, but what people are being told it was about, and what they’re being told to go and see or being told are significant sites and objects’. Likewise, AM10 assured that there is no adequate promotion for this culture. As a result, AM12 stated:

For the average visitors nothing has called Magan...You have to realize that no one has heard of it; very few people know anything about the Sultanate of Oman.

AM33 believes that in Oman archaeologists ‘invest a lot of public money, so they should give back some. It should be done in accordance with the country itself. There should be a constant cooperation between local media, local institutions and archaeologists’. However, part of the issue is that the people who are in power do not take the public archaeology seriously (BX5) since ‘the awareness of those in key positions is weak’ (BX7). Also, some respondents emphasized that many entrepreneurs, administrators and other public groups are not aware of NHPL 1980. This is not surprising since the law is not practically implemented (BX5), where for instance, there is no practical guidance that advises people about what to do if they find archaeological materials (AM10).

Unfortunately, even when a notification has been given to governmental and private bodies about archaeological materials and monuments in their boundaries, their sustainability cannot be guaranteed, e.g. the ancient mining sites in Wadi al-Jizzi, Bausher and Bat. Therefore, AM6, AM10 and AM13 asserted that there is a need for an
alternative effective mechanism to teach the public about AH. Certainly, this cannot be attained without a practical strategy set up by experts in public archaeology (BX2). However, finding someone ‘for the pursuit of an academic or public archaeological career has proved frustratingly difficult’ (Potts 1998: 197).

6.2.2. Lack of Archaeological Data and Materials Management

There is no doubt that any interpretive master plan for archaeological sites depends basically on the raw information and materials which have been produced by archaeological fieldworks and affiliated studies. The history of these works, their findings and their archival documents represent one of the initial major steps in planning PIN. Accordingly, it is vital for interpreters to easily access these data and documents to facilitate PIN processes and save time, money and effort. As well, a practical well-organized mechanism is important for other researchers, site managers and the general public. Therefore, Article XXXII of NHPL states the following in regard to Registration of Mobile Cultural Properties:

*The Ministry [MOHC] is to prepare and regularly update an authoritative list including a detailed description of each and every registered mobile cultural property together with pinpointing their respective locations as well as the names and addresses of landlords or the appointed supervisors.*

Repeatedly, this is confirmed in articles III, IV and VIII; however, currently there is no appropriate national documentation and registration system (AM10). This has been confirmed by AM14 who believes that a national registrar is important to avoid future destruction by the landlords for archaeological sites. Also, there is no accurate information system that facilitates accessibility to the data from fieldworks (AM14). The Omani Archaeological Sites Information System, OASIS, which was prepared by
the Department of Antiquities between 1998 and 2002, has major deficiencies and outdated. The stored databases (ca. 1409 archaeological sites) are inaccurately listed and inadequately described.

What is more, information accessibility sometimes is a challenge, especially in the absence of accurate technical classification systems (digital or manual). This was confirmed by field experience and AU5 in relative to the Ministry of Information. Also, the report which was prepared by Rowan (1997) about the Library of the Department of Antiquities at MOHC indicated some problems which can be summarised as: (1) the absence of acquisitions policy; (2) absence of a budget for the purchase of materials; (3) incomplete holdings of maps and finite collections drawing and panels of Oman. This explains why ‘at present, it is not easy to obtain aerial photographs of the ancient sites’ (BX3) since such technology as geographic information system (GIS) and remote sensing images are not efficiently utilized (AM13, AM33). According to Orchard and Orchard (1997: 22), there is ‘no map coordination of the archaeological sites and monuments’.

Field visit to the Department of Antiquities’ store at MOHC on 08/January /2006 showed that the storage space is overcrowded with artefacts which are improperly catalogued and stored, unsafe, sometimes lost and mostly remaining unanalysed. This has been confirmed by AM30 and AS5. According to Norman’s (1997) report, the store faces the following problems:

- A large proportion of the antiquities in the Department needs a long-term preservation.
Lack of conservation record system and conservation photographs.

Lack of safety of the archaeological objects, e.g. inappropriate storage condition of ancient metal objects and humidity problem.

Lack of space management and the arrangement of items is haphazard.

Similar to OASIS, today there is an incomplete administrative archive or catalogue for some of the objects stored at the Department of Antiquities, MOHC. Based on this, public accessibility to archaeological findings can be easily denied as indeed is happening where people are not allowed to access the stored materials at MOHC (AM13). The findings from the early archaeological works in the 1970s and 1980s at Bat, Arja, Ras al-Jinz and other significant sites are even more difficult to be accessed even by site managers themselves (AM11, AM33, AS4). Beside this, AM13 explained that there are a limited number of archaeological exhibitions within the country due to the lack of suitable venues, security concerns and conservation experts and equipment. Currently, most analysis works are done abroad in Germany and France (AM9).

6.2.3. Insufficient Archaeological Research Development

Another critical issue in PIN development and management is the availability and validity of information relative to AH where continuous research is a prerequisite for any interpretive plan (Uzzell 1998b, Brochu 2003). AM21 stated that ‘the presentation is very tied to excavations; no excavations, no presentation’. Certainly, this is important in presenting the big concept of AH to the public (see Section 3.5.4)\textsuperscript{149}.

\textsuperscript{149} For instance, Inskeep (1991: 278) mentioned that ‘Without understanding the background of the cultural resources, it is not possible to establish the basis for their conservation and presentation to tourists’.
According to the findings, the absence of updated archaeological research development and data collection strategy represent major issues in PIN of AH in Oman. AM13 and AM35 emphasized that most surveys were conducted in the late 1970s and in the 1980s by British, French, Italians and German expeditions. For instance, Weisgerber et al.’s (2002: 12) report confirmed that ‘so far the knowledge of the archaeological background of Bat sites is too preliminary’. The Sixth Five-Year Development Plan, 2001-2005, (Ministry of National Economy 2001: 127) stated that ‘the archaeological exploration activity, through cooperation with foreign exploration expeditions, is slow’. As a result, it is expected that ‘site information in relation to topography, sub-surface conditions and service capacity/availability is extremely limited at most sites’ (Parsons International Limited 2002: 50).

Also, another reason is that archaeological excavations and surveys are limited to a few specific sites and regions in Oman, mainly prehistoric (BX5). Most of the previous archaeological works focused on particular archaeological periods (e.g. the Bronze Age) or ruins (e.g. graves). For instance, although Dhofar region represents one of the top major destinations in the area (Parsons International Limited 2002), yet in practice, there is no systematic research strategy for AH at the Directorate General of Heritage and Culture in the region where the available statistics and information at the Directorate are outdated (AM5).

150 For example, Hasting et al. (1975), de Cardi (1977) and de Cardi et al. (1976) (see Section 2.5.2).
151 For instance, one of the common archaeological features in Dhofar is the rock art sites (King and al-Shahri: 1991, AM19), however, as AM10 mentioned our information about these sites is very limited. Also, except for the current works at the frankincense sites, there is no active systematic archaeological research in the area.
Some respondents talked about this problem in relative to Magan culture where there is limited information about social life, socio-political status, physical characteristic of the inhabitants (AM7, AS5) and settlements organization and spatial distribution (AM27). Also, AM9 and AS3 referred to the inadequate data about mining sites during this period. According to Gerard Weisgerber (personal communication: 03/May/2006), there are some third millennium B.C mining settlements within the area of Arja in general, such as Zahra; however, ‘unfortunately it was never well studied’. The case is similar in regard to Ubayla (Gerard Weisgerber: personal communication: 10/April/2006).

Likewise, Islamic archaeology is poorly studied in Oman (AM13, AM35). One of these sites is Qalhat which its history ‘is very poorly documented, making it frustratingly difficult to reconcile the obvious wealth and significance of the city’ (Bhacker and Bhacker 2004: 14). This was confirmed by al- Zadjali (1997) and Costa (2004) who mentioned that most of our information is historical, such as those mentioned by Ibn Battuta\(^\text{152}\). Unfortunately, all previous archaeological works were unsystematic and done by non-specialists (AM35, AS1). Similarly, in regard to al-Balid, ‘no one knows the full extent and arrange of al-Balid chronology’ said AM21 and continued by explaining:

\[
\text{A very important of the interpretation is to determine the real time of the site, not generalization. We have to correct all problems that are related to the history of the site before and during the Islamic period.}
\]

\(^{152}\) Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Battuta, a famous Moroccan traveller from the 14\(^{\text{th}}\) century, visited Oman and described some ancient cities that he visited such as Qalhat and al-Balid. His travelogues were republished as Rihlat Ibn Battuta 1980 (Costa 2004).
This is because many primary interpretations were based on theoretical historical approaches and little excavations rather than empirical (BX5, BX9). Yule (1999: 124) explained this problem in relative to the Iron Age and Pre-Islamic periods in particular, by writing:

*It is not surprising that even today many aspects of the prehistory of Oman are unclear. Initially, without stratigraphy and with few radiocarbon determinations, the chronology of pre-Islamic culture was largely theoretical, based on groupings of typologically associated artefacts loosely dated by outside comparisons.*

Today, and due to the limited number of archaeologists, equipment and the rapid development process all over Oman, most archaeological fieldworks carried out by the Department of Antiquities are not research-oriented, but rescue-motivated, data and artefacts collections and accumulation (AM6, AM13, AM28, AS3, AS5, AS10, BX5). Herein, as the analysis and publication of these data is a secondary issue, ‘the number of pieces of information collected about the past may increase incrementally; our understanding does not’ (Tilley 1989: 277). Unfortunately, rescue archaeology could be part of what is known as ‘contract archaeology’, (McGuire 2003: vii) does not go beyond the process of evaluating the significance of a site; it is a sporadic fieldwork. There is no examination for the larger context within which the evaluation is manipulated as in Bausher (AM3). As well, it has been accused of ‘applying the same standards to all projects, regardless of their diversity’ (Carman 2004: 258). Moreover,

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153 For instance, although the Pre-Islamic period at Bahla Fort is initially documented, yet, there is efficient no systematic archaeological research.

154 Unfortunately, rescue archaeology in more instance means ‘urgent interventions, when there is no warning, and works result in immediate damage to vestiges and archaeological information’ (Staedtler and Cos 2007: 23).

155 The increasing involvement of contract archaeology in archaeology in the United States, for instance, has raised the ethical issues in relation to academic archaeology to business, the training of students, publications and public outreach (McGuire 2003).
Carman (2004) argues that rescue archaeology focuses exclusively on production of facts divorced from interpretation, while research archaeology is much more dialectical in its purpose. As a result, the analytical techniques for the description, classification and quantitative analysis of data remain poorly developed and have been partially interpreted (e.g. W.S. Atkins 1999).

As many archaeological ruins at such sites as Arja, Bat and Bausher are scattered over a large cultural landscape, there is a need for problem-oriented and landscape-based research rather than site-focused research where the wider range of other data about surrounding archaeological and historical features are incorporated to provide more sensible historical narratives for both archaeologists and visitors. For instance, field visits to Bat show how hard it is, even for archaeologists, to recognize the linkage between towers and tombs which are located far from one another. In another word, these features might be physically accessible for visitors, but not intellectually. Certainly, this lack of connectivity or relativity in primary interpretations could create gaps in PIN and accordingly an ambiguous constructed experience\textsuperscript{156}.

6.2.4. Lack of Experimental Archaeology and Reconstruction

Based on sections 6.2.2 and 6.2.3, it is not surprising to find that the application of experimental archaeology and reconstruction as worldwide common interpretive methods for AH has not been developed in Oman yet. In regard to experimental archaeology, some respondents talked about ‘Magan Boat Project’ (Vosmer 2000)

\textsuperscript{156} Herein, ‘holistic evaluation research’ are needed which refers to the process of acquiring additional information about the presence of archaeological remains in a particular area and estimating their potential importance (Champion \textit{et al.} 1995: 1).
which can be considered as the first and only popular attempt for the past reconstruction in Oman’s AH\textsuperscript{157}. Some respondents criticized the idea of Magan Boat itself (BX9), designing mistakes (AM31), lack of enough qualified experts (BX2) and lack of cooperation with other governmental institutions, e.g. Sultan Qaboos University (AM6, AM20).

Also, BX2 implied the lack of Omani experts able to conduct proper experiments in archaeology such as field flint knapping and metal smelting and melting. In fact, some respondents disapprove the use of experimental archaeology in PIN due to the lack of knowledge about AH in Oman (AM12, AM21). Yet, there are some experts who agree that this approach is an effective interpretive method, but it should be done far from the site itself (AM7, AM18, BX3).

In regard to reconstruction techniques, BX9 believes that it is little practiced in Oman where most archaeologists conduct post-excavation consolidation as at Bat, Khor Rori and al-Balid. It is important that any reconstruction work should be preceded by ‘a thorough understanding of the site, its history, context and original whole’ (Price 1994: 287). For instance, in regard to Bat, Gerd Weisgerber (personal communication: 01/April/2006) wonders ‘How could we reconstruct something if we do not excavate the stones before?’ Holistic oriented-research is necessarily needed before any reconstruction works at archaeological sites. Otherwise, the result will be similar to the

\textsuperscript{157} Combining all the information available and applying principles of naval architecture, specialists from all over the world were engaged to assist in ‘constructing’ a Magan boat and experiencing the ancient trail to India as would have happened in the third millennium B.C (Ministry of Heritage and Culture 2005: 11-13). However, on the 7\textsuperscript{th} of September 2005 the boat developed a leak and soon it got water-logged and sank. The crew were rescued by an accompanying vessel (Magan Sets Sail 2005: 1).
irreversible ‘misconstruction works’ at the site of Ubayla (Figure 5.5) (see Section 5.3.5).

For instance, in order to present an ancient fishermen village at Ras al-Jinz as suggested by AS2 to interpret the seafaring life-style during the Bronze Age, some more scientific data might be required such as roofing and the height of walls (AM33). Also, in regard to the reconstruction tomb 401 at Bat (Figure 5.4), it is arguable that this interpretive structure here does not communicate the ‘big concepts’ of the historical landscape discussed by Copeland (2006). It is not simply enough to reconstruct the tomb in order to provide an appropriate interpretive experience where the wider context of the tomb is unrealized.\(^{158}\)

Some respondents (AM13, AM14, AM21) emphasized that reconstruction should be done with caution and by sophisticated experts and specialized archaeologists whose are currently unavailable in Oman. This problem can be noted repeatedly at sites, such as Qalhat, where parts of the site, in particular the cistern\(^ {159}\), the mausoleum and tombs have been restored and reconstructed by low-wage and non-skilled restorers which threatens the authenticity of the ancient city. Also, part of the issue is that unfortunately there are no current practical in-detailed policies in regard to reconstruction or

\(^{158}\) There will be some interest among visitors in wanting answers to various questions about the connection between this tomb and other components, at least within the surrounding archaeological landscape of Bat. Visitors require the knowledge of archaeological interpreters to demonstrate how the defence at Bat originally looked (e.g. tower 1145), what the dwellings looked like and what may have been the socio-cultural and socio-economic structure of the society that lived in this site during the Bronze Age.

\(^{159}\) The water cistern and the mausoleum are considered unique elements to the Oman’s seafaring AH as they are the only remaining examples of their kind in the country (Bhacker and Bhacker 2004, Costa 2004).
restoration works; NHPL 1980 does not include articles which address this issue in particular.

6.2.5. On-Site Management and PIN

As mentioned in Section 3.8.2 the on-site management could influence the total interpretive experience of visitors and create mindful visitors\(^{160}\), the findings show two main operational problems which are: 1) lack of visitor management and evaluation; and 2) lack of in-situ maintenance management and guardianship. The following discussion describes these two problems in more details.

6.2.5.1 Lack of Visitor Management and Evaluation

A main problem facing administrative stewardship as AM13 mentioned is the difficulty to efficiently manage those sites which are located in remote areas far from the central administration in Muscat. This becomes more difficult while there are inadequate human, technical and financial resources at the Department of Antiquities, especially that ‘there are many large landscape sites in Oman’ (BX3) where ruins are scattered over extensive areas. To exemplify, Bat extends over an area of 4053416 m\(^2\) (= 4.05341 km\(^2\)). The affiliated sites al-Khatam tower is located ca.2 km to the west and Wadi al-Ayn graves are located ca.22 km east of Bat. This means, the current buffer zones of these sites are hardly recognized by both the public and the governmental bodies. Similarly, the size of Arja is not clear even to the responsible authority.

\(^{160}\) There is a lack of information which is given to visitors to assist them to better plan their visit and to understand the visited site. Also, there is no good information about on-site options so visitors can select what is suitable according to their personal experiences and backgrounds. Currently, visitors do not know what is available, if there is any, until they reach archaeological sites. The situation appears more serious in the absence of interpretive infrastructure and touristic superstructures as this has been confirmed in Section 5.7.
As Section 5.4 showed, archaeological sites are affected by the lack of site management for visitors before, during and after their visits (e.g. Qalhat, al-Ayn, Ras al-Jinz). Therefore, some respondents (e.g. AM7, AM18, AM21) emphasized the need for tour restrictions and guiding instructions. Besides, the increasing number of tourists and the consequent growing pressure on tourist sites\textsuperscript{161} in Oman (Ministry of Information 2005, Ministry of National Economy and MOT 2006, 2008) should call AH management to recognize the need for appropriate visitor management strategies. Unfortunately, there are no policies or practical legal structures which can protect and ensure archaeological sites sustainability and visitors safety (AM1); there are no signs advising appropriate behaviour while exploring the sites. In fact, the public, tour operators, tour guides and other stakeholders are not even aware of the legislation (either royal decrees or ministerial decisions), such as NHPL, as stated by many respondents (e.g. AM13, AS1, BX5). Certainly, in the absence of fences, permanent guards, tour guides and unaware visitors, site management becomes a key issue.

To explain this more, field observations at Ras al-Jinz proved that some locals, who do not require an official permit (AM11), drive their vehicles inside the reserve and nearby archaeological ruins. In this case, the locals represent a source of threat unless there are awareness programs. As mentioned in Section 5.9.3, there is the Ministerial Decision 55/2006 of the Ministry of Regional Municipalities; however, the main purpose of this decision is to control visitors who come to watch turtles, but not the archaeological site. This emphasizes the critical needs for unified efforts among all involved governmental

\textsuperscript{161} According to Salalah Khareef surveys 2005, 2006 and 2007, the number of visitors to Salalah has increased from 239, 674 in 2005 to 364,128 in 2007 during the period from 21/June-21/September (Ministry of National Economy and MOT 2008).
and private institutions in managing popular archaeological sites, especially that the number of visitors to the reserve is increasing (Rashid al-Amri: personal communication 16/08.2008) and a master development plans has been prepared by MOT (2004b).

Another important aspect in regard to visitor management is the development of systematic regular evaluation programs. This is necessary to evaluate and analyse visitors to archaeological sites to assess a particular interpretive practice or approach in order to develop PIN and archaeotourism in the future based on systematic research. However, in the present, evaluation research is absence at all archaeological sites in Oman which makes it more difficult to manage and evaluate the sites properly (AM13, AM17). This is not surprising since ‘the tourism in Oman has no idea of the consumers’ (AM18) where ‘there are significant gaps in the available market data’ (Parsons International Limited 2002: 50) and lack of reliable correlative visitor information (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2001, Sweeney 2002).

6.2.5.2. Lack of In-Situ Maintenance Management and Guardianship

According to the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005), ‘there is a need for maintaining and restoring the main archaeological sites in addition to providing necessary services to them’ (Ministry of National Economy 2001: 127). This is because ‘long-term visitability depends on active maintenance of the site’ (Price 1994: 284). To achieve this, Stubbs (1995: 73) suggested that planning for site preservation should begin in the formulation phase of any archaeological program; a point which is

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162 The current initial statistics for the Turtle Reserve show increasing numbers of visitors from 3631 in 1991 to 21198 in 2004 (Ministry of Regional Municipalities n/d.).

163 For instance, there are some available statistics about the visitors to some of the frankincense sites, but they are not efficient for evaluative research (AM17).
Currently overlooked in AH management in Oman. Only Article IV of NHPL 1980 asks people not to conduct any kind of modifications for heritage sites without a written official approval from MOHC or an authorised government official. However, operationally, in the lack of well-equipped regional centres, this problem might increasingly continue to be an obstacle against PIN and subsequently archaeotourism (AM6).

Currently, all visited sites undergo varying levels of unsustainable condition (see Chapter Five). However, due to the lack of enough data, evaluative research and skilled experts this can not be done properly. Consequently, if this issue is not addressed, the survival of such unique archaeological landscapes in Oman as Qalhat would represent an immeasurable loss for knowledge of Omani history and a loss of economic opportunity for the local inhabitants (Bhacker and Bhacker 2004).

What has exacerbated this problem is the lack of on-site guardianship by the national authority or any official representative to observe and maintain those excavated ruins as this has been established by field observations at al-Maysar, Qalhat and Bat. According to BX3, ‘if the sites are not carefully protected, publicity and public access may well attract thieves interested in removing objects from the sites for the illegal antiquities trade’\(^{164}\). This is a serious problem, especially that there is a limited joint coordination

\(^{164}\) Article (6) of the Charter for the Protection and Management of Archaeological Heritage (ICOMOS 1990) stated that 'The archaeological heritage should not be exposed by excavation or left exposed after excavation if provision for its proper maintenance and management after excavation cannot be guaranteed.'
between the national security bodies, such as the Royal Oman Police and MOHC (AM35)\textsuperscript{165}.

Part of the issue as AS9 mentioned is that these sites are not practically appreciated as ‘an important national resource’, including the World Heritage Sites. To explain this, MOHC has not prepared yet a master management plan for Bat and the affiliated sites of al-Khatam and al-Ayn (AM13), although they have been inscribed on the World Heritage List since 1988. This can lead to work being done on ‘as needs’ basis, reactively than proactively, which in the long term has often proven to be more costly and difficult to manage (Stubbs 1995: 75) as at Sohar Fort (AU7). In their report about Bahla Fort, Guillaud and Michon (2003: 10) confirmed this and added:

- \textit{The conservation, management and maintenance policies are not properly defined and the decision-making process is still not clear.}
- \textit{There is no specific formal budget to cover regular expenses of maintenance of the site.}
- \textit{Foreign institutions and/or private foundations have not yet been attached for sponsoring the development of the conservation project.}

Some respondents ascribed these problems to bureaucracy and the fact that some people who are in charge are not aware of NHPL 1980 (AS1) or of the concept of sustainable tourism (AM20).

\textsuperscript{165} This is necessary as field observations and respondents AU7 and BX5 confirmed that some people vandalize sites by using part of the archaeological landscape as playgrounds as is the status at Bat and Shenah.
6.2.6. PIN of AH and Museums

According to Chapter Three, and based on the International Code of Ethics for Museums, the museum has an important duty to ‘provide opportunities for the appreciation, understanding and promotion of the natural and cultural heritage’ (ICOM 2006: 8). The World Bank’s (2001: 16) report about the Middle Eastern countries concerning the cultural heritage and development stated:

*Museums are ages behind the richness of the cultural patrimony itself, and behind in the modern technologies of preservation, presentation and public education.*

In regard to Oman specifically, and according to the findings, the lack of appropriate PIN for AH within museums is partially responsible for the big lacuna between archaeological resources and the public. Archaeology is poorly presented (AS13, AM35, BX5) and interpretive practices and approaches are underdeveloped and unsatisfactory. Therefore, it is not surprising that in Oman rarely people visit museums with archaeological and historical collections (AM9). The main reasons for this can be channelled into two main streams: (1) the managerial realities and (2) the efficiency of PIN166.

6.2.6.1. The Managerial Realities

The lack of funding and expertise are two pressing obstacles challenging the development of museum directorship and museology as a profession in Oman which is reflected in the poor PIN for archaeological records inside museums. Although there are on-going plans to showcase some archaeological findings at Ras al-Jinz and al-Balid,

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166 It should be mentioned here that this part of the chapter is not intended to present an in-depth analysis and argument for the current PIN within museums in Oman; rather it looks at them as part of the stewardship structure. Also, museum as a profession is commonly connected to on-site interpretation and considered as one of the incentive elements that provoke and boost archaeotourism.
however, the success of these two exhibitions will basically depend on considering other major problems that can be repeatedly observed at those visited museums which are Sohar Fort Museum\textsuperscript{167}, the Omani Museums\textsuperscript{168}, Salalah Museum and the Land of Frankincense Museum. Basically, these are the only museums in the country which display some archaeological objects where most displays are based on ethnographic materials (AM13, AS8)\textsuperscript{169}.

Also, these museums do not promote programs, services or activities suitable for families and school students relative to archaeology (AM30). Although Arja and the current mining factory are continuously visited by school students, yet there is no site exhibition (AM2). The status is similar at Shisur Wubar where only a small wooden room has been used to demonstrate the excavations in the 1990s through pictures, some ethnographic and geological collections provided by the locals (AM15, AU4)\textsuperscript{170}.

McLean and Cooke (2003: 154) mentioned that ‘the national museums represent the nation in time and space, embodying the legitimacy of the heritage of the nation for both citizens and the “other”. Yet, there is no one national or local museum for AH in Oman that has the ability to excavate, preserve and interpret archaeological sites to the public (AM12, AM13, AM34, AM33, AM27, AM21, AM30, AS4). AM35 referred this to the

\textsuperscript{167}Opened in 1993 and designed by the French archaeologist Monik Kervran who had previously worked as the head of French team for excavations in Sohar Fort (Ministry of Heritage and Culture 1996).

\textsuperscript{168}It was closed for the public from 2004-2007 for maintenance and renovation purposes. Before closing, the museum presented few archaeological objects and two small replicas for Hafit tombs (ca. 3000-2500 B.C) and Um an-Nar tombs, ca. 2500-2000 B.C (Yasin al-Lawatia: personal communication: 10/September/2005).

\textsuperscript{169}A small museum was opened in 2007 in Muscat called Bait al-Barandah to present the history of Muscat region; some images, few archaeological objects and a reconstructed grave from Bausher area are displayed.

\textsuperscript{170}Currently, this room is opened occasionally by the locals for some visitors.
shortcoming in administrative, financial and technical resources. BX9 asserted that ‘funds must be made available for a national museum worthy of the name’. In line with this, the Sixth Five-Year Development Plan’s (2001-2005) report emphasized the importance of creating a standard national museum and developing Salalah Museum as Dhofar Governorate is a growing popular touristic destination in the region, especially during autumn season, al-Khareef (Ministry of National Economy 2001: 127).

Another important point discussed by respondents is the centralization of museums in the capital city, Muscat, where there are no regional museums (AM12), except for Sohar and Salalah, where archaeological materials are poorly presented (AM7). Herein, the ‘physical access’ barrier (McLean 1997) represents an issue for many people who find it difficult to visit museums in the capital (AM30) due to such factors as long distance, expenses, lack of guiding signage and transportation (AM30, AM18). Also, some respondents complained that there is no enough time to visit museums because they are closed during holidays, afternoon and evening\footnote{Most museums opening hours are limited between 7:30 am and 2:30 pm daily except Friday.} (AM18, AM29).

Moreover, AM18 believes that the absence of private-sector partnership and sponsorship and the central managerial control of heritage institutions, including museums, sometimes foster disinterest and reluctance to learn due to the low salary levels in governmental organizations. AM29 referred to the lack of interest by the members of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) in museum business
due to the limited turnover\textsuperscript{172} and the belief that the government is the most qualified body to manage museums in the country.

Furthermore, the absence of evaluative programs, as in the case of Sohar Fort (AU8), is a pressing issue in museum management in Oman. Based on the archival and published documents from MOHC, Ministry of National Economy and MOT, it appears that there are no adequate or a detailed breakdown for visitor profiles. All gathered statistics in regard to museums and historic buildings are general and quantitative in nature.

\textbf{6.2.6.2. Efficiency of PIN}

According to this research, instead of heuristic constructivist approaches, museums in Oman depend totally on positivistic informative approaches where the focus is on the products of archaeology rather than the process and context and where visitors have difficulty to understand the wide range of factors that bring objects from archaeological sites to showcases. For instance, AM13 criticized PIN of Bat cemetery at the Omani Museum where children are not able to learn about the life and ritual of those people who lived in ancient Bat. This implies the underestimation of audience differences (intellectually and emotionally) which according to one of Tilden’s (1977) principles is important to communicate the desired message of a specific interpretive program. Also, by looking at the current PIN of Magan culture, it appears that, except for the poor illustrative panels at Sohar Fort Museum, there are no off-site interpretive media (AM6, AM35).

\textsuperscript{172} Despite this, AM29 admitted the successful experience of Bait Zubair Museum, a privately-run museum opened in 2000 and located in old Muscat,
An important part in any good PIN is that the content needs to be themed (Ham 1992) and ‘organized in a way that visitors can both access it and follow it’ (Moscardo 1998: 10). Field visits to Salalah Museums and Sohar Fort Museum show that there is insufficient space management. Also, there are no particular themes with specific objectives and no unified storytelling for the displays. Moreover, there are a lot of historical gaps (AS2) and in some cases archaeological materials are repeatedly and randomly mixed up with modern ones without a particular purpose (AM18).

Continuous renovation and creativity in presentation should be part of museum works in Oman (AM9, AS11) where, for instance, ‘the archaeology at the Omani Museum should be renewed according to the increased knowledge during the past decennium’ (BX2). This is because the current displayed archaeological materials still the same from the excavations in the early 1970s (AM33). Also, the current exhibit at Salalah Museum needs to be changed to ensure ‘continuity of attraction to visitors from citizens and tourists’ (Parsons International Limited 2002: 127). This is not surprising since there is a lack of conservation for objects and difficulty to create archaeological exhibitions (Norman 1997).

Also, there is a lack of basic interpretive and promotional productions and facilities (e.g. gift-shops, audio and visual media) as it is the case at Sohar Fort Museum (AU2). Although the fort represents a major attraction for foreign tourists, especially in the winter, as observed there are no multi-language guiding signs inside the museum to guide the tourist within the site or direct the tourists away from fragile areas in the

\[173\] For example, what is the status under which a product was produced or manufactured? This means that archaeological objects should be situated in place and time and in relation to other archaeological objects (Hodder 1986).
western part of the fort (Figure 6.2). In order to provide a quality PIN and management, one of the main requirements is the need for dedicated professionals in museums (AS11), however, AU8 referred to the shortcomings of well-informed and skilled tour guides at Sohar Fort Museum.

Figure 6.2: Fragility of Sohar Fort, restoration errors and a single guiding sign in Arabic (green).

Another issue is that in many cases, museums depend basically on visitors (Harrison 1997), however, and due to the described factors above, in Oman visiting a museum is not a common sense among the Omani people (AM36). Currently, the museums are boring ‘unless archaeologists understand that they have to make museums interesting and entertaining’ (AM18).
6.2.7. Lack of Professional Archaeologists

According to the research findings, the limited number of trained Omanis in primary interpretation\textsuperscript{174} of AH represents one critical factor in PIN of AH in Oman where, except for a few historians and archaeologists working at Sultan Qaboos University and MOHC\textsuperscript{175}, the number of indigenous field archaeologists and academic staff is still very small (AM3, AM6, AM9, AM13, AM14, AM23, AS1, AS2, AS9). For instance, nowadays, at the Directorate General of Heritage and Culture in Dhofar there is not even one archaeologist since 1979 (AM5). Also, BX5 referred to the lack of a national archaeological team which as an idea has never been taken seriously by the current stewardship.

Also, one major reason for this is the limited number of in-country educational institutions and training programs in Oman (AM12)\textsuperscript{176}. Therefore, and similar to other GCC countries, e.g. U.A.E, such aspects as the quest for a national past, its preservation and conservation have been undertaken by expatriate archaeologists rather than indigenous citizens (de Cardi 2003, Potts 1998, 2003, Orbasli 2007)\textsuperscript{177}. Certainly, this represents a big problem as confirmed by AM13, BX2 and BX5 where, for instance, due to academic obligations and the weather, archaeological works in Oman are

\textsuperscript{174} This includes the restoration and reconstruction works where there are limited Omani experts. In return, the government had to bring foreigner experts from such countries as Morocco and Italy (Guillaud and Michon 2003, Ministry of Information 2005) as this has been confirmed by field observations at Qalhat, Bahla Fort and Khor Rori.

\textsuperscript{175} Although there are some collaboration between Sultan Qaboos University and MOHC, yet, it is still not enough (AM20).

\textsuperscript{176} Currently, the only undergraduate program in Oman, which was available at Sultan Qaboos University, is currently closed for those students who desire to take archaeology as a major subject (AM10). Some respondents connected this to the lack of job opportunities for the graduate students from the Department of Archaeology (AM3, AM30, AS4, AS8, AM20).

\textsuperscript{177} For example, the site of Bat was initially excavated by Karen Frifelt in the 70s and in the present by the German Expedition in 2004/2005. Also, the Italian-French joint expedition has been working continuously in Ras al-Jinz since the 1980s.
seasonal and last for two months during the winter, e.g. Bat and Ras al-Jinz (see Section 2.2.3). Another consequence for this dependency on foreigners is the limitation of intellectual and physical accessibility to the excavated sites (AM9), especially with the absence of any interpretive infrastructure.

### 6.2.8. Lack of Financial Resources

According to the research findings, financial resources shortcoming is another imperative issue facing PIN of AH in Oman where funding in general is scarce and not readily available for either primary or public interpretations (AM8, BX2).

O’Carroll (2002: 19) reported that Ali al-Shanfari, the previous Head of the Department of Antiquities, mentioned that there were many desirable projects existed, but funds were very scarce to afford the costs of museum displays for some of the excavated archaeological materials. Also, AM33 talked about the limited financial aid for conducting archaeological works at Ras al-Jinz where ‘all excavations are paid mainly by France and Italy…the resources are limited’. One possible reason for this could be that some administrators are not convinced that archaeological sites are invaluable and irreplaceable (AM6, AM11, AM13, AM20, AM35, AS1, AS5, AS6, AS7, AS10). In practice, this is confirmed by the unmistakable poor status of PIN for AH, including the World Heritage Sites. This is despite the fact that the Seventh Five-Year Plan report for 2006-2010 shows that such sites as Bat, Bahla, Qalhat, Khor Rori and al-Balid are included in the investment plans of MOH and OCA (Ministry of National Economy 2007: Tables 4 and 23).
6.3. ARCHAEO TOURISM AND PIN IN OMAN

According to the findings, there are interrelated factors in the tourism industry in Oman that are influencing the current status of PIN of AH and consequently archaeotourism. Four factors are discussed in the following sections which are: (1) archaeological resources as touristic attractions; (2) efficiency and implementation of national tourism policies and legislation; (3) community-based tourism and local socio-economic consideration; (4) PIN and stakeholders’ partnership and sponsorship.

6.3.1. Archaeological Resources as Touristic Attractions

Initially, it is important to say that the tourism industry in Oman is a growing new phenomenon (AM6, AM34). In regard to heritage tourism, in particular, ‘there is a need for specialized training in the various areas supervised by the heritage sector’ (Ministry of National Economy 2001: 127). For instance, the Final Master Plan for Ras al-Hadd/Ras al-Jinz area (Ministry of Tourism 2004b) aims basically to establish an eco-resort on the outskirts of Ras al-Jinz and Ras al-Hadd (AM26, AM35), rather than preserving the natural or cultural resources. One of the main reasons for this shortcoming according to AM10 is that heritage issues in general do not represent a priority in developing countries where the interest in heritage comes after a long-term of education and as a reaction to the industrial revolution and modernization processes.

In practice, archaeologists are rarely involved in the developing and planning development committees of the tourism projects, especially those relative to heritage resources (AS1) which could reflect the limited functional cooperation at the operational level between MOHC and MOT. It is in this context, some respondents
think that archaeotourism has been overlooked by the tourism stakeholders in Oman where archaeological resources are not considered as valuable as other heritage attractions such as forts and castles (AM21, AM9, AM13, AM20, AM28, AS12, BX7).

According to the report ‘The Investment Program for the Civil Ministries during the Seventh Five-Year Plan 2006-2010’, there is about R.O. 1.495 million to improve some forts and castles for touristic purposes (Ministry of National Economy 2007: Table 55). One reason for this could be their physical appeal and visibility (AM9). Despite this, AM21 believes that ‘even at the forts there is no presentation…People go and wander around; they know nothing about the site’. This has been confirmed by the assessment report provided by O’Carroll (2002: 13) who stated:

\[
\text{Presentation/interpretation standards were inconsistent and generally incomplete. Some rooms were named and others were not. Isolated items of furniture and household equipment were provided. Some of the items were authentic historically; others were not.}
\]

The Household Travel and Tourism Survey 2000 in Oman shows that one of the main incentives for domestic tourists to visit a site during the weekends and holidays is the availability of touristic facilities and activities (Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Ministry of National Economy 2002). Therefore, some respondents believe that due to the absence of on-site interpretive infrastructure and touristic facilities it is expected that only a limited number of tourists and tour operators would visit archaeological sites (AM3, AM5, AM6, AS12), in particular special interest tourists (AM30, Lakshmy Narayanan: personal communication: 08/08/2008, Percy Rarao: personal communication: 12/08/2008) and recreational visitors (BX1). In fact, even if there were some interested people there are no specialized agencies (AM31, Lakshmy Narayanan:
personal communication: 08/08/2008) and ‘most sites are unknown except to specialists’ (BX9).

In general, as Table 6.1 illustrates, the inbound tourism expenditure in Oman in 2002 is mainly focused on three main activities which are: leisure and recreation; visiting relatives and friends; and business.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of Visit</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>The GCC Countries</th>
<th>Other Arabs</th>
<th>Asians</th>
<th>Europeans</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leisure &amp; Recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td>19,789</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>1,071</td>
<td>22,705</td>
<td>2,262</td>
<td>46,066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Relative &amp; Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,460</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>1,165</td>
<td>3,364</td>
<td>1,537</td>
<td>9,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,735</td>
<td>990</td>
<td>5,058</td>
<td>14,045</td>
<td>4,798</td>
<td>30,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,096</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>1,670</td>
<td>2,270</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>5,443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>30,081</td>
<td>1,787</td>
<td>8,963</td>
<td>42,383</td>
<td>8,649</td>
<td>91,863</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1: The total inbound tourism expenditure in 2002 by purpose of visit O.R. (000) (Modified after Ministry of National Economy and Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2003: Table 7)

In regard to archaeotourism in particular, the *Inboun Tourism and Outbound Tourism Survey 2001/2002* (Ministry of National Economy and Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2003) mentioned that the interest in visiting archaeological sites in Oman, in particular, by the inbound tourists comes after making a general tour (excursion), a marin tour, diving and sunbathing. As for foreign visitors to Oman, a big share of them, especially from the European market, are usually more affluent, senior citizens, 25-44
years old, more sophisticated, self-aware, well educated, value learning and self-improvement; they are deeply interested in Oman’s history and culture (AM34, Sweeney 2002, Ministry of National Economy and Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2003, MOT and Ministry of National Economy 2006).

According to the 2002 survey, only 3.16% of the tourists, including Arabs, European and Asian, listed archaeological sites as one of their preferred attractions. Also, the 2007 survey of Salalah Khareef visitors confirmed that 94.36% of the visitors (Omani and non-Omani) consider ‘Weather and Natural Views’ as the main satisfactory factor in their visit to Salalah (Ministry of National Economy and MOT 2008). However, only 0.56% of the visitors who described ‘Religious and Archaeological Sites’ as attractive places, e.g. Qatar, 3.16%, Saudis 0.75%, Emirates 0.32% and Asians 1.79%. Repeatedly, these results have been confirmed by previous surveys as well (Ministry of National Economy and MOT 2004, 2006).

Currently, there are no visitors’ databases or systematic regular surveys for the different market segmentation of visitors to those tourists who visit archaeological sites. One of the reasons for this, and as discussed in sections 5.3.3, 5.3.4, and 6.2.5.1, is the difficulty to control the number of people and vehicles within some of the archaeological site, especially in the lack of clear borders and fences due to the large size of their landscapes, e.g. Bat, Arja, Shenah, Qalhat, Bawsher. Also, some of the sites, such as al-Maysar and Tawi Ubaylah, are abandoned sites and visited by archaeologists only. Moreover, the limited number of members of staff and specialists

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178 According to a survey for visitors in 2002 (Ministry of National Economy and Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2003), the two main age groups which visit Oman are between 25-44 (581,964) then 45-64 (140,944).
employed by the government to manage archaeological sites in Oman is another reason for the incapability to count the visitors properly, conduct professional in-detail surveys and establish retrievable database. This has been confirmed by some respondents in regard to al-Balid (Mohammed al-Rawas: personal communication: 17/08/2008), Shisur Wubar (Mabrook Bayit-Misan: personal communication: 11/08/2008) and Sohar Fort (Sadiyah al-Sadi: personal communication: 08/08/2008).

Another reason is that some of the archaeological sites, such as Bahla Fort, are closed to the public, except for some official delegates as confirmed by Ahmed al-Tamimi (personal communication: 06/08/2008). Furthermore, such archaeological sites as Ras al-Jinz cannot be seen physically by visitors except during the archaeological excavations in the winter, between Mid-December to Mid-February. In addition, and in regard to Ras al-Jinz, in particular, most tourists come to visit the green turtles within the area, rather than the site *per se*; thus, it is difficult to differentiate between these tourists and those few visitors who intend to see the archaeological sites in particular (Khamis al-Ameri: personal communication: 11/08/2008). Despite these factors, the researcher was able to obtain some approximate statistics for the visitors to some of the archaeological sites included in this research (Table 6.2). Mainly, these numbers are reported by the governmental employees from MOT, MOHC and OCA.
Chapter Six: The Stakeholders and Stewardship Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitors Sites</th>
<th>Approximate Number of Visitors</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Al-Balid       | 35,019                        | - Official delegates = 647, School students = 1388, and Other tourists = 32,984  
|                |                               | - A large number of tourists come between Aug.-Nov. |
| Khor Rori      | 30,000                        | During al-Khareef season (June-September) the number of visitors can reach to 1500 visitors per day. |
| Shisur Wubar   | 5,760                         | - Mainly, the visitors are non-Omani from Sweden, German, France  
|                |                               | - A few tourists from the GCC countries visit during al-Khareef season in the summer (June-September)  
|                |                               | - In the winter, some Omani families come during the weekends |
| Ras al-Jinz    | 28,874                        | - Omani: 6,299 and Non Omani: 22,575  
|                |                               | - There are about 60 school students a week  
|                |                               | - Omani visitors come during the Summer and they come as families |
| Sohar Fort     | 11,059                        | - Students represent 6,440  
|                |                               | - Most European tourists are pensioners, over 50s |

Table 6.2: The approximate numbers of visitors in 2007 to some of the archaeological sites mentioned in this research with a brief description.

Basically, there are three main segments of visitors who visit archaeological sites in Oman that are: special interest tourists; school students; and families. As for the special interest group, which is a small market, it includes those who are interested in knowing the history of Oman in-depth and visiting archaeological sites in particular; they can be described as primary cultural-core tourists (Hughes 2002). Most tourists in this group are well-educated, pensioners, over 50s and come from European countries, such as German, U.K and France (AM34, Sadiyah al-Sadi: personal communication: 08/08/2008, Khamis al-Amri: personal communication: 11/08/2008, Percy Rara: personal communication: 12/08/2008). Due to the lack of specialized tour guides, many of these tourists are advised by the tour operators in Oman to contact specialized companies, such as Oman Travel in U.K (Lakshmy Narayanan: personal communication: 11/08/2008).
Also, a big share of the visitors to archaeological sites is the school students, who can be considered as *multi-primary culture core tourists* (Hughes 2002) where the archaeological sites are of equal importance with some other reasons for the visit. For instance, the school students who visit the archaeological sites at Ras al-Jinz they also visit the turtle reserve, Ras al-Hadd Fort and the beaches within the area (Khamis al-Amri: personal communication: 08/08/2008). During the excavation season at Ras al-Jinz (December to February), there are about 60 students who visit the sites; mainly, they come from those schools which are located in al-Sharqiyah region, especially from Sur and Ja’alan (Khamis al-Amri: personal communication: 08/08/2008). The case is similar to such sites as Sohar Fort (Sadiyah al-Sadi: personal communication: 08/08/2008), al-Balid and Khor Rori (Mohammed al-Rawas: personal communication: 17/08/2008).

In addition to the special interest tourists and school students, there is a major number of families, Omani and non-Omani, who visit archaeological sites. However, this segment can be described as *incidental culture-peripheral tourists* (Hughes 2002) where archaeological sites represent a reason for the visit, but secondary to some other reasons such as visiting relatives and friends. Also, the tourists in this group can be *accidental culture-peripheral tourists* (Hughes 2002) where archaeological sites have not been featured at all in the decision to visit the destination, but they do nonetheless visit the sites. Most families visit archaeological sites during the weekends, religious and national holidays and during their annual vacations. In particular, during al-Khareef season in Salalah, the number of families who visit archaeological sites, including Shisur Wubar, al-Balid and Khor Rori, increases dramatically. Also, many families visit
Ras al-Jinz in the summer (Rashid al-Amri: personal communication: 16:08:2008); however, because the sites are covered with soil and archaeological digs are closed, the visitors are unable to see the site, learn about the archaeological excavations within the area or increase their knowledge about archaeology in general (Khamis al-Amri: personal communication: 11/08/2008).

As discussed in Chapter Three, PIN requires a teamwork planning and practical supportive partnership; however, some respondents mentioned that ‘archaeological and historical sites are controlled by archaeologists who present AH based on their perspectives’ (AM18) 179. In this context, AM18 asserted that archaeologists have to understand the mentality of the consumers because archaeological sites as such may not be interesting to the average tourists, such as school kids and families. Parallel to this, AM21 said:

\[
\text{Most archaeologists who are interested do not understand publicity or tourism. This is a new idea to archaeologists for tourism. If you mention the word ‘tourism’ for archaeologists they don’t approve it...you have to have somebody to understand all about the work.}
\]

Another related issue is that archaeotourism could be a long-term developing process (AM25). In this sense, the recruitment and enlightenment of the public, including local communities, concerning the potential of PIN in archaeotourism is a costly process which might need substantial continuing financial support and skilled human resources,

\[\text{179 As discussed in Chapter Three, this confirms the conflict between archaeologists and the tourism sector.}\]
such as the reconstruction works at Bahla Fort (AM6) or Ras al-Jinz (AM33). Therefore, AU6 mentioned that:

*The first thing in anything that is new is you have to build awareness. To educate people to appreciate what they have in their land. Doing that is quite a major work, because you will start from scratch.*

In addition to the limited local and foreign investment and limited resources for financing and promoting new projects (Ministry of Tourism 2004a), there are inadequate human and technological resources (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2001: 7) which can be utilized to develop heritage PIN in general.

To say more, seasonality is another effective element in regard to the tourism industry in Oman (Sweeney 2002, Ministry of Tourism 2004a). Partially, this has been linked to the hot climate of the country in general (AM30, AS6). For instance, it is unsurprising since in al-Dhakhliyah region, for instance, the summer temperatures can soar to 54°C (Ministry of Information 2005). Because of the lack of such important facilities as on-site shelters for visitors as discussed in Chapter Five, most tourists visit Oman during the more temperate months between October and April. Also, Salalah’s distinctive climate and annual festivals last for only three months during the monsoon season (*al-Khareef*) which runs from about 21st June to the end of August (Ministry of Information 2006). Also, it was mentioned in Section 6.3.7 that Oman’s climate has affected archaeological fieldworks where welcoming visitors has become a difficult and

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180 In this context, Tosun (2000: 624) argued that ‘asking communities to participate in development plan can be a time consuming and complex process which in return may lead to the delay in decision-making and disappoint those investors who expect a short-term return’.
181 Sweeney (2002: 10-11), who described this issue as ‘Salalah Crisis’, ascribed this problem to internal and external factors. Some of the internal factors are directly related to the lack of supportive interpretive infrastructure and programs.
secondary duty due to the short time of excavations (AM13). For these reasons, investing money to develop archaeological sites for a short tourism season could be a major risk for the private sector in Oman (AM29, AM30).

Also, one of the impediments that slow down the growth of tourism is the lack of planning (Henderson 2006: 88), where for instance, there is no practical comprehensive management plan for such World Heritage Sites as Bat and the affiliated sites (AM13). In practice, even if there is such a plan, there would be a lesser amount of attention is given to implementation as it is the status with Bahla Oasis (AM6, AM13). This might reflect the limited serious practical steps toward the development of archaeotourism (AS4) at least in the near future.

6.3.2. Efficiency and Implementation of National Tourism Policies and Legislation

In regard to the tourism sector, AM9 believes in the importance of imposing regulations in order to protect the socio-cultural life of the local communities and avoid host-guest cross-cultural conflicts. Also, AS1 linked the current negative impacts caused by visitors to the lack of PIN and tour policy where some visitors pick up some surface materials from archaeological sites without an official permit, e.g. Qalhat.

The lack of specified buffer zones for historical and archaeological sites supported by legal instrument has also participated to the problem of the contextual negative impact (AM1). According to AM1, this is important, especially that archaeological landscapes and their wider contexts are continuously threatened by the rapid development process.
and lack of building codes where many modern structures are located too close to the sites, e.g. Busher, Bat, Bahla.

Another issue is the absence of factual consideration for the local communities as an integral part in any tourism-related legislation and policies, including heritage tourism\textsuperscript{182}. Although the current tourism law refers sporadically to the expanding of the role of communities in the tourism sector, as well as the priority of developing heritage resources to enhance the touristic products and upgrade competitiveness of the country (Royal Decree 33/2002), in practice, a limited work has been achieved in regard to community tourism (Ministry of National Economy 2001). There is no effective legal structure defends local communities’ interests, educate them about their right and how they establish enterprises and meet their expectations; a structure that enforces their factual participatory in tourism planning, development and management, e.g. tour guides, facilitators (AM6, BX5). For instance, Mershen (2007: 197) mentioned that currently visitors to Misfat al-Abriyin in al-Hamra, al-Dhakhliyah region, ‘frequently cause disturbance to local residents, as they unaware of the unwritten local codes of behaviour and are not properly guided’\textsuperscript{183}.

Moreover, although sustainable consumption for the various touristic resources has been emphasized and protected by current national legislation and various directives (e.g. Ministerial Decision 55/2006, royal decrees 6/1980, 16/2001, 114/2001, 6/2003, 6/2003, 114/2001, 6/2003,

\textsuperscript{182} The UNESCO World Heritage Convention 1972 (World Heritage Centre 1972: Article 5a) encourages the State Parties to ‘adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community and to integrate the protection of that heritage into comprehensive planning programs’.

\textsuperscript{183} Salih al-Shuaibi (personal communication: 18/March/2008), who is conducting a research about community participation in the tourism in Oman, referred to the lack of community involvement in one of the most important tourism projects in Oman, ‘The Muscat Wave Project’.
27/2003, Ministry of National Economy 2007), in reality, this has not been implemented. To exemplify, the field visit to Wubar Shisur, and as confirmed by AM21 and AU4, the locals attract tourists to the remaining archaeological ruins at the site despite its fragile physical status (see sections 5.2 and 5.3.2).

6.3.3. Community-based Tourism and Local Socio-economic Considerations

Chapter Three discussed the vital role of local communities in PIN of heritage resources. Yet, in Oman there are structural and operational limits for community participation and consultation in regard to tourism development process in general (Mershen 2006)\(^{184}\), including PIN provision.

The findings suggest the exclusive reliance upon top-down community development strategies and expert-based research where the local residents in the vicinity of the visited sites are disempowered, under-represented and marginalized as both investors and decision makers. Herein, the residents can be described as ‘passive stakeholders’ (Robinson 1999: 9) who ‘seldom know what to expect from tourists and are unlikely to have been consulted as to their views’. This is not surprising since there are no active legal instrument, workshops and programs that aim to facilitate knowledge exchange and melt down barriers between the locals and other stakeholders. In short, the goal of the governmental sector in Oman toward community-based tourism is poorly supported, unclear and underdeveloped (Ministry of National Economy 2001) as it is the case in Wubar Shisur.

\(^{184}\) Mershen (2006) confirmed this in respect to desert-tourism in Wahibah Sand in Sharqiyah Region.
Nowadays, there are limited entrepreneurship and managerial associated skills among the local communities which enable them to derive socio-economic, educational, socio-cultural and recreational benefits. For instance, in Bahla Oasis there is no empowerment for the locals’ enterprises (AM6), e.g. gift shops, handicrafts, tour guidance. According to Guillaud and Michon (2003:11), this lack of implication of the locals ‘could generate conflicts between the stakeholders’. Also, in a report prepared by experts from MOT about Ras al-Jinz, it was confirmed that the locals would be enthusiastic to be involved in tourism by providing skilled services such as tour guides, but ‘the community currently feels that it lacks suitable training and does not know how to go about obtaining the relevant skills’ (Ministry of Tourism 2004b: 2-6).

Also, members of the community have sold their houses and other properties to Omani and non-Omani investors (AM23) which could imply the limited community awareness about the future touristic plans in the area\(^\text{185}\). Consequently, there might be fewer opportunities to develop community tourism (Jamal and Getz 1995) or indigenous tourism (Ryan and Aicken 2005) where ‘local communities become economically and culturally dependent on a foreign-dominant industry’ (Sharpley 2003: 27). This might threat the tourism sustainability, including archaeological attractions, where the main ongoing projects are mainly focused on creating facilities which would meet the foreign market, attract foreign visitors and maximize national economic benefits (e.g. Ministry of Tourism 2004b).

\(^{185}\) The case is similar at Wubar Shisur (AU4) and al-Ayn (Rashid al-Hatimi: personal communication: 06/January/2006).
Although there have been some attempts by the government to publicize a message that tourism is a friendly industry to raise the national population awareness of socio-economic benefits of the tourism industry\textsuperscript{186} (AM24), however, until now, the national tourism organizations have not succeeded yet to relay the message to local communities. This is not surprising since the main points of contact of tourists are with hoteliers, particular shopkeepers and a few Omani personal interpreters. Official reports from the governmental institutions, such as the Final Master Plan of the Physical Master Planning Services for Ras al-Hadd and Ras al-Jinz (Ministry of Tourism 2004b: 2-6), reported that the interaction between tourists and local people over the last years has been limited; mostly because the majority of tourists visit the turtle sanctuary only, often staying just a single night and pursuing activities during daylight hours. In return, this has caused a general feeling among the locals that there has been little effort by the industry or tourists themselves to include them and for many it is as though there is little to be gained from tourism.

Also, direct cross-cultural tourist-host encounters can be limited where the socio-cultural dissimilarities might hinder social interaction (Reisinger 1994); especially that Germans, United Kingdom and Nordic countries respectively represent the principal markets to Oman (Sweeney 2002). Certainly, the talk here is not about PIN as a way of acculturation, instead it is about creating a positive interaction through local tour guides, for instance, and preventing such negative status as xenophobia.

\textsuperscript{186} For instance, MOT organized the tourism awareness week in 2005 (2-8 April) titled ‘Tourism Enrich’ (Aminah al-Belushi: personal communication: 20/09/2005).
Sustainable archaeotourism should not be based on economic criteria alone, but also by being acceptable to the host communities, especially that many archaeological landscapes are located within private land plots. For instance, at Ras al-Jinz, there is a private-owned house located within the Turtle Reserve itself. This problem has not been solved yet by the MOT (AM23, AM26)\(^{187}\). Also, some of the ring-wall towers at Bat (e.g. 1146, 1147 and 1148) are located and surrounded by private-owned farms as this confirmed by field visit and several published reports (e.g. Frifelt 1976, 1985, Brunswig 1989). The status is similar at Shisur Wubar where members from the community own the palm-tree farm, to the south of the site, and benefit from the water spring, in the centre of the site. According to respondents, the issue has not been resolved yet between the locals and the governmental authority, OCA (AU1, AU4).

6.3.4. PIN and Stakeholders’ Partnership and Sponsorship

As repeatedly confirmed in Chapter Three, heritage PIN is a collection of a number of different industries and partnerships which are brought together to service the needs of both hosts and guests while simultaneously conserve the heritage resources. The research findings shed light on the limitations of this collaborative partnership in regard to PIN of AH which in results has been hindering the development of archaeotourism in Oman\(^{188}\). This has been described in term of three main interrelated levels which are:

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\(^{187}\) Basically, and according to the royal decrees 64/1978, 75/1987 relative to the expropriation on public interest grounds, the government has the responsibility and power to dispossess private ownership provided that there is a public interest. The expropriation has to be decided by a committee headed by the Ministry of Regional Municipalities; a representative member from MOHC has to be appointed to the committee.

\(^{188}\) The report which is published by the World Bank (2001: 16) in regard to cultural heritage and development in the Middle East mentioned that 'there are many unresolved issues concerning regulations, lack of operational cooperation, inequitable sharing of costs and benefits'.

250
(1) limited intergovernmental partnership and coordination; (2) the public and private sectors partnership; (3) limited international sponsorship and cooperation.

6.3.4.1. Limited Intergovernmental Partnership and Coordination

Limited coordination and cooperation between governmental institutions can be very damaging to the quality of PIN as no one governmental establishment can operate in isolation, especially where there is a lack of human and financial resources. Although Article III of NHPL advises MOHC to work cooperatively with other governmental agencies, some respondents criticised the limited partnership among the different governmental institutions concerning PIN for AH (AM3).

In fact, the lack of cooperation can be found among the governmental institutions which were established basically to manage and develop archaeological sites as it is the case with MOHC and OCA in regard to the frankincense sites in Dhofar region (AM5, AM21). AM24 asserted that unfortunately every governmental institution works in isolation from the others. As a result for this, there is a little awareness of AH significance among some governmental institutions (AM35). For instance, the Ministry of Housing, as mentioned by Orchard and Orchard (1997), is not aware as fully as possible of the location of the important archaeological sites and monuments in Oman. Also, AM35 mentioned that the coordination between MOHC and Airport Security and other Royal Oman Police’s units is not efficient where most members of the Royal Oman Police are not qualified to differentiate authentic archaeological sites and historical monuments in Oman.

One main problem in regard to this is that there is no systematic liable maps for archaeological sites and historical monuments in Oman and practical archaeological site inventory (AM14) which has been threatening those sites which are located in active developing areas such as Bausher (see Section 5.3).
materials from others. Moreover, although it is very crucial, the cooperation with the media in particular, is quite limited (AM6, AU5, AS1).

To give a specific example, many of Bat’s archaeological features are located within *awqaf* areas\(^{190}\) or *Bayt Mal*, properties managed by the government and used for the public interest. These are managed totally by the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs. Also, Bat which extends between the present day of Bat village and al-Wahrah is threatened by the graded crossing road of Wadi al-Ayn which is maintained by the Ministry of Transportation (AM13). Also, according to the Royal Decree 25/96, the Turtle Reserve at Ras al-Jinz is managed and conserved by the Ministry of Regional Municipalities (1996). Similarly, Arja is located within mining areas which is under the auspices of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (AM16, AM22). Therefore, MOHC is required to establish more practical joint efforts with these ministries and MOT before planning for PIN\(^{191}\).

6.3.4.2. The Government and Private-Sector Partnership

The government in Oman has had to play a central role in heritage tourism management and development, as is the case in many developing countries (Din 1989, Oppermann 1993, Aziz 1995, Tosun 2000, al-Masroori 2006) which has partially resulted from the absence of private investors with the capital, experience and willingness to invest in

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\(^{190}\) *Awqaf* (plural for *waqf*) or endowments are voluntary, *awqaf* permanent, irrevocable dedication of a portion of ones wealth – in cash or kind – to Allah. Once *awqaf*, they never get gifted, inherited or sold. They belong to Allah and always remain intact. The productions of the *awqaf* may be utilised for any religious compliant purpose (e.g. maintaining or building a mosque) (Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs 2007).

\(^{191}\) Currently, there is an ongoing project to establish a scientific centre and museum. This was based on agreement between MOT and Oman Liquefied Natural Gas (Oman LNG) which was signed on 12\(^{th}\) July 2005 with amount of one million RO (Ministry of Information 2005: 168).
heritage attractions, including archaeological sites. This is not surprising since besides the lack of coordination between the public and private sector (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2001), ‘the development of the private sector is still in its early stages in the absence of the entrepreneurial spirit’ (Ministry National Economy 2003a: 37).

In fact, even the government does not have the required experts for PIN; the formulation of policies and plans for the tourism sector has usually been undertaken by foreign consultants. For instance, the International Development Ireland Ltd. (IDI) contracted with MOT as a tourism management partnership agreement to help the establishment and implementation of a comprehensive strategy for the future (International Development Ireland 2002a, 2002b).

The government had and still to undertake the role of entrepreneur and operator who develop and manage the presentation of archaeological and historical sites, e.g. al-Balid, Sohar Fort. The government may play the main role in providing interpretive infrastructure and amenities, however, it may not be able to react effectively and efficiently to public needs and market changes\textsuperscript{192} or to be an effective source of tourism management due to its bureaucratic structure (Jenkins 1994, Tosun 2000) and the lack of flexibility in managerial approaches and vision that allow high-quality services to be developed (AM18, AS9).

The development of PIN should cooperate with the private sector which represents ‘the engine of growth’ (International Development Ireland 2002a: 6) because ‘uncoordinated

\textsuperscript{192} For instance, the international market is affected by political or social instability, such as the Gulf War in the 1990s and the September/11 event, where the number of tourists decreased (Azzam 2002, International Development Ireland 2002a, Ministry of National Economy 2004a).
planning and implementation almost inevitably leads to market failure’ (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2001: 1-39). For instance, the lack of coordination was one of the obstacles countering the Tourism Sector during the period of *Sixth Five-Year Development Plan*, 2001-2005, especially the local investment in the tourism sector (Ministry of National Economy 2001). This is not surprising due to the absence of training courses, clear Omanization plans for the private sector and low salary scale provided by the tourism and hospitality private sector; these are major challenges facing the Omanization of the tourism industry (MOT 2004a).

Based on the fact that PIN of AH could be driven by the search for profit (see Section 3.5.5)\(^\text{193}\); therefore, the absence of private investors with enthusiasm to invest in archaeotourism could have resulted from the lack of initial feasibility studies about archaeological sites, ways of developing them for touristic purposes (AM29) and information about the actual market (AM25). Also, as archaeotourism is ‘a very specialized tourism’ (AM33) which could be a long-term expensive investment (see Section 6.3.1); therefore, most Omani investors are not interested in such a risky industry, rather a short-term investment is preferred (AM5). Also, similar to the geological tourism (Salim al-Maskari: personal communication: 09/January/2007) and the desert tourism (Mershen 2006), one major issue facing archaeotourism is the lack of experience amongst investors in Oman (AM29) which might explain the absence of qualified management companies (AS10). Accordingly, this has resulted in presenting poor randomly-designed PIN and insufficient site management by locals as it is the status at Shisur Wubar (AM21).

\(^{193}\) For instance, Fowler (1981: 66) mentioned that ‘the visible, tangible past may be culture but it is now very much money too’.
6.3.4.3. Limited International Sponsorship and Cooperation

Some respondents referred to the lack of technical and financial support from such international organizations as ICOMOS, UNESCO and World Tourism Organization, which are directly involved in supporting and developing PIN for cultural heritage. For instance, drawing on personal working experience at the frankincense sites, AM21 asserted that ‘there is not much cooperation with UNESCO’, especially in relative to PIN.

A clear evidence for the limited practical cooperation between the World Heritage Committee, UNESCO, and the Omani government is the deletion of the Arabian Oryx Sanctuary from the World Heritage List in 2007. According to the Committee, this is due to ‘Oman's decision to reduce the size of the protected area by 90%, in contravention of the Operational Guidelines of the Convention. This was seen by the Committee as destroying the outstanding universal value of the site which was inscribed in 1994’ (World Heritage Centre 2008). To avoid this in the future, AM6 emphasized that UNESCO should help the Omani government to properly manage the World Heritage Sites.

AM6 emphasized that UNESCO should help the Omani government to properly manage the World Heritage Sites. Another reason for international cooperation is relative to the critical requirement for financial aid (AS7, BX5)\(^{194}\). One of the

\(^{194}\) For instance, the Historical Association of Oman (HAO) received two grants from the Ambassador’s Fund for Cultural Preservation, USA, to conduct a survey of Bahusher Village and to complete an architectural, historical and cultural analysis of Bilad Manah (US ambassador 2005: 1).
international UNESCO establishments is the World Heritage Fund\textsuperscript{195} which offers assistance for any property inscribed on the World Heritage List. However, one of the problems facing this aspect is that the Omani government is obliged to cover all of the expenses for the invited experts (AM13).

6.4. THE CURRENT ROLE OF PIN IN PROMOTING AND MARKETING ARCHAEO TOURISM

As discussed in Chapter Three, PIN is an effective marketing and promoting medium for archaeological attractions to sell interpretive products and services, increase the number of visitors and ensure repeat visits. Yet, in Oman this role has not been developed by SSC as indicated by the research findings. For instance, according to the Ministry of National Economy (2001: 127), one of the obstacles inhibiting the tourism sector in general is the ‘insufficient promotion for tourism projects’ either by governmental or private sectors.

In regard to the international market, ‘all reports confirm the issue of the low level of awareness of Oman and its tourism products in source markets’ (International Development Ireland 2002a: 10). For instance, al-Azri (2004: 117-118) who conducted an analysis of the image of Oman among potential U.S travellers concluded that very few U.S. citizens visit Oman which is partially due to the absence of traditional forms of advertising of Oman, e.g. tour operators, vacation and tour brochures, special programs on local media. The report of the \textit{Sixth Five-Year Development Plan, 2001-2005},

\textsuperscript{195} The World Heritage Fund is a trust fund, established by the World Heritage Convention in conformity with the provisions of the Financial Regulations of UNESCO. The resources of the Fund consist of compulsory and voluntary contributions made by States Parties to the Convention, and any other resources authorized by the Fund’s regulations (World Heritage Centre 1972, 2005).
No leading role was evident for the private sector in promoting heritage except that some companies allocated some pages in their brochures to provide information about castles, forts, museums and archaeological sites. The private sector is still directing its attention and investments toward the production sector that generate fast profits.

Sweeney (2002: 6) criticized the Omani marketing approach in tourism where there are no clear consistent and organized message, lack of creativity and production quality and the dissemination of information is focused on individual product sale. Additionally, there are no tourist information offices in Oman and the only ready access to independent information on the ground is a narrow range of leaflets at major hotels (Sweeney 2002). This has been confirmed by Negm et al. (2004) who showed that tourist information in Oman is rather limited and insufficient where there are no on-site information centres, brochures, city and route maps, audio-visual materials and multilingual tourist bulletins, e.g. Sohar area (AM28), Bat area (AM10) and Ras al-Jinz (AM23, AM33, AM34).

Currently, information on tourist attractions, if available, is costly and hard to find where travel and tourism bureaus, tourism guidance manuals and Internet played a minor role as a source of information (Ministry of National Economy and MOT 2004, 2008). It should be emphasized that the destination information system is an essential functionality to improve online PIN services and to enhance the promotion and engagement of cultural sites (Christodoulakis et al. 2005). Although internet websites are the cheapest and most effective way for Oman to place its array of products before global market (International Development Ireland 2002a), its deployment as an
interpretive tool has not been developed yet (Ministry of National Economy and
Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2003, Ministry of National Economy and MOT
2008). The main sources from motivating the tourists to visit Oman are four: previous
visits; hearsay; friends and relatives; and tour operators and travel agencies (Table 6.3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourists Media</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Other Nationalities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Visit</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>28.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hearsay</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>21.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends &amp; Relative</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through Tour Operators &amp; Travel Agencies</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Guides</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet, Radio, TV &amp; Newspaper</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.3: Information source that helped in deciding to take the trip to Oman – (%)
(Modified after Ministry of National Economy and Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2003: Table 9)

In regard to archaeotourism in particular, there is a lack in promoting archaeological
attractions as one of the available alternatives for tourists, in particular the World
Heritage Sites (AM24, Lakshmy Narayanan: personal communication: 08/08/2008).
AM29 and AM18 confirmed the limited role of the Omani media in promoting
archaeological sites at large. Also, AM30 denied the role of museums in promoting
archaeological sites. This is not surprising since there is a low level of communication
among the various stakeholders (AM6, AM7, AM9, AM10, AM21, AS23, AU4, AU7,
BX2, BX9).
In fact, it is notable that some overused promotional materials relative to AH help in creating a fake image or ‘deceptive advertising’ (Din 1989) about archaetourism where tour operators exaggerate the positive qualities of a particular site and avoid coverage of the less pleasant aspects. For example, Shisur Wubar, which is internationally promoted as ‘the Lost City of Ubar’, has neither on-site nor off-site PIN (AM21). Archaeological images are selectively chosen for commercial purposes. Also, most of the interpretive materials used for advertisement reflect the Western perceptions, concepts and images about the exotic Orient, including Arabian Peninsula. Herein, as Arden (2004) said archaeological sites and their communities have become commodities used to sell vacations and escapism. Again, in regard to Shisur Wubar such symbolic icons as camels, veils and palm-tree oasis with exotic palaces (Figure 6.3) are commonly used to portray and communicate the uniqueness and authenticity of the place and distinct the ‘orient from the occident’ (Al-Mahadin and Burns 2006: 159). For the long-term, this kind of ‘fake heritage business and marketing’ (Gyimothy and Johns 2001: 248) might threaten the development of heritage tourism in Oman by negatively affecting the destination positioning.\footnote{Also, Arden (2004: 110) argued this issue in regard to Maya culture where this kind of promotion ‘could reinforce the impression that archaeological ruins are entertainment for wealthy foreigners, not places of cultural meaning and history’.}
Also, another related point is the use of locally-produced souvenirs as promotional materials which are ‘intended to fix the association of place in the minds of visitors long after their return home’ (Prentice 2005: 246). Yet, as it is the case with many other countries in the region (World Bank 2001), in Oman commercial enterprises specialized in heritage are difficult to establish and the economic values of such materials in marketing and promotion has not been adequately realized (AM7, AM18). This has been confirmed by AM6 in relation to Bahla Oasis. Currently, there is no practical quality control and there are not enough Omani ethnic art shops except for few marketplaces in some major cities, specifically Nizwa, Sohar, Salalah and Muscat\textsuperscript{197}.

\textsuperscript{197} Field observations showed that the average tourist would not be able to differentiate the limited Omani-made souvenirs from other ethnic products, such as Indian and Chinese, where the latter are widely imported and mixed up with the locally-manufactured. The low cost of labour and production and the availability of technical experience and equipment in some Asian countries, India and China, are major factors in this phenomenon (Badr al-Kalbani: personal communication: 03/January/2008). Also, the technology of production mostly depends on new materials and treatments which are introduced from buyers or intermediaries to the level that in some case significantly changing the form that final product takes, it becomes tourist-type art for ‘tourist mementoes’ (Evan 1994).
In order to surmount this problem, AU6 asserted that ‘it is very important that we revive our traditional history since in Oman crafts are dying out’. Although there are some publications and documentation by the Public Authority for Omani Handicrafts\(^\text{198}\), however, the biggest issue is that there are very few young Omanis who feel enthusiastic about working as handicraftsmen which is why crafts are mostly practised by expatriates as observed at one of the pottery factories in Bahla.

### 6.5. HERITAGE PIN AS A PROFESSION IN OMAN

Similar to the primary interpretation, the lack of expertise and qualified training activities and programs in PIN represents a basic issue facing not only archaeotourism, but also the tourism industry in Oman. In the first part of this section, it is intended to present the current status of PIN as a profession in Oman. Then, the second one will discuss tour guidance as a factual example of one of the most pressing issues in people-based PIN in Oman.

#### 6.5.1. Lack of Omani Expertise and Training Programs in PIN

According to the reports which were presented by MOT (2004a) and the Ministry of Manpower (2005), the Omanization\(^\text{199}\) processes in Oman is inhibited by the absence of: a) specialised education and training institutes and courses, b) a comprehensive plan for human resources development and c) clear Omanization plans for the private sector. This has been confirmed by the Ministry of National Economy (2001: 53) which

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\(^{198}\) It was set up in 2003 to ensure the survival and growth of Oman’s traditional craft and trades sector (Ministry of Information 2005: 48).

\(^{199}\) Omanization is the government’s program to integrate more Omanis into positions that have been held by non-Omanis.
asserted ‘the limitation of educational establishments specialized in tourism field to prepare the trained Omani workforce’.

In regard to PIN in particular, many respondents (e.g. AM13, AM23, AM25, AS3, AS7, AS8, AS10) emphasized that the lack of trained expertise and in-country training programs are two initial problems which need to be resolved. In this sense, AM6, AM14, and AS5 expressed the crucial need for trained interpreters capable of providing appropriate PIN for different visitors. However, the formulation and implementation of serious in-country training programs are other challenges where ‘there is no specialized institution to develop PIN for heritage sites in Oman’ (BX5). Beside this, and similar to the governmental sector, ‘the private sector is lacking an effective professional institution due to the shortage of qualified and competent cadre’ (Ministry of National Economy 2001: 53).

In fact, as the research findings show, in Oman heritage PIN as a concept and as a profession is not commonly known among those who are involved in heritage tourism development and management. For instance, AM13 asserted that currently there are no plans to foster any national centre or administrative unit for PIN in the country. This could demonstrate ‘the lack of the institutional guidance’ (BX8). Also, according to BX2, unfortunately ‘the manpower of the Department of Antiquities is too small to form a group for PIN. They are completely occupied with protecting the monuments and handling of foreign expeditions’.
The inadequacy of qualified Omani experts in PIN has limited the participation of Omanis in heritage PIN in general and stimulated an influx of employees from other countries to interpret Omani heritage to the public in general. In this matter, AM11 referred to the current development project of Ras al-Hadd/Ras al-Jinz where the master plan is totally prepared by foreigners (Ministry of Tourism 2004b) who are basically archaeologists and not interpreters. As well, *the Master Management Plan for the World Heritage Site of Bahla Fort* is prepared by experts from W.S. Atkins International & Co. (2001). As a result of this, some respondents (AM6, AM20, AM21, AM24) demonstrated their concern and raised the issue about the authenticity of PIN, i.e. who has the right to interpret and to plan PIN?

### 6.5.2. The Case of Tour Guidance in Oman

Basically, tour guides represent a major people-based interpretive approach because they have a multiplicity of roles to perform (Cohen 1985, Black *et al.* 2001, Weiler and Ham 2002, Armstrong and Weiler 2003). For instance, they communicate archaeological sites to visitors through appropriate interpretive experience and simultaneously they ensure the safety of both sites and visitors by directing behaviour within the sites. As for Oman in particular, the Omanization report referred to the current shortcomings of Omani tour guides (Ministry of Tourism 2004a) where it is difficult to find appropriate guides (AM34, AM36).

At all visited archaeological World Heritage Sites in Oman there is no one qualified interpreter or tour guide, e.g. Bat (AM13), Bahla (AM6), Khor Rori, al-Balid (AM15). As field visits show, the on-site tour guides become more important where sites, such as
Bat, Qalhat and Bausher, are scattered over a large area which makes it difficult sometimes for visitors to comprehend and communicate the big concept of the sites, especially for the keen tourists (AM3). The untrained tour guides may cause negative impacts to the site itself. According to AM6 and AM18, being an archaeologist does not mean the ability to communicate archaeological sites properly to visitors. There is a need for trained ‘interpretive tour guides’ (Weiler and Ham 2002: 52) who are able to provide an enjoyable experience in a responsible way by informing, involving and inspiring visitors. AM25 referred to the MOHC where there are some employees who are able to provide visitors with information about forts and castles, but not well-qualified to work as professional tour guides. Some of them can speak English, but there is a big lack of communication skills. This has been confirmed by one of the tour guides at Sohar Fort (AU8).

Although, this issue is critical for the quality and validity of PIN, yet there are no clear job descriptions and effective policies in relation to tourism guidance in Oman (AM24). In regard to policies, the Royal Decree 33/2002 sets some fifteen initial articles (126-140) in regard to tour guidance in Oman. However, in the practical sense, these articles have not been implemented sufficiently. For example, Article (127/5) includes that in order to practice tour guidance applicants must have enough experience and hold a valid qualification in tour guidance. However, it is common in Oman that tour guidance is practiced by retired or unemployed people who have no or little education (AM3). Also, Article (127/7) stated that applicants need to be well-informed in regard to Oman’s history, civilization, archaeology, heritage and its social and natural environment.
However, AM32 assured that many applicants do not know about the history of Oman or archaeological sites.

The status is similar in regard to Article (127/6) which includes that applicants are required to be able to speak one foreign language beside Arabic. According to the findings, ‘the lack of foreign languages skills’ is one of the most pressing issues concerning tour guidance in Oman (Ministry of Tourism 2004b). This is a critical issue in archaeotourism since most of the up-to-date publications in archaeology are non-Arabic.

Also, ‘the tour guide who speaks the tourists’ language, and understand the tourists’ culture and customs can facilitate tourist contact with foreign hosts and enable tourists to feel secure and less alienated in the host community’ (Reisinger 1994: 747). The importance of this comes from the fact that the principal market for Oman is from non-Arabic countries (Sweeney 2002). For instance, a large percentage of tourists who ask to go to Bat are German (Joseph Z: personal communication: 04/February/2006). In line with this, the Omani Tourism Sector Seminar and Workshop (21-22/September/2004), organized by Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (2004), concluded:

Currently, there is a gross shortage of language speaking guides in Oman and it is not feasible for any travel agency to employ on a full time basis such staff in view of the seasonality of tourism. German and French speaking personnel are most required...

Based on this, tour guidance is practiced by expatriates who might not have the required knowledge about Omani heritage. For instance, Yasin al-Tikriti (personal communication: 09/March/2006) believes that the standard of these guides in
understanding the main elements of archaeological heritage, such as Magan culture, is ‘really poor’ due to the lack of communications between tour operators and specialists. As a result for the increasing number of foreign tour guides in Oman, some respondents (e.g. AM18, AM20, AM25) showed some concern and sensibility about the quality of PIN where it is possible that some of these guides ‘provide a distorted view of the host culture to visitors’ (Reisinger 1994: 748). In this context, AM24 insisted that tour guidance is not about describing archaeological sites only, but it is a whole interpretive work for the Omani environment which should not be practised by foreigners.

Reisinger (1994: 747) explained that a tour guide’s role is to develop a positive tourist-host contact by helping the tourist to surmount the cross-cultural interaction difficulties. Unqualified tour guides can keep tourists within their touristic space isolated from contact with the local hosts. In this context, AM18 included:

> I think it is much nicer for the tourists to meet representatives from the country to feel the culture... [This] is a very effective tool of communicating his country and talking about his nation in an effective manner.

To resolve this problem AM3 suggested the development of joint training programs, e.g. at the Department of Archaeology, Sultan Qaboos University, specifically designed to prepare qualified interpreters at heritage attractions. However, the training institutes require research to determine training needs, program aims, curriculum structure and content, selections of trainees and trainers and programs assessment and evaluation (Black et al. 2001). Currently, these aspects are underdeveloped and poorly researched in Oman (both in the governmental and private sectors) where there are not enough training programs or people who know or realize PIN either as a profession or as an industry (AM34, AM25). For instance, at Oman Tourism College there are no specific
training courses or qualified trainers in tour guidance for heritage attractions in particular (AS4). Also, AM25 pointed out the absence of qualified companies that offer special guidance services or provide specialized training programs in tour guidance.

In addition to the previously-mentioned reasons behind the lack of Omani tour guides, there is also the problem of limited job opportunities in this profession (AM20). Furthermore, seasonality of tour guidance and the low salary scale and incentives provided by the tourism and hospitality private sector in Oman are other major problems challenging the profession (Ministry of Tourism 2004a, 2005b, Ministry of Manpower 2005). This is beside the socio-cultural factors discussed in Chapter Seven.

In the light of all these problems facing personal-based guidance in Oman, MOT is planning to install electronic tour guides system at some forts and castles, such as Nizwa Fort, Nakhal Fort and al-Hazm Castle (AM1), which has been criticized by some respondents for their insufficiency to communicate sensory experience (e.g. AM18, AM24).

6.6. SUMMARY
The importance of SSC comes from the strong interconnection between the quality and success of PIN and liable stewardship and trustful stakeholders. For instance, there is an interrelated relationship between the role of stewardship in developing expert interpretation for AH before interpreting it to the public. Likewise, the current status of PC and SCC is clearly influenced by SSC as this is illustrated in this chapter and chapters five and seven as well. For instance, it appeared that in the initial stages of PIN
development in Oman the government is the main body which has resources to provide the necessary interpretive infrastructures for heritage resources.

Also, it seems that priority is currently placed upon economic growth by the main policy makers with little concern about the local share of economic benefits in the real practice. Decision-makers have not updated their information about socio-cultural and socio-economic situations in the vicinity of heritage attractions. Also, due to the limited governmental financial resources, building the public awareness could be a challenge for SSC if alternative resources are not located.

Another example for the influence of SSC is that even if the current governmental regulations were adequate, their effective implementation in practice is another challenge due to the lack of effective administrative plans and limited human resources and technical support. The rescue rapid archaeological fieldworks, which are widely practiced by MOHC, are not of much value for both primary and PIN. The destruction or alteration of accompanying contextual information by constructing modern structures is commonly observed. As a result, some sites, such as al-Maysar and Arja, are mostly destroyed and others are fighting to survive against time and human intrusion, such as Bat, Qalhat, Ubaylah and Shisur Wubar.

Currently, as it appeared from the discussion, the opportunities of planning joint projects between the tourism and heritage sectors are limited which might due to the poor understanding of the complex structure and operation of managing heritage attractions and planning PIN. Certainly, this includes the lack of realization for the
potential of PIN as one crucial chain in travelling experience for visitors and resources sustainability.

An important point to be remembered is that SSC can not be isolated from its SCC in Oman and vice versa. This indicates that some of the mentioned issues discussed in this chapter and in Chapter Five are underpinned by social and cultural constructed factors. Based on the research findings, Chapter Seven will illustrate this reciprocal relationship.
PUBLIC INTERPRETATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEO TOURISM IN THE SULTANATE OF OMAN

VOLUME II

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## CHAPTER SEVEN
THE SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT AND PUBLIC INTERPRETATION

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CHAPTER SEVEN
THE SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT AND PUBLIC INTERPRETATION

7.1. INTRODUCTION

As discussed in Chapter Three, socio-cultural factors, such as value systems, morals, reservations, behaviours, community organization and collective lifestyle, are critical influential aspects in PIN of AH. Based on the research findings, this chapter explores the ways in which PIN might affect or be affected by SCC of a particular host community in Oman, e.g. differing alternative interpretations. This is because without taking into account SCC of a particular area, the potential of PIN in developing archaeotourism will be challenged continuously and there will be no ‘committed public’ (Fowler 1981: 57). The consideration of Omani SCC is important before adapting and deploying interpretive approaches from non-Omani contexts; this is supported by PIN philosophy of the National Trust, UK, where PIN needs to be bespoke to the interpreted site and the presented themes rooted in the place (Taylor 2006).

Also, the importance of SCC comes from the fact that the government, under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, has devised a strategy to develop tourism and encourage investment in this sector so that it can effectively support the socio-economic development of the country, while at the same time tourism in Oman is envisaged to be a disciplined activity that goes in line with the Omani society’s traditions (Ministry of National Economy 2001). Therefore, the creation and development of AH should be part of larger socio-cultural and economic processes in a harmonic way where both host and guests are considered. Yet, currently little attention was given to SCC at heritage attractions, including archaeological sites. Besides, the process of ‘sedimentation’ is
another problem when layers of sedimented cultural meanings serving as a barrier between us and realities (Crotty 1998: 59).

Based on the findings, the following sections will briefly discuss the influence of SCC on PIN of AH in Oman in relation to six major subjects which are: (1) Religious Values and Social Reservations; (2) Socio-Political Issues and PIN; (3) Alternative Interpretations of AH; (4) Archaeotourism as a Socio-Cultural Phenomenon; (5) The Media and PIN of AH in Oman; (6) Education and PIN of AH in Oman.

7.2. RELIGIOUS VALUES AND SOCIAL RESERVATIONS

Article (1) and Article (2) of ‘The Basic Law of the State’, established by the Royal Decree 26/75 and disseminated on 6/11/1996 (Ministry of Legal Affairs 1996), affirmed that Oman is an ‘Arab, Islamic state’ and that ‘the State’s religion is Islam and the Islamic Shari’ah (law) is the basis of legislation’. This is not surprising since around 630 AD Islam has been playing a vital role in the formation of the Omani socio-cultural, economic and political contexts (Ministry of Information 2005). Islam enjoins ‘genuine, human, equitable and reciprocal cross-cultural communication’ (Din 1989: 554). Muslims are asked to always assist travellers and ‘provide hospitality to visitors who, under the Islamic law, enjoy the rights of citizens’ (Henderson 2003: 448).

Similarly, in Islam guests are asked to respect the privacy and culture of the hosts (Aziz 1995) where sometimes tourists occupy places with cultural meanings that belong to others (Robinson 2001). Orbasli (2007: 161) used the term ‘Islamic City’ to mean those

200 Though, the Basic Law affirms the equality of all citizens before the law and freedom of religions and religious rites as Article (28) records.
historic towns or settlements where the Islamic cultural and social values are attached to them which could present serious challenges for tourism development if this is not realized by planners. For instance, Burns and Cooper (1997: 555) talked about tourism in Yemen ‘where both cultural and religious issues are perceived as everyday matters, the interactional nature of tourism and the inevitable mingling of consumer and producer, can be problematic’.

The same can be said about Oman which emphasizes the consideration of religious values and social reservations in tourism planning, including interpretive infrastructure and services, especially at religious ancient monuments which attract visitors (Omani and foreigners). For example, many graveyards and mausoleums in Dhofar region function both as sacred spaces and as tourist attractions (al-Shahri 1992). Herein, Woodward (2004: 173) warned that not all religious sites ‘are able to resolve some of the conflicts that arise from non-religious use of faith buildings’.

This means that interpreters are required to consider what Robinson (1999: 7) called the ‘cultural carrying capacity’. For instance, during the 2003 excavations inside the ancient Great Mosque of Bahla, located south-east Bahla Fort, archaeologists dug up some human bones which dated back to the third millennium B.C as confirmed by AM6 and AM33. The exhumation and display of these bones within the mosque have been disapproved by the Grand Mufti\footnote{The official religious affairs advisor for the Omani government.}, Sheikh Ahmed al-Khalili, who asked the people in charge to displace them outside the mosque (AM4). The locals who are usually fascinated by the finds and do not show any opposition about archaeological projects,
they might do when it comes to dig up human burials as this is considered as a disrespect and disturbance of the human-beings (AM13, AM12). The issue of excavating, studying, displaying and storing human remains is a common issue worldwide where within many cultures and societies a wide variety of conflicting beliefs exist about what should or should not be done with human remains (Hubert 1994).

The commercial development of archaeological sites can sometimes overlook the local traditional significance of a site and the socio-cultural well-being of a community (Ucko 1994a). As part of heritage-tourism development, PIN planners are directly responsible to consider the fact that religion contributes to the construction of SCC of Omani society. As in regard to PIN in particular, Broadie (2005) believes that the local population, who represents the first audience, should be consulted before planning or displaying any presentation. PIN stewardship should be selective and cautious in communicating information, designing and locating interpretive facilities. For instance, considering the segregation between male and female visitors in interpretive programs is of importance to Omani society (AM30).

One of the controversial issues that needs to be addressed is the gender issue. For instance, AS8 mentioned that it is not preferred that females work in archaeology. According to AM4, basically, there is no harm as women do archaeology according to Islamic regulations; however, women should be segregated from men at work places and should not be accompanied at work with a man who is not a mahram, a non-marriageable companion.
This is confirmed in a study conducted by al-Ameri (2005) in Oman who shows that most respondents preferred sex-segregated working conditions for women. Also, about 66% of the respondents asserted the influence of the socio-cultural reservations; the thing which prevents a lot of Omani women from working in places that lack segregation policy (al-Amri 2005). This might explain the low number of female graduates from the Department of Archaeology at Sultan Qaboos University (Ministry of National Economy 2005b). Accordingly, it is not surprising the some respondents in al-Ameri’s (2005: 95) study listed ‘Archaeological Diggings’ as one of the unsuitable professions for women.

Similarly, Muslim women ‘do appear to be disadvantaged as tourists, hosts and workers in the tourism industry’ (Henderson 2003: 449), though this varies from one place to another and from time to time depending on such factors as the level of liberalism and personal values. Again, based on al-Ameri’s (2005) study, working at travel agencies in general is considered one of the improper jobs for women in Oman. Additionally, it is not permitted that a woman travels alone for more than 24 hours unless accompanied by a mahram (Din 1989, AM4).

Considering this, those Omani females who desire to work as tour guides would be challenged unless there is a policy goes congruently with the socio-cultural norms. Until then, women might continue to miss out on formal employment opportunities in PIN because the norms continue to restrict the type of economic activities in which women may be engaged. Although the ‘Basic Statue of the State’ of 1996 was not based on

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202 This is similar to Indonesia where Wilkinson and Pratiwi (1995) mentioned that women should not contact foreign tourists; women being involved in guiding are not regarded favourably by the community.
gender discrimination, e.g. Article 17 (Ministry of Legal Affairs 1996), the *Human Development Report* (Ministry of National Economy 2003a: 173) recorded that:

\[
\text{Laws by themselves are not enough to put an end to various forms of discrimination against women in Oman. Prevailing values and economic and social pressures often block the application of these Laws in real life.}
\]

Since the 1970s, Oman witnessed a significant advancement in education of females and provision of employment opportunities for them as the governmental statistics show\(^{203}\) (Ministry of National Economy 2003b, 2005a). Yet, active women’s participation in the development process is still inhibited by several obstacles, including some of the social reservations, e.g. conventional male attitude towards women (Ministry of National Economy 2003a, Gerd Weisgerber: personal communication: 07/June/2006).

As shown in Chapter Six, one weaknesses of the tourism industry in Oman is its lack of policy and evaluation studies pertaining to socio-cultural and socio-economic aspects of the local hosts. Also, it has been confirmed that tourism development is epitomized by lacking comprehensive practical sustainable development plans. Lately in Oman, there has been a relative increase in the level of infrastructure and tourism superstructure planned to support the growing tourism industry; however, many of the assigned development areas lie in rural areas with strong indigenous socio-cultural values. These values have been listed as one of the challenges to counter the Omanization processes in

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\(^{203}\) The ratio of female students in the general education increased from 12.7% in 1971-1972 to 48.6% in 2001-2002 (Ministry of National Economy 2003a: 170).

Also, Tucker (2007: 87) reported that ‘as tourism has developed in the region surrounding the World Heritage Site in Göreme in central Turkey, men have become tourism entrepreneurs and gained tourism employment whilst women have remained largely excluded from tourism work’.
the tourism industry in general, including PIN as a profession (Ministry of Tourism 2004a), especially amongst communities living outside the capital area. For example, in regard to tour guidance, AM18 confirmed the following:

There is a huge misconception about the role of the tour guide. I have evidence for this from interviews we have done and a lot of training sessions that we have organized at MOT. There is a misconception about the job as a tourist guide; a lot do not want to work as a tourist guide; they think it is a low job.

Parallel to this, Din (1989) argued that different religious backgrounds between hosts and guests may influence the services supplied to the guests in certain Muslim countries where in some cases tourism is discouraged because of its impact on local communities. However, according to the current facts in Oman, the tourism industry could represent a threat to Islamic cultural values and social traditions by providing for the secular hedonistic needs of the tourism market such as internationalized resorts and bars with international service standards, e.g. Ras al-Jinz. That is to say, presently, religion and other socio-cultural values in Oman exert limited influence on the operation of tourist-related activities as implied by AM9. This is not surprising since the lack of Omani expertise has resulted in the employment of foreign labour forces and consultants for planning, marketing and advisory services which are western-oriented to provide for the secular needs of the tourist-originating countries (see Section 6.6).

By adapting standardized Western designs without considering SCC, it is expected that violations of Islamic values can be opposed by conservative members of the Omani society and develop negative repercussions and a possible feeling of xenophobia as is

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204 For instance, in al-Sharja, UAE, the sale of alcoholic beverages was banned in the early 1980s for religious reasons (Sharpley 2002: 227).
the case in Egypt (Aziz 1995) and Malaysia (Din 1989, Henderson 2003). In the long run, this can be in conflict with the community development paradigm for tourism (Liu and Wall 2006), including community readiness to involve in PIN. This has already been reported by experts at Ras al-Hadd and Ras al-Jinz (Ministry of Tourism 2004b). Also, Rashid al-Hatimi (personal communication: 06/January/2006), a local inhabitant, mentioned that some visitors to Wadi al-Ayn tombs walk accidentally on the Islamic cemetery which is located at the bottom of the site. Therefore, the promotion of ‘responsible tourism’ (Jenkins 1994: 6) was supported by some respondents (e.g. AM12).

7.3. SOCIO-POLITICAL ISSUES AND PIN

In Oman there is a reciprocal relationship between heritage PIN and the socio-political status where the revival of some bygone cultural patterns of heritage into public displays may produce ‘hot interpretations’ (Uzzell 1989b: 33). Herein, PIN could bring back some undesired ‘patrimonial preservations’ of what the community is trying to forget and to leave behind in order to move forward (Jafari 1996: 45).

Accordingly, some respondents were concerned that PIN planners need to consider this interwoven connectivity and sensitivity if an appropriate interpretive provision is to be accomplished. In Oman, ‘while democratic debate is encouraged in Oman, the society

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205 Sadly to say this has continually been linked negatively to Islam ‘as a religion of strict taboos’ (Aziz 1995: 92). This suggests the need for a new interpretive strategy which can enhance Muslim images and promote Islamic societies as peaceful, welcoming destinations. Needless to say that due to the political conflicts status in the Middle East, some respondents, e.g. AM7, believe that it is important to explain to the European people that there are other countries in the region, such as Oman, where people are tolerant and understanding. AM10 shared this view and mentioned that ‘Oman is politically stabilized and safe which is an essential element in tourism development. People here in Oman do welcome people from all cultures; hospitality level is very high’.

206 For instance, Dubai has a liberal attitude towards alcohol and nightlife which could cause offence to some Dubai residents (Horner and Swarbrooke 2004).
as a whole strongly rejects anti-social acts which are not intended to serve the greater good’ (Ministry of Information 2005: 30). As in other neighbouring countries in the Arabian Peninsula, where the society is tribally-based in nature (Miles 1919), in Oman the tribe represents ‘the backbone of Oman’s social structure’ (Ministry of National Economy 2003a: 194). Some archaeological sites are located within tribal domain or belong to a group of people who do not wish to interpret them to the public (AS4). Herein, ‘all, part, or none of these cultural and spatial zones may be shared with tourists’ (Jafari 1996: 46).

The sensitivity against some of AH evidence for socio-political reasons is also reported by some respondents. For instance, AM19 referred to some rock inscriptions, writings and drawings where some of these materials represent original historical records for the social, cultural and political conditions in Oman (e.g. tribal wars). This may explain why some of these inscriptions have been ignored or vandalised by some people as confirmed by AM19. Also, AM21 referred to the problem of representing al-Balid history in PIN where various tribes are involved.

One of the major issues in PIN is the heritage internationalisation and ownership when a particular AH is connected to wider groups of people from the global village such as those sites and objects with religious values (Wallis and Blain 2003, Schadla-Hall 2004). According to Insoll (1999: 8), archaeological study of religious sites is a complex affair, and for this reason the bigger picture is often avoided as a taboo subject. A related example to this issue is the Jewish Cemetery (maqbarat al-yahud) and the Jew

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207 To manage this issue for instance, the Royal Decree 16/2001 was issued to prevent this conflict in regard to the four frankincense World Heritage Sites, Khor Rori, al-Balid, Wubar Shisur and Wadi Dawkah.
Chapter Seven: The Socio-cultural Context

House (bait al-yahudi) in Sohar. While some respondents believe that Jewish archaeological sites are part of the Omani heritage which needs to be interpreted to the public properly. Nonetheless, some of them are worried that this kind of PIN might generate and provoke undesirable sensitivity (AM9, AM17, AM18, AM30, AS1, AS3, AS5, AS11)\(^{208}\). This might due to the ongoing Arab-Israeli political conflicts in the Middle Eastern region (Ministry of Information 2004: 31)\(^{209}\).

Another possible reason, and similar to the Islamic archaeology (see Section 2.5.2), this might due to those factors mentioned in chapter five and six as confirmed by AM13. For instance, except for some recent initial research that was conducted by Aviva Klein-Franke (personal communication: 02/August/2006), there are no proper previous studies for the Jewish heritage, including the cemetery and the house in discussion (see Klein-Franke 2006).

Other socio-political issues in regard to AH interpretation were highlighted by Potts (1998). For example, in regard to Magan culture, many respondents assured that Magan has to be interpreted and promoted as part of the Omani heritage (AM13, AM20). Yet, Potts (1998: 195) asked a sceptical question, i.e. ‘Do the modern inhabitants of the UAE and Oman identify themselves with the land known in cuneiform sources as Magan [knowing that] the Arabs did not arrive in the region until sometime late in the pre-Islamic era?’ Potts (1998: 196) continued his argument by writing:

\(^{208}\) Lowenthal (1998: 26-35) argued that stewards of heritage need to learn how to strengthen their heritage through interchanging and sharing with others, because if ‘self-centred interpretation’ takes over, heritage will be in danger of becoming sterile or unproductive. Also, Carr (2004: 434) mentioned that an ‘appropriate, authentic interpretation has been regarded as a means of enhancing cross-cultural understanding and improving the quality of the visitor experience’.

\(^{209}\) Lehr and Katz (2003) Baram and Rowan (2004) and Bauman (2004) also referred to the underestimation of Arabic and Islamic history in Israel in PIN.
As more and more evidence of Harappan civilization\textsuperscript{210} is discovered in the Oman peninsula, some worry has been expressed that local Indian and Pakistanis expatriates...will contend that the original pre-Arab population of the area was Hindi. This, they feel, would unleash a terrible situation in which claims for prior ownership would be made, something to be avoided at all costs.

Also, some respondents talked about the interpretation of ‘colonial heritage’ and non-Arabic AH. For instance, AM6 referred to the Portuguese Forts in Oman. Besides, for Oman there is no doubt about the great influence of Persian culture on Omani tangible and intangible heritage through the ages as this can be seen in such archaeological sites as Qalhat (al-Zadjali 1997, Bhacker and Bhacker 2004, Costa 2004) and Bahla Fort, especially the oldest part known as al-Qasabah (AM6). Again, Potts (1998: 196) asked ‘what is the attitude of Arab nationals today to the Persian elements in their archaeological records’, including Oman\textsuperscript{211}.

### 7.4. ALTERNATIVE INTERPRETATIONS FOR AH IN OMAN

As discussed in Section 3.6.3, alternative archaeology should be an indispensable part of any PIN as there is no one meaning and wholly objective account to be discovered in the past. According to the findings, local communities have differing interpretations for what happened in the past at some archaeological ruins based on such factors as religion, politics and superstitions. These interpretations have been socio-culturally constructed and handed on from one generation to another.

\textsuperscript{210} The mature phase of the Indus civilization, flourished in the Indus river valley during the third millennium B.C in northeast Pakistan (Possehl 2003).

\textsuperscript{211} Again, this claim can be rejected based on the fact that some respondents confirmed that even Islamic archaeology in Oman is underdeveloped and that archaeological research and literature are mainly focused on pre-Islamic cultures (AM13, AM35, BX5, BX9, AS3).
Considering alternative interpretations may foster sense of pride, authenticity, partnership and stewardship amongst the indigenous communities. In fact, the alternatives represent valuable resources for many primary interpretations. Al-Shahri (1992: 22) in his research about the ancient tombs in Dhofar region wrote:

> To archaeologists studying the life, customs and traditions of the ancient Dhafari, the graves and tombs of the region's ancestor are of crucial importance.

Therefore, Tosi (1976) emphasised that the application of data gathered from anthropological research should be considered when interpreting Oman’s AH. Also, based on their fieldworks, AM10, AM33 and BX3 consider ethno-archaeological studies necessary for understanding AH in Oman. However, similar to many other inter-disciplinary researches, ethno-archaeological studies yet to be developed in Oman. Oman is a country where culture is still very lively and strong. The people are attached to their sacred places and the majority of the local communities have their own interpretations for archaeological ruins (AM10). Some of which are based on religious beliefs and/or mixed with inherited superstitious tales that might have various levels of certainty depends on time and place.

One of the themes in alternative archaeology in Oman is ancient knowledge and power where ‘ancient people are seen as endowed with greater knowledge and power than contemporary civilizations’ (Schadla-Hall 2004: 257). To exemplify, the inhabitants of

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212 For example, one of the ethno-archaeological studies that might help in understanding the social and economic aspects of the past is Lancaster and Lancaster’s (2002) study in Ja’alan area, eastern Oman, in relation to the trade and exchange networks which has been seen as crucial to the development of social institutions in the societies of the past. Also, BX3 wrote: ‘There are the agricultural settlements of the local inhabitants of Oman and the U.A.E; they are the key to our understanding of the archaeology of the Hajar region [Oman] and of an early civilization in the Arabian Peninsula.’

213 Some of the rock arts in Oman are connected to some traditional myths. For example, the anthropomorphic figures at the massive boulder of Hasat Bin Salt in al-Hamra area are interpreted by two supernatural stories inherited by the people in al-Hamra itself and by the elders in Nizwa (Reade 2000).
Shir believe that a legendary tyrannical giant called Kybaykeb built the ancient towers for his own use (BX5). The legend which tells the story of Kybaykeb, the owner of a magical sword, and a local Bedouin called Qadi is well known amongst the locals (al-Taie et al. 1997). Similarly, in Dhofar regions it is believed that some graves called asbaheeta were built overnight by jinn\textsuperscript{214} (i.e. spirits) who ‘possessed the unusual power to build them overnight’ (al-Shahri 1992: 25)\textsuperscript{215}.

Also, AS11 reported that the people of Salalah used not to enter al-Balid because they think it is a cursed city. Sometimes, such local interpretations are underpinned by historic sources as Zarins (2001) mentioned in regard to Shisur Wubar which was discovered in the early 1990s. During that time, it was announced in the mass media that the ‘Lost City of Ubar’ had been found in Oman which probably represents the Kingdom of Iram, the people of Ad’s land, which is mentioned in the Holy Qur’an (Chapter 89: Verses 6-9) and doomed by God because of its disobedience and sinful ways (al-Taie et al. 1997, Zarins 2001). However, some scholars argue that there is no evidence that Shisur Wubar was once a city called Ubar, although it was probably a caravanserai on overland frankincense trade routes (Stewart 2004).

A very important point to be mentioned here is that ‘when archaeological enquiry leads to conclusions contrary to the claims of a community of faith, then it is important not to underestimate the robustness and adaptability of religious discourse’ (Bergquist 2001:

\textsuperscript{214}A plural for a jinni, which in Islamic and Arabic culture, is ‘an intelligent spirit able to appear in human and animal form’ (Soanes 2003: 602).

\textsuperscript{215}Also, although there is no scientific evidence, there are some tombs which are believed to belong to Messengers of Allah mentioned in the Holy Qur’an such as Hud, Job, and Imran. People of Dhofar region greatly respect these tombs. They pay them regular visits and regard them as sacred places to perform vows and sacrifices; despite the fact that these practices contradict the teachings of Islam (see al-Shahri 1992).
This is important to be remembered in both primary and public interpretations as religion represents one of the utmost driving forces in the Omani society. Certainly, local alternative interpretations need to be balanced with other scientific interpretations for the past. Paul Yule (personal communication: 02/July/2006) wrote:

In Muslim countries, archaeology already faces a socio-cultural challenge in the face of a growing disenchantment with western values...Archaeologists are neither for nor against Islam. Their questions are individual and cannot be classified in a simple way.

To explain more, the interconnection between archaeology and anthropology is undeniable\(^{216}\). Through the history of archaeology, the principles of the *Evolution Theory* are used to interpret archaeological records through physical, social and cultural anthropological theories (Trigger 1989, Schnapp 1993, Bahn 1996, Gosden 1999). This theory has no support in Islam; similar to the Biblical account of human origin, it is considered as one of the anti-religious ideology (Trigger 1989: 102-103); hence, *Creationism*\(^{217}\) ‘has clashed with archaeological interpretation since the middle of the nineteenth century… [and] emphasized that humans, along with other living things, were directly created by God in much the same form as they are today’\(^{218}\) (Skeates 2000: 100). Therefore, Muslims ‘oppose evolutionary theories, perceiving them to be a direct threat to their religious faith’ (Skeates 2000: 100) because they ‘shift the power of God to nature which is considered as independent of Him’ (Nasr 2006: 57). According to the Holy Qura’an (2: 34), Allah created the first man on Earth from scratch. He did not evolve him from any other of His creation (see Abdul Wahid 2005).

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\(^{216}\) ‘Archaeology is anthropology or it is nothing’, a statement with which many archaeologists would strongly agree (Gosden 1999: 2).

\(^{217}\) For creationists or religious believers ‘their views are not myth but eternal truth, and it is the nature of such truths that they are subject neither to verification, nor falsification’ (Montagu 1984: 7).

\(^{218}\) In the same context, Islamic religious art avoided recreating the human form for that was thought to be God’s prerogative only. God alone is the Creator or the “Fashioner.” Calligraphy, in addition to vegetal and geometrical designs, became a way of artistic expression (Neill 2006).
In regard to this subject, the real problem here ‘lies not only in deciding what messages about the past should be communicated, [but] how these meanings should be explained to others’ (Ucko 1996: ix). In this matter, Jeffery Rose (personal communication: 25/June/2006) believed that ‘Omanis aren’t against evolution; they just don’t understand the relationship between creation of Adam in the Qur’an and biological evolution’.

AM18 mentioned ‘if you don’t provide people with information, they will try to find these information in their own way’ which sometimes might result in misconception of the religious texts, in particular the Holy Qur’an and the sayings of the Prophet, Hadiths. For instance, in Sahih al-Bukhari\textsuperscript{219} (Khan 2006), one of the Prophet’s disciples, Abdullah bin Umar, narrated:

\begin{center}
\textit{When the Prophet passed by (a place called) Al Hijr\textsuperscript{220}, he said, “Do not enter the house of those who were unjust to themselves, unless (you enter) weeping, lest you should suffer the same punishment as was inflicted upon them.” After that he covered his face with his sheet cloth while he was on the camel-saddle.}
\end{center}

This \textit{hadith} can be misinterpreted by some people to the extent that might prevent them from visiting archaeological sites using the Prophet’s commands as evidence. This is despite the fact that the Holy Qur’an encourages Muslims to learn from archaeology, but without admiring those people who disbelieve in Allah (AM4).

In line with this, some respondents mentioned that one of the common alternative interpretations or misnomers for archaeological sites amongst the public in Oman is the concept of \textit{al-Jahiliyah} which usually means the pre-Islamic period or the ‘age of

\textsuperscript{219} The title of the books of Hadiths compiled by Muhammad ibn Isma’il al-Bukhari, a scholar (see Salafi Publication 2006).
\textsuperscript{220} Located in the north of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; alternatively it is called \textit{Mada'in Salih}
ignorance’ (Potts 1998: 195). In this context, Mowayiah Ibrahim (personal communication: 07/June/2006) said ‘our understanding of al-Jahiliyyah led to our ignorance of important material culture of Arabia before Islam’\(^{221}\). To exemplify, most of the tombs and graves in Dhofar region have been identified as pre-Islamic monuments (al-Shahri 1992).

Also, the prehistoric tombs at al-Ayn and Bat are commonly known as *Qoboor Bani Juhal* which means the tombs of ignorant people (Rashid al-Hatimi: personal communication: 06/January/2006). According to some respondents, this has negatively affected archaeological fieldworks at some sites as BX9 reported that the work at al-Ayn was once objected to because of ‘the danger of a Jahil in the grave’. Also, Yule and Weisgerber (1998: 238) reported that the damage to the towers at Shir ‘may be connected with a fear of jinn on the part of the local population’. Another example for the misnomer and mystification in interpreting archaeological sites by the locals in some region of Oman is pointed out by BX4 who wrote:

> People have tales in their minds about the presence of the Persians sometime in history. Therefore, they explain all old remains as built in the Persian Period\(^{222}\).

This is not surprising as there is no active public archaeology as discussed in Section 6.3.1; thus, it takes much time and effort to convince the public about archaeology, especially the prehistoric societies (AM19). Herein, Bergquist (2001: 185) argued that ‘the rigorous scientific approach of modern archaeology can lead to some neglect of

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\(^{221}\) Potts (1998: 195) wrote ‘*In a region which has yielded only a small number of inscribed objects, it is easy to see how traditionalists could dismiss entirely the pre-Islamic era as Jahaliyya*’.

\(^{222}\) For example, the locals in Zukait, Izki area, think that those third millennium B.C tombs (Yule and Weisgerber 1998) or as they called them *booms* were built by Persians who used to extract and manufacture copper in the past (Saif al-Riami: personal communication: 23/September/2005). The status is the same at such sites as *Dhabk al-Furs* or ‘the Persian Castle’ in al-Hamra area (AM30).
things that may seem irrational’. In this case, conflict may arise in case the discovered information appears to underestimate beliefs or practices as AS11 reported that some local people at Khor Rori opposed the archaeological excavations due to their social and cultural reservations. Hence, to avoid such sensitive conflicts Bergquist (2001: 188) suggested a ‘negotiated consent’ or ‘bilingualism of discourse’, scientific and religious. For instance, AM33 talked about the locals in Ras al-Jinz who are now familiar with archaeologists and their fieldworks.

7.5. ARCHAEO TOURISM AS A SOCIO-CULTURAL PHENOMENON IN OMAN

It has been confirmed in Chapter Five that the current status of PC of archaeological sites represent one major challenges for PIN provision and consequently for domestic archaeotourism in Oman. Although, the lack of public archaeology as discussed earlier in Section 6.2.1 is a major element in the underdeveloped status of archaeotourism in Oman, the findings show that public apathy about AH is another influential socio-cultural factor as well. In practice, as in many other Muslim countries, in Oman although Islam encourages travel, it has little influence on the mode of tourism development (Din 1989). Some authors recount that Islam enjoins particular types of travel, such as the pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj), which have retained an important religions and social function (Aziz 1995, Timothy and Iverson 2006)223.

According to the Holy Qur’an and Hadith, Muslims ‘should travel in order to visit friends and relatives and fully appreciate the beauty of God’s world’ (Henderson 2003: 448), either in the realm of past or present. In this sense, ‘whatever tourist attractions the

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223 In some cases, ‘the motive behind a pilgrimage is similar to that behind a tour’ (MacCannell 2004: 199).
traveller sees [they] should make him/her more aware and appreciative of Allah’s greatness’ (Din 1989: 554). Indeed, Islam as a religion is not against tourism\textsuperscript{224}; conversely unlike the commercial goals of modern mass tourism, it does encourage purposeful tourism that brings people socio-economic benefits as long as it is not against Islamic regulations and mainly motivated mainly by pleasure and hedonistic pursuits (Din 1989).

In the present, although the majority of the Omani public realizes and appreciates all previously-mentioned values in regard to Islam and tourism; however, there are a few who in practice observe these values in their daily lives. For instance, AM18 mentioned that ‘there are a lot of people who actually think that tourism is a waste of time. There are people within the Ministry of Tourism who do not believe that tourism is an important activity’.

Today, Omanis walk nearby or through past archaeological sites every day, but know nothing about how they were created and transformed to their current condition. The intangible national and universal concepts of AH, e.g. pride, aesthetic, have not been enforced through PIN for the tangible features of AH. To be more specific, despite the valuable values of AH, travelling to learn from the past for present and future benefits has little influence on the mode of domestic archaeotourism (AM9, AM3, AM5, AM13, AM30, AM34, BX5, BX9) even with religious provocative propagation. For instance, Yule and Weisgerber (1998: 238) mentioned that in regard to Shir tombs ‘although these tombs were known amongst the local population, there was little public notice of

\textsuperscript{224} For instance, in Islam travellers are excused from many duties which are obligatory when they are not travelling, e.g. postpone fasting Ramadan and shorten or combine prayers.
them until the early 1990’s’. Also, Gerd Weisgerber (personal communication: 17/March/2006) asserted that at Bat ‘it was a surprise that most of visitors were Germans or Austrians’. As well, AM28 confirmed that only a few people from Sohar visit Sohar Fort and Arja (see Section 6.3.1).

In this part, it is confirmed that similar to PIN as a profession, archaeotourism as a culture is not a popular mainstream or a social and recreational activity amongst the general public in Oman. It is unusual to find Omani families visiting archaeological sites (AS9, AS13, AM30). For instance, the Survey of Salalah Khareef Visitors 2007 (Ministry of National Economy and MOT 2008) confirmed that 93.17% of Omani visitors described ‘weather and natural views’ as the most satisfactory things in Salalah. However, in regard to ‘religious and archaeological sites’, in particular, only 0.25% of the Omani visitors in 2007 included these sites as one of the satisfactory factors in their visits to Salalah. Mainly, the Omani tourists who visit archaeological sites can be described as culture-peripheral tourists (see Section 3.2.2) where archaeological sites do not represent a main motive to visit a destination as it is the case in Ras al-Jinz (Khamis al-Amri: personal communication: 11:08:2008) and Shisur Wubar (Mabrook Bayit-Misan: personal communication: 11:08: 2008). The public in Oman appears to be more enthusiastic for leisure travel (inbound or outbound) than any other kind of tourism (Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Ministry of National Economy 2002, Ministry of National Economy and MOT 2004, Ministry of National Economy and MOT 2006). Visiting relatives and friends (VRF) comes next in order which might be
underpinned by the Islamic values to strengthen the bonds of Islamic society (Ministry of National Economy 2003a).\(^{225}\)

Also, the *Household Travel and Tourism Survey 2000*, which was conducted by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of National Economy (2002: 17-23), shows that in regard to the internal trips or inbound tourism, it appeared that the main purposes for travelling amongst the households (Omani and non-Omani) are recreation, leisure and vacations during the weekends or holidays. As for the international trips or outbound tourism, the survey illustrates that VRF, recreation and leisure and shopping are respectively the main three purposes for travelling.

Also, in regard to museums, some respondents claim that in addition to the physical access barriers (see Section 6.3.6), there are psychological access barriers (McLean 1997) to museums which are envisaged by the public as the venues of cultural authority and touristic space (AM19, AM31, AM36). In comparison with natural history museums, it appears that museums with archaeological and historical collections are less visited by the public in Oman (Figure 7.1).

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\(^{225}\) In 1999 and 2000, the Omani government conducted several household statistical surveys that covered various standards among which is living, household expenditure and income, time use, leisure time use and travel and tourism. With regard to activities, the surveys show that men spend three times the amount of time women spend on reading, sports and leisure time activities. Men also spend 18% more time than women on social visits, 13% on learning and 14% on travelling and touring. In comparison, women spend 20% more time than men on watching television and 29% on socializing with family members (see Ministry of National Economy 2003a).
As well, opposite to archaeological sites, some respondents assured that the majority of Omani people are more interested in visiting forts and castles in particular (AM9, AS6). In fact, some people disregard archaeology and archaeological materials (AM3, AM19)\(^{226}\), they consider it against modernization (AS4). Also, there are those people who are against exhumation and link archaeology to grave diggers, treasures hunters and bone collectors (AS9, AM33)\(^{227}\). Another respondent mentioned that there are some Omanis who mix archaeological interpretations with myths and supernatural spirits (AM35). In many time, these misunderstandings has resulted in conflicts between archaeologists and the locals\(^{228}\) as happened in Khor Rori (AS11).

One possible reason for this as expressed by AM21 is that ‘most people are not interested in the past because they don’t understand it…To them the past is dead and has no relation to their living’. AM20 confirmed this and added that as it is in Arabian

\(^{226}\) Du Cardi’s (2003: 18) describes the relation between the public and archaeology in the Arabian Gulf Countries, including Oman, by saying ‘The past in terms of public consciousness rarely exceeded a couple of centuries, and was usually seen in ethnographic terms as the traditional way of life which had changed little from one generation to the next.

\(^{227}\) In line with this, Broadie (2005: 130) assured that the public keenness for archaeology ‘is often sparked by the perceived romance of treasure hunting and the challenge for archaeologists are to redirect this enthusiasm’.

\(^{228}\) Saif al-Riami (personal communication: 23/September/2005) reported that once there was a British expedition in the 1970s came to Zukait, Izki area, when the locals thought of them as a group of thieves.
Peninsula, archaeological ruins and historical monuments represent usual sceneries to people in Oman which makes them unattractive. In another word, archaeological sites do not capture the imagination - tourist gaze (Urry 2002). Therefore, archaeology does not represent a priority in their daily living requirements either for local communities or administrators; they have their own interests and issues to deal with, especially in less developing countries (AM10, BX7)\textsuperscript{229}.

Indeed, such issues as intellectual and physical accessibility to and within the sites, travelling expenses, and buying or renting equipment are some of many other economic difficulties facing the low income of major percentage of families in Oman\textsuperscript{230}, especially in the lack of governmental and social or welfare agencies that support what is known as ‘social tourism’ (Murphy 1985: 23)\textsuperscript{231}. This was confirmed by AM21, AM29 and AM31 and by the Human Development Report (Ministry of National Economy 2003a: 64) which concluded that:

\textit{Omani’s satisfaction with their living standards appeared less than average (47 on a scale that ranged between zero and 100)...In general, to raise the level of Omani’s satisfaction with respect to their living standards, more attention should be directed to improve social security, economic opportunities, housing etc.}

There is no doubt that those mentioned socio-psychological, cultural and economic factors might deprive, directly or indirectly, the enthusiasm to develop in-country training programs in public archaeology, to provide interpretive services at

\textsuperscript{229} It has been argued by Aslan (2005) and Daher’s (2006) that in the Arab region the preservation of cultural heritage resources is challenged by local social, cultural and political conditions.

\textsuperscript{230} It can be said that this socio-economic status due partially to the fact that most Omani people still prefer to join the public sector rather than starting their own business where 'the Government continues to be a major actor in generating income and providing job opportunities to citizens' (Ministry National Economy 2003a: 37).

\textsuperscript{231} According to Murphy (1985: 23), social tourism ‘involves the provision of vacations for people who can afford them only with the aid of a third party...to extend the benefits of vacations to a broader segment of society’. 
archaeological sites and sequentially to hinder or even halt archaeotourism in Oman. Therefore, it is vital that these factors need to be addressed by SSC in Oman, especially that there are some people who are interested in developing the primary and public interpretations of AH in Oman (AM6, AM32, AM33, AM35, AS1, AS6).

In regard to this, the findings pointed out two particular underdeveloped channels in Oman, namely mass media and education, which are crucial in avoiding being trapped by existing interpretations for the past, maximizing self-guided constructive reification and minimizing the processes of sedimentation (Crotty 1998).

7.6. THE MEDIA AND PIN OF AH IN OMAN

The role of the media in interpreting and presenting AH to the public has long been realized by people in such sectors as education and marketing (see Chapter Three). Herein, the term ‘the media’ or ‘the mass media’ means ‘the various modes of channels of communication as an industry in the public domain’ (Nielsen 2001: 24) which include such media as print media, broadcast media and internet.

Since its early beginning in the 1970s, two of the main aims for the Omani media are to inform the public and to promote sense of national identity by encouraging citizens to play an active part in the country’s development (Ministry of Information 2004). The media has proved to be effective in Oman as a tool for PIN of AH as this confirmed, yet, some respondents, especially those who has previous fieldworks, mentioned that working with the media is difficult and limited in motivating and attracting the public to visit archaeological excavations and understand archaeology (AM6, AM19, AM23,
AM28, AM30, AM32, AM35, AS1, AS6, AS11, AS13, BX5, BX9). For instance, AS9 talked about the excavations at Bausher where there was no continuous support for archaeologists to survive the site.

More evidence was provided by AM21, AU4 and AS10 who confirmed that the promotional publications for the World Heritage frankincense sites are limited and seasonal, particularly during al-Khareef season. Also, in regard to Ras al-Jinz, AM33 mentioned that TV has never been there since a long time ago.

That is to say, the role of the Omani media is underutilized as an educational and promotional medium for AH in Oman. This is not surprising as the archival files for the Ministry of Information show the limited number of documentary films and programs concerning AH in Oman in the period from 1975 to 2004 (AU5)\(^\text{232}\). According to official statistics, 32.2% of the Omani national radio and television’s programs are classified as ‘religious and cultural’, 20.2% as ‘recreational and art’ and 3.4% as youth and sports (Ministry of National Economy 2003b: 3-21). Also, there is no independent public printed media or internet media specializing in Oman’s archaeology or history (Ministry of National Economy 2005b: 1-12).

Some respondents referred to the fact that the Omani media is intensively oriented more toward presenting and promoting other natural and cultural attractions, such as living heritage and castles (AM3, AS2). Other respondents criticized the poor quality and desultory inaccurate isolated context of the presented information to the public (AM14,

\(^{232}\) For example, in 1989 the national TV presented two short films titled ‘Ancient Mining in Oman’, 14 minutes and 15 seconds and ‘Bat and Bahla’, 8 minutes and 47 seconds.
AM35, AS5). Waleed al-Tikriti (personal communication: 03/March/2006) shared these perspectives and added:

_The media people do not always care about the scientific side of the subject. Some of the journalists rely on their own sources without proper investigations._

Additionally, some of the published information is out of date (AM30). According to AM33, ‘if you look at the books, they are all repeating the same things that we have done 20 years ago’. Furthermore, a number of respondents referred to the problem of limited published materials about AH in Arabic and plain language (AM6, BX7). Currently, most of the published materials about archaeological excavations are published in foreign languages and made in scholarly print media which might be unavailable in Oman, incompressible for the non-specialists and unaffordable for the majority of the public.

For instance, AM8 pointed out the absence of publications about Magan culture and its interpretation in the Omani print media. As well, in regard to the broadcast media there are no available documentary films and promotional materials about mining history in Oman (AM9) or Bronze Age settlements, such as Bat area regardless its universal significance (AS3).

Although some respondents believe that the Ministry of Information is largely responsible for this issue as mentioned above, others blamed MOHC for being not cooperative with the media (AS5). Another practical reason could be that in Oman there is only one national TV channel and one radio station which have their designated
policies and priorities by the government (AM29). Additionally, AU5 listed the following problems facing the Omani media in regard to PIN of AH:

- **Lack of awareness among the people in charge of the media about AH values in practical sense.**
- **Limited financial resources to produce programs about AH in Oman.**
- **Limited technical facilities.**
- **Lack of specializing staff in heritage resources in general.**
- **There is the problem of bureaucracy.**

In many cases, and as the next section evidences, the underutilization of the media in communicating and developing the values of archaeotourism is strongly connected to the poor presentation and PIN of AH in the Omani education system. This comes from the fact that the media is one of the vital tools in informal education as this has been discussed in Chapter Three.

### 7.7. EDUCATION AND PIN OF AH IN OMAN

Earlier in Chapter Six and in this chapter, the findings confirmed the limited role of informal education in Oman in communicating AH through public interpretive practices and approaches, both on-site and off-site. According to Light (1995: 124), informal learning is both a motive for and a requirement of visiting heritage sites’. This

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233 Currently, the Ministry of Information has offered the opportunities for the private sector in Oman to establish private TV and radio stations to play a part in the Sultanate’s media. The private sector involvement is strongly encouraged and supported by the Royal Decree No. 87/2004 which amended the Law on Printed Matter and Publication and the Royal Decree 95/2004 which promulgated the Law of Private Radio and Television Establishment (Ministry of Information 2006: 69).

234 According to Light (1995: 117), informal education can be defined as ‘the self-motivated, voluntary, exploratory, non-coercive learning and understanding which can take a place during a visit to a heritage site’.
suggests the needs to provide appropriate PIN through active public programs in the media or museums for instance as this has been repeatedly confirmed by respondents (AM9, AM21, AM35). One important reason for doing this is that there is a general lack of knowledge about the national history of Oman among the public (AM6) and interest in archaeology is limited to those with appropriate educational background (BX1).

A very pressing issue in regard to PIN of AH via the informal education in Oman is the high level of illiteracy, especially in the rural areas where few people are able to communicate through printed media. For instance, in 2000 the illiteracy rate among people 15 years and above stood at 26.4% (Ministry of National Economy 2003a: 35). So, it is not surprising that the majority of respondents asserted that educating the public is a priority to construct a proper insight about AH. For example, at al-Balid area, AM21 mentioned that ‘education is the biggest thing. You have to educate people, till they become interested’. Also, AM33 pointed out that the people in Ras al-Jinz ‘have not been educated for archaeology’. In another word, the development of PIN of AH in informal education can be attained gradually through well-designed and long-term formal and informal education.

The importance of this sector comes from the fact that according to the official statistics, a major part of Omani society is young (see Section 2.3). The Ministry of Education estimated that the grand total of students’ number during the school year of 2004/2005 is ca. 597,534 at both the basic and general education establishments (Ministry of Information 2005: 96-97). This is without counting the students at the higher education institutes, either public or private.
The importance of this comes from the fact that the awareness about the value of AH and other heritage resources in Oman should start from the preliminary level of formal education (AM24). Therefore, the World Heritage Convention of 1972 (World Heritage Centre 2005) and ICOMOS charters (1993) emphasized that each State party should provide information on education (primary, secondary and tertiary) and information programs to strengthen appreciation of heritage resources. However, and according to ICCROM’s report, ‘a serious deficiency in organizing educational activities for professionals in the Arab countries is the relative lack of published material in Arabic’ (Aslan 2005: 13). In regard to Oman, the Human Development Report (Ministry of National Economy 2003a: 35) recorded that:

There are deficiencies in the quality of education particularly in the educational content that leads to skills and capabilities formation.

As for PIN of AH, the findings show the absence of practical relationship between AH and school curricula (AM3, AM10, BX5, BX8, BX9, AS10, AS11) where there are only a few teachers who are interested in involving archaeology as a subject in their curricula (AM35). For instance, al-Kharoosi’s (2002) research showed the underdeveloped role of the current history curriculum in Oman in raising the awareness of secondary school students about the heritage tourism in Oman.

At that early time in the 1970s, and because of the lack of qualified Omani experts in designing and teaching history curricula, recourse has been taken to the importation of Arabic-speaking educationalists and history scholars, e.g. Egyptians and Iraqis. Usually, these educationalists and scholars arrive with no knowledge of local history and
archaeology and believe nothing existed in the Gulf in the days when ziggurats and pyramids loomed large in their native lands (Potts 1998).

Nowadays, school students learn about AH of Oman (e.g. Ministry of Education 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2005, 2006), but there is little knowledge of historical sequence beyond. There are a lot of gaps in teaching history through archaeology where many periods are not included in the school curricula, such as the prehistoric time (AS9, Gerd Weisgerber: personal communication: 07/June/2006). Herein, the sense of chronological sequence has not been featured properly to the students where the concepts of time and change, cause and effect are underdeveloped.

For instance, in regard to Magan cultures, teachers of history are still depend on the positivistic approach rather than constructivist in communicating its archaeological evidence; they depend on one-way communication where there is only general information (AM30, al-Kharoosi 2002) or ‘statement of facts’ (Tilden 1977: 8). According to Gyimothy and Johns (2001: 247), ‘these scholarly educational displays with dry factual information might hinder rather than facilitate understanding.’ This is beside the low quality of historical information presented in history curricula about archaeological sites (AM6, AM13, AS11) which are ill-presented, poor, old, repeated, disorganized and inaccurate contents (e.g. Ministry of Education 2000, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2005).

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235 Due to the lack of awareness and specialized teachers in archaeology, the misunderstanding of the evolution theory may represent one example for the exclusion of some prehistoric periods, in particular the Paleolithic period which is the longest in human history (Fagan et al. 1996).

236 It might be similar to what Ham (forthcoming) called Didactic Paradigm to PIN which depends on the principle ‘if they know what we know, they’ll care as we care’.
Some respondents referred to the importance of field visits by school parties and hands-on experience instead of class-works, theoretical pedagogical methods and memorization rather than on-site visits and interactive hands-on experience (AM3, AM31). The on-site visits and ‘activity-based learning’ can contribute to an understanding of changes, growth and decay of archaeological sites and objects and help students to understand the background to the present cultural environment (Prentice 1995: 148).

Also, as mentioned by some respondents, school field visits are mainly focused on forts and castles rather than archaeological sites (AS8). Similarly, although there is no entrance fee (AM36), museums with historical and/or archaeological exhibitions are less popular among school parties (Figure 7.1). According to the official statistics, the number of students who visited forts and castles were 24,953 in 2002, 31,696 in 2003 and 28,857 in 2004 (Ministry of National Economy 2005b: table 6-21). According to Mohammed al-Busaidi (personal communication: 07/January/2006), although the teaching guide-books for history curricula encourage teachers to manage some field visits outside the class, yet some teachers are unable to do so because of teaching load, big number of students, limited time and limited financial resources.

Furthermore, the problem of training in specialized education and shortcomings in teaching skills seems to be basic general issues even for other available subjects because of the rush works in spreading education and speeding up of the Omanization in the

\[237\] Also, it should be mentioned here that museums with archaeological findings are limited geographically to three main cities in Oman, Muscat, Salalah and Sohar.
teaching profession (Ministry of National Economy 2003a). Other possible reasons for this are the lack of on-site interpretive plans, site development and management (see Chapter Five and Chapter Six) and limited co-operational joint programs between the Ministry of Education and MOHC (AM10 and AM13). This status might suggest the lack of understanding of the educational market by both archaeological sites managers and museum curators.

Because school students are tomorrow’s constituency, accurate knowledge about AH may be an important component in the development of meaning-making. In addition to al-Kharoosi’s (2002) study, some respondents, such as AM30, AS4 and AS11, asserted the need for an independent curriculum that links the young generations to AH through educational tourism. However, this does not seem to be an easy option as this might be faced with such problems as the overcrowded curricula (Stone and Mackenzie 1989, Skeates 2000) and the educationalists’ interest in archaeology as a new subject, not to mention the availability of job-related trainings for the new subject, archaeology.

7.8. SUMMARY

This chapter emphasized that SCC represents a demanding and driving influential factor in the current underdeveloped PIN for AH and archaeotourism in Oman. Thus, considering SCC is a prerequisite to surmount many issues relative to PC and SSC. For instance, understanding the constructed values and education system are two

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238 A huge quantitative expansion has taken place in the field of education from only 3 primary schools with 900 students in the early 1970s to 1,181 schools in 2004/2005 with about 598,336 students (309,709 male and 288,627 female) receiving education at various levels (Ministry of National Economy 2005b: table 4-19).

239 Skeates (2000: 116) talked about this by saying ‘Over-crowded educational curricula and under-informed teachers often exclude archaeology as a ‘luxury’ subject of little relevance to today’s society’.
cornerstones to achieve sustainable PIN and community archaeotourism as discussed in Chapter Three and confirmed in this chapter. Understanding SCC is necessary to prevent negative inputs and outputs, to reinforce positive outcomes and to empower local people to become protectors for AH in their areas as well as decision makers.

Some of the archaeological sites mentioned in this research, such as Ras al-Jinz and al-Balid, have already been considered in tourism development plans. However, and according to the findings, there are critical unresolved gaps in regard to SCC which has resulted from the lack of balance between the current needs of SSC and local communities.

Part of the issue is the absence of systematic pragmatic research which aims at raising the awareness of the tourism planners and achieving a win-win relationship among all involved stakeholders in developing heritage tourism in Oman in general. For instance, secular interpretive needs should take into account the various Islamic injunctions and respect other Omani constructed socio-cultural lifestyle. Also, negative cross socio-cultural conflicts between local hosts and other stakeholders may stem in the future from denying social and cultural benefits for the locals at such visited sites as Wadi al-Ayn, Ras al-Jinz, Qalhat, Shisur Wubar and Bahla.

Additionally, this chapter illustrated the limited role of the media and current education system to promote and relate AH to people’s life and make them appreciate its value in a practical sense. This is important as the public in general does not seem to care for

\[240\] This is not a unique situation to Oman; the lack of community participation in many developing countries in the tourism industry is ‘a reflection of prevailing socio-political, economic and cultural structure’ (Tosun 2000: 613).
archaeology and its resources in comparison to other heritage resources. For instance, the historical and religious significance of some forts and castles in the Omani living heritage as sources for pride and nationalism is nothing but evidence for the importance of social constructed values in the Omani SCC. Certainly, this has led to consider Nizwa Fort in al-Dhakhliyah region, which has significant religious and political symbols in the Omani history, as more connected and related to the current living society than a prehistoric archaeological site, regardless its national or universal outstanding values.

The findings show that AH scientific significance for a particular part of AH could be a presumed extrinsic value amongst archaeologists where other stakeholders and their perspectives, such as the locals, are excluded. In another word, archaeology and its products are disconnected from the holistic social system, except for few people. Accordingly, there are no collective agreements, shared realities (Crotty 1998) or shared intentionality (Searle 1995) where certain aspects of our world come into being as a result of the combined intentionality of those who make use of them. Therefore, other alternative interpretations were gradually constructed which might be influenced by religious and superstitious thoughts.

By now, it has been confirmed that all factors mentioned in PC, SSC and SCC do influence one another. This suggests the need for a holistic integrative approach to be considered if effective and appropriate interpretive practices are to be successfully accomplished. Therefore, the next two chapters will deal with this issue in an attempt to develop a practical approach for PIN of AH in Oman guided by the research findings and the available literature.
## CHAPTER EIGHT
TOWARD AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH TO PUBLIC INTERPRETATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE IN OMAN

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8.1. INTRODUCTION

In order to sustain the quality of PIN, there are many issues, interfaces and techniques to improve the performance and achieve competitive advantage. This chapter will attempt to provide an operational definition for PIN of AH in Oman. It proposes and describes an alternative viable interpretive approach for AH in Oman so as to sustain archaeological sites and simultaneously develop archaeotourism. It is hoped that the approach will assist to minimize the number of impediments discussed in the last three chapters.

In addition to the research findings, this chapter will benefit from secondary sources to assist in the conceptualization, description and validation of the argument in discussion. It should be mentioned that this chapter does not aim at designing an interpretive plan or prospectus for a particular archaeological site since ‘the strongest planning approach will be the one that is most appropriate for a particular project’ (Brochu 2003: 15). Moreover, any master interpretive plan is a collective dynamic team-work and a multi-discipline profession (Bradley 1982) so as to reduce subjectivity, enforce sustainability and create a win-win relationship among all involved stakeholders and actors.

8.2. TOWARD AN INTEGRATIVE INTERPRETIVE APPROACH FOR AH IN OMAN

The research findings have critically postulated the adaptation of an alternative wider planning strategy in interpreting AH resources to communicate their myriad values to
the public. This strategy should be designed with serious consideration for the ‘whole context’ and the ‘whole person’ by not underestimating the factors discussed in chapters five, six and seven. The findings show that these two aspects are dramatically influenced by the current factors within the three contexts, i.e. PC, SSC, SCC.

These contexts influence PIN of AH at two interdependent dimensions that are the Micro-impact of the Three Contexts and the Macro-impact of the Three Contexts (see Figure 8.1). The Micro-impact refers to the local context which includes the various factors of the three contexts in the surrounding cultural landscape in which a particular AH is situated. The Micro-impact differs from one area to another. For example, the rural PC of Bat or Bahla Fort differs from that of Bausher area which is located in a semi-urbanized area in the capital city. Likewise, SCC can be slightly different. For example, most people who live nearby Bat almost belong to one tribe, al-Miqbali. However, in such a semi-urbanized area as Bausher it is expected that the population is heterogenous, Omani and non-Omani, with different tribes from all over Oman. The case is the same concerning SSC where Bausher, for instance, can be easily accessed and monitored by AH stewardship since it is located in the capital itself, meanwhile sites, such as Bat and Shir, are comparatively less manageable due to their locations in peripheral areas.
Chapter Eight: Toward An Integrative Approach to Public Interpretation

As for Macro-impact, it includes such factors as macro-economy, socio-political status, mass media, national policy, strategy, vision and development plans, in particular those which are related to the tourism sector or heritage management. Also, other influential factors concerning the Macro-impact are international agreements, the international changeable market and nearby competitive destinations which can play a major part in interpretive plans. Certainly, the Micro-impact can not be separated from Macro-impact of the cultural landscape since every site is naturally interacting dynamically.

Figure 8.1. The two interactive dynamic dimensional impacts of the three contexts in the archaeological heritage.

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241 The Macro-Impact of the Three Contexts is of a big important in Oman where a centralized governmental stewardship for AH and tourism sector is strongly supported and implemented. Although, there are regional directorates for MOT, yet they operate within the national governmental strategy, regardless their special local requirements (Ministry of National Economy 2001). In such a status, both the Micro-impact and Macro-impact are of a particular archaeological landscape need to be managed in a compatible complementary way and cope with each other through suitable integrative planning approaches.
with its macro-context which can be national, regional or even global. Thus, as these
two dimensions are strongly interdependent, they need to be addressed and considered
simultaneously before, while and after developing and implementing PIN strategy for
any AH.

In addition to the various related issues to the three contexts, the current lack of quality
interpretive approach has been strongly associated with the shortcoming of quality
management plan for heritage tourism in general and archaeotourism in particular (see
Chapter Six). The incapability of securing an advance, comprehensive and consistent
quality management process constitutes the major weakness of local, regional and
national interpretive plan for AH resources. This is despite the fact that *The Final
Priority Action Plan for Tourism Development in Oman* (Parsons International Limited
2002: 1) reported the following:

> Oman’s competitive strengths in the Middle East market are its potential
to provide the greatest diversity of products and experiences in this region
and the rich traditional nature of its cultural and heritage assets.

Today, as supported by the findings, PIN of AH in Oman is totally depending on
positivistic and informative approaches instead of being constructivist and interactive
(Figure 4.2) where visitors are not encouraged enough to construct understanding and
meanings about the interpreted site or presented object within museums through
heuristic processes. The current presentation of AH cannot be distinguished from other
forms of information transfer where ‘the interpretive approach’ (Ham 1992: 8), which is
characterized by having a theme and being pleasurable, relevant and organized, is
underdeveloped.
Also, PIN can be described as ‘operations planning-type’, e.g. al-Balid, which has been used ‘to fill in the gap between having an interpretive plan and no planning at all’ (Brochu 2003: 20). It has a limited relationship to management mission and objectives, message, media and market. Besides, here the personal, social and physical contexts are not practically considered. Moreover, it is official-led PIN (Price 2006) or contract PIN which basically means an organization carrying out the work of PIN where community PIN and participation is limited.

Archaeotourism should not consider archaeological landscape only, but also other kinds of attractions, especially that the field observations at all of the selected sites for this study illustrate their integral connections with their cultural landscape components, including natural, living and built heritage. For instance, the present marine environment and living heritage at Ras al-Jinz, as Cleuziou and Tosi (2000) mentioned, are two integral parts in AH interpretations in this area. This connectivity has been part of the unique characters of Oman’s archaeology (see Section 2.6) and one main motive for archaeologists to consider studying Oman’s archaeology to interpret the past (Tosi 1989).

Considering the whole context by using a holistic integrative approach in interpreting AH to the public could increase the sense of the interpreted place through the past representatives, archaeological resources and the present representatives, natural and living resources (see sections 3.5.4 and 4.3.4). For instance, the four frankincense sites, Khor Rori, Wadi Dawkah and Shisur Wubar, can be thematically connected to today living heritage in Dhofar region where the visitors can observe and participate in
frankincense harvest season and experience the ancient routes from Khor Rori to Shisur Wubar. Doing so will provide interpreters with more opportunity to reveal the meanings of AH and relate them to visitors and their hosts lifestyles. In this regard, Uzzell (1998b: 245) mentioned:

*Although the visitor can get a great deal out of the interpretation of any one site, the whole is much greater deal out of the interpretation of any one site; the whole is much greater than the sum of the parts. The true significance of the site (the keynote) only becomes apparent if the visitor can appreciate it in a larger context.*

Therefore, the findings have stressed the necessity to introduce a new workable approach and practices for PIN to support this competitive strength as the current positivistic, operational and official-led approaches to PIN have failed to communicate the potential of AH values. This has been espoused by many respondents (e.g. AM21, AM25, AM6, AM32, AM34, AM35, AS1, AS6, AS11) who incited the need for a different compelling mechanism that can integrate AH with the ‘whole context’ and address the ‘whole person’. For example, AM18 referred to the importance of utilizing geological resources and living heritage in interpreting AH in Oman as there are only a minority of tourists who would like to visit archaeological sites alone (see Sections 6.3.1).

AS13 thinks that integration is important, especially for remote sites, such as Shir. As well, AM30 believes that by considering an integrative approach in PIN, such issues as the lack of attractiveness might be solved. Yet, so far there are no integrated interpretive themes capable of incorporating all these elements to provide a sensible experience and practical approach. In Oman, every archaeological site is seen as a single unit with no linkage with its surrounding cultural landscape components. Archaeological sites in
Oman are visited by tourists as a part of pre-made packages despite the lack of PIN. In another word, they represent culture-peripheral attractions (Hughes 2002) rather than core attractions. There are few core-cultural tourists, mostly specialists, who only come with the intention to visit a particular archaeological site per se (AM34).

Also, the findings put more emphasis on the importance of SCC in particular, as a demanding factor in achieving a sustainable interpretive strategy by considering the local alternative interpretations and raising the public awareness of AH via education system and the local media. Accordingly, and based on the above, the researcher proposes an integrative approach that can develop PIN of AH in Oman and boost archaeotourism. Consequently, it is hoped that the factors with negative-impact to be addressed and managed and various values can accrue for all the involved stakeholders.

8.3. THE NEED FOR AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO PIN OF AH

The literature suggests different reasons²⁴² for the importance of using holistic integrative approaches or Integrated Quality Management, IQM, (European Commission 2000a) in developing and managing heritage tourism to raise the competitiveness of a particular destination. Five of these reasons are:

- Heritage tourism is one sector among others in the tourism industry which in return should not be de-contextualized from national policies, other development sectors, supporting facilities and services, and environmental and social context (Cossons 1989a, Inskeep 1991, European Commission 2000b) and thus, this could bring more balanced touristic development (Cater 1987).

²⁴² Saxena et al. (2006) suggested five benefits for integration approaches which are: economic, experiential, conservation, development and synergistic.
Natural resources, cultural traditions and a whole range of integrated tourism enterprises have an influence on visitor experience and ‘Value Tourism Chain’ (European Commission 2000a: 15) where the total travel experience is dependent on all the links in the ‘experience chain’ (Ritchie and Crouch 2003: 213). For instance, ‘bundling’ strategy in heritage tourism can be more realistic, cost-effect option and create a more appealing new product that benefits consumers and suppliers (McKercher and du Cros 2002: 112).

Cultural heritage attractions may serve a multitude of user groups who may value them for different reasons and seek different benefits as well making the task of presenting the attractions appropriately more difficult (McKercher and du Cros 2002: 7). Thus, Boyd (2002: 226) expected that ‘building partnerships is perhaps the one which may influence the direction of heritage tourism in the future’.

Tourists are moving from mass consumption to Post-Fordist consumption and more flexible system of production and organization (Urry 2002, Daher 2006). They have become much more sophisticated consumers with specific needs (European Commission 2000a, Richards 2000, Novella and Benson 2005), especially in this globalization era (Hollinshead 1997). They are looking for

243 According to McKercher and Du Cros (2002: 112), bundling is ‘Typically involves combining a variety of similarly themed products and experiences and promoting their collective consumption to the visitor. This strategy encourages visitation throughout a destination and not just to one or two assets. In this way, the economic benefits of tourism are dispersed more widely’.

244 Hodder (2003: 9) talked about archeotourism in particular by saying: ‘archaeological sites are being opened up to contested perspectives and at how new forms of tourism and global exchange are leading to engagements with the past in which multiple perspectives need to be taken into account’.

245 This has been supported by looking at such master management plans for World Heritage Sites, such as Blaenavon in south Wales (Blaenavon Partnership 1999: 10) and Hadrian’s Wall (Turley 1998, Gillette 2000). For example, in regard to the latter, the importance of partnership comes from the fact that Hadrian’s Wall (ca. 73 miles) and outlying areas do not form a self-contained archaeological zone where there are multiple owners which exacerbate the management and planning procedures, especially that the Hadrian’s Wall Military Zone lies in a living and working landscape (Turley 1998).

246 For instance, regional communities are realizing that ‘the sum of their cultural assets has greater tourism appeal than the individual assets within a community’ (McKercher and du Cros 2002: 113).
uniqueness of the experience (World Tourism Organization 2005) and ‘for the authentic experience to escape the anomie of the modern world’ (Harrison 1997: 25).

- The adoption of integrative mechanisms could support resources sustainability (Butler 1999, European Commission 2000a). For instance, the multi-roles status for tourism\footnote{Tourism in general has been advocated as efficient way to promote the development of less favoured regions (Hohl and Tisdell 1995, Ribeiro and Marques 2002, Williams and MacLeod 2005).} in the less favoured and peripheral areas\footnote{According to Prideaux (2002: 381), although peripheral areas generally are regarded as those located some distance from the center of tourism activity, accessibility is also a determining factor in defining the periphery.} has been improved and strengthened by the introduction of such integrative approaches as the *Integrated Quality Management* (European Commission 2000a, 2000b, 2000c)\footnote{Prideaux (2002) argued that possession of an interesting landscape, old building, unique event or historic landscape is no guarantee that tourism will flourish in peripheral areas; however, success has much more to do with such issues as marketing, pulling power, viability and informed management. To do so, Prideaux (2002) suggested the integration of four critical factors which are: 1) location and access; 2) community support; 3) operating economies and management of the attractions; and 4) supporting tourism infrastructure in the surrounding area.}.

Based on the above, it was argued that planning, designing, managing and evaluating PIN of AH should be addressed through integrative holistic approaches where a whole context and the whole person are considered (see sections 3.5.4, 4.3.3 and 4.3.4). However, searching for the whole in PIN is hard (Tilden 1977) where for instance ‘partnership works better in theory than in practice’ (Craik 2004: 53). Integration could become a challenging complicated strategy that requires effective practical partnership, team-work efforts and interdisciplinary approaches (see Section 3.4).

To achieve this, some integrative approaches have been developed by practitioners and scholars based on their theoretical and practical research in PIN. Briefly, the following...
section highlights some of the suggested approaches followed by a critical overview based on the literature and the research findings.

8.3.1. An Overview of the Integrative Approaches in PIN

According to the Oxford Dictionary (Soanes 2003: 581), to integrate means ‘to combine or be combined to form a whole’ or ‘to bring or come into equal participation in an institution or body’. Literally, and in regard to tourism, Butler (1999: 67) defined the integrated planning and development as ‘the process of introducing tourism into an area in a manner in which it mixes with existing elements’. Oliver and Jenkins (2005: 27) included that in tourism the term ‘integration’ is both fluid and evolving where it becomes widely defined from being used to mean the integration of tourism into broader economic and social development contexts, goals and decisions to emphasize the importance of local participation and control in tourism management and development (see also Mitchell and Eagles 2001).

As the increasing espousal of using integrative approaches and practices has become a common trend in tourism planning and development, it is not surprising that a wider integrated approaches to heritage PIN is also adopted. This comes from the fact that

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250 Oliver and Jenkins (2005: 27) define ‘integrated tourism’ as: ‘Tourism that is explicitly linked to the economic, social, cultural, natural and human structures of the localities in which it take places [where] it has clear connections with local resources, activities, products, other production and services industries and a participatory local community’.


252 For example, in Britain integrated interpretive planning is widely applied (Broadhurst 1989) to such sites as Castell Henllys (Mytum 1999, 2000, 2004), Roystone Grange, West Stow Country Park and Anglo-Saxon Village News (Pearce 1990) and Hadrian’s Wall (Turley 1998, Stewart et al. 2001). A good example is the HERIAN project which aims at interpreting the South Wales industrial heritage (see http://www.herian.org/). Similar to Wales, an integrative approach was used in Ireland as a strategy to
‘the task facing the interpretive planner is to insure that all possible factors are addressed’ (Bradley 1982: 83). Yet, there are a few practical studies and models in regard to the application of integrated holistic approach in PIN (e.g. Broadhurst 1989, Veverka 1994, Goodey 1996, Orams 1996, Stewart et al. 2001, Beck and Cable 2002, Brochu 2003, Copeland 2004, 2006). For instance, an earlier model was proposed by Gabriel Cherem in 1977 (Figure 8.2) which beside the site itself, it includes the managerial realities as a major components in planning processes.

![Figure 8.2: Cherem’s (1977) model of PIN (modified after Veverka 1994: 26)](image)

Probably, the interest in presenting a holistic PIN goes back as early as Tilden’s work (1977: 8) who stated that the true interpreter goes ‘beyond a part to a whole’. This perspective was repeatedly emphasized later by several scholars, though in different terms. For example, Stewart et al. (2001: 343) referred to the perceived values and importance of choosing a ‘dispersed planning approach’ in promoting sustainable and cost-effective PIN as opposed to the traditional centralised one at the Brecks develop rural Ireland in order to assist in developing a coherent national scheme of PIN in which duplication is avoided (Philips and Tubridy 1994).
Countryside Project in Eastern England. This approach ‘makes use of existing interpretive provision at various points throughout an area through enhancement, networking, integration and partnership’ (Stewart et al. 2001: 343).

Also, Beck and Cable (2002a: 47) illustrate the importance of presenting a whole picture and interpreting to the whole person; they referred to this as the ‘holistic approach’. Similar to this, Copeland (2006: 89) linked the efficiency and the adoption of ‘big concepts’ in interpreting historic landscapes in particular, which allow the visitors to gain incremental knowledge of the evidence in the landscape and ensure that they do not see every heritage venue as a special case separate from the evidence of all the other sites, but as part of a wider historic environment.

For scholars, such as Goodey (1996: 303), the concept of an integrated PIN is ‘an essential characteristic of interpretative planning’. Aldridge (1975) emphasized the importance of integrated regional approach for interpretive planning as a strategy to avoid duplication of financial aid, artefact collection, effort by the agencies involved and visitor experience. Also, Copelle et al. (1989: 116) referred to the need for ‘coordination between agencies in planning the visitor experience on a regional basis…Each resources area is unique and some themes are better represented in certain areas than others in a given region’. Also, two different advantages for this wider planning were mentioned by Cooper (1991) which are:

- It allows the development of themes and sub-themes regionally which can be linked to the marketing of the destination.
- It acts as a catalyst for public and private sectors cooperation.
Furthermore, following integrative strategies and group partnerships to heritage, PIN could be a major source for new internal and external funds as it is the case in the UK (Broadhurst 1989). To accomplish this, Broadhurst (1989) suggested three main processes which focus on identifying 1) opportunities and resources required; 2) resources and benefits amongst potential partners and 3) suitable mechanisms for services delivery.

In line with this, Veverka (1994: 87) refers to the use of a wider macro-type and a resources-based interpretation, ‘the Interpretive Systems Planning’, as a way of looking at the entire system of interpretive agencies, sites and opportunities around the interpreted sites. It is a way of thinking about the total system and its components where ‘a detailed system interpretive plan’ is needed (Capelle et al. 1989: 115). According to John Veverka (personal communication: 18/November/2006), this approach is ‘the same as for doing an individual site interpretive plan, but instead of park sites we inventory interpretive sites, facilities and features within a larger system’.

To facilitate the applicability of the Systems Approach, a thematic PIN or structured interpretation is used to link all various selected sites by a main theme (see Section

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253 Take south Wales as an example where ‘the 1990s saw the virtual disappearance of deep coalmining and the steep decline of steel-making and related manufacturing industries’; some 90,000 jobs were lost in the region between 1978 and 1987 (Dicks 2000: 10). However, ‘the opening of Big Pit as a Mining Museum in 1983 and the conservation of Blaenavon Ironworks have contributed to economic regeneration’ (Blaenavon Partnership 1999: 10). Working through integrative approaches and partnership, the Interpretive Plan for the South Wales Industrial Heritage Initiative is widely contributing to the survival and revival of the declining industrial heritage (PLB Projects Ltd and Govannan Consultancy 2003). For example, the Big Pit Mining Museum generates export revenue and jobs in a location where there are few alternatives other than living on public welfare. Besides, ‘as time has passed and the memories of coal have diminished, so the Big Pit Mining Museum has acquired a growing heritage value’ (Wanhill 2000: 68).

254 McKercher and du Cros (2002: 112) suggested that the bundling within a cultural tourism context ‘helps create a theme for a place, creating a stronger sense of destination for the tourist by invoking many places with similar meanings’.
3.8.1) which is in return composed of several interconnected sub-themes (Veverka 1994). Interpreting a range of sites in order to develop a thematic PIN over a wider historic landscape ‘would greatly enhance the opportunities to introduce visitors to the evidence of the evolution of settlement and land use’ (Binks 1986: 43). Themeing interpretation (Ham: forthcoming) has an administrative role where it helps interpreters in determining the required information and research for a particular presentation, as well as the desired message to be communicated (Cooper 1991, Ham 1992). It also assists in preventing contradiction and emphasizes on cohesion where various data gathered from different sites integrated into a cohesive holistic context (Ham 1992).

Moreover, by doing this, PIN may include the less spectacular and visited sites which may not be included according to their physiographic appeal or remoteness for instance. These sites could offer first-hands experience and the opportunity to develop themes and stories in an effective way, especially in the countryside areas (Binks 1986). Wickham-Jones (1988) argued that ironically at many of the smaller archaeological sites PIN provision could be cheaper and simplest, but these are often left for until the last. Also, thematic PIN might provide the opportunity for the utilization of other natural, cultural and physiographic resources, historic stories and facilities (Capelle et al. 1989, Veverka 1994). This could be one advantage for community tourism in the marginal areas. Capelle et al. (1989: 116) added that inter-agency interpretive planning on a regional basis ‘makes evaluation of interpretive plans and programs easier

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255 For instance, the Jordanian government has been attempting to develop a northern touristway through the Jordan River Valley that integrates the valley’s archaeology and other heritage resources as one way to sustain these resources and increase community development and participation in less visited areas (Shunnaq et al. 2008).
and more meaningful by pointing out excessive duplication and omission within the interpretive system’.

Also, Knudson et al. (2003: 309) mentioned that the system interpretive plan ‘abets cooperation and operates in line with the way visitors act and perceive a tourist destination’. The System Approach is one of the few practical mechanisms utilized in PIN planning and it has been very successful in the U.S.A and Canada as well (Capelle et al. 1989). A similar integrative approach was proposed by Uzzell (1998b) aims at creating a high-quality psychological, social and contextual experience for visitors. Uzzell (1998b: 233) talked about a holistic model which ‘seeks to provide a framework for incorporating within one model all the significance inputs and outputs required to plan a successful cognitive, effective and behavior interpretive experience’.

Uzzell (1998b: 238) suggested that interrelationship between themes, markets and resources256 is required and that the interaction between these elements defines interpretive outcomes where ‘each of the three elements should only be seen in the context of their relationships to the other two elements’. Goodey (1996: 304) thinks that although Uzzell’s model is an information gathering device, rather than a system model, yet it ‘has been used as the sole tool for determining the form and function of many heritage and leisure facilities’.

A more recent approach for interpretive planning was developed by Brochu (2003) called the ‘5-M Model’ which emphasizes the importance of integrating five major

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256 **Resources**, e.g. sites, staff, media, the management structure, marketing programs, the financial base, intangible resources; **Market**, e.g. size of market, visitor profiles; **Themes**, e.g. stories, messages.
interrelated elements in planning PIN which are: management, message, mechanics market and media. One of the main problems facing this model, as Brochu (2003: xxii) acknowledged, is that it was not based on scientific or academic research; rather, it is the result of her own experience.

8.3.2. A Critical Overview

Although PIN is an integral part of the tourism industry, generally, there is a limited literature available about the application of integrative approaches and practices to this profession (Goodey 1996, Brochu 2003). There are even fewer profound and lengthy studies that explore and apply the concepts of a ‘whole context’ and the ‘whole person’ in interpreting heritage resources in particular, including AH, which are indispensable part of the wider tourism industry (Ted Cable: personal communication: 23/Feburary/2007).

Mostly, scholars are more focused on the theoretical part, yet not enough delineated and tested. For example, although thematic PIN, which is widely used in integrating various different sites, has theoretical grounding in cognitive psychology, social psychology and persuasive communication, it has not been adequately examined in practical interpretive settings (Tarlton and Ward 2006). Also, it is noticeable that evaluation is mostly audience-oriented; however, a sustainable approach to PIN would evaluate the influence of the final outputs on all involved aspects in delivering the interpretive plan, e.g. resources, management, media, audience (Brochu 2003). In another word, it should consider the micro-impact and macro-impact of the provided PIN on PC, SSC and SCC and vice versa.
Uzzell (1998b: 236) criticized the current interpretive plans by arguing that ‘the planning process is treated linearly while in practice the process is necessarily more recursive and iterative’. In congruent with this, Hall and McArthur (1998: 187-190) referred to similar related issues that inhibited the recognition of PIN as a main tool in heritage management. These issues can be summarized as follows:

- The limited integration into the core business of heritage management. There is little to no systematic approaches being undertaken to develop, implement and improve PIN.
- Most theories about PIN have not been produced by interpreters where there is a gap between those generating theories (e.g. academics) and those generating delivery (e.g. practitioners).
- For many heritage management organisations PIN is only a visitor service.
- A reluctant to write measurable objectives or performance criteria that could be used to evaluate and make subsequent improvement to interpretive planning and provision.
- Poor linkage with other related disciplines such as marketing.

Also, Jenkinson (2004: 22) attracted the attention that ‘the medium seemed to dominate the professional’s view of interpretation’ which means the control of the medium over the intended message itself. Also, in the practical sense, ‘the success of too many heritage projects is jeopardized because insufficient attention is given to the planning stage’ (Uzzell 1998b: 234). A critical issue in PIN is the common use of generic perspectives and models in developing, planning, designing, managing and evaluating interpretive planning for all resources without taking into account the unique
characteristics of every interpreted resource. This refers to the increasing needs for speciality in interpretive planning and the adoption of ‘idiographic approach’ (Babbie 2004: 19) or PIN for a particular site rather than applying nomothetic explanations and ‘standardized interpretation’ which might result in duplication and predictability (Aldridge 1989: 86)\(^\text{257}\). Herein, ‘the concrete uniqueness of a site is important rather than an abstract universal characteristic’ (Lew 1987: 555).

Being holistic does not mean context-free where one approach is viable and valid for all types of attractions at any time and place. Every interpretive plan for heritage resource has to be context-oriented which requires a specific detailed interpretive mechanism of integration to reach to an interpretive provision that is characterized by acceptability, efficiency and harmony (Butler 1999). In line with this, Prentice and Light (1994: 210) assured that ‘clearly, different types of heritage attraction will be interpreted in different ways’. For example, the literature shows that some of the main issues in regard to AH in particular, are the excluded past, alternative interpretations, authenticity and gender issues. Such issues might not be of a big concern when interpreting natural parks.

The current approaches for PIN are mainly oriented toward the survey of the components available in PC and SSC where the local community awareness, educational level, values and the alike are barely included theoretically and practically. SCC, as this study argues, could be easily underestimated in the current generic interpretive approaches for cultural heritage sites and sights.

\(^\text{257}\) Aldridge (1989: 86) argued that ‘because interpretation is an art, it is naive to think that it can be done scientifically and objectively’ to become standardized interpretation.
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Shanks and Tilley (1992: 116) mentioned that archaeology ‘is unavoidable social [because] its data are the product of social practices’. Similarly, PIN is ‘a social activity for an individual, a group or an audience’ (Tilley 1989: 280). This means a fixed imported generic interpretive approach to AH from one context might fail in another because every interpretive plan needs to be socially constructed via collective shared agreements. This highlights the importance of considering the dynamic nature of interpretive approaches where it is developing and changing continually according to the components of both the micro and macro contexts of AH. Thus, an interpretive team needs to realize the local demographic and psychographic characters, religious beliefs and social systems, as well as to ensure understanding and acceptance of diversity of traditions in interpretive programming (Zuefle 1997).

Different places and people need to be interpreted differently according to their special context. It is therefore misleading to describe PIN as an undifferentiated activity. As repeatedly discussed in Chapter Three, and confirmed by the research findings, SCC in particular, is of a special priority and becomes more important in less developed countries as in Oman. Hence, the application of integrated interpretive approaches to AH in Oman requires an alternative perspective copes with its special unique needs. Herein, as Aslan (2005: 12) wrote ‘socio-cultural development can and should be integrated into conservation planning’.

This leads the discussion to the lack of literature that addresses PIN as an industry or as a professionalism in relation to heritage-tourism in developing countries. Robinson (2006: viii) mentioned that ‘it would be true to say, certainly from a European
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to integrate it as a number of destinations’ where the complexity and richness of histories and cultures is reduced to a relatively small number of images and signs. Accordingly, this neglects the diversity of landscapes, sites and location which in return has led to poor understanding for many other destinations within this region (Daher 2006, Robinson 2006). This issue has become very critical, especially that many of these destinations, such as the Arabian Gulf States, are growing touristic areas.

Relatively, this might explain why the majority of the references in this research, for examples, are mainly written by western and western-oriented scholars deal with issues related to developed countries. Therefore, the outcomes of these studies need to be carefully used and applied to other countries with different contexts, such as Oman, which imposes the application of hermeneutic-based approaches to PIN. Sayer (1989: 167) mentioned that ‘to interpret nature in the Third World will mean a major new learning process for us in the West’. The same can be presumed about archaeological resources where archaeological research and management vary between one region of the world and another (Herrmann 1989) due to their different micro-contexts and macro-contexts. For example, the economic long-term vision of an oil-dependent country, such as Oman, differs totally from that of the United Kingdom. The similar can be said about the national policies, education, religion and the alike. Again, despite its importance and influence on the market, the consideration of the macro-context of PIN plan is also rarely discussed in the related literature.
Uzzell (1989a: 4) believes that ‘the rationale and raison d’etre of interpretation is now more extensive and complex’. Therefore, PIN, as a growing profession, is required to develop and update its approaches in both practical and theoretical sense periodically and sophisticatedly. It needs to move step forward toward specialty than generality whereupon complicated issues, as shown in chapters five, six and seven, can be properly addressed and managed.

In addition, the world has become a global village under the globalization umbrella. If competitiveness is not counted as one of the long-term agenda in heritage PIN, then crucial issues in the tourism sector, such as sustainability, authenticity and quality experience, will be threatened. This is also important in order to cope with the dynamic development strategy of changeable tourism market (Hollinshead 1997, Richards 2000, Prentice 2005). Therefore, ‘a plan is never complete; there will always be a need for revision and improvements in planning’ (Bradley 1982: 85).

8.4. THE INTEGRATED CONTEXTS PUBLIC INTERPRETATION (ICPI)

As none of the interpretive approaches mentioned in Section 8.3 seems wholly satisfactory in the context of AH in Oman, the remainder of this chapter will propose an alternative approach for PIN of AH in Oman called The Integrated Contexts Public Interpretation (hereafter ICPI). The approach is guided by the research findings and the related published literature. The issues discussed in Chapter Three and in sections 8.2 and 8.3 are taken into account. It is hoped that this approach has the ability to address and manage these issues without compromising the integrity of AH and its wider context.
8.4.1. The Conceptualization of ICPI

ICPI can be identified as a holistic interpretive perspective that considers an integrative approach for guiding the planning, designing, managing and evaluating of PIN for AH where both ‘the whole context’ and ‘the whole person’ are two main principles necessary to communicate the myriad tangible and intangible values of a particular archaeological resource. ICPI is meant to lead to multiplied effects by playing multiple-roles within the wider context in which it is situated. In this term, ICPI works as a complementary system where ‘a holistic thinking is central’ (Patton 2002: 120); a system which is made out of different physical elements (e.g. heritage attractions), stakeholders and values, however through a well-studied strategy. Herein, ICPI is proposed as a means of thinking critically and comprehensively about the actors, resources and linkages involved in PIN of AH.

In harmony with the discussion above, and based on integrative strategy to PIN, in ICPI an archaeological site is not an isolated interpretive unit from its surrounding archaeological landscape258 and the wider cultural landscape259. An archaeological site is a record for a historical event which happened in the past in a particular place, but ‘neither sites, nor their people ever exist in a vacuum’ (Fowler 1981: 62). Thus, ICPI aims at integrating AH of a particular area with other heritage natural and living components within its wider cultural landscape through creating systematic interdependent linkages. Herein, an interpretive plan endeavours to introduce a site or a

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258 The term archaeological landscape here means different sites with similar and/or different physiographic features and chronology within a particular area. It is part of the wider cultural landscape.
259 The cultural landscape includes different types of heritage resources such as built-heritage, natural heritage and living heritage.
group of sites into the overall plan and total development strategy of a particular area, but in a cohesive manner.

The interpretive team is encouraged to consider the broad chronological bracket, not only the particular period in which an archaeological site was formed or reformed. AH must be seen as a complementary part of the present rather than secondary by-product where it becomes a part of the whole interpretive system. However, its unique features need to be presented\(^{260}\) as PIN ‘can help foster uniqueness’ (Stewart et al. 2001: 346). The system or network here is perceived ‘as a number of interrelated components that have discrete boundaries’ (Fagan et al. 1996: 246).

It is intended that ICPI helps to communicate an overall awareness about other heritage resources in the vicinity of the wider context of the interpreted AH, tangible and intangible ones. It asks all those involved in PIN to be holistic and collective rather than selective in planning interpretive services and products by considering the remote and less visited sites for instance. Herein, archaeological sites need to be included to communicate sense of a particular place through ‘a combination of heritage and contemporary lifestyle’ (Smith et al. 2006: 113). This must be a basic for any presumed integrated cultural tourism landscape\(^{261}\) (Jafari 2001) in which the site is only one interpretive unit within a whole wider interpretive system (Figure 8.3). It is one touristic chain in the total experience of a particular visitor which starts from his/her actual visit.

\(^{260}\) According to Oliver and Jenkins (2005: 27), a successful integrated tourism trajectory depends on dedicated and specialized production rather than generalization and standardization.

\(^{261}\) It includes the heritage attractions within a particular cultural landscape in addition to the interpretive provision, touristic infrastructure and superstructure.
Depends on visitors and their personal context (Falk and Dierking 1992), it can be either a core or peripheral attraction. Also, it can be a part of one or more guided themed trails.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 8.3: The dynamic interaction between archaeological landscape, cultural landscape and cultural tourism landscape.**

Also, in regard to audience, ICPI emphasizes the importance of the previous experience and constructed values of visitors and it aims at improving the quality of what is provided for them so they come back again or recommend others. ICPI also stresses the importance of giving all audience the opportunity to be part of the interpretive scheme and interactive rather than passive participants.

Additionally, ICPI addresses and minimizes the current impact of those discussed factors in chapters five, six and seven, as well as it aims at developing archaeotourism in Oman in particular, and heritage tourism in general. Both the *Micro-impact* and the
Macro-impact of PC, SSC and SCC should be highly considered and audited where a particular interpretive plan must be customized and cautiously integrated. In this sense, ICPI underlines the role of PIN as a sustainable tool that is congruent with the primary aims of integrative approaches in tourism. It is a sustainable approach where the interpretive planning is implemented and managed in a way that physical, stakeholder and socio-cultural values and courtesies are not damaged, but as possible sustained and strengthened. For instance, ICPI aims at lowering the total reliance on top-down development plans for PIN and ensuring the active involvement of local people and local tourism enterprises in planning and managing the site. Hopefully, this will maximize retention of profits from the capital investment made and give the locals more control over interpretive infrastructure, touristic facilities and services development and operation.

ICPI does not aim to enforce a mandatory relationship, but to establish a long-term understandable connection and partnership that sustains archaeological resources and their surrounding better than a mandatory policy. For instance, as the findings show, even with a legal instrument such as NHPL 1980, an archaeological site can not be sustained or enlivened without raising the awareness of local communities and teaching them about archaeology through effective off-site and on-site PIN\textsuperscript{262}. In this term, ICPI strongly values the high significance of SCC as a basic dimension in any interpretive plan where the impact of any interpretive plan is properly managed and continuously

\textsuperscript{262} Article (7) of the ICOMOS Charter of Archaeological Heritage Management 1990 (ICOMOS 1990) highlights that: ‘The presentation of the archaeological heritage to the general public is an essential method of promoting an understanding of the origins and development of modern societies. At the same time, it is the most important means of promoting an understanding of the need for its protection’.
ICPI is a macroscopic strategy to remember all constituents that should affect the decision-making processes while interpreting AH. The cultural tourism landscape is a multi-stakeholders ownership where there can be various constructed values and orientations. Mainly, the essential principle of ICPI is to communicate these various values to all these stakeholders which depends on PIN plan. To explain more, one of the related critics for PIN is the ‘manipulation of information’ and that the gatekeeping role of interpreters can be abused (Cooper 1991: 229). Hence, the success of ICPI relies on several interdependent stakeholders which underscores the need for an integrative strategic planning. Interpreters and other specialists, including archaeologists and tourism planners, should welcome the involvement of the local participants intellectually and physically.

Based on the above, and similar to the Integrated Quality Management approach, ICPI aims at: 1) working together to a strategy, 2) delivering quality at all stages of the visitor experience, and 3) strengthening and installing effectively quality management and monitoring processes (European Commission 2000a). In this term, ICPI encourages an overall understanding of the dynamic basic principles and processes of integrated site management approaches. Yet, it should be emphasized that ICPI is not a led approach; it is far wider in its application than assuring product or service quality and visitors satisfaction. The researcher has drawn on primary and secondary resources as a
springboard for the proposed approach, given the limitation of theory and practical practices related to PIN (Figure 8.4).

![Diagram of ICPI Model]

**Figure 8.4: Some of the approaches used to build ICPI**

### 8.4.2. The ICPI Model

The purpose of suggesting a model for ICPI is to resemble the meanings illuminated in Section 8.4.1, as well as to provide a guided framework for the development of PIN in Oman. The model of ICPI approach portrays five major processes which are briefly illustrated in Figure 8.5 and more delineated in Figure 8.6. As it appears clear from the figures, the suggested model is recursive and iterative which reflects the dynamic nature of PIN planning and the contexts in which it is operating. To explain more, the following sections will provide a description for each stage in the model.
Figure 8.5: The main five processes of ICPI model in Figure 8.6
Chapter Eight: Toward An Integrative Approach to Public Interpretation

Motivations and Initial Aims & Objectives

Leadership & Partnership Board

Integrated Contexts Interpretive Plan (Developed Aims & Objectives)

Audience Total Interpretive Experience

Feedback & Adjustment Proposals

Dynamic Integration Process

Socio-Cultural Context

Stakeholders & Stewardship Context

Audit & Analysis of Archaeological Heritage (Micro Context & Macro Context)

Physical Context

Figure 8.6: ICPI Model
8.4.2.1. Audit and Integration Phase (the inputs phase)

This should be the first phase in every interpretive plan where it can be called also the inputs phase where all various elements will be later processed to establish the Integrated Contexts Interpretive Plan (hereafter ICIP). Also, this phase can be seen as the establishment phase since its two main aims are to establish a Leadership and Partnership Board and ICIP. This phase includes four elements which are: a) Motivations and Initial Aims and Objectives; b) Audit and Analysis; c) Dynamic Integration Processes; and d) Leadership and Partnership Board.

a- Motivations and Initial Aims and Objectives

There are various incentives which work as leading catalysts or motivations for AH management to consider PIN planning\(^\text{263}\) for one or more archaeological site. To develop an interpretive plan there should be one or more specific incentives which can be internal-led and/or external-led. The internals come from inside the responsible stewardship itself, e.g. MOHC and OCA, and it can be related to structural and operational factors. For example, the desire to develop a master management plan for a World Heritage Site can be a motivation to design an interpretive plan for the site as well. One example for this is the attempt to develop interpretive programs for the ancient frankincense trade at al-Balid and Khor Rori (AM17, AS11). Also, in some cases the stewardship may decide to design interpretive programs to raise the public awareness and provide financial resources for sustaining particular archaeological sites due to their national or scientific significance.

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\(^{263}\) Aldridge (1975: 11) defines interpretive planning as ‘the complete process of answering the questions what, where, when and how in relation to interpretive provision. It begins with a series of survey and ends with a detailed prospectus for the interpretive provisions’.
As for the external motivations, mostly, they come from other governmental institutions, such as MOT, or from private groups or individuals who would like to invest in AH for different reasons. For example, the development of Ras al-Jinz was essentially motivated by the Scientific Centre and Museum which will be totally funded by the Oman Liquefied National Gas, LNG (Ministry of Information 2006, AM26). Whether motivations are internal or external there must be initial directive aims and objectives\textsuperscript{264} that guide the next stage of this phase which is \textit{Audit and Analysis}. These aims and objectives are basically established based on those particular motivations that had led an interpretive initiative to be proposed in the first place. The determination of these aims and objective is subject to modification resulting from audit stage during PIN planning and formulation, as well as from dynamic evaluation and monitoring processes.

The desired values might affect the interpretive provision to be oriented depends on the stakeholders, e.g. market-led, community-led, operational-led, official-led. Therefore, one aim for the next steps is to help in balancing the various rising perspectives and reshape the intended values. It is important to stress here that the motivations can determine various features and aspects of interpretive plans such as geographic boundaries and audience. In regard to the geographic elements for example, PIN can be designed at various levels, i.e. local, inter-local, regional, inter-regional, national or even international.

\textsuperscript{264} Merriman (2005: 37) mentioned that effective PIN ‘\textit{built around measurable objectives is cost effective and recruits the user in protections of sensitive resources}’.
Chapter Eight: Toward An Integrative Approach to Public Interpretation

b- Audit and Analysis

The lack of the required data and knowledge is one of the reasons that stands against the implementation of integrative approach (Butler 1999). Therefore, the purpose of this stage is to audit and analyze the whole impact context (McLaughlin et al. 2006a) where both the Micro-impact and the Macro-impact of the three contexts within the selected geographic area are carefully and consistently examined. This explorative stage should audit PC of AH and its relation to the wider cultural landscape, the involved stewardship and stakeholders and SCC.

Very important here to consider the development of such a technique as Historical Landscape Characterization approach (HLC) which is a process of describing, analyzing and identifying patterns within the historic landscape to provide an insight into how people have influenced the landscape over time, reflecting its time-depth and highlighting the degree of continuity and change within it (Macinnes 2004). The audit phase is an inventory process which is important to identify and locate all considerable affective factors in PIN. Herein, all resources associated with, contiguous to or affected by PIN should coordinate and bring all involved aspects within the specified area together at the beginning of the planning process. This assures that all related contexts will be weighted equally in the interpretive integrated plan (Bradley 1982).

265 Instead of site-specific approaches of most archaeological records, in 1992 Historical Landscape Characterization (HLC) was developed in England as a strategy to characterize the dominant historical processes which have affected the landscape and which are still evident within it (Macinnes 2004: 156). Therefore, based on local knowledge and professional assessment, HLC identifies the dominant historic landuse or characteristics and provides an understanding of the historic depth behind the characteristics.

266 According to Bradley (1982: 89), ‘A good inventory provides basic data necessary for effective transmission of interpretive information, potential justification for acquiring additional land and opportunity for retaining the interpretive integrity of the area’.
As inventory here is goal-oriented where it was made based on specific motivations, it must try as possible to follow those suggested initial aims and objectives in the first step of this phase. Regardless the selected techniques which are used to gained data, ‘accurate information requires well-targeted primary fieldwork and effective data management’ (Cadw and Royal Commission 1999: 4), especially for the data from the micro-context of AH.

A very important factor for the success of this step is the involvement of different specialists to ensure the validity and affectivity of the gathered data. Again and again, PIN includes many arts (Tilden 1977, Aldridge 1989) where a multidisciplinary profession and a team work planning are required. In order to assure this, the audit should not just focus on the physical tangible aspects of AH, but the intellectual intangible heritage is equally importance for archaeological sites\textsuperscript{267} in the Omani context.

Accordingly, the audit involves the collection of all relevant information about the resources to be developed. It should include aspects such as the region’s ecology, history, demographic data, culture, economy resources, soundscapes and land use. Also, it includes the inventory and evaluation of the existing and potential of attractions, activities, accommodation, facilities and transportation\textsuperscript{268}. Also, beside the resources,

\textsuperscript{267} The ICOMOS report ‘Filling the Gap’ in regard to the World Heritage List (ICOMOS 2005) emphasised the importance of the broad anthropological context over time in a holistic way, reflecting tangible as well as intangible qualities of the nominated properties, as the latter are becoming increasingly important.
\textsuperscript{268} Herein, Ritchie and Crouch’s (2003: 257-264) model of operational measures of destination competitiveness and sustainability, \textit{destination diagnostics}, can be utilized during this stage (see Section 4.4.4).
this phase should gather information about the involved stakeholders, including the locals, and the expected market.

After data collection, the responsible management should conduct data analysis which considers the ‘total system’ (Bradley 1982: 90), analyzing processes should be a holistic and integrative process. Gaps in this step may lead to a low quality plan. However, if this is the status where there is a lack of research about a particular interpretive unit; thus, Uzzell (1998b) suggested that the available information can be used with caution. Later, the appointed Leadership and Partnership Board should seek practical mechanisms to fill in these gaps by conducting systematic research as needed. For quality PIN, the audit and analysis processes need to be dynamic, updated and conducted periodically which is important for PIN nourishment (Tilden 1977) 269. It should be understood that ‘interpretive planning is a process, not a product’ (Brochu 2003: xii).

c- Dynamic Integration Processes

This stage is about synthesizing the analyzed database or ‘the putting together of parts or elements so as to form a whole’ (Inskeep 1991: 141). The involved team needs to integrate all those data gathered from primary and secondary sources about AH, its wider cultural landscape and its cultural tourism landscape. The integrating stage provides much of the basis for the interpretive plan formulation and recommendations.

269 For instance, archaeological sites are part of the dynamic environmental system where ‘a site should be viewed dynamically, as the present state of a continuing process of landscape evolution rather than as an isolated and static phenomenon’ (Price 1996: 288).
Herein, the gained and analysed data about the Micro-impact and the Macro-impact of the three contexts need to be integrated and their interrelationships are understood\textsuperscript{270}.

The synergy processes are not an easy mission, therefore, to save time, money and effort the data need to be assembled and evaluated into interactive manageable systems such as Geographic Information System (GIS) applications. A greater understanding of archaeological sites in their various settings becomes easier by using aerial photographs and relevance field surveys\textsuperscript{271}. Also, the use of such technology will help in understanding the extent and character of land use in the area of archaeological sites as well as examining the influence of the cultural landscape on the sites and vice versa. This is especially important since the integration processes need to be dynamic for future needs. Also, in the next stages GIS-based data are more capable of producing various interpretive themes at local, regional or national level.

At this stage, and based on the findings, the opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses of the selected area can be described. Also, it is initially possible to suggest some potential interpretive themes or interpretive opportunities which may be centered around some significant features of the area or more general. However, the final plan altogether with the modified aims and objectives can not be decided until a \textit{Leadership and Partnership Board} is established by the responsible supervisory team based on the gathered information.

\textsuperscript{270} Inskeep (1991: 27) emphasized that in order to achieve effective development patterns and not generate serious problems ‘\textit{all aspects of the area or development sector being planned must be understood and carefully integrated}’.

\textsuperscript{271} GIS and aerial images can make surveying, storing, analysing, interpreting, planning, managing and evaluating the obtained information much easier and effective especially that some archaeological sites are best viewed from the air (Gaffney \textit{et al.} 1995, van Leusen 1995).
In addition to what is mentioned about thematic PIN in sections 3.8.1 and 8.3.1, it helps in managing and organizing the huge amount of gathered data from the three contexts and representative’s perspectives. Also, some scholars (e.g. Aldridge 1975, Ham 1992, Veverka 1994, Beck and Cable 2002a) suggest that thematic PIN can save time, money and effort for planners, interpreters and audience. Also, it leads to the avoidance of duplication of information and services and the achievement of proper planning and implementation\(^\text{272}\).

**d- Leadership and Partnership Board**

At this stage, all integrated data need to be presented to select representatives from the various involved stakeholders depends on the intended interpretive plan. The members of the *Leadership and Partnership Board* are representatives chosen from all those who will be influenced by ICIP from the governmental sectors, private sectors, academic sector, local entrepreneurship, local communities and others. Its main aim is to facilitate a ‘consensus planning’\(^\text{273}\) (Nilsson 2007: 436) where several issues are managed to achieve consensus through communicative conversations between all stakeholders. The board has various dynamic responsibilities; some of these responsibilities are to:

\(^{272}\) Herein, the less appealing sites and historic landscapes would ‘greatly enhance the opportunities to introduce visitors to the fascinating evidence of the evolution of settlement and land use’ (Binks 1986: 43). Aldridge (1975: 26) emphasized these points in the regional or local interpretive plans by saying: ‘In the case of the regional plan, we are concerned with avoiding duplication, allocating local themes to local areas, and ensuring as fast as possible that the local themes taken together contribute to a regional story which represents a major part of the personality of the region. In the case of the local plan, we are seeking to interpret the significance of the local area through a theme which is often a highly selective presentation’.

\(^{273}\) It is a collaborative approach where many stakeholders are involved; it is structured to achieve the local and national planning objectives and sustainable development. It emphasizes the societal issues in planning, advocating public interest. It is communicative planning where there is a mutual conversation between all stakeholders and actors (Nilsson 2007).
integrate interpretive mechanisms of AH into comprehensive plans or the wider tourism development plans and policies;

help in suggesting further research and incorporating the data gathered to establish ICIP for the selected AH and its cultural landscape;

review, revise, enhance and develop the initial suggested aims and objective in the light of new databases\footnote{274};

allocate and divide jobs for the different partners;

help in recruiting and designing training programs in PIN;

develop a business plan and identify financial resources and investment opportunities;

discuss any rising issues and keep a balance among all stakeholders;

set the related directive policies of ICIP;

monitor and evaluate ICIP implementation and impact; and

comment and decide on feedback and adjustment proposals.

These responsibilities can be strengthened through the networking among the representatives at regular meetings. As needed, multidisciplinary workshops for the involved stakeholders and their representatives on the board need to be held frequently at various levels and phases. The main purposes of these workshops are myriad such as to:

- explain the initial aims and objectives of the interpretive plan and seek the representatives’ insight;

\footnote{274} Brochu (2003) defined three main objectives for interpretive planning which are: management objectives, action objectives and interpretation objectives. These objectives can serve the short-term and long-term goals of a particular institution and they need to be measured regularly.
found a common ground and shared meanings amongst the stakeholders in order to build reciprocal confidence;

- describe the expected values and socio-economic outputs; and

- consult the various stakeholders through their representatives in any main sensitive issues that should be addressed carefully.

As the lack of understanding and information about the nature of tourism is one of the impediments facing the integrative approach (Butler 1999), these workshops are vital to keep the members of the stakeholders informed and updated, especially that many of the board members are expected not to have previous experience in archaeotourism or PIN values. A group facilitation might be needed where a neutral facilitator is selected to ‘help a group improve how it identifies and solves problems and makes decisions, to increase the group effectiveness’ (Schwarz 2002: 5). An important element in regard to the board is that the selected representatives should be mindful and contemplative as possible and aware of their multi-responsibilities.

Similar to the System Approach to PIN, Capelle et al. (1989: 118) insisted that to implement this approach there is a need for managers who ‘can appreciate the benefits of planning interpretive services on a regional scale, not the traditional site-only bases’. Besides, as suggested by Ritchie and Crouch (2003: 22) the wise stewardship of resources is critical to the long-term competitiveness of a tourism destination. Another important meaning for being a mindful representative is the ability to negotiate different solutions to construct ICIP based on collective reality or shared intentionality (Searle

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275 In fact, ‘a lack of knowledge about the potential for cooperation and the benefit of the cultural tourism seem to be the biggest barriers to development’ (Richards and Hall 2000:13).
1995) to avoid cross-cultural conflict which may arise from the different interests and expected benefits from ICIP. That is to say, what is important here is that partnership should take the form of ‘strategic alliances’ (Sautter and Leisen 1999: 326) where every stakeholder work according to the collective suggested strategy.

8.4.2.2. Planning and Themeing

For its importance, designing ICIP is considered to be the only focal aim for this phase in particular. It represents a master interpretive plan and a reference to create an Integrated Interpretive Network for the next phase. It is a directive guide for implementing, managing and operating, marketing, monitoring, sustaining and improving PIN. In short, it is the essence of ICPI and a descriptive document and translation for the collective works that have been done in the first phase of the model, i.e. motivations, aims and objectives, audit, analysis and integration process, partnership board, discussions, etc.

The Leadership and Partnership Board is required to agree upon a particular strategy with a mission for the project in question. As a strategy, it needs to be clear in order to achieve quality management objectives, to focus attention on priorities, to coordinate action between stakeholders and to act as a persuasive tool in seeking support and funding (European Commission 2000a: 26).

ICIP should have a major directive guide of aims and measurable objectives. This represents the key to success for interpretive plans and reflects the mission of the management board (Veverka 1994, Brochu 2003). Therefore, the aims and objectives
need to be identified and balanced; they clarify the role and importance of ICIP\textsuperscript{276}. They might be different from the initial aims and objectives suggested in the first phase. Herein, they provide the direction and content of all interpretive activities and programs which, as possible, need to be connected to emotional, behavioural and learning expected outputs (Veverka 1994). Also, they need to achieve livability, efficiency, amenity, flexible and choice, minimum harm to natural and cultural communities or sustainability, optimum use of resources and public participation and empowerment (Bradley 1982)\textsuperscript{277}. An important aspect is that ICIP should conform to the structure and operational policy and regulations of the leading governmental stewardship. In line with this, a set of policy should be established; however, in compatible with the national legislation as well as with the international agreements and directives. This is in order to reserve the rights of all involved stakeholders and actors, including the host community. ICPI fosters the sense of shared ownership amongst all stakeholders where ICIP must be based on a collective agreement in order to determine the most effective way to communicate AH in integrative ways and provide quality interpretive experience for visitors\textsuperscript{278}. Therefore, ICIP needs to have a strategic view of where the site should be and what it should offer according to the suggested main aims and objectives. Accordingly, full description is required for the cultural tourism landscape and how AH, in particular, can be integrated within this landscape. ICIP should define all possible themes, sub-themes and storylines which must be unique to each part of the selected

\textsuperscript{276} In this regard, Feilden and Jokilehto (1993: 100) mentioned that ‘The aim of the interpretation of the heritage site needs to be clearly established before work starts, and reviewed regularly in the light of experience and changing thinking’.

\textsuperscript{277} Also, Oliver and Jenkins (2005) referred to the consideration of such characteristics as embeddedness and complementarity.

\textsuperscript{278} For instance, Knudson et al. (2003: 310) mentioned that ‘The plan identifies significant resources characteristics and features. It suggests how to relate them to the visitor, based on their characteristics, needs and desires’.
area and suggest the kind of interpretive infrastructure and services to be developed, design-based or people-based. Yet, it is expected that the selection of a particular interpretive strategy and media can be difficult. Thus, this needs to be done systematically based on the previous outcomes and guided by the available previous studies and practices. Also, the next phase (Section 8.4.2.3) will provide more insight on this aspect, e.g. specific location, model, design, etc.

Probably, during the planning stage more audit and analysis processes would be required to be carried out according to new data and perspectives provided by the representatives and by the evaluation process. This is part of the dynamic nature of ICPI approach as to avoid dissonant interpretation or conflicts in the implementation phase as much as possible and to ensure the sustainability and quality of PIN as well.

Also, one of the main aims for ICPI is to prevent ICIP from being manipulative interpretation which serves a limited group of people for oriented agenda. In ICPI, any stakeholder can express its perspective freely and have the right to suggest or reject any proposed *Integrated Interpretive Theme* or interpretive technique. In regard to the locals, ICPI provides the opportunity for them to express their wishes to interpret their local sites which might interconnect with other suggested *Integrated Interpretive Themes*. Yet, this should be accompanied with valid justifiable evidence and in the light of the final decided aims and objectives of ICIP. Every theme should be determined and implemented through overriding agreed-upon purposes. The early mentioned networking workshops and regular meetings can play a major role in

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279 Philips and Tubridy (1994: 117) included that one of the benefits for a master interpretive plan is ‘to ensure that the right level of resources is allocated to interpretation projects which meet the needs of visitors, and reflect the interest of local communities’.
producing joint themes and create smaller joint partnership under the umbrella of the board to insure that this is happening and progressing according to a collective directive strategy.

Any *Integrated Interpretive Theme* needs to be well-studied and based on scientific research than being arbitrary and more research might be needed for some suggested *interpretive units*, an interpretive element used to communicate the proposed theme such as an archaeological site and a *falaj*, a handicraft shop, a local museum. According to ICPI, the priority is given to those themes which are capable of establishing interpretive units that can be utilized for various integrated themes within the *Integrated Interpretive Network*. The proposed themes should have a potential to represent the historic dimension of a particular landscape more fully and connect AH to other heritage components within the cultural landscape and the cultural tourism landscape as much as possible. It could also provide an understanding behind the present characteristics of the interpreted landscapes. As for the interpretive units, their selection depends on such factors as scale, preservation, authenticity, uniqueness and accessibility. Priorities should be given for those units that serve the area as a whole and show the unique regional personality from prehistoric time, if possible, to the present day. Sites and sights are selected according to their interpretive potential and their capability to provide complementary panoramic views that enable visitors to get a good holistic interpretive experience about the area. All these aspects should be planned in congruent with the phase one, Audit and Integration.
A site can be selected to work as a hub or part of a cluster of sites. The hub can work as a gate to various clusters of sites where information, orientation and various alternative interpretations can be provided. Similar to the information points suggested for the Herian interpretive project in south Wales, these hubs can be used to entice people from established popular attractions to equally interesting, but less well-known sites and scenic countryside (PLB Projects Ltd and Govannan Consultancy 2003).

Furthermore, a major aim of ICIP is to provide a guide of recommendations in regard to aspects such as promotion and marketing, visitor management, training programs and investment opportunities. Finally, it is important to make ICIP accessible manually or electronically for all involved stakeholders as needed, but with caution.

8.4.2.3. The Implementation, Marketing and Management Phase (the processing phase)

The main principle of this phase is to design and construct a viable holistic Integrated Interpretive Network based on the suggested interpretive themes. ICIP here is practically translated into a group of interconnected themes. Again, every Integrated Interpretive Theme should be done in congruent with ICIP main aims and objectives without compromising the micro-context and macro-context of the resources.

Also, this phase is responsible for the establishment of a Managerial and Marketing Strategy for the entire Integrated Interpretive Network. Both the network and the strategy need to be integrated internally and externally. Internally means that both strategies need to complement each other within the micro-context of a particular interpreted unit. Externally refers to the incorporation of the strategies within the macro-
dimension of the interpreted unit. Additionally, a major part of both the Integrated Interpretive Theme and the Managerial and Marketing Strategy is the third components of this phase which is the Integrated Interpretive Media. For their importance, the following lines will briefly describe the Integrated Interpretive Network, the Managerial and Marketing Strategy and the Integrated Interpretive Media and their role in ICPI.

a. Integrated Interpretive Network

The network is an implementation strategy for ICIP. It is composed of one or more integrated themes suggested by the Leadership and Partnership Board. The network is an integrative interpretive strategy to foster an interconnection and interdependent relationship among the various interpretive units of the Integrated Interpretive Themes. A multi-disciplinary interpretive team from a wider range of professions and disciplines is created in cooperation with the board. Accordingly, besides the professions, the team should include representatives from the involved stakeholders, including the locals.

The interpretive network can be made out of one or more themes depending on various factors such as first motivations, size and potential of the archaeological site and its cultural landscape, the board representatives, financial and human resources, the market and the alike. An integrated theme might incorporate one or more sub-themes which in return are made of smaller interpretive units (Figure 8.7)\textsuperscript{280}.

\textsuperscript{280} For example, ICIP may suggest the designing of a theme relative to Magan culture. Here, a possible theme can be focused around ‘Oman, the land of copper’. Under this theme, some sub-themes can be created about ‘ancient mining sites’ or reconstructed ‘copper caravan trails’. Here, every ancient mining or smelting site represents an interpretive unit within the main theme which in return is part of the wider Integrated Interpretive Network. The Leadership and Partnership Board may suggest another theme that can be conflated with this theme such as the ‘old oasis of Oman’.
One technique to facilitate the design and construction of a particular Integrated Interpretive Theme for the development of archaeotourism in particular, is the thematic integration of different heritage resources based on chronological dimension and spatial dimensions. This technique can be called the Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation where several interpretive units are integrated according to appropriate theme/s to provide a complementary PIN plan from the audited resources based on a particular main idea²⁸¹ (Table 8.1).

²⁸¹ Here, the use of GIS image has the potential to facilitate the use of Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation in planning a coherent theme by making it easier to explore the possibilities and connects archaeological sites with other heritage resources in local, regional and even national levels. This is important for a multi-themes interpretive plan within a particular interpretive network.
Table 8.1: An example for the Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation where the Chronological Dimension refers to various historic periods for the selected interpretive units within a particular cultural landscape, the Spatial Dimension.

The interpretive units could date from various historical periods within a selected geographic area and this reflects the chronological dimension for the technique. As for the spatial dimension it refers to the geographic context in which the chronological dimension is located. The Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation technique is more than an inventory strategy as it allows interpretive units to be classified and organized on chronological and spatial dimensions to help in creating a thematic PIN by the interpretive team and link the past to the present.

Geographically, the technique can be used at local, inter-local, regional, interregional, national and international level which depends on the aims and objectives of the suggested theme. Some of the main aims for this technique are to:
facilitate the selection of appropriate themes based on the historic characterization with the selected area;

link and facilitate the connection of AH with other heritage resources in chronological and sensible context;

provide some alternatives for visitors and create some diversity and enrichment by including various heritage components, i.e. built, natural and living;

communicate and enhance mindful interpretive visitors’ experience and make sense out of AH;

empower the role and function of AH in the public life and communicate its various values to the local communities through the development of community archaeology and community PIN;

link remote or peripheral sites to those located in core areas as well as to enliven the less visited sites and other heritage resources;

prevent duplication and save time, money and effort; and

pinpoint the gaps in the chronology of a particular selected areas which might suggest a further field research.

One site can be a cross-interpretive unit for different themes within a particular area. Also, while one site can be an intrinsic or core attraction for some visitors, for others it is an optional, incidental or accidental. Accordingly, except maybe for the captive visitors, such as school parties, visitors are not obligated to visit the interpretive units in chronological order. They are free to create or to do what Jafari (2001: 3) called

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282 In this context, McKercher and du Cros (2002: 110) mentioned that a heritage attraction ‘could act as a primary, secondary and tertiary attractions simultaneously, depending on the tourists’ different reasons for visiting’
‘touristic sampling’ for the visited place where they can customize their own themes (interpretive package) and select any interpretive unit located within the interpreted context. This support for flexibility comes from such facts as type of tourists, time, money, appeal, accessibility and uniqueness\(^\text{283}\).

Also, the *Integrated Interpretive Network* can organize the site according to the concept of ‘hub and clusters’ which means to unify a group of heritage sites in ‘clusters’ around a series of major sites called ‘hubs’ (LPB Projects Ltd and Govannan Consultancy 2003). Here, a hub can act as a major interpretive unit that is a destination in its own right or a flagship for other integrated units, e.g. Bahla Oasis. However, what important here is that any interpretive unit within a particular *Integrated Interpretive Theme* needs to be connected thematically to its main ideas. Similar to the ‘dispersed interpretation’ (Stewart *et al.* 2001: 350), ICPI is ‘working from the specific to the general and guiding awareness and understanding through familiar channels to less familiar subjects’. This means that visitors are encouraged to visit and learn about other attractions within the wider cultural landscape by building upon their particular primary interests in visiting a given attraction (the core) and relate this to the wider cultural landscape or the clusters, including archaeological sites.

*b- Managerial and Marketing Strategy*

When a particular *Integrated Interpretive Theme* is finalized, the interpretive team, in cooperation with the *Leadership and Partnership Board*, needs to design, construct and prepare interpretive infrastructure and services. Thus, the main purpose of an integrated

\(^{283}\) For instance, Ham (1992) mentioned that the probability that a non-captive audience will pay attention depends on the potential benefit and the required effort to get the benefit.
managerial and marketing strategy is to ensure and facilitate the implementation of the designed *Integrated Interpretive Themes* in harmony and efficient way. The *Managerial and Marketing Strategy* manages the construction and administration of the established interpretive network and promotes ready-constructed interpretive services (i.e. self-guided trails, local museums, demonstration) to the desired audience or market.

With the support of the board, the *Managerial and Marketing Strategy* is required to manage the ‘operational resources’ (Brochu 2003: 76) which includes the provision of any required staff, facilities, maintenance and finance. This is important in order to avoid senseless PIN or negative quality interpretive experience for visitors. For example, in regard to visitor management, there should be two considerations; the particular *genius loci* of the place are wholly respected and the excellence is achieved in the quality of the experience for visitors (Millar 1999).

There is no doubt that the quality and success of the *Integrated Interpretive Network* will partially depend on the managerial board and their efficiency, mindfulness and appreciation of the collective partnership in managing and monitoring the provided interpretive services and infrastructure. A ‘mindful management’ (Moscardo 1997: 16) that it recognizes its responsibilities and roles in integration processes is critically important. The *Managerial and Marketing Strategy* should go side by side with ICIP’s aims and objectives. Additionally, the management needs to be aware of the role of PIN as a hard and soft management tool. For example, site managers may consider applying various visitor management tools (e.g. alternative themes, direction maps, guided trails, 284

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284 In this matter, Shackley (2006) stressed that a holistic visitor management plan needs to be fully addressed when developing the management plan.
virtual tour, moving facilities) to network interpretive themes and at the same time achieve a sustainable PIN.

Beside management, and as PIN operates in a business context, the Managerial and Marketing Strategy is responsible for promoting and marketing the Integrated Interpretive Themes. The Managerial and Marketing Strategy should care for visitors pre-visit, during visit and post-visit. To do so, the involved team has to learn to become professionals and to compete in the current market by intersecting with ‘the economic sphere’ (Little 2004: 279). To reach to such level successfully, it is important to develop training programs constantly. Marketing plans should serve different functions such as providing market analysis and recommendations (Brochu 2003) and prepare off-site interpretive media. The off-site media could enhance visitors’ experience before their actual visit (Prentice 1993), prepare visitors for visiting, provide them with alternatives and relate to the visitors which could assist in achieving mindfulness state (Moscardo 1998). Parkin et al. (1989) pointed out that PIN starts from capturing the potential visitor first time through visual image on leaflets and in the media.

Accordingly, it is important to relate the Integrated Interpretive Network to market segments where the Leadership and Partnership Board should think carefully and realistically about the kinds of visitor that stewardship is able and wish to attract. Stewardship should consider how different market segments relate to the interpretive

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285 McLoughlin et al. (2006a: 12) suggested the use of visitors profile as one way to enable more targeted marketing strategies to take place.
286 In this regard, Urry (2002: 3) mentioned that the off-site interpretation ‘may motivate to choose a place to be gazed upon because there is anticipation...constructed and sustained through a variety of non-tourist practices’.
287 Buhalís et al. (2006) highlight the significance of technology or e-marketing in the pre-visit and post-visit experience where the published information in the internet websites, for example, allows visitors to plan in advance, develop their knowledge, and generate repeat visits.
strategy and objectives to avoid any sort of conflict and achieve a sustainable archaeotourism. Therefore, Prentice (2004) emphasized that marketing strategy needs to be based in the understanding of consumer reality where visitors are remarkably diverse and a standard interpretive message or medium cannot work with all visitors. This is an important issue for the tourism industry in Oman as the government intends to promote and support selective niche markets and special types of tourism rather than mass tourism (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2001, Sweeney 2002).

One application for the concept of ‘whole person’ is that the previous personal experience of audience does matter (Bradley 1982, Pine and Gilmore 1998) which emphasizes the importance of considering the whole audience which means ‘a group of people who would require the interpreters to be familiar with the tastes, interests, preferences of their audience’ (Sam Ham: personal communication: 22/May/2008). Herein, choices concerning interpretive representation help in shaping ways in which the tourist understand heritage sites (Macleod 2006). The Managerial and Marketing Strategy should be dynamic and built on practical sense rather than static standards and imaginative ideas. As this is one of the most complicated processes in PIN (Buhalis et al. 2006), ICPI emphasizes the necessity of team-based work in PIN.

Another important aspect in the Managerial and Marketing Strategy is that it should go side by side with the practical implementation of a particular interpretive theme where ‘a total marketing approach requires that promises kept, even excelled’ (Sweeney 2002: 288).

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288 For instance, Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996: 28) argue that interpretation is ideological in sense that the conveyed messages through heritage products can be received by consumers quite different from that intended.
6). As marketing is part of the tourism chain and visitor’s interpretive experience, this step should be based on realistic products rather than presenting fake images.

c- Integrated Interpretive Media

According to their types, the media can be designed for off-site or on-site interpretive purposes, either personal (people-based) or impersonal (design-based). The main aim of the Integrated Interpretive Media is to transform the overall ICIP’s aims and objectives to audience and to convey and reinforce all or part of the focal message of a particular theme within the constructed interpretive network. In the wider sense, it is arguable that any interpretive unit can be described as a medium in ICPI even if it is unaided with design-based technology or attended. For instance, an ancient copper mining trail is an interpretive medium that might connect other sub-media or interpretive sub-units, such as a mine shaft and smelting furnace, so visitors can understand the relationship among all integrated sites. So the concept of media here can be as small as a thematic map or an ethnographic or archaeological object and as big as the whole interpretive network.

The Integrated Interpretive Media should assist in making sense of the selected themes and their interpretive units properly and efficiently. To do this, the Integrated Interpretive Media should complement one another and not to be duplicated. ICPI underlines the importance of using various interactive media that provoke and interact with all senses in intellectual, emotional and physical ways without harming the interpreted sites. By providing various media to transform a particular theme, visitors are not forced to encounter one way of thinking; however, they can select according to their level of experience, time, interest…etc. The Integrated Interpretive Media should
be designed to reach the audience from various aspects and consider all those factors that might help in enhancing the total interpretive experience. The Integrated Interpretive Media is a tool to mediate not only the desired message by managers, but it allows visitors to have their own interpretations.

As part of ICPI, the Integrated Interpretive Media is an integrative strategy which connects and introduces visitors to other related sites within the Integrated Interpretive Network. It works as a gate which leads visitors to explore more elements and enrich their interpretive experience. In line with this, and in order to convey and reinforce one or more messages to visitors efficiently, the employment of Omani interpreters as a personal media or in designing the Integrated Interpretive Media is preferred as this is confirmed by the research findings (see chapters six and nine). Similarly, the use of environmental Omani materials in designing a trail or designing a sun shelter out of the palm-trees products might be more convincing and effective in generating sense of the visited place. This explains the criticism for the current methods used in reconstructing and restoring the historical monuments at Bahla and al-Balid as confirmed in Chapter Five. Also, doing so can have multiplied effects where the local handicrafts, for instance, can be revived and consequently local socio-economic benefits can accrue.

Having said this, the evaluation of the Integrated Interpretive Media influence should not be limited to visitors, but to the micro-impact of the interpreted context (see Section 8.4.2.4). Therefore, as the visitor profile influences the media designing, similarly, factors, such as sites integrity and local reservations, part of the whole context, should not be negotiated. Again, the use of media should consider the unique context of each
interpretive unit where ‘what has worked on one heritage site may not be effective for all’ (Feilden and Jokilehto 1993: 100). Beside this, there is a need for an effective technology management where a continuous review of technology strategy is required (McLoughlin et al. 2006b). Finally, despite its importance, it should be stressed that in ICPI media are not indicative of PIN, but common means by which PIN messages may be delivered (Prentice 1996).

8.4.2.4. The Total Impact Phase (the outputs phase)

This phase is considered to be the outputs phase for the previous phases, inputs and processing, which are expected to foster impacts on the audience and the interpreted context. As an integrative approach, ICPI relates to the network of heterogeneous organizations ‘to cater effectively and efficiently to visitors’ needs and expectations, and to minimize the potential negative socio-cultural, economic and ecological on the environment of a host community’ (Go and Govers 2000: 80).

Also, as ICPI is not merely a market-led or audience-led approach, it goes beyond the commercialization of PIN and AH to observe the total impact in the various resources within the whole context and the involved stakeholders. Therefore, the success and efficiency of ICIP depends on its role in preserving AH, raising the public awareness of AH values, activating the local community participation in interpretation and the alike. However, it is expected that this role might be influenced by different factors as neither the audience, nor the PC, SSC and SCC of a particular site are static. A brief description is given below for the importance of this phase in relation to the audience’s Total Interpretive Experience and the interpreted micro context.
a. Total Interpretive Experience

Since any interpretive plan is mainly designed for audience, it is not surprising to find that most published literature in PIN is mostly focused on audience experience where ‘all things are audience dependent’ (Sam Ham: personal communication: 22/May/2008). In fact, almost any suggested definition for PIN includes the audience as a focal element (see Section 3.2.3). Thematic interpretation (Ham 1992), the big concept (Copeland 2006) and market-led planning (Brochu 2003) are examples that show how audience are focal in planning PIN.

As for ICPI, the ‘whole person’ certainly represents one of the main aspects in any Integrated Interpretive Theme. This is based on the fact that ICPI is not a manipulative approach in a sense that visitors are given different alternatives and have the opportunity to create their own experience depending on their interests. From a theoretical perspective, they become interpretive audience which is not an optional, but a mandatory from constructionist and constructivist points of view whether interpreters and archaeologists like it or not (see sections 3.6.3 and 4.3.3). A constructivist perspective is valuable in ICPI approach because it believes in visitors’ right to interpret and it considers their perspectives; herein, experts’ perspectives can be negotiated.

Similar to the ‘thesis-based interpretation’ discussed by Lundberg (1997), the Integrated Interpretive Theme should provoke, challenge, disturb and unsettle audience; it should move them from their comfort zone. This is one of the keys for quality PIN which arranges for self-interpretation where the interpreter provides materials to visitors to learn on their own and become ‘cultural producers’ (Tilley 1989: 280). As a service, the
Managerial and Marketing Strategy must ensure that interpretive programs are relevant to visitor’s needs (Hall and McArthur 1998) and provide a memorable experience (Pine and Gilmore 1998). This can be encouraged by a self-reflection activity (Crang 1996), sense-on experiences and site visits to archaeological sites as this might be more capable to convey insightful learning experience at a particular site (Prentice 1996) (see Section 3.7).

The desired visitor profile, as decided by the Leadership and Partnership Board, should be practically translated and expressed in the designed integrated themes. For instance, as a constructivist approach, ICPI admits that the general public is ‘made up of different audiences with different needs and different expectations’ (Uzzell 1998b: 249). To explain, SCC shows that the educational system and illiteracy represent two of the main factors to be considered when designing interpretive programs for the local visitors. Therefore, as discussed in the Managerial and Marketing Strategy the appointed PIN team should consider the types of tourists who are visiting, e.g. demographic and psychographic characteristics. For instance, it is important that PIN considers those tourists who want to have in-depth experiences and those incidentals who look for a short experience. Also, meanwhile some visitors may prefer design-based media, there are those who are more interested in people-based PIN and vice versa. Herein, interactive technology is one way that can be adapted to allow visitors to choose freely the media they can best relate to (Laws 2001).

From the discussion in Chapter Three and in this chapter, there are three main sources that PIN for AH participates in constructing the Total Interpretive Experience which
are: pre-visit experience; during-visit experience; and post-visit experience (Figure 8.8). The *Total Interpretive Experience* is the product of a continuous active dynamic ‘external-internal shift’ (Beck and Cable 2002a: 14) which means the explanation of external message through internal previous experience and constructed values as well. These externalization and internalization processes may start before visiting the site and continue after the visit via off-site interpretive media\(^{289}\).

Based on this, PIN should not be seen as an end product, but as a process where dynamism of constructing a new experience is opened and admitted (Grimwade and Carter 2000). As construction processes can be endless, therefore, it is arguable that there is no final static interpretive experience; rather, it is a dynamic where multiple interpretations ‘are created, recreated and contested as social process’ (Knudson *et al* 2007: 229).

\(^{289}\) Therefore, Aldridge (1989: 85) suggested that interpretation should aim to make the appreciation of a place relevant to audience and conflate the appreciation into their lives.
Figure 8.8 suggests that learning can not be created through a simple accretion of facts; instead, ‘the streams of information is selected, interpreted and organized to form the cognitive structures, schemas’ (Lee 2002: 205) about a particular context. It is suggested here that before learning takes place, there is a liminal zone or transitional stage which can be called the filtering processes where all coming messages get sieved against the constructed experience and values before finally accommodated, assimilated or even rejected by ‘the cognitive map’ (Prentice 1996: 58) of visitors.

To explain more, when a visitor gazes at an archaeological object, reading it or trying to understand a site, s/he will go through internal search and think of it in a holistic way by connecting what s/he is looking at to the constructed values and stored previous values.

\footnote{Cognitivism is ‘a psychological perspective which takes perception as the core process in the way in which an individual relates to the world he constructs through experience’ (Prince 1982: 165).}
schemas or knowledge before any assimilation or accommodation of new ideas through the internalization and externalization processes.

Visitors may modify their perceptions about a destination after sharing their Total Interpretive Experiences with others (e.g. school students and their teachers and families) or updating their constructed experiences through the mass media. In this term, the Total Interpretive Experience for visitors is the total of all those construction and deconstruction processes, pre-visit, during-visit and post-visit. However, what is important for the Leadership and Partnership Board is to evaluate the Total Interpretive Experience which has been constructed from visitors’ pre-visit, while visit, and post-visit shortly after they finish their tour. This can be done through on-site and/or off-site evaluative techniques which their description and discussion are far from the subject of this chapter.

As ICPI is not manipulated by particular individuals or groups, and due to its dynamic nature, audience (e.g. visitors, the locals) should be allowed to participate in adjustment processes, share their perspectives and offer advices to the board. However, this should congruent with the Micro-impact and the Macro-impact of the three contexts within the interpreted landscape. Welcoming the audience comments could have a vital role in reshaping ICIP and accordingly enhancing the Total Interpretive Experience for visitors and excelling their future expectations.

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291 ICPI derived this nature from the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (World Tourism Organization 1999: Article 8) which emphasizes the visitors’ right in accessibility to the cultural sites and should benefit from the same rights as the citizens of the country.

292 Beck and Cable (2002b) concluded that being aware of visitor’s perspective, knowledge and a past experience is essential for a successful interpretation.
Chapter Eight: Toward An Integrative Approach to Public Interpretation

b. The Micro-Impact of PIN

According to ICPI, PIN can not be considered successful by just providing a constructive *Total Interpretive Experience* to audience; however, there is another important measurement for the success of PIN which is its micro-impact on PC, SSC and SCC at a particular interpreted context. Certainly, it is expected that the positive impacts by applying ICPI strategy in the micro-context would have a gradual positive influence on the macro-context as well as these two contexts are interconnected based on the research findings.

As it is the case with audience, it is expected that through ICPI practices some of the mentioned factors relative to the three contexts will be cautiously and effectively addressed and managed (see Chapter Nine). For example, as sustainability is one of the main tenets of ICPI, it is expected that a particular *Integrated Interpretive Theme* assists in decreasing the natural and human negative impacts discussed in Chapter Five, especially if local communities are intellectually and physically involved in different ways (Figure 8.9). Thus, multiplied effects can occur to all involved stakeholders and interpreted resources because the multi-values for sustainability make it necessarily a shared reality among all stakeholders and a measurement for the influence and success of ICIP on the micro-context of the interpreted unit/s (see Chapter Nine). Therefore, sustainability should be regularly monitored through holistic integrated evaluative processes as the next section confirmed this.
Figure 8.9: An example for the ICPI impact on the three contexts.

8.4.2.5 The Dynamic Integrated Evaluation and Monitoring

Prentice (1993) emphasized the need in heritage tourism for the evaluation of heritage PIN to be placed as a priority rather than depending on intuition and experience. In ICPI, a Dynamic Integrated Evaluation and Monitoring is needed which starts from the first phase rather than being a final evaluative process for specific stated objectives. For instance, the initial objectives, suggested in the first phase, should be measured and evaluated by the Leadership and Partnership Board who in return evaluates and adjusts the initial objectives and the proposed interpretive plan as early described in Phase One and Phase Two.

The Dynamic Integrated Evaluation and Monitoring is a holistic continuous multi-disciplinary strategy of monitoring and investigation which collects data from the four mentioned phases and examines the likely effects of the established Integrated Interpretive Network on the audience and on interpretive units and their PC, SSC, SCC.
The success of the stated objectives for a specific integrated theme need to be measured in relation to the wider stated objectives for ICIP based on a particular systematic evaluative mechanism. Also, some information might be gathered through a periodic research strategy as the need arises. This type of evaluation and monitoring processes is similar to what Ritchie and Crouch (2003) called the *inward flow of information and research*. Herein, evaluation can be off-site or on-site and done by fieldwork or desk-based assessment.

*The Dynamic Integrated Evaluation and Monitoring* is also holistic and integrative in a sense that it looks at ICIP as a system made of complementary and interdependent processes. The shortcoming in one of these processes might affect the entire system. As ICIP resembles a vital ingredient in different tourism chains, and it is interconnected with the total travelling experience, a senseless PIN or shortcomings in one or more parts of the selected interpretive system can negatively influence the *Total Interpretive Experience* and the interpreted context, especially that both the *Micro-impact* and the *Macro-impact* of the three contexts are not static. Therefore, besides the evaluation of these two aspects, the entire implementation and processes in the four phases should be constantly monitored and adjusted. *The Dynamic Integrated Evaluation and Monitoring* should monitor the performance of a particular *Integrated Interpretive Theme* (including interpretive units and media), measure staff and visitor satisfaction, the incremental impacts of the interpretive network on local communities and their environment, quality management, promoting standards and training programs.293 Also, if possible, *The*  

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293 For instance, in regard to tour guidance Weiler and Ham (2002: 63) wrote: ‘Training efforts must be systematically evaluated, and lessons learned form these evaluations must be documented and disseminated widely and used to inform future training efforts’.
Dynamic Integrated Evaluation and Monitoring could include the search for evaluative techniques for the post-visit experience of visitors which might help in measuring the impact of a particular interpretive program in visitors’ life.

Part of the Dynamic Integrated Evaluation and Monitoring’s principles is to balance and compare all evaluative feedbacks by testing them against one another. This is to avoid jumping into a quick prejudicial final decision which might cost money, effort and time and benefit one side of the interpretive system at the account of others. One main reason for doing this is that a complete objective feedback from visitors is difficult to be expected and measured. Thus, the feedback obtained from visitors should be measured against those gained from the locals as well and vice versa.

All feedbacks from the inward flow are continuously gathered, analyzed and tested by the Managerial and Marketing Strategy team to be reported to the Leadership and Partnership Board with Adjustments Proposals and improvements. Adjustments may include training programs, visitor management techniques, advice on sources of funding, a new partnership and enterprises, etc. The board then re-evaluate the feedbacks and the proposals against ICIP aims and objectives. The board should seriously study various precautious alternatives to determine the expected advantages and disadvantages for each one of them. Various changes can be applied to any part of the Integrated Interpretive Network and further research might be needed before putting a final decision into work. Also, the board may decide to carry on systematic and problem-oriented evaluative programs to explore particular issues or to improve the network by adding or removing interpretive themes.
As ICIP is part of wider tourism plans, the final outcomes of the evaluation and adjustment proposals should be disseminated to all involved stakeholders through various media (e.g. periodic newsletters, official website). Because of its importance for such groups as the local community, tour operators and special interest tourists, this dissemination or *outward flow of information and research* (Ritchie and Crouch 2003) should also be monitored and improved by the board.

Finally, it should be mentioned that although the *Dynamic Integrated Evaluation and Monitoring* seems to be a complicated and difficult long-term processes, yet like any other evaluative programs, it is essential to meet the increasing challenges of accountability for AH stewardship and sustainable archaeotourism. Therefore, the *Dynamic Integrated Evaluation and Monitoring* is an effective strategy in ICPI that helps findings the gaps, enhancing the communication, sustaining AH and its environmental setting more properly; usually there is always a room for enhancement.

**8.5. SUMMARY**

The main aim of this chapter was to propose a holistic integrative strategy for PIN of AH in Oman guided by the research findings and the limited available literature. The suggested approach is an attempt to fill a gap in PIN literature, especially in relation to AH in developing countries.

The chapter underscores the importance of designing alternative approaches for communicating AH values in Oman as the current interpretive practices have been repeatedly criticized. Although some scholars and practitioners have developed some
integrative approaches to holistic PIN, yet, these approaches cannot be successfully applied to the Omani context where the micro-contexts and the macro-contexts of AH are slightly different. Beside, these approaches are unclear about how the whole context and the whole person are addressed while planning, implementing, managing, marketing and evaluating PIN. A well-planned integrative PIN for AH within the wider heritage-tourism industry is required to strengthen the integrative mechanism, communicate a total experience, sustain different types of heritage resources, deliver various benefits for stakeholders (including the locals), raise the public awareness of AH tangible and intangible values and foster a national pride and identity.

The proposed approach, ICPI, highlights the importance of improving the current interpretive approaches from being generic to become more specific and oriented to work for a particular context, a particular heritage and particular audience, from generalization to particularization. Thus, PIN team should not base any interpretive plan or services on fixed approaches and previous constructed knowledge, but the team ought to configure their planning approaches according to the context in which PIN will be suited, i.e. the specific selected heritage resources and required audience. The idea of ICPI should encourage a holistic conceptualization of PIN for AH which in return suggests a research methodology that seeks to engage all actors involved in its constitution.

In the light of the research findings, ICPI has emphasized the serious considerations of all factors within the three contexts at their micro and macro dimensions where such aspects as long-term vision, comprehensive plans and policies, authenticity, public
education and participation and dynamic evaluation are highly considered. That is to say, any archaeological landscape or attraction should be interpreted in relation to its cultural landscape and cultural tourism landscape. Also, this chapter illustrated the complicated nature of planning, implementing, managing and evaluating integrative holistic strategies for PIN by using ICPI which needs a factual dynamic cooperative partnership and an interdependent multi-roles system to achieve their multiple objectives.

It appears from the research findings that such integrative approaches as ICPI goes well with the present and future ambitious plans of the Omani government to develop the heritage-tourism in general, and special interest tourism in particular, including archaeotourism. Therefore, the next chapter will delineate in details some of the main trends of ICPI and their significance for the development of PIN in Oman, specifically in regard to archaeotourism.
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CHAPTER NINE
ICPI APPROACH, ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEO TOURISM IN OMAN

9.1. INTRODUCTION
This chapter aims to delineate the potential of ICPI in communicating various values of AH in Oman. By giving examples, it shows how to put ICPI into work and become part of the solution for many of the discussed issues in regard to PC, SSC and SCC in order to develop archaeotourism in Oman in particular. The richness of heritage resources, including archaeological sites, and the ambitious governmental development plans for sustainable heritage-tourism represent two incentive factors to consider the application of integrative approaches such as ICPI. This is to establish quality tourism in the long-term for all stakeholders without compromising the sustainability of heritage resources and their contexts.

The discussion here is grounded on the literature review in chapters three, four and eight, as well as the research findings where the criterion and opportunistic sites are utilized to provide practical examples from the case study.

9.2. ICPI AS A DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING TOOL FOR ARCHAEO TOURISM IN OMAN
It is misleading to assume that ICPI is the typical framework for solving the entire set of inhibitive issues facing PIN of AH as a profession in Oman. Simply, this is due to the changeable dynamic nature of PIN per se as an industry and the three contexts impact in which it is situated. For example, in regard to SCC, it is expected that the advancement in scientific and political thought as well as the social and economic progress would
eventually nurture the sentiment against the dominance of the tribal role in Oman (Ministry of National Economy 2003a). In another word, SCC might have a less influence in the future because of the wider context influence such as modernization and globalization process (Wang 1999, Ratz 2000, Sadler 2003)\(^\text{294}\).

Notwithstanding, ICPI is an attempt to consider the main aspects that might help an interpretive plan to become appropriate and successful\(^\text{295}\). It is expected that ICPI as such would be supportive in accomplishing the following objectives of Oman’s Vision for the tourism sector (Parsons International Limited 2002: 2-3) which are:

- a distinct, highly attractive quality tourist destination that showcases Oman’s natural assets, culture, heritage and people;
- a highly competitive regional tourism experience;
- a diverse range of high quality tourism products throughout the country with facilities and services that provide desirable destinations and activities year around; and
- the development of partnerships between government and the tourism industry stakeholders.

In this sense, the rationale underpinning ICPI approach is that by proposing a compelling strategy to integrate all these objectives as a whole, a further step has been taken to develop heritage-based tourism in Oman generally and archaeotourism in

\(^{294}\) According to Sadler (2003: 30), ‘In recent years, globalization has accelerated as a result of the increasing adoption of free-trade policies and the deregulation of market, policies vigorously pursued by the member countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (WTO)’. Also, Wang (1999: 358) argued that ‘with the accelerating globalization under postmodern conditions, it is increasingly difficult for the authenticity of the original, such as the marginal ethnic culture, to remain immutable’.

\(^{295}\) For example, ICPI does conform to those objectives listed by Bradley (1982) and the characteristics discussed by Oliver and Jenkins (2005) (see Section 8.4.2.2).
particular. ICPI empowers the competitiveness of Oman as its main strength is derived basically from the authentic various heritage resources (Parsons International Limited 2002).

In the following sections, six interconnected characteristics for ICPI are discussed to demonstrate how this approach can be utilized as a tool or guideline for SSC to develop the applicability and effectiveness of sustainable PIN for AH in Oman. These characteristics are: 1) Integrated Quality PIN Management; 2) Dynamism and Creativity; 3) Mindful Experience; 4) Thematic PIN; 5) Community-led Approach; and 6) Phased PIN.

9.2.1. Integrated Quality PIN Management

As it appeared from the discussion in Chapter Eight, by considering an integrative planning perspective, quality PIN may accrue, i.e. quality experience, quality management and quality heritage tourism chain. As the research findings show, in Oman the macro-context of AH does strongly support the adoption of ICPI for PIN as the national policy emphasizes this. For example, Article III of NHPL 1980 stated the importance of establishing a cooperative committee composed of several governmental authorities. Also, The Final Priority Action Plan for Tourism Development in Oman (Parsons International Limited 2002: 1) in Oman included:

296 For practical concerns, it is worthwhile to mention here that sustainable interpretation should not be linked or necessarily means a typical status of sustainability; all approaches to sustainability are suggestive and not conclusive because ‘no project can have solely positive effects and there are sometimes unintended negative impacts despite all the preventive measures taken’ (World Tourism Organization 2005: 5).
In respect to AH in particular, the findings have assured that this can not be achieved in Oman without considering PC, SSC and SCC as a whole by adopting an integrative management approaches (see Section 8.2). The current approach for communicating primary interpretations at historical monuments, forts and castles, can be described as a disconnected presentation where the wider cultural context is absent; only historical facts are provided about the monument, e.g. Sohar Fort. Accordingly, visitors are disconnected as well from the wider context, especially in the lack of a particular theme capable of linking the monument to its surrounding because mostly ‘people remember themes they forget facts’ (Ham 1992: 39).

Visitors here see every attraction in isolation from others, there is no big concept or a whole picture in which this attraction is connected to. Similar to visitors, the locals are disconnected as well since there is no visible functional role in their contemporary life system. Therefore, through a cooperative network, ICPI endeavours to promote PIN from being disconnected, positivistic and official-led to be a thematic, interactive and holistic; an approach that considers both a whole context and the whole person. This has been supported by the characteristics of Oman’s AH as discussed in Section 2.6 where in many cases archaeological landscapes can be linked sensibly and chronologically to the present cultural landscape context to complement and strengthen the main idea of the selected thematic storylines.
The continuity of environmental setting, local socio-economic and sometimes socio-cultural factors in some areas through the ages helps in connecting AH, tangibly and intangibly, to the present Omani heritage and people ways of lives which symbolize ‘the contemporary use of pasts’ (Ashworth 2006: 23). Yet, an important point to be raised here is that linking past societies to the contemporary ones does not mean to ignore the uniqueness or ‘strangeness of past societies’ (Owen 1996: 205). The present heritage is not the typical interpretation for the gone past, but represents one way to make PIN more sensible, understandable, realistic and attached to observable factual information (see Section 3.6.2). For instance, AM33 talked about this in respect to Magan culture by saying:

‘...we have to figure out what was exactly Magan. We used a lot of local data. We should be careful in the fact that Magan was in the past, and the past has never looked exactly like the present. What I would really try to avoid is the idea that Magan and Oman are the same thing. There have been a lot of historical changes. We still have a lot to learn about Magan’.

By using the Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation, it would be possible for visitors to link archaeological ruins and turtles at Ras al-Jinz to the current present seafaring life of the local community. The archaeological excavations from Ras al-Jinz produced several findings which still represent an integral part of the cultural landscape. This includes such objects as abundant green-turtle and bones, fish-hooks, net sinkers, incense burners and others (Cleuziou and Tosi 2000). For example, the burning of aromatics was and still an everyday activity performed with locally manufactured objects.
Another example is the copper mining and smelting in Sohar where the ancient mining sites at Arja are located. Sohar area has mining traditions dating back at least to the third millennium B.C and extensive mining activities taking place today at some nearby regions. Today, it is still possible for visitors to observe this industry, especially that some Omani handicrafts in Sohar depend on copper as a raw material. The same can be said about Bat area where remains for ancient irrigations system were discovered (Frifelt 2002a, Weisgerber et al. 2002). The irrigation system which is known in Oman as aflajs is commonly used and represents a vital part of the people daily life, mainly in the northern part of Oman.

By looking at Bat (Figure 9.1), the partial reconstruction of tomb 401 is not enough to communicate the values of AH in this area. In visiting Bat and exploring its cultural landscape, the diversity appears to be of a potential part of its competitiveness (Figure 9.2), where in addition to the necropolis, there are other types of sites dating to different phases such as the iron age village at al-Banah and al-Batin (ca. 2600 B.C) which is the oldest slag heaps of Oman (Weisgerber 2005).

\[297\] At Bat village, there are still some aflajs such as Falaj al-Zubi and Falaj al-Suiyah.
Figure 9.1: An aerial photograph portrays the diversity of heritage components at Bat area (Readapted from the National Survey Authority, Oman).

Also, some of the heritage resources are the palm-tree farms, rural oasis, wadis (water streams), historical monuments and locals’ life-style in Bat. The outer area of Bat includes natural attractions, such as the attractive cave of al-Iraqi or al-Kittan, located ca 8km north of Ibr (Hanna and al-Belushi 1996).
Figure 9.2: Some of the heritage components that can be thematically integrated with the archaeological heritage at Bat and al-Ayn.

Similar to Bat, Figure 9.3 shows that Bahla Oasis is another compelling example where various heritage components are located in the surrounding cultural landscape. One of the respondents mentioned that ‘When we talk about Bahla as a touristic attraction we have to think of it as a whole, not only the fort. Its cultural and natural attractions complement one another’ (AM6). Here, a self-guided trail by using the Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation can be easily designed (Table 9.1). This might explain why Bahla is one of the top visited destinations and most memorable places in Oman (Parsons International Limited 2002).

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298 Similarly, AM17 and AS11 talked about the frankincense sites which are located in Dhofar region where archaeological sites are located close to one another and surrounded by rich heritage resources, especially geological and ethnographic.
Figure 9.3: An aerial photograph for part of Bahla Oasis (Modified after Deutsches Bergbau-Museum 1998)

Table 9.1: An example for a possible local *Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation* in Bahla area

To facilitate the integration of various heritage components, *Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation* can be used here at local, regional or national levels. For instance,
to communicate that ‘Magan is the land of copper’ inter-regional integration of various mining sites and settlements could help in conveying this idea in an effective and attractive way to audience (Figure 9.4).

Figure 9.4: A map for the ancient copper mining sites in the northern Oman where an inter-regional Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation can be created (modified from Weisgerber 1978b: 16).

Another theme can be based on the scientific research about the ancient oasis settlements\(^\text{299}\) in Oman (BX3, BX7). Similarly, and according to evidence, Oman was in the third millennium B.C a growing oasis culture (Potts 1990, Orchard 1994, Cleuziou and Tosi 2000, Frifelt 2002a). Similar to Ras al-Jinz in the coast, al-Maysar in the eastern region, Wadi al-Ayn and Bat were very active settlements by that time. Also,

\(^{299}\) See Deutsches Archäologisches Institut – Orient Abteilung (2001).
drawing on the archaeological research, thematic trails for the ancient caravan routes have been suggested (AM13, AS8, AS10).\(^{300}\)

To accomplish integration effectively, there is a need to establish a *cross-sectoral partnership* (Cochrane and Tapper 2006) in coordination with the local community and voluntarily groups. For AH to become an integral part of the heritage tourism system in Oman, there is a need for an integrative partnership to create a collective stewardship and involve other stakeholders. Therefore, one of the main principles for ICPI is to develop heritage PIN in general from being guided by a limited number of governmental institutions (MOHC, MOT, OCA) and focused on few forts and castles to be holistically planned, implemented, managed, promoted and evaluated by setting up a cooperative partnership.

This is crucial for the quality of PIN as AM18 emphasized that ‘PIN of archaeological sites should be done in consultation with MOT…who understands how does this site fit in the overall program of tourists’. In return, AM20 insisted that the MOHC should pay more effort in bridging the gap with other governmental institutions as well\(^{301}\) which is important to accomplish sustainable PIN and archaetourism (BX3). In this context, BX3 mentioned the following:

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\(^{300}\) For example, Frifelt (2002a: 101) wrote the following ‘*Bat was a centre for the traffic that went north-south and east out to the Gulf of Oman. About 200 km to the south was the salt quarry of Qalat al-Mih, not so far south but farther east the mining site of Maysar. Ca. 130 km to the north was the fertile Buraimi oasis, and from there it was only 120 km to the west coast, less along the Wadi Jizzi to the east coast. From Bat over the well-peopled Wadi Ayn*.’

\(^{301}\) AM20 included that MOT ‘*can not develop the tourism industry by itself, there must be some sort of national institution or centre to help and provide the Ministry with reliable decisions and regulations in relation to archaeological and historical sites instead of relying on foreigners or particular individuals…This would help in establishing a central reference and unified sources of information, supervision, and administration*.’
MOHC should be consulted about tourist visits to archaeological sites, and since some of the archaeological sites occupy large areas of land, the whole question of local access would also need to be discussed. Tourist visits should be very carefully planned. Remember, too many unrestrained visitors could destroy the very things you want them to see.

Therefore, integrative approach to partnership is required to minimize the negative impacts on PC and achieve sustainable PIN. For instance, the diversion of the current crossing roads at Bat would require the cooperation with the Ministry of Transportation. As well, the ownership of those lands surrounding towers, namely, 1145, 1146 and 1147, suggests the involvement of the Ministry of Awqaf and the Ministry of Housing as well.

In addition to the locals and governmental involvement, the findings endorsed the importance of partial privatization of PIN where the involvement of private sector in the tourism industry has been one of the main aims for the Omani government (Ministry of National Economy 2001). Therefore, this sector should be well-informed on the priorities of the government through ‘the provision of a clear framework for both public sector and private sector tourism investment’ (Parsons International Limited 2002: 4).

AM24 and AM36 assured that the involvement of the private sector in PIN could help in overcoming some financial and technical problems. Also, to deal with these two problems in particular, some respondents suggested an international interpretive linkage and cooperation. Possible international linkages have been acknowledged by archaeological scientific research which makes this more sensible and applicable, e.g. the frankincense trade in the south and Magan culture in the north. To explain, geographically Magan culture includes U.A.E which owns some of the best-preserved
archaeological sites, such as Umm an-Nar and Hilli Park. Therefore, AM27 implied the importance of interpreting Magan in cooperation with the U.A.E government where museum, for instance, are more developed. Also, based on archaeological research, and due to the big number of variety of tombs in Oman Peninsula\textsuperscript{302}, spatially and chronologically (Figure 9.5), some respondents suggested the creation of international thematic trails related to the funerary architecture (BX1, BX2). This has been supported by the fact that currently tourists do come to Bahla on their way from the U.A.E to Nizwa and Muscat (BX3).

According to Horner and Swarbrooke (2004: 109), ‘while Dubai is well-provided for modern consumer shopping tourism, the rapid development has limited its appeal for cultural or heritage tourists’. Therefore, there is a considerable potential has been identified in the Regional Western Expatriate market, as there are some 300, 000 expatriates in this group in the the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, GCC, including about 50,000 in the U.A.E (Parsons International Limited 2002: 8)\textsuperscript{303}. A current joint visa agreement with the U.A.E provides the freedom of movement of tourists between the two countries (Ministry of Information 2004).

\textsuperscript{302} This is not surprising since ‘graves are the most prominent prehistoric remains in Oman where, for example, a huge amount of them extends from al-Ayn to Dhank area, ca. 30 km south Ibro’ (Gentelle and Frifelt 1989: 119).

\textsuperscript{303} Also, AM29 mentioned that there are about 30,000-35,000 Japanese tourists who visit Dubai annually.
Another possible international linkage can be established based on ancient frankincense trade routes which, beside Oman, they might include several Middle Eastern countries such as the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, GCC, Egypt, Jordan and Yemen\(^{304}\) (see Shackley 2001). Yemen, in particular, could become the main partner where there are ‘cooperative cultural, social and historical connections’ (Ministry of Information 2006: 61). This means, that those visitors who wish to follow the length of the ancient frankincense route from Yemen to Oman and vice versa can do this more easily than before as supported by AM34.

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\(^{304}\) In this context, Shackley (2001: 1) wrote: ‘It has been suggested that the diverse single-country frankincense-based tours could be linked into a major international ‘Frankincense Route’, necessitating joint product and marketing initiatives like those developed for the UNWTO ‘Silk Road’ program.’
Another aspect to be mentioned in this section is that it is important for quality PIN to appreciate the potentiality and uniqueness of the context in which PIN will be operated, thus, a successful interpretive plan at one area can not be randomly applied to another even at the local geographic dimension. Any interpretive product should be embedded and directly connected to the interpreted unit according to its specific context where every region in Oman is different in its geographical and archaeological features (AM34, BX7).

Also, it should be remembered that the Integrated Interpretive Network should be designed in a way that provides various experiences where every interpretive unit utilizes its own special character that provides different and complementary experience. Diversity is ‘likely to be beneficial for attracting a more diverse range of visitors’ (Mcloughlin et al. 2006a: 9). As well, from a sustainable perspective, considering diversity could be helpful in reducing the over-consumption of touristic resources where, for instance, at Wahiba Sand in al-Sharqiyah region, there is an over-supply of the same product by the locals in a very small geographical area; this has resulted in negative impacts on the Sand due to the lack of visitor management and aggressive competition between the individual desert-tourism camps (Mershen 2006).

### 9.2.2. Dynamic and Creative PIN

As mentioned before that ICPI approach does not consider PIN for AH as a final product, but as a changeable process. Thus, it is imperative for a holistic interpretive planning to adopt a dynamic strategy and being creative to cope up with the unpredictable status of both the micro-context and macro-context. There is no single
blueprint and a set of fixed rules to be applied for all contexts. The dynamic constructive processes, socio-cultural values, technology, the natural and man-made factors, the knowledge and technology and market are few driving examples to consider dynamism as a principle when interpreting an archaeological site.

In this sense, planning and marketing must reflect this dynamism as the international market continually faces change because of demographic shifts, changing lifestyle values, and rapidly evolving technologies (Sweeney 2002: 3). What makes this so important for Oman is the rapid development and modernization processes, including the tourism sector, where phased PIN is required (see Section 9.2.6). Also, searching for creative approaches for interpreting AH has been supported by some respondents (e.g. AM35, AS11). Herein, the appointed interpretive team needs to adapt for tackling changing situations by considering different strategies in PIN. Therefore, Sweeney’s (2002: 4) report included:

*Destination Oman must be clear, clever, creative and consistent in its marketing communications and product development if it is to be seen and appreciated as a very distinct destination.*

**9.2.3. Mindful Interpretive Experience**

In contrast with the current interpretive approach used in historical monuments in Oman, ICPI endeavours to communicate sense-on interpretive experience for visitors where Oman has the potential to improve its competitiveness and play a significant role in diversifying and expanding tourism experiences. ICPI could help improving ‘Oman’s unique positioning as a somewhat exotic and authentic Arabic destination with a highly diverse range of tourism experience’ (Parsons International Limited 2002: 7). To explain this more, the following sections will discuss this in regard to four aspects
which are: 1) Constructivist Experience; 2) Authentic Experience; 3) Safe Experience; and 4) Sensible Interpretive Experience (Figure 9.6).

![Diagram of mindfull interpretive experience]

**Figure 9.6: Four suggested elements necessary to convey a mindful interpretive experience.**

**9.2.3.1. Constructivist PIN**

The significance of providing constructivist experience interpretation has been discussed in different parts of chapters three and four. Therefore, considering the constructed previous experience of visitors in PIN of AH is essential (BX1). To accomplish this, AM18 suggested that ‘we have to understand the mentality and the psychology of the consumer and then we have to adapt our product to match it’. For instance, the consideration of such aspects as the education system and lifestyles have to be considered while interpreting for the Omani public, yet at various levels; i.e. rural or urban. Also, based on the visitors profile for the non-omani visitors and the market segments mentioned in Section 6.3.1, considering constructivist interpretive approaches could be more desirable and suitable than positivistic ones.
In comparison to the current learning and teaching approaches in Oman, it is also presumed that the dependency on ICPI perspective in communicating AH would be more effective and enjoyable. For instance, on-site visits and firsthand experience are more supported to relate and reveal meanings about Magan culture, for instance, instead of merely presenting factual information (AM3, AM7, AM9, AM13, AM30, AM36, AS2, AS4). A sensory experience can be stimulated by promoting encounters with real objects, experience and participation (Uzzell 1998b, Gyimothy and Johns 2001).

According to ICPI approach, sense-on experience refers to the involvement as many as possible of visitors’ senses while communicating the different collected messages from the various interpretive units. It is in this context, ICPI encourages what Urry (2002: 146) called the ‘sensuous experience’ or multi-sensuously experience where ‘in almost all situations different senses are inter-connected with each other to produce a sensed environment of people and objects distributed across time and space’.

Another important point to prepare a constructivist interpretive experience is the integration of both tangible and intangible heritage to convey and enrich visitors’ Total Interpretive Experience. For example, the inherited folk stories about archaeological sites, such as in Shisur Wubar, Shir and Bahla, can be used as part of infotainment/edutainment programs or in personal-based interpretive services. In addition to the built heritage, the inclusion of the natural and living heritage resources by using the Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation, for instance, could help in

305 For instance, AM18 mentioned that ‘The more glass cases you have, the less interesting to them [audience]…I want to go to a museum where I can touch, where I can feel, and then it becomes more interactive… A pottery behind glasses does not mean anything to a child’.
constructing a comprehensive chronological picture about the past of a particular area as discussed in Chapter Eight. Also, as a themed PIN is important in ICPI, it could be used to strengthen a constructivist perspective to interpretation. Cognitively, humans are better able to understand and relate to a main message when the individual parts are presented as a linked theme (Ham 1992, Veverka 1994, Brochu and Merriman 2002).

Also, in order for Omani tour guides to relate the main merits of the selected theme they need to be more professional and trained, better educated and equipped with sociological and psychological knowledge (Cohen et al. 2002, Reisinger and Steiner 2006). Therefore, some respondents (e.g. AM7, AM15, AM18, AM20, AM24, AM25, AM34, AS10) believe that tour guidance is a crucial job where tour guides must be well-trained and speak the language of the group being guided to communicate realistic and accurate information about the interpreted landscape. This becomes more important by looking at the tourist trends described earlier and the targeted market, e.g. special interest, school students and families (see Section 6.3.1).

For example, some respondents emphasized the differences between special interest tourists and the average tourists (e.g. AM14, AS9, AS13) where communication methods appropriate for the former may not be acceptable to the latter. Therefore, specialized tour guides in AH are crucial for those who are more interested to have in-depth experience (AM10, AM19, AS3, AS13, BX5). In addition to this, it is presumed that the local guide is more capable of communicating constructivist interpretive

306 AM18 mentioned that ‘the tourists look at the tour guide as main entrance to the country. They take his words, they believe him, they think of him as a representative of the nation. It is a crucial job; it is like appointing an ambassador’.
As this appears from the community-based tourism in Wahibah Sand in al-Sharqiyah region and in Jaddat al-Harasis in al-Wusta region where many local Bedouins are working as guides, particularly in regard to desert tourism (Dutton 1988, Mershen 2006).

9.2.3.2. Authentic PIN

One of the important elements that might influence the Total Interpretive Experience quality of visitors is the authenticity of the interpreted subject or object. Through the Integrated Interpretive Network, the Integrated Interpretive Themes and Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation, ICPI encourages visitors to explore AH in their original settings and in relation to their wider context. This can be supported by the fact that most AH in Oman can be considered as living archaeological and historical heritage which is located in rural countryside, where ‘tourist spaces’ (Urry 2002: 9) are limited, e.g. Bat, Qalhat, Shir, Wubar Shisur. For instance, the trekking trails designed by MOT (2005a) passé by various cultural heritage resources where a tourist-host contact is unavoidable (AM3, Dale and Hadwin 2001). To give an example, Reinhard Siegl (personal communication: 13/January/2006) assured that the trekking trails of al-Sharqiyah region pass through the towers and villages in Shir.

The current pre-planned itineraries and all-inclusive packaged experience used by the tourists in Oman prevent a direct self-discovery experience and intercultural interacts

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307 According to the model suggested by Weiler and Ham (2002) for the development of tour guidance in developing countries, it appears that more emphasis has been placed on the local training and local trainers, supervisors and evaluators.

308 The status is similar in many other Arabic countries such as Yemen, the old city of Sana’a (Al-Maqalih 2001) and Jordan, the restored Taibet Zaman Tourist Village (Fakhoury 2001, Daher 2006) and the Jordan River Valley Touristway (Shunnaq et al. 2008).

309 See also Siegl (2005) and http://www.omantourism.gov.om/
with local communities which is now ‘at the lower level’ (al-Masroori 2006: 340). Instead of this enclave experience or ‘formal tourism’ (Oppermann 1993: 552), ICPI encourages the development of intimate relations with the local hosts than with foreigners to learn about the ‘local insider meanings’ of a particular cultural landscape than ‘broader outsider meanings’ (Knudson et al. 2007: 229) and to have a back region experience than front region one (MacCannell 1989). This means PIN should be designed heuristically as discussed by Aldridge (1975, 1989) and should not become a surrogate for the real context which could be the reason behind the actual visit. A possible authentic experience can be done through ‘thematic walking tours’ (Markwell et al. 2004: 460) which is an approach used to construct a personal sense of place for locals and visitors alike and to create a self-directed interpretive tour. Therefore, some AH resources, particularly in the peripheral areas, could be integrated and mapped in the trekking trails which are mainly designed to trace the ancient walking paths (e.g. AM9, AM10, AM35).

Also, the interaction and exchange between the locals and visiting people through craft villages, for example, could provide a prime source for travel experience beyond the hospitality industry (Evan 1994, Novell and Benson 2005). Moreover, the reliance on a well-informed and trained local tour guides than foreigners to communicate the cultural landscape features might create more sense of the place and its past (Black et al. 2001, Weiler and Ham 2002) and enforce more community-based PIN (see Section 9.2.5). They are more aware of the heritage in their surroundings (AM15, AM24, AU4, AU6)

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310 Deborah et al. (2001: 271) suggested that ‘managers should consider developing themed packages that provide highly specialized heritage tourists’.

311 Hill and Cable (2006: 63) concluded that interpretive specialists can guide the audience to create more authentic personal experience by communicating a broad view of authenticity where they can provide more and better ways to provide it.
and could provide people with ‘more real experience of the country’ (AM18). Yet, the desire to have an authentic experience must not be reached at the account of the ‘cultural carrying capacity’ (Robinson 1999: 7). This is important since many archaeological sites are still a live context and a vital part of the inhabitants’ hometown where they practice their daily life, e.g. Bahla, Bat.

Another point to be mentioned here is the simulated authenticity (Breathnach 2006) or constructed authenticity (Hill and Cable 2006), such as experimental archaeology and reconstruction, which can be used to make archaeological sites more understandable by giving more physical experience than imagination (AS6, BX4). However, in this case, the interpretive team is strongly reminded not to deceive visitors, but inform them as part of PIN integrity and ethics.

9.2.3.3. Safe PIN

One of the main ways that PIN can contribute to the quality of visitor’s experience is by making the interpreted context safe, intellectually and physically. Intellectual safety can be achieved by ‘providing information to encourage safety and comfort’ (Moscardo 1998: 4). Also, through reciprocal positive cross-cultural and host-guest interaction; thus, the Leadership and Partnership Board should strongly consider the development of policies and directive guidelines for ICIP that organize this critical aspect. However, as these policies would become part of the interpretive sphere and affect the interpretive experience they should be crafted carefully and efficiently.

\[312\] For instance, AM15 said: ‘Always the local tour guide is the most appropriate candidate to communicate his/her heritage; he/she knows better than any expatriate’.
Also, these policies need to congruent with the national legislation and the micro-context of the interpreted area. The Managerial and Marketing Strategy in coordination with the board should make sure that both visitors and host communities understand their rights and obligations according to the stated national and international policies for tourism in Oman\textsuperscript{313}, especially within those living and sacred archaeological areas, e.g. the Grand Mosque in Bahla and graves in Dhofar region.

In addition to this, securing the physical safety is a complementary part to the intellectual where the locals, for example, can be part of the physical orientation and guiding system, especially in such remote sites as Shenah and Shisur Wubar. It should be remembered that some of these sites are difficult to be accessed, e.g. Shir, or located within or nearby insecure physical context, e.g. Arja (see Chapter Five).

\section*{9.2.3.4. Sensible PIN}

Senseless PIN happens when one or more parts of the provided PIN is not congruent with the context in which it is situated; thus, this might influence the Total Interpretive Experience of some visitors. Therefore, it is expected that all of the various integrated components make sense of one another without intruding senseless dissonant components that conflict with the wider context intellectually and physically. Intellectually means that interpretive infrastructure within a particular cultural landscape should not be dissonant at the account of the socio-cultural values of the local society.

\textsuperscript{313} Weightman (1987: 236) included that ‘uncontrolled intercultural contact is more detrimental than beneficial to the socio-cultural well-being of host peoples’.
As for the physical sense, it has been discussed in Section 2.6 that Oman’s AH is in harmony with its physiographic environmental context. Therefore, to sustain this harmonic integrity, it is imperative to avoid applying and practicing any interpretive provision or intrusion that does not match with the integrity of AH and its surrounding physical context. For instance, instead of applying improper restoration works at Bahla Fort and the infill buildings at al-Balid Park, ICPI maintains the importance of using of environment-friendly materials (e.g. heritage hotel and vernacular architecture). Otherwise this might lead to senseless PIN as the ‘sense of place has to do with the use of specific materials found locally’ (World Tourism Organization 2005: 3).

ICPI is against the idea of any misusing of AH where a site is taken out of its context or the context is overlooked, the thing that can add an extra dissonant dimension as this has been argued by Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996). To avoid such unsustainable status, the establishment of a national interpretive directive ethics and legislation is important as this is confirmed by AM19.

9.2.4. Thematic PIN

Section 3.8.1 referred to the importance of using thematic PIN with measurable objectives in communicating AH values where different sites are organized around one or more particular idea. Also, this has been supported by respondents, such as BX1, who mentioned that thematic PIN would be ‘an excellent approach to the archaeology of Oman, whereby sites of different periods and nature, archaeological and ethnographic sites, as well as sites spread over a wide geographical area could be integrated into a sensible theme’. Therefore, the second and third phases in ICPI highlight the importance of themeing in PIN.
Several benefits for the thematic PIN have been mentioned (sections 3.8.1, 8.3.1, 8.4.2.2); however, in this section only three are discussed in relation to ICPI which are: 1) quality PIN; 2) core-peripheral linkage; 3) oriented PIN.

9.2.4.1. Quality PIN

Having a theme could prevent duplication which is one of the observable weaknesses in presenting the historical facts of forts and castles in Oman (AM21) where there are poor duplicated generic ideas randomly organized without a focal and oriented message. Also, there are no meaningful concepts that can relate to visitor’s previous experience and lives. Moreover, the uniqueness of each historical monument here is underestimated, compromised and hence lost. Therefore, AM14 emphasized that MOT should design themes that are suitable for the history of each fort and the region in which it is located.

Part of this issue is the lack of thematic interpretive media (e.g. thematic map, thematic guides, and thematic souvenirs) which are basically designed to convey and support the selected theme in particular. A historic or regular geographic map is slightly different from the thematic one where the latter should be more focused to help visitors to see various linkages amongst the interpreted sites and sights. It connects one interpretive unit to another within the cultural landscape. Besides, it leads visitors to other available alternatives and opportunities in the interpretive network.

Also, in Oman where financial and human resources in developing PIN are limited for the time being, and there is a rapid development process, it is important to consider the
use of thematic PIN. Having a theme could save time, money and effort to handle information by focusing on exactly the main theme suggested for particular resources (Ham 1992, Veverka 1994). As for the audience, interpreters must consider that sometimes limited amount of time is available to communicate the holistic context of the archaeological site. Based on Section 3.8.1, having a central theme is more helpful for visitors to gain a particular knowledge and focus their intellectual effort and cognitive mapping on the main ideas of PIN.

9.2.4.2. Core-Peripheral Linkage

As ICPI is not totally oriented toward commercial values, the consideration of remote sites in Oman as sources for educational, recreational and social values, at least for the local communities, is highly supported. This is important as many of these areas will rely on tourism as the one main form of economic development. One of the best examples is Shisur Wubar as confirmed by AM21 and AU4 who referred to the local socio-economic benefits. This has been supported by many other respondents who mentioned that remote sites, such as Shir, Qalhat and Shenah, might become an integral part of adventure tourism (AM10, AM35, AS1, AS4). This kind of focused tourism appears to be one possible option for the development of PIN of AH and archaeotourism in Oman and links between core and peripheral sites.

314 AU4 said: ‘Shisur is different because tourists, particularly the Western, enjoy staying in the desert more than in the urban; accordingly, they spend more time and money. Many of them like to follow the step of Wilfred Thesiger who crossed the Empty Quarter. The Arabian Sands became more famous after his trips in Oman from 1945-1950’.

315 In addition to the establishment of national core-peripheral linkages amongst archaeological sites themselves and between them and other heritage resources within the country, the thematic PIN does strengthen the goal of establishing an international cooperative partnership. One important fact about AH of Oman is that it can be interpreted beyond its national spatial dimension. This can be done under the sponsorship and supervision of intergovernmental and/or international organizations.
Since most of the archaeological landscapes in Oman are located in the rural peripheral areas, some of the thematic PIN may be utilized to connect these landscapes to core active interpretive units. By using the Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation, for instance, the flow of tourists from a developed core to a less developed periphery can be increased in searching for new experiences that might not be available in the core (Prideaux 2002).

Creating historical trails through abandoned sites far from the over-consumed attractions plays a major role in prompting for sites that might stand unnoticed or underused in the midst of undistinguished architecture (English Tourism Council 2000). Therefore, the ancient mountainous trekking trails designed by MOT, for instance, can be developed to link AH and other heritage resources in the core areas to those sites and resources in the less visited areas and/or with less population where the density of population is low (AM3, Reinhard Siegl: personal communication: 13/January/2006).

9.2.4.3. Oriented PIN

Besides having a particular topic, the objectives of a particular theme might be oriented toward a specific group of audience, especially for local people. Therefore, to know visitors is part of any successful PIN (Uzzell 1998c, Falk and Dierking 1992). In regard to Oman, the discussed in Section 6.3.1 and the current SCC are in favour of designing

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316 In this term, AM14 pointed out that ‘We have to consider all sites, and not only the attractive and easy-reached sites’.

317 In regard to this, AM3 mentioned ‘trekkers may enjoy various natural and cultural attractions, including many archaeological and historical sites...The Eastern Hajar trekking trails, in particular, are full of archaeological sites; wherever you go, there are some ancient graves or other archaeological features’.
oriented themes toward some niche markets, namely special interest tourists, school parties and families (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2001, Sweeney 2002).

These groups deserve a serious attention while planning for PIN in the first phase where in assessing the choice between mass and focused tourism in Oman, the *Tourism Marketing Strategy* report is in favour of considering the focused tourism. Thus, this should be reflected in the provided programs and interpretive infrastructure. This is in order ‘to avoid the threat of undermining Oman’s social and economic fabric and the decline of the destination, as opposed to the potential contribution to the economy and the long-term sustainability of the destination’ (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2001: 12).

Oman is a young society where 66.96% of the population is under the age of 25 years (Ministry of National Economy 2004a: Table 7-2). With some 596,895 school students in the governmental and private (Ministry of Information 2006: 97) it can be imagined how promising this niche is. This expresses the necessity of designing oriented thematic interpretive programs for this particular group where thematic PIN is ‘used to increase knowledge gain from interpretive programs with educational goals’ (Tarlton and Ward 2006: 7). What makes this more important is that currently many private schools take their students to visit historical and archaeological sites, especially during the weekend (AM31). Another possible benefit for considering this market is its importance to generate out-of-season revenue where ‘the diversity of the educational market may be

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318 According to some research in Wales (e.g. Prentice 1995, Gruffudd *et al.* 1998, Mytum 2000), the engagement of children with archaeological sites and objects makes the past easier to be understood and communicates various values such as national identity.
though to counter the opportunity for product and service developments’ (Prentice 1995: 166).

Another related aspect to this is the consideration of socio-cultural values for Omani visitors. For instance, as the social context is of importance in PIN (Prentice and Light 1994), gender segregation in amenity, interpretive programs and activities might be required; this is highly observed in the public services in Oman. In addition to the domestic market, the family-oriented themes should be promoted to accommodate the increasing regional and international market\textsuperscript{319}. The \textit{Managerial and Marketing Strategy} should target such segments as families groups, including Muslim families\textsuperscript{320} (Sweeney 2002: 28). This is important as the current PIN does not encourage family-based tourism (see sections 6.2.6.1 and 6.3.1). Doing so, could help in decreasing tourism seasonality, particularly in Dhofar region in the south where there has been considerable potential for tourist inflows from residents of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, GCC, as a close source market, especially during \textit{al-Khareef} season in the south (Parsons International Limited 2002)\textsuperscript{321}.

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{319} This has been supported by Uzzell (1998a: 18) who mentioned that ‘in every survey we have undertaken, we have found that family and friendship groups make up at least 90 per cent of the visitors’. Also, Milman’s (2001) study predicted that the family market would be the core of the theme parks and attractions’ industry, and that it would become more services oriented, offering less passive and more interactive experience; many visitors will expect more than traditional amusement park experience.
\item \textsuperscript{320} The report further asserted that ‘in demographic and cultural terms, Oman offers two important targets, the indigenous Muslim population and large expatriate communities’ (Sweeney 2002: 18).
\item \textsuperscript{321} Din (1989: 547) wrote: ‘it is suggested that considerations for alternative or complementary approaches to tourism development which are presently neglected, may help to provide a wide range of product to make Muslim destinations even more attractive’.
\end{itemize}

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9.2.5. Community PIN

The term local community here means those people who live in the vicinity of a particular archaeological landscape and its surroundings and who are directly affecting and affected by PIN provision, physically and psychologically. As a supportive for community tourism, ICPI encourages community-led interpretation (Price 2006) which includes ‘groups of individuals with varying degree of organisation and with a shared agenda’. Community PIN seeks to balance and fit ICIP with the needs and aspiration of the locals in a way that is acceptable to them, helps them to rediscover the heritage in their area, sustains their economies and is not damaging their culture, traditions, daily lifestyle and convenience. Herein, PIN should be responsive and contribute to the locals’ needs, empower them to become actors rather than part of the interpretive product; an active member in PIN provision as planners, interpreters, managers, investors and visitors (see Section 3.8.2). Therefore, BX1 mentioned that local communities ‘should always be the first addressees’.

The findings in chapters five, six and seven are very supportive for the inclusion of local communities in any leadership and partnership board and ICIP as one agent to accomplish sustainable PIN. Thus, it is expected that the audit phase defines the various characteristics of the involved local communities and their contexts, e.g. demographic and psychographic trends, the current socio-economy, local handicrafts, education level and training qualifications. The following discussion in this part will describe the expected impact of ICPI approach on the local communities in respect to SCC and SSC.

322 For example, the local community characters of those who live in Bausher urban area differ from those who live in the rural Bat area. It is expected that Bausher residents are less influenced by the social traditions and dedications than those who live in Bat.
9.2.5.1. Communities and their socio-cultural context

As mentioned in Chapter Seven, the Omani society still observe its inherited traditions, especially in the rural areas where people still live in the vicinity of archaeological areas. Therefore, ICPI does consider their acceptance and interest in developing their local area to be a part of a particular interpretive theme and respect their social, spiritual and symbolic spaces that assume meanings and significance as it is the case with the tombs in Shir and Dhofar region323. Also, the scientific-led interpretations in archaeology related to such topics as prehistoric eras and the evolution theory needs to be communicated properly through education system, public archaeology, community archaeology and the local media as expressed by many respondents (e.g. AM10, AM14, AM19, AM21, AM32, AM35, AS6, AS11, AS13). For instance, welcoming the locals and interact with them has approved a good results at such sites as Ras al-Jinz (AM33) and Qalhat (AM35) where excavations become ‘socially engaged’ rather than being scientifically detached practices (Tilley 1989: 280)324.

A further imperative element in regard to this part is the documentation and utilisation when possible of intangible heritage, especially if it is related to the interpreted AH. For instance, the folk stories for AH at Shir and Wubar Shisur represent ethnographic values and a possible source to enrich the interpretive themes and make it more enjoyable (BX5, BX10)325. Also, the inclusion of living heritage in themeing PIN326.

323 Also, Zuefle (1997: 34-35) assured the importance of such matter ‘to avoid alienating program, participants and constituent communities by failing to recognize potentially important differences between values and belief system of the community’s members’.
324 Some respondents (e.g. AS3, AS4, AM33, BX3) suggested local site museums to carry on such missions as visitor management and public outreaching programs.
325 In this term, Teri (2006: 80) mentioned that ‘public folklorists have a potentially- important contribution to make to the interpretive conversation’.
would provide the opportunity to survive and make the intangible tangible to visitors. In addition, this might increase the sense of ownership and pride among Omani visitors, especially the locals (AM31), who might realize that part of their heritage is somehow connected to the sites within their area (see Section 3.8.2). In this sense, PIN helps in giving ‘the people of Oman a deep insight for the long traditions of their live styles’ (BX4). All these aspect should be discussed by all stakeholders in the Leadership and Partnership Board during the planning of ICIP as one of the main goals for ICPI is the accomplishment of sustainable PIN as much as possible.

Also, to develop an interpretive program does not mean the removal of the inhabitants from the site or the destruction of more lived-in structures as in Bahla. In fact, this can be attractive as ‘historical integration with present-day life that adds to the interest and the value of the site’ (Aslan 2005: 13). Daher (2006: 29) included that ‘tourists seek contact with living communities next to ancient sites all over the Middle East where local communities have lived in between such ancient ruins or next to them for ages’. Therefore, tourism officials, public and private, ‘stressed the importance of culture in promoting Oman as a tourist destination’ (al-Masroori 2006: 328). In this term, BX3 suggested the following:

Some currently inhabited oasis towns are already visited by tourists, but only to see their forts and suqs. A proper oasis trail (selectively including all sorts of places like Izki, Nizwa, Tanuf, Misfah, Bahla, Ibra and the Sharqiya towns) should be a possibility, with groups being led through the oases to visit traditional bayts [houses], look at carved

326 According to Little (2004), thematic framework is a useful conceptual tool to make tangible-intangible links.
doorways, sample dates and so on. Of course, this would have to be set up in collaboration with the local communities and their leaders.

9.2.5.2. Community as a stakeholder

In order to establish an active role of community in PIN, there is a requirement for ‘a sound working relationship’ (Grimwade and Carter 2000: 37) to be set up and enforced by the Leadership and Partnership Board. Here, instead of exploiting the locals as cheap labour in seasonal jobs, they insistently need to be enrolled and empowered in PIN as main partners. Also, the locals can work collaboratively with the government and try to develop their interpretive planning based on community-based research rather than waiting for the unclear governmental aid.

The sense of ownership amongst communities might be best encouraged through the development of dispersed interpretive mechanisms located within the communities themselves rather than in a centralised interpretive facility that could be isolated from these communities (Stewart et al. 2001). This means that PIN of AH ‘should contribute to the local economy’ (BX3) which becomes more important for some sites being central to their surrounding communities as in Bahla, al-Balid Park, Bausher and Qalhat. In return, this might give multi-functions for AH in locals’ life and becomes part of its biosphere and future empowerment (ICOMOS 2006b). This can be achieved by selling local handicraft products related to the thematic storylines about a particular AH. In this sense, PIN for AH is important in sustaining communities (Keen 1999) as one basic reason for tourists to travel is to experience the way of life and product of a particular community (Richard and Hall 2000). Also, the locals may represent an

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327 This can be done in cooperation with the Public Authority for Crafts Industries where there are plans to establish national centres, studies, preservation plans and training and marketing programs to develop crafts industries in Oman (Ministry of National Economy 2007: Table 53).
important market, especially in the peripheral areas and during the off-season periods; thus, seeking the community’s advice in designing various interpretive programs for local families and school parties would be worthwhile (AM17). Herein, some local archaeological sites can be utilized for educational and recreational purposes. For instance, AS5 suggested planning for local festivals at Bat and Qalhat.

The deformed physiographic landscape and the lack of cohesion in developing some of the historic forts and castles have resulted from the lack of local communities’ involvement in SSC and the absence of active public archaeology. Therefore, as most of AH in Oman is located in the rural areas, and because of the lack of trained human and financial resources, it has become critical not to underestimate the role of local people in site management and sustainable archaeotourism (AS2, AS6, AS9, AS12, BX3). For instance, local guides can become an interpreter and a site guard as well. AU6 emphasized that ‘every region must have its own tourist guides; this will give more accountability and stewardship to particular people to be in charge of a specific area [and] will benefit the locals from tourism development’. These guides can become *ecotour guides* (Black et al. 2001) who work as cultural mediators between their community and visitors, assist in management, and provide education. This is beside the role of local guides in providing mindful interpretive experience as described in Section 9.2.3.

### 9.2.6. Phased PIN

As repeatedly said in this research, Oman is a developing touristic destination. As a new phenomenon, tourism in Oman ‘requires careful planning from the planning authorities
to avoid any negative consequences that may surface in different tourism development stages’ (al-Masroori 2006: 329). As Chapter Six confirmed the importance of linking archaeotourism to other development plans in the country, therefore, it is expected that ICIP could become a phased interpretive plan rather than one-off instant project, especially in the middle of a bureaucratic environment (AM13, AS9). Herein, as suggested by Brochu (2003: 142) ‘the action plan should suggest appropriate phasing to accomplish implementation in logical steps’ which ought to be determined by the Leadership and Partnership Board.

As interpretive programs represent one chain among other travelling chains, ICPI considers the national general strategy for the development of the tourism industry in the country. This is important to ensure PIN practicality and sustainability as it ‘must be seen to be a part of overall sustainable management policy’ (Stewart et al. 2001: 353). Therefore, as it is the case with any integrative approach (European Commission 2000a, 2000b, 2000c), the implementation and application of ICIP could be a long-term commitment that will need considerable amount of time, effort, fund and workforce plans.

As the history of PIN shows, the interest in heritage PIN as a profession could increase as the interest in heritage tourism increases in Oman which is a critical requirement for the competitiveness and sustainability of any destination (see Section 3.8). This is with the fact that heritage resources represent one if not the most important competitive

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328 The development of tourism planning and archaeological resources management does not necessary mean the improvement of heritage PIN provision and profession in Oman. This has been noticed in Wales, United Kingdom as discussed by some commentators (Jenkins 1992, Turley 1998, Elis-Gruffydd 2002, Humphries 2006).
elements in the tourism industry in Oman. In this context, BX8 encourages the current stewardship to ‘create a long-term projects, programs and policies that aim at encouraging the importance of archaeological sites and motivating people to participate in this part by involving them in different processes regarding the archaeology in the country’.

Phasing any interpretive plan, as confirmed by ICPI in the first phase, has to be done in congruent with the data gathered from both the micro-context and macro-context of the interpreted sites. In respect to the micro-context, the current status of development and local ongoing projects, as well as the short-term plans for the context should be measured and audited. For instance, Bausher area, Bahla Oasis and al-Balid Park are located in active areas where reasonable level of public services and infrastructure are available. Visitors here can take an advantage of having more recreational and leisure activities.

As for the macro-context, it refers to the long-term tourism development plans at national, regional or local level for a particular area. It also means the availability and capability of national technical and financial support (public and private) to implement the intended PIN at a particular area. To exemplify, at Ras al-Jinz, there are ongoing governmental projects to develop a scientific centre and visitors’ camping facilities. This is in addition to the long-term approved master development plan for Ras al-Jinz and Ras al-Hadd (Ministry of Tourism 2004b). Such future plans, which have been proposed and supported by MOT, the LNG Oman, and other private and public bodies,

\[329\] In contrast to this positive influence, the disadvantage as discussed in Chapter Five is that the archaeological sites are more threaten and exposed to destruction due to the modernization processes.
play as external motivations to develop the archaeological sites in the area. Regardless their significance and direct or indirect effect in developing the centre, here, it is the macro-context that helps in providing a better opportunity for Ras al-Jinz to be interpreted.

In another word, although Bat and Shisur Wubar are of a national and universal significance; yet, the research findings show that there are no current tourism development plans in the practical sense. This confirmed that PIN provision is partially driven by economic objectives. It should be remembered that as Oman is a developing country, there are a set-up level of priorities in planning and development process built on such circumstances as the Five-Year Development Plans (Ministry of Information 2004), the vision for Oman’s Economy, Oman 2020 (Ministry of National Economy 2001) and Oman’s Vision for Tourism (Parsons International Limited 2002). Also, it is important to establish a vision of what the future of the tourism industry in the region and where the available markets are (Sweeney 2002).

A very important point to be considered at both sites Bausher and Ras al-Jinz is that the development of PC is not enough. Therefore, the phased PIN here means also the serious consideration of understanding the needs of SCC for these sites gradually and systematically. If not, as a critical driving factor, this context can draw back PIN and consequently the heritage tourism in at large.\(^{330}\)

\(^{330}\) For instance, the local communities at Ras al-Jinz and Ras al-Hadd areas are not practically involved in the planning, development and implementation processes (AM23). This indicates unsustainable condition for any future PIN. In visiting Ras al-Hadd Hotel which is located nearby the residential area of the locals, it appeared that the hotel serves alcoholic for its guests. Similar to this, and as field visits to Bahla show, the local community still believe that their involvement in tourism in general and in
Also, it should be born in mind, and due to SCC and SSC, the integration of the locals in interpretive plans and their recruitment might take a long-time before they can effectively play a major role and be self-dependents. This is one main challenge facing the current SSC where compelling the locals to be part of PIN might be an issue in its own right, specifically where there is no awareness and proficiency\textsuperscript{331}. Also, dealing with SCC can not be done randomly and rapidly. This explains why it is important to include mindful members from the local community in the \textit{Leadership and Partnership Board}\textsuperscript{332}. By doing this, the socio-cultural effects could be reduced and the adjustment to ICIP is not quickened.

Although some may presume that phased PIN in ICPI might hinder the implementation of ICIP, however, a thoughtful look will see it as a supportive practical agent and an opportunity to accomplish sustainable tourism rather than importing ‘quick fix’ ready-made approaches as this was never a serious consideration of the Omani government in the general development framework for the common good (Ministry of Information 2006). For instance, Mershen (2006) mentioned that the quickened large-scale investments through foreign investors in Oman could cause considerable negative impacts in community-based tourism and touristic resources as well.

\begin{footnotesize}
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\begin{enumerate}
\item[331] This becomes more challenging as the Human Development Report (Ministry of National Economy 2003a: 36) included: \textquote{The actual difference between developed and developing countries lies in acquisition of knowledge...A difference made by the availability of information, statistics, and good database’.}
\item[332] There is a group of people from the locals and the general public who are really concerned about archaeology and enthusiastic to develop archaeotourism (AU4, BX1). This group can become the intermediaries between the stewardship and their communities.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Also, phased PIN could be a cost-effective approach where interpretive themes are established upon existing developed attractions (e.g. the Turtle Sanctuary at Ras al-Jinz, al-Balid Park, Sohar Fort Museum). These attractions can become as hubs to various clusters of sites (see Section 8.4.2.2). Moreover, there are many developing projects all over Oman, especially in the tourism sector, which encourages phased PIN (Ministry of Information 2007).

Furthermore, there are some promising projects that can work as incentives to consider ICPI approach. For example, with the grant from the Ambassador’s Fund for Cultural Preservation, U.S.A, the Historical Association of Oman (HAO) is able to conduct a multi-purposes survey of Bausher area that covers its various heritage components, including the archaeological heritage (US ambassador 2005: 1)\(^{333}\). Another important fact, and similar to the regional administrative department, established by MOT, there is a growing awareness about the importance of creating such departments by MOHC (AM13), especially it is reported that there is about one million Omani Rial to establish cultural centres in different regions of Oman during the Seventh Five-Year Plan, 2006-2010 (Ministry of National Economy 2007: Table 23).

The establishment of these centres would go well with ICPI approach to facilitate and increase the stewardship at regional level and provide more opportunity to develop PIN. This partial decentralization or regional devolution can facilitate and ensure the long-term commitment and dynamic monitoring in partnership with involved private and

\(^{333}\) It is hoped that the survey will help in interpreting the area in general and AH in particular considering its various heritage resources and strategic location in the capital, Muscat (AS1).
public sectors, as well as with the locals in order to develop community PIN, especially in the less developed areas.

9.3. SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the main characteristics and benefits of applying ICPI approach to accomplish quality PIN of AH and consequently archaeotourism, as well as the tourism industry in general. This has been described in relation to the Omani context in particular. Virtually, it appeared from the discussion that all of the characteristics are interdependent and complement one another.

The discussion illustrates that all these characteristics go side by side with the governmental long-term vision for the tourism sector in Oman, as well as with AH stewardship. Also, they help in accomplishing the constructivist, constructionist, interpretive and hermeneutic nature of ICPI by emphasizing the significance of thematic PIN and community PIN for instance.

Although the complicated nature of such integrative approaches as ICPI is undeniable, however, such complexity is part of its applicability and a reflection for the practical fact in which AH and its PIN are originally situated; it should be understood that ‘good interpretation doesn’t come cheap’ (Binks 1986: 45). This refers to the importance of applying dynamic approach where there is continuous processing for new inputs within the context in which PIN is situated. Considering the interlinked various factors as one system in PIN could be more effective, capable and successful to communicate,
strengthen, benefit and enliven archaeological sites and their cultural landscape without compromising their integrity.

ICPI should not be seen as a route to instant success or claimed to be a comprehensive solution for every single problem inhibiting PIN of AH in Oman. Yet, ICPI is willing to be part of the solution if not the solution itself. In the following chapter, some recommendations are provided to assist in the development of ICPI plans for AH and consequently archaeotourism in Oman.
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10.1. INTRODUCTION

It is intended in this chapter to provide a brief summary of the main aims and objectives of this thesis. Also, it describes the major research findings and contributions in respect to PIN of AH in particular and heritage PIN in general. As well, this chapter posts some guiding recommendations that could help in the implementation of ICPI in Oman. Finally, this chapter will refer to the limitations of this thesis and point out some research gaps and opportunities in regard to the subject matter of this research.

10.2. SUMMARY

In an attempt to heighten the existing quality of PIN for AH at one of the developing growing touristic destinations, Oman, this study has called for the serious and practical reconsideration of the current interpretive practices and approaches. The importance of this comes from the fact that Oman’s heritage resources, including archaeological sites, have been seen as key elements to develop a competitive destination in the region. So, it is expected that as heritage tourism in Oman is growing, the interest in heritage PIN should increase as well since PIN has the ability to improve the quality of travelling experience and consequently the competitiveness of the tourism industry in Oman.

However, the current role of PIN as a driving factor in archaeotourism is unrealized or overlooked by the tourism stewardship in Oman which is a paradoxical status. This is because while AH represents one of the major competitive-touristic elements and one of the first motivations for visitors and tourists to travel around the country, yet, its
development via interpretive infrastructure is the last to be considered. It is a paradox between theories and the practical fact and between the difficulty of getting funding for PIN provision and of the increasing stated concern about heritage resources in Oman by the public and private institutions. To understand in depth the various reasons behind this, four main objectives were set up which are: 1) reviewing the related literature; 2) auditing and analyzing the main issues; 3) proposing an alternative interpretive model; and 4) posting directive recommendations and pointing out some future research opportunities based on the available literature and the research findings (Figure 10.1).

To accomplish the first objective the researcher started by reviewing the theoretical and practical research in respect to PIN of AH in particular, in an attempt to cover most studies related to the research problem. The literature focused on defining the concept of PIN and archaeotourism, describing the main values of PIN for heritage resources in

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<td>Integrating Context Public Interpretation (quality, constructivist, dynamic &amp; creativity, mindful experience, community-based, thematic, phased).</td>
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**Figure 10.1: A summary for the research main steps**
general, discussing the major controversial issues in AH interpretation for public and shedding light on problems facing PIN in regard to planning, management and evaluating aspects. A new definition was proposed for archaeotourism and a framework was described for the concept of PIN. This objective worked as the first directive base for the structure and discussion in this thesis (Chapter Three).

To achieve the second objective, which represents the second directive base, the researcher conducted intensive fieldwork in Oman through various types of interviews, expert surveys and the review of archival and documentary resources, especially those relating to the criterion sites (Chapter Four). This is in order to audit the phenomenon in discussion more comprehensively and within its micro and macro context which are congruent with hermeneutic perspectives. Various perspectives were integrated where different respondents had the opportunity to share their interpretive comments and analysis in relative to PIN of AH in Oman.

Based on the primary resources, and guided by the related literature, three main interconnected influential factors have been identified, namely PC, SSC and SCC (see chapters five, six and seven). Under each one of these factors there are numerous major issues which were repeatedly presented and supported by the findings. Also, the findings show the strong interrelationship among these factors at both the micro-context and the macro-context of a particular archaeological landscape.

Based on Objective One and Objective Two, and supported by the current trends in cultural heritage tourism and PIN, a new approach for PIN of AH in Oman was
proposed to achieve the third objective set up for this research (Chapter Eight). As the current status in PIN has resulted from the total collective impact of the interlinked factors associated within the three contexts, equally, the study strongly supported the application of a holistic integrative approach, ICPI, to address these factors comprehensively and complementary as possible; an approach that is guided by constructivist/constructionist viewpoints to develop PIN for AH in Oman. Again and again, ICPI should not be seen as a route to instant success; however, it endeavours to help in:

- building up more awareness and support for archaeotourism in Oman amongst the general public and across all involved governmental and private organizations;
- making AH relevant to the public life via PIN by giving it a dynamic practical function, e.g. socio-economic, recreational;
- taking advantage of the various heritage resources surrounding a particular archaeological landscape without compromising their integrity;
- providing an effective dynamic sustainable management approach for AH and other heritage resources;
- appreciating and strengthen the shared meanings and various perspectives proposed by the different stakeholders of a particular interpretive project to accomplish consensual planning;
- empowering community PIN and consider the context in which PIN is situated;
- presenting a ‘whole context’ and considering ‘the whole person’ in heritage PIN in general;
improving the image and perception of the heritage tourism generally and archaeotourism specifically in Oman by providing a positive total experience for tourists, encouraging repeat visits and spreading a positive word of mouth amongst other potential visitors;

- heightening the importance of using constructivist approach in communicating AH to the general public through on-site and off-site PIN;
- activating the role of PIN as a profession in academic and practical sense in Oman; and
- designing a phased interpretive system that goes well with the current development plans for the different sectors in Oman, including tourism.

The achievement of these objectives and others can be strengthened by considering the fourth objective of this research which is mainly focused on posting a directive of practical recommendations (Section 10.3) and suggesting further research opportunities in particular areas (Section 10.5).

**10.3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Guided by the research findings, and published literature, here are some main recommendations which mainly are meant to present some tips for the implementation of ICPI approach and address the issues in the three contexts collectively to strengthen accessibility, validity, comprehensibility, authenticity, sustainability and vitality of PIN of AH in Oman.
10.3.1. Professionalism in Heritage PIN

Drawing on the findings that PIN as a profession has not been developed in Oman yet, while concurrently the interest in the heritage tourism in general is increasing as one source for economic diversification, it is recommended that the Omani government develops PIN as a profession in academic and practical sense in cooperation with national and international institutions. Three important steps are required to be considered which are:

10.3.1.1. Heritage PIN Centre

It is strongly recommended that a national centre or association for PIN to be founded, managed and advised by a joint committee represents all those public and private bodies which are expected to relate to heritage PIN in Oman. The centre could be under the auspices of one or more governmental bodies such as MHC and MOT. In addition to these two ministries, it would be important to include other governmental institutes such as the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Education, Public Authority for Crafts Industries, Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources and the Historical Association of Oman. Besides, the public and private academic and training institutions, such as Sultan Qaboos University and Oman Tourism College, should be involved as well since they would have an important role in designing quality training programs and in-country workshops in PIN. The centre should be committed to:

- promote quality interpretive practices and develop PIN for all types of heritage resources in congruent with the Omani context by fostering enthusiasm, specifically amongst policymakers and particular groups such as tour operators.
and investors in heritage tourism. This could help in securing some financial resources and technical supports;

- monitor the quality of interpretive plans and training programs, and their fulfilment for advising on the set up national legislation and the establishment of ethics relative to PIN, e.g. sustainability, community involvement;

- fund and encourage scientific research and publications in PIN and keep up-to-date information on education and training resources;

- help and play a major role in designing specific interpretive programs, either on-site or off-site, and training workshops to recruit some of the local communities in interpreting heritage sites as needed. For instance, by advising and assisting those archaeological excavations managers on how to welcome and involve those visitors who are interested in archaeological digging and how to raise the local awareness and participation as one way to strengthen community archaeology and PIN;

- give the opportunity for the interested and committed volunteers willing to participate in PIN in a particular project or lead guided tours, especially the locals;

- work as a coordinating body where professionals and interested volunteers from various disciplines could meet and exchange perspectives about interpretive programs and services. For instance, the findings show that experts from the Ministry of Agriculture are needed to help in interpreting the frankincense sites;

- assist the established regional departments by MOT for producing regional interpretive plans to improve the competitiveness and quality of heritage tourism in Oman; and
establish and suggest a national action plan for heritage PIN in congruent with national development strategies in different sectors where a priority is given for those heritage resources which are located in touristic active areas and World Heritage Sites.\footnote{For instance, AM6 mentioned that Muscat-Ibri road which leads to al-Dakhliyah region is a very active touristic line which takes visitors close to many well-known cultural and natural sites in Fanja, Birkat al-Mawz, Nizwa, al-Hamra, Bahla, Jibrin and Ibri.}

\section*{10.3.1.2. Tour Guidance Training Programs in PIN}

Having the fact that tour guidance is an important people-based PIN, and that there is a lack of trained Omani tour guides in general, it is strongly recommended that in-country theoretical and practical training programs to be developed.\footnote{One of the main principles that mentioned by Weiler and Ham (2002: 55) to develop tour guidance in developing countries is that ‘the initiative for training should come from the host country and ownership should remain with the host country’.} Meetings amongst various national governmental and private training institutions in Oman need to be organized periodically in order to:

- develop cooperative effort in designing related courses in PIN. For instance, MOT and MOHC need to cooperate with Sultan Qaboos University and Oman Tourism College to plan interdisciplinary courses relative to PIN such as tour guidance. As it is recognized that in-service and on the job training is an essential component of any training program (Binks 1986), therefore, travel agencies and tour operators should be encouraged to provide such opportunities;
- design some specialized oriented courses in PIN such as tour guidance at archaeological sites. These courses can be incorporated into already existed programs within these institutions. For example, it is suggested that both the Department of Archaeology and the Department of History at Sultan Qaboos University design joint intensive courses in archaeology and ethnography.
suitable for those working in heritage tourism and delivered in a way that supports and enhances their skills rather than simply as part of more academic degree programs\textsuperscript{336};

\begin{itemize}
\item train and prepare female tour guides in Oman\textsuperscript{337} where for socio-cultural reasons some tourists, especially those with families, prefer female tour guides;
\item offer foreign language courses specially designed for interpretive services as there is an increasing need for such languages as English, German, French and Japanese;
\item prevent duplication of courses within a particular area and emphasize diversity and complementary amongst institutions in training PIN; and
\item increase the public awareness of the importance of tour guidance as a profession and support this by forming in-detail job description and ethics relative to tour guidance in Oman.
\end{itemize}

\subsection*{10.3.1.3. Archaeology as a Profession}

Archaeological research and excavations represent the main sources for primary and public interpretation. The limited number of qualified Omani experts and technical support in archaeology and its affiliated sciences is a critical problems facing PIN of AH. Therefore, MOHC in cooperation with Sultan Qaboos University and other

\textsuperscript{336} Also, many respondents have expressed the importance of using re-enactment or performance-led programs in interpreting the past, especially for the average tourists and school students (AM7, AM12, AS4). Here, the Department of Theatre at Sultan Qaboos University could help in improving personal interpretation by providing courses in re-enactment.

\textsuperscript{337} Al-Hotta Cave has been one good example for the employment of on-site female tour guides from the same area (see Ministry of Tourism 2006: http://www.alhottacave.com/).
involved academic and administrative institutions should establish theoretical and practical training programs in archaeology\textsuperscript{338}.

Also, the formation of a national team for archaeological works is an interesting idea where its membership is opened to all those interested in archaeology, both specialists and volunteer\textsuperscript{339}. Moreover, as there is no single specialized archaeologist at the Directorate General of Heritage and Culture in Dhofar, MOHC should expand and support a close cooperation with OCA where a group of archaeologists is available. Besides, the programs should include those administrators in the governmental and private institutions relative to cultural resource management.

\textbf{10.3.2. National Registry and Research Management}

According to the findings, one of the obstacles facing the primary and public interpretation for AH is the lack of national registrar and effective research management which is partially responsible for keeping the official records of AH inaccessible and unmanageable. Any audit stage in ICPI would have to refer to the official registry and research department. Also, this is vital to set up a national interpretive plan with priorities. Moreover, the registry would assist the private sector in conducting initial feasible studies in regard to PIN of AH for projects with different goals.

For its importance in the application of ICPI, as well as for the development of quality PIN as a profession, it is recommended to upgrade the current research and

\textsuperscript{338} Lately, this appears to be quite promising as there is increasing joint projects between Sultan Qaboos University and MOHC. Though, the lacuna between academic and administrative institutions relative to archaeology needs to be more bridged financially and scientifically.

\textsuperscript{339} Moore (2006: 17) referred to \textit{the recreation archaeology} which includes volunteer programs, paid participant programs which can be developed at local levels at such sites as Ras al-Jinz and Bat.
documentation department at MOHC to become a functional and more active national registry and multi-disciplinary research unit in co-operation with other governmental institutions working in the same field. This should be made statutory with more supportive funding from the government to ensure work quality and validity. The department should aim at:

- training some Omani experts appropriate for the particular needs of the registration and research work, carrying out periodic systematic archaeological surveys, documentation and initial analysis for AH in the country;
- adopting more holistic and integrative approaches in documenting archaeological sites from being site-focused to landscape-based strategy where other affiliated heritage resources are considered\(^{340}\). This is equally important for both research-oriented or rescue excavations\(^{341}\);
- preparing a list of archaeological sites in each region, including both those which have been excavated and those identified during survey. This is a matter of some urgency, once completed the list would have to be periodically updated to include new discoveries. A comprehensive list of that kind would certainly be a useful research tool for archaeologist and AH management;
- reconsidering archaeological research priorities by conducting and improving oriented analytical research and primary interpretations to explore the historical gaps in some periods and the lack of information and connectivity about

\(^{340}\) In the UK, Historical Landscape Characterization (HLC) has been applied to help identify gaps in knowledge and target priority areas for further survey and research. HLC shows patterns and connections within the landscape, including the variety of sites and their relationship with other landscape features in the past and present. This advised land management issues and helped archaeologists to communicate the relevance of the history in the landscape to modern strategies (see Macinnes 2004).

\(^{341}\) According to Tilley (1989: 277), ‘it is pointless to rescue the trace of the past at any site in isolation’.
particular sites (e.g. Bat, Arja, Qalhat) or periods (e.g. Magan culture, Islamic archaeology);

- co-operating with national and international academic institutions in doing the documentation and in-depth multidisciplinary research, especially with those institutes which MOHC has joint projects with such as Sultan Qaboos University, the Italian-French expedition (Ras al-Jinz), the American expedition (al-Balid) and the German expedition (Bat);

- designing functional and known practical techniques to produce easy-accessed system for processing and maintaining the collected data in a comprehensive flexible archive. For instance, utilizing GIS techniques can provide more accessibility for data to all stakeholders. Therefore, AH stewardship should liaise with those institutions that intensively use this technique in Oman such as the National Survey Authority, the Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Environment and Sultan Qaboos University;

- producing high quality aerial images, pictures, maps and other explanatory illustrations (manual and electronic) to benefit future research and PIN. For instance, designing such interpretive media as Archeoguide system (see Section 3.8.3) would become easier in case there are digitized data, not to mention that this will help in managing such problems as the lack of Omani experts and financial resources; and

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342 For instance, Mohammed al-Belushi from the Department of Archaeology at Sultan Qaboos University has proposed database system called ‘The National Archaeological Database of Oman’, NADO, which can be used by MOHC to serve conservation, management and research needs (al-Belushi 2005).

343 A good example to show the importance of developing the national registry is the online National Monuments Record of Wales (NMRW) and the COFLEIN which is developed and published by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (2007).
making the data and research findings accessible to the academic institutions, scholars, and for the interested members of the public depending on their specific needs. This should be a statutory obligation, yet data should be used responsibly. Policy should be formed for the re-use of the accessed data to keep copyright and prevent any damages to AH, especially in the remote areas. This can be more facilitated via online dissemination where the data becomes easier and faster to be used and can save time, effort and money for both users and manager.

Another aspect in regard to this recommendation is that as opposed to expert-based research, community-based research should be encouraged where research ‘has to be done in collaboration with members of a community rather than entirely by an outside expert’ (Root 2007: 565). Herein, the right to research is more democratized where research is not manipulated by knowledge-based institutions (Appadurai 2006). This would reflect the growing interest in public participation in the development of the tourism industry in general and heritage tourism in particular. Also, because of the cost of conducting professional research, and in cooperation with some experts, the community can develop their own methods for providing the necessary data to prepare local PIN; the written interpretation would respect and protect the community interest as a whole and it would become more accessible linguistically to the locals as well as other average visitors.

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344 Community-based research are designed to evaluate community’s current programs or policies to increase the members’ ability to identify problems and develop plans to solve them and to make a case for a public policy favoured by members of the community (Root 2007).
10.3.3. The Privatization of PIN

Based on the findings, the involvement of the private sector in PIN is highly supported which does not mean a total control of PIN industry by limited individuals and groups to become manipulated and official-led and consequently the commercialization of heritage tourism. However, it means that as Oman is moving towards privatization of many sectors, including the tourism industry, the establishment of practical mechanisms and appropriate regulations that facilitate and organize the relationship between the private sector and heritage PIN is vital. For instance, various steps are needed to build quality awareness about PIN among the interested investors. Also, the inclusion of governmental representatives and members of the local communities should be a prerequisite for such investment and enterprises.

Private interpretive projects and services can help in overcoming financial resources and provide the opportunity for those who are interested to work in PIN, especially the locals. It should be remembered here that the application of integrative approaches to interpret large historical landscapes, such as Bat, Bausher and Qalhat or various groups of sites as the frankincense sites, will require the serious involvement of specialized private companies. This is important for the quality of PIN. That is to say, the national, international groups and individual/family enterprises that are willing to invest in heritage tourism should be wisely empowered and supported as part of improving community PIN without compromising heritage resources sustainability. Therefore, dynamic evaluation and monitoring by specialists is required.
10.3.4. Establishing International Co-operation and Coordination

As PIN has not been established as a profession in Oman yet, and as there is growing demands to develop heritage-based tourism in Oman, it is strongly recommended that the country seeks the advice from international organizations and establish close relationships with those countries with developed heritage PIN institutions. 

As it is the case with some archaeological sites in the Middle East, such as Mkies in Jordan and Luxor in Egypt (Daher 2006, Orbasli 2007, Shunnaq et al. 2008), the Omani government should work in cooperation with experts from UNESCO, ICOMOS and ICOM in order to properly develop the documentation and registration system, research, preservation and off-site and on-site PIN for AH, especially the World Heritage Sites.

In addition to the internal funding options, the government could look for external sources from international grants and friends organizations. For example, according to the Operational Guidelines of the Convention of 1972, the Member nations can apply for long-term loans and, in special cases, for outright grants (World Heritage Centre 2005: VII.E Summary Table). Also, as Oman is a member state of ICOMOS, it is entitled to seek assistance from the International Scientific Committee on Interpretation and Presentation (ICIP) in designing a basic guideline for PIN of cultural resources. Similarly, Oman could use those international charters and ethics developed by World Tourism Organization, e.g. Québec Declaration of Ecotourism (2002) and the Global

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345 This comes from the fact that AH is ‘the common heritage of all humanity [where] international cooperation is therefore essential in developing and maintaining standards in its management’ (ICOMOS 1990: Article 9).
346 According to the Convention of 1972, Member Nations can request international assistance from the World Heritage Fund for studies, provision of experts, technicians, skilled labour, training of staff and specialists, and the supply of equipment for protection, conservation, rehabilitation, and interpretation of World Heritage Properties (World Heritage Centre 1972, 2005).
347 For further details see the Operational Guidelines (World Heritage Centre 2005) which were first prepared in 1977 by the World Heritage Committee and have been revised since then (James 1993: 84).
348 http://icip.icomos.org/ENG/home.html
Code of Ethics for Tourism (1999), as guidelines for the development of heritage tourism through PIN. Similar to the international Silk Road Project\textsuperscript{349}, the development of interpretive international trails, such as the Frankincense Trail or Magan Route, will require the involvement of multilateral international agreements and the involvement of international organizations such as UNESCO and World Tourism Organization.

Due to the lack of Omani experts and institutions in PIN, MOHC and MOT should seek the technical and scientific support and advices from well-established international organizations such as National Association for Interpretation (NAI)\textsuperscript{350}, the Association for Heritage Interpretation (AHI)\textsuperscript{351} and the Ename Centre for Public Archaeology and Heritage Presentation\textsuperscript{352}. In case there was an intention to establish PIN centre or association by the Omani government, these organizations could become good guiding sources to build up PIN as a profession in the country through information exchanges and joint workshops, programs and projects. Noteworthy to say, ‘staying connected with professional associations is one of the most effective ways for interpreters to stay abreast of a changing world’ (Merriman and Brochu 2006: 63).

10.3.5. National Legislation and Ethics for PIN

The findings show that there is a policy vacuum in regard to AH and its interpretation to the public. It is true that AH is protected by the law, however, the current regulations are mainly focused on management and have not been linked with development plans.

\textsuperscript{349} In fact, Oman played a major role in the Silk Road as many research confirmed this (Kervran 1992, 2002, Severin 1992) which provides an opportunity to integrate some related archaeological landmarks, e.g. Sohar, Qalhat, Khor Rori, with the ready-established routes (World Tourism Organization 2006).

\textsuperscript{350} http://www.interpnet.com/

\textsuperscript{351} http://www.heritage-interpretation.org.uk/

\textsuperscript{352} http://www.enamecenter.org/
They are old and insufficiently responsive to the complex needs of the plans. Therefore, they need to be reformed, amended and then enforced. This is in order to reach the desired quality management for PIN. In regard to this, there are two main things which are needed to be stressed, national legislation and ethics for professionals.

10.3.5.1. National Legislation

It is necessary to update and implement the current established national legislation which are directly influencing AH and its interpretation, such as NHPL 1980 and Tourism Law 2002, and the indirect ones such as those royal decrees related to natural resources preservation and environment protection (e.g. 114/2001, 6/2003, 27/2003). This is extremely important in Oman, especially that the current mentioned legislation and policies do not state clearly or give much credit to heritage PIN.

Also, the locals should be supported and included in the national vision for the development and management of heritage tourism in Oman. A critical point here is the value of protecting historical landscape integrity as a whole at such site as Bat and Bahla to show the chronological progress and cohesion of these landscapes and provide examples for the past influence in the present, e.g. vernacular architecture and aflaj.

10.3.5.2. Professional Ethics

In addition to the national legislation and policies, there is a need to create a more specific professional directive of ethics for heritage PIN in general to work as a guideline for all interpreters and interpretive plans. This directive should consider all those mentioned elements in chapters five, six, seven, eight and nine. The related
international conventions, charters, agreements, ethics and codes can work as sources for the development of such directive. To ensure its practicality and comprehensibility, this directive needs to be set up, upgraded, enforced, monitored and evaluated by a joint committee of experts from various public and private institutions or by the suggested centre in Section 10.3.1.1\(^353\).

10.3.6. Archaeotourism as Special Interest Tourism

It has been mentioned in chapters six and nine that Oman has been planning to develop different types of specialized tourism, including archaeotourism. Also, the research findings suggested the integration of archaeotourism with other types of tourism such as adventure tourism and rural tourism where most AH in Oman is spread over the peripheral areas which have their own uniqueness as adventure place. That is to say the interest in archaeotourism should be practically translated into active interpretive practices, so that various benefits can be accomplished. For instance, demographic erosion has already led to the partial or complete desertification of hundreds of villages in Oman. Herein, integrative interpretive plans can work as one pivotal activity to achieve the socio-economic revitalization of the rundown and less advanced regions\(^354\).

It is suggested here that archaeological landscapes can be incorporated into different touristic itineraries for niche tourists such as geo-tourism, e.g. Shir and Qalhat, desert

\(^{353}\) Some of the most important elements which can be included in the directive are: holistic interpretation; integration planning; local community participation; specialization and training; systematic documentation and registration; oriented research; marketing strategy; public awareness; publications and media; visitor management; sustainability; authenticity; security; accessibility; sensuous experience and education; and dynamic evaluation.

\(^{354}\) This has been confirmed by Greffe (1994), Lane (1994) and Orams (1995) where they suggested that rural tourism in particular 1) enables other possibilities for rural activities to be defined, 2) makes it possible to create outlets for traditional products, e.g. handicraft product, and 3) makes it possible to create new sources of income, e.g. small and medium enterprises.
tourism, e.g. Shisur Wubar, eco-tourism, e.g. Ras al-Jinz, ethnic-tourism, e.g. Shenah, agricultural tourism, e.g. Bat and Bahla, and mining tourism, e.g. Arja, and al-Maysar. This is important at such regions as Dhofar in the south, where during al-Khareef season archaeotourism can become one alternative for the increasing number of tourists (Ministry of Information 2007), especially the World Heritage Sites relevant to the frankincense trade.

Currently, MOT has been working in some projects to develop these niche tourisms such as trekking trails in the Eastern Haja, Western Hajar and Capital Area, the Turtle Reserve in Ras al-Jinz and al-Hotta Cave in al-Hamra. Yet, the specialized tour operators in Oman still underdeveloped where, for instance, there is one specialized company in Geotourism, Shuram L.L.C (Jacelyn Cabaltera: personal communication: 10/January/2007).

Since the subject matter of this research is mainly PIN and archaeotourism, it is recommended that both MOHC and MOT in cooperation with those related public and private institutions to:

- promote the value of designing integrative itineraries for niche markets by suggesting examples of thematic interpretive programs where AH is mainly included;
- integrate and strengthen joint efforts of those interested travel agencies and operators in promoting and operating archaeotourism. For instance, the operators should be advised by site managers regarding the content and delivery of a

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355 According to Pitchford (1995: 36), ethnic-tourism could be identified as ‘a group and its distinctive culture are the main attraction’.
particular interpretive programs in order to convey the desired message by the managers and accomplish long-term conservation objectives;\(^\text{356}\);

- encourage the local SMEs or micro-enterprises that are willing to develop archaeotourism in a particular area throughout interpretive services, e.g. specialized guides. Encouragement comes from incentives such as grants, technical support and flexibility of procedures;
- co-operate with international agencies that are specialized in promoting and operating archaeotourism in particular, or cultural heritage in general;
- prepare some specialized design-based interpretive media and publications for the specialized tourists, and others for the average tourists; the data should be periodically evaluated and updated;
- develop the required interpretive infrastructure and touristic superstructure; and
- design a special oriented training programs and workshops in interpreting AH and sponsor various activities and programs that are related to archaeotourism.

### 10.3.7. Museums and PIN

In regard to museums, there are two main aspects which are the establishment of a national museum for AH and open-air museums (or archaeological parks) in Oman.

#### 10.3.7.1. The National Museum for AH

The establishment of a national museum for AH in Oman to ‘be the focal point of the entire network of archaeological sites and site museums’ (BX3) has been supported by a major number of respondents (see Section 6.2.6.1). The museum needs to be well-
established and designed with high quality standards where it can handle and provide different missions for both the average visitors and specialists. In regard to PIN, some of the major roles that the museum can play are:

- Some of its sub-departments could play complementary roles in documentation and research development in regard to AH and its interpretation.
- It attracts the public interest to AH with various thematic interpretive activities where quality and audience variety are considered and expected.
- Special oriented edutainment and learning programs should be provided for some groups such as school parties, families and specialized tourists.
- Due to climatic considerations during the summer in Oman where it becomes difficult for many people to visit archaeological sites, the museum could be one alternative venue for the public to learn about AH.
- In cooperation with governmental and private institutions, promotional materials and activities for archaeotourism should be considered through exhibitions, brochures, leaflets, booklets, magazines, T-Shirts and souvenirs.
- The museum could act as a soft visitor management tool by promoting sustainable tourism and foster a sense of social collective responsibility and national identity amongst the public.
- The museum might organize field trips and guided tours to archaeological sites with on-site interpretation, on-going archaeological digs and less visited sites.
- Opening hours should be extended and periodically reconsidered.

Besides the national museum, these roles can be partially accomplished by establishing some regional, local or a network of site museums to present and promote the unique
AH and other heritage resources of a particular region\textsuperscript{357}. For instance, AM13 suggested an on-site specialized mining museum at Arja to showcase the unique mining AH of Sohar region in particular\textsuperscript{358}. One of the main goals for these museums would be to avoid centralization and provide the people who live outside Muscat with museums that are accessible to them. Besides, it makes more sense to establish specialized thematic museums at some regions with rich AH such as al-\textit{Sharqiyah}, al-\textit{Batinah}, al-\textit{Dakhlyiah} and DhoFar. For example, Salalah Museum in DhoFar can be used to promote and organize different thematic trails relative to frankincense sites, especially during \textit{al-Khareef} season, e.g. Caravan Trail, Frankincense Trail, and Wilfred Thesiger Trail.

The national governmental museums could be complemented by privately-owned museums. All these museums should be supervised by local or regional centres in cooperation with the Department of Museums at MOHC and managed by well-trained staff. Also, some forts and castles can be utilized in cooperation with MOT\textsuperscript{359}, especially that some of them are located nearby or in the centre of active areas such as Bahla Fort, Nizwa Fort, Sohar Fort, al-Khandaq Castle and Mirbat Castle.

\textbf{10.3.7.2. Open-air Museums as Archaeological Parks}

The second part of this recommendation in regard to museums suggests that such archaeological landscapes in some areas, such as Bat, Bahla, Khor Rori, Shenah, Shir, Qalhat, Arja and Bausher, are characterized by being large in size and rich in historical

\textsuperscript{357} This issue is critical, especially that previous archaeological works at some regions, such as al-\textit{Sharqiyah} region, have produced enormous amount of AH (Table 1.2).

\textsuperscript{358} This could be similar to the on-site frankincense museum at al-Balid.

\textsuperscript{359} Some of these forts and castles, such as Nizwa Fort, Mirbat Castle and al-Khandaq Castle, have already been the target of MOT to be prepared for visitors; yet, there are some issues which are related to managerial aspect, maintenance, quality of interpretation (see chapters five, six and eight).
patterns; hence, it is recommended that these landscapes could be prepared as open-air museums. Take Shenah as an example, where in addition to the extensive Bronze Age tombs, there are various rock art sites, rich living cultural and natural heritage, pastoral life, geological formations, wadis and desert plants. Also, beside these landscapes, many respondents (e.g. AM14, AM17, BX1) did strongly recommend the development of historic quarters, *harah*, which can be considered as ready-made museums as well. Similar to what Davis (1999: 226) said, these open-museums appear to be in harmony with their cultural and natural surroundings and complementary parts of the interdependent natural eco-system; therefore, it is possible that the sense of the past becomes more reachable\(^{360}\).

Also, these genuine landscapes have the potential to become educational and recreational archaeological parks for the public, yet, without compromising their integrity\(^ {361}\). Considering a holistic approach to quality PIN at these landscapes is important, especially that there are some on-going attempts to develop al-Balid, Khor Rori, Bahla, Shenah and Bat, if not, a serious negative impacts are expected, especially at the fragile ones. This emphasizes the importance of giving this issue a degree of serious attention. Therefore, it is recommended for the time being to attempt to do the following:

\(^{360}\) Therefore, Pearce (1990: 180) mentioned that ‘the presentation of open-air sites is one of the most important interfaces between the committed archaeologist and the public’.

\(^{361}\) According to Bagnall (2003: 87), ‘living heritage museum offered potential for exploring the role of heritage in the real sense’ where some tourists are not attracted to ‘institutional’ and ‘freedom limiting’ experiences (Harison 1997: 37). Therefore, such interpretive projects as Castell Henlllys in Dyfed, Wales (UK), have become one of the most intensively studied Iron Age forts in Britain; as well as where more effort has been put into displaying and interpreting an Iron age settlement to the public (Mytum 1999, 2004).
There should be a joint effort among the various stakeholders involved in cultural landscape supervision and management.

These museums could be managed directly by the Department of Museums at MOHC or by regional cultural centres and authority.

The appointment of different trained staff, especially from the locals, to work as park ranger, tour guidance and security.

The activation of voluntary works and public outreaching programs.

The enforcement of visiting regulations can help in reducing the negative impacts providing that both host and guests are aware of them.

International co-operation with those countries where open-air museums, eco-museums, or folk museums are well-established such as the Scandinavian countries, Britain, France and German.

### 10.3.8. Financial Resources for PIN

As Oman is a growing touristic destination, the people who are in power need to be more aware of the importance of putting more financial resources in improving PIN for AH. Touristic projects are rapidly developing in the country; thus, unless there is a practical way of cooperation, the sustainability of AH is definitely threatened. Consequently, integrative holistic practices, such as ICPI, should be seriously considered and repeatedly enforced by AH stewardship in tourism development and management plan in the Omani context, especially with funding being such as an issue in PIN (see Chapter Six). As it is a priority, the stewardship should have the task to develop the capital of interpretive program for a particular site until it becomes self-
supported. Funding archaeological research, documentation, interpretation, museums, training and evaluative research should be a national long-term commitment.

It can be claimed that in Oman to sustain heritage is to sustain tourism and vice versa (AM1); it is a double way relationship. However, this can not be accomplished without securing the required capital. Thus, the following recommendations provide some insight on how to manage this issue in Oman:

- There should be a set of policy and clear-cut financial management plans for the development of PIN for AH and other heritage attractions in the country according to well-studied phases, especially for those with universal and national significance. These plans should set priorities and implement the necessary work in close coordination with the tourism sector and other stakeholders.

- MOHC should be well-informed and explore the feasibility of the development plans for tourism in particular; accordingly, it should attempt to create a strategy for designating the most suitable ways to fund PIN for a particular archaeological site. For instance, rather than spending a lot of money on creating impressive attractive buildings for visitors, managers should first try less expensive improvement that address minor issues such as signage.

- As part of the legislative framework improvement, there should be a definite policy enforced by MOHC to obligate those developers or investors to provide and allocate some fund for documenting, excavating, preserving, presenting and maybe publishing of any archaeological findings in case there is any in their
project area\textsuperscript{362}. Also, they should be obliged to seek government consent before making any changes to a listed monument of national importance. Moreover, MOHC should impose more charges for any provided services such as the archaeological clearance report and field visits. The services income can be channelled into more general archaeological research, including PIN.

\begin{itemize}
\item There should be a business plan as part of the master management plan for heritage sites to work as guidance for income generation activities and programs such as charging for admission, special programs and events, on-site museums and travelling exhibitions, gift shops and souvenirs, catering, etc\textsuperscript{363}.
\item The creation of a partnership consists of a range of various stakeholders from private, public, community and maybe international bodies to help sponsoring interpretive projects at particular archaeological and historical sites, e.g. Petroleum Development of Oman (PDO) and Liquefied National Gas of Oman (LNG)\textsuperscript{364}.
\item Non-governmental organizations, such as the Historical Association of Oman\textsuperscript{365} and Geology Society of Oman\textsuperscript{366} should be given an active role in planning and managing PIN; they should be encouraged by several means to provide resources and funding.
\item In cooperation with the Ministry of Manpower and MOT, as well as with other governmental and private bodies, the local SMEs relative to community PIN
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{362} For example, according to Cadw’s regulations, developers or exploiters are expected to fund unavoidable archaeological work associated with their developments including provision for adequate post-excavation work and archiving of the record (Cadw and Royal Commission 1999: 4). 
\textsuperscript{363} For example, historic sites in the UK are increasingly used as venues for a variety of business and social functions such as conferences, product lunches, filming, wedding, receptions, fashions shows, banquets and corporate entertainment (English Tourism Council 2000: 49).
\textsuperscript{364} According to Cochrane and Tapper (2006), due to financial limitations in financial resources, a partnership approach is increasingly applied in managing World Heritage Sites.
\textsuperscript{365} See http://www.hao.org.om/
\textsuperscript{366} See http://www.gso.org.om/
should be empowered and encouraged with incentives to be one main source for funding in the future and enliven local archaeological sites. Community groups can work collaboratively and run commercial operations which generating benefits for the sites, especially that the Omani government is working to promote economically and socially schemes to provide young people with financial and technical supports which they need for their projects such as Sanad Program and Youth Projects Development Fund (Ministry of Information 2006). In line with this, MOT plans to provide financial assistance for smaller scale projects that enhance tourism products in a particular location (Parsons International Limited 2002). Enhancing activities may include handicrafts and souvenir shops, tour guidance, selling local gastronomy and the hire and sale of recreational equipment\(^{367}\). This will expand the cultural sector’s contribution in heritage tourism in general, yet, more supportive environment is required, especially for the locals.

➢ There is a big need for a good strategy in promoting and marketing the interpretive infrastructure, services and products or the ‘interpretation business’ (Uzzell 1989a: 8). This has to be planned and implemented in cooperation with MOT in particular, and with other related private and governmental bodies such as the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Oman Centre for Investment Promotion and Exports Development\(^{368}\).

\(^{367}\) For instance, in regard to traditional handicrafts, there is ample room to enhance handicraftsmen competitiveness, broaden the enterprises’ access to national and foreign market and increase their productivity, trade volumes and revenue (World Bank 2001).

\(^{368}\) An important aspect here is taking advantage of the Internet which is a complementary off-site touristic interpretive medium to the on-site interpretive services and could change the way travellers engage with AH, especially the World Heritage sites (Macleod 2006b).
➢ Fund raising mechanism through public sector organizations, philanthropic works, business patronage, professional help. Also, different types of publications for academic, public and educational purposes could be one source for revenue regeneration.

➢ The encouragement of voluntary work helps in archaeological works and PIN which can save the site management money, especially if it comes from the locals and well-informed people.

10.3.9. Public Awareness of AH Values

All mentioned recommendations can not be effectively managed and accomplished without raising the public awareness of AH via PIN which has done much to accomplish this as discussed in Chapter Three. According to the research findings, there are three main interdependent channels to develop this awareness, namely public archaeology, formal education and the media. This can be achieved through the following:

➢ MOH should establish a national interpretive strategy for raising the public awareness of the various values of AH with a special reference to those mentioned factors relative to PC, SSC and SCC.

➢ To enrich this strategy and make it more practical and connected to the national development plan, a joint inter-sectoral committee needs to be established and empowered by legislation. The committee should include representatives from non-governmental organizations, e.g. the Historical Association for Oman, in order to have a more active role in the planning and developing the strategy.
All members of the public should be provided with opportunity to express their perspectives in interpreting AH. As for the local community in particular, open meetings and the establishment of community steering committee is important to understand, reflect on and record their opinions and to bring about a process of greater understanding and awareness of their situation as a basis for informed decision making and community PIN development.

Those archaeological fieldworks which are located in accessible places to the public have more opportunity to welcome visitors, especially from the locals, niche tourists and school parties. Some good example to do this is Ras al-Jinz, Bat, al-Balid and Bausher as long-term archaeological fieldworks have been established\textsuperscript{369}. In regard to the voluntary work in particular, it could be very useful when there are rescue archaeological excavations in Oman, especially that there is a limited number of experts.

Festivals, such as Muscat Festival and Khareef Salalah Festival, should be widely utilized as these annual events attract a large number of domestic and international tourists. For instance, in 2005 Muscat Festival attracted 1,755,564 visitors (Ministry of Information 2006: 170).

In cooperation with different local authorities, youth clubs, museums and the regional centres of MOT, MOHC can promote specific days to be known as ‘Archaeology Week’ for instance where different interpretive programs are designed based on each region’s particular AH\textsuperscript{370}. Travelling archaeological

\textsuperscript{369} Tilley (1989) discussed that large-scale excavations should be conceived as an experiment in interpretive activity involving the public and theatres for promoting the past.

\textsuperscript{370} For instance, Arizona Archaeological Month provides various themes that focused on the recreation/tourism potential of Arizona’s archaeological resources; \textit{Tour the Past!} (1989), \textit{Time Travel Arizona!} (1990) and \textit{Discover Arizona’s Past-Time!} (Hoffman 1997).
exhibitions around the country can be organized by MOHC and receives intense media coverage. Also, through educational programs, a resistance against marginalization and exclusion can accrue which can be done by designing workshops and tool kits to help communities explore local heritage\textsuperscript{371}.

- It could be a challenge, however, to be able to overcome some SCC, and because the interest in heritage might start after a long-term of educational process, some respondents mentioned that building up the public knowledge AH via PIN has to be organized through different stages in the Omani educational system (e.g. AM3, AM24). The current national historical curricula and pedagogical practices should be reviewed and reformed to include well-organized, thematic, scientific information about AH in chronological sense\textsuperscript{372}.

Local sites in each region can be used as examples to illustrate national and general history (Prentice 1995). Certainly, there should be alternative interpretive programs, media, facilities, flexible timetable and early circulation of activities. Also, some of the graduate students from the Department of Archaeology, Sultan Qaboos University, can be prepared to work as history teachers and can be prepared through regular workshops in interpreting AH. All this has to be done in cooperation between the MOHC and Ministry of Education (AM7, AM10, AM24, BX2).

- Certain international organizations can provide assistance in designing interpretive programs, training workshops and publication. For instance, in addition to publishing a manual for schoolteachers in both Arabic and English,  

\textsuperscript{371} This has proven success as for instance in Herian Project in Wales, UK (PLB Projects Ltd & Govannan Consultancy 2003, Welsh Assembly Government 2007, see http://www.herian.org/).  
\textsuperscript{372} Similar to the English Heritage, Education on Site series can be provided as teacher’ guides which are written especially for teachers, tutors and students to help them make the best use of the historic environment (Brisbane and Wood 1996).
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ICCROM\textsuperscript{373} held many successful regional workshops as in Jordan and Tunisia in 2005 and reviewed pedagogic methods and curricula approaches for promoting awareness among schoolchildren about historic sites (Aslan 2005). Moreover, other countries’ experience, such as Bahrain (BX5) and Egypt (AM24), can be helpful, especially that SCC of these countries is relatively similar to Oman’s.

10.4. THE CONTRIBUTION AND MAJOR FINDINGS

By using Oman as a case study, the research has included several important contributions and remarks in respect to PIN of AH and its relationship to archaeotourism in particular. Briefly, the following section discusses the theoretical, methodological and practical contributions of this thesis.

10.4.1. Theoretical Perspectives

- In general, the available literature in regard to heritage PIN in developing countries is limited. The fundamental philosophy of PIN and the available literature is mostly written and developed by scholars from developed countries in Europe, North America and Australia. Therefore, it is hoped that this thesis represents a major source for those who are interested in learning about the status of heritage PIN in general in one of less developed countries, Oman. The study adds a new regional dimension to PIN of heritage resources literature.

- Based on the available literature, it can be said that there is a less interest in conducting critical research relative to PIN of AH than other types of cultural

\textsuperscript{373} The International Centre for the Study of Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
heritage such as historical monuments and living heritage. The current literature is mainly focused on primary interpretation rather than PIN and mostly written by and for professionals (e.g. Magan culture). Also, it is more focused on off-site PIN (museums, exhibitions) than the on-site one. Therefore, this study contributes to and expands the knowledge about the major challenging issues face on-site PIN, especially in developing countries. It also presents the first critical comprehensive and empirical study focusing on PIN of AH, in particular for the example of Oman.

➢ In regard to the application of integrative approaches in heritage PIN, the available literature is limited and poorly developed, let aside AH. It can be claimed that this research could be one of the few systematic studies that were undertaken to improve the potential of PIN for heritage resources by using such approaches.

➢ New definitions are proposed for the concept of PIN and archaeotourism (see Chapter Three) which were basically developed for the interest of this research to add new dimensions and expand the available meanings of these two terms in the academic and professional senses. For instance, both definitions are not merely focused on the physical features of a single particular site, but they include the associated intangible heritage and the wider cultural landscape. Also, the study has assisted in the development and the establishment of such concepts as ‘sustainable PIN’, ‘senseless and sensible PIN’, ‘Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation’ and ‘community PIN’ in regard to historical and archaeological monuments by referring to practical examples from Oman.
ICPI model (Figure 8.6) is a contribution to PIN studies, especially those relative to AH. Here, the model provides an operational definition rather than merely conceptual for the concept of ‘holistic interpretation’ (Beck and Cable 2002: 47). It confirmed and added to the theoretical perspectives relative to PIN planning models, e.g. the whole person, the whole context. For instance, based on the empirical findings, the model shows the importance of considering both the micro-context and macro-context of the interpreted site. Therefore, a whole context in archaeological site interpretation means presenting the site as a whole entity rather than separated parts or objects and in relation to its wider cultural landscape. This emphasized the important of adopting hermeneutic perspectives in PIN of AH. Also, this research confirmed the significance of holistic approaches in communicating constructive interpretive experience and sustaining AH resources. Herein, PIN is not considered as merely a touristic service, but as a critical tool for developing visitors’ experience, the host community, site management and the interpreted sites. Also, ICPI illustrates the importance of using recursive dynamic approaches in planning, managing and evaluating holistic PIN instead of linear one.

While the visitors represent the focal point of most interpretive approaches, in ICPI the micro-impact of PIN is highly considered. These two elements are interdependent; one can not be separated from the other. In this sense, interpreting AH should not be designed to convey a particular message to visitors only, but to strength the community archaeology and empower community PIN.
The importance of community PIN for heritage attractions, especially in regard to archaeological attractions, has not been researched adequately, in particular in developing countries. Accordingly, the research described how a particular community can become an active stakeholder in interpreting AH within its vicinity and consequently it develops more awareness about sustainable PIN and AH values, including archaeotourism.

The interrelationship between SCC and PIN has received less attention in the current literature in general. Thus, this study provides a new insight to those scholars and professionals who are interested in developing PIN (professionally and theoretically) and confirms the influential strength of SCC and its potential to be either a constructive and/or destructive force in PIN, especially in developing countries.

10.4.2 Methodological Perspectives

This research can be considered as the first of its kind that is conducted on a large scale in Oman in regard to PIN of AH. There is no previous in-depth research in regard to heritage PIN in general or archaeotourism in particular, especially with the framework of socio-cultural perspectives. This research provides insight for the significance of considering holistic approaches when studying PIN of heritage resources; herein the phenomenon is studied in relation to its micro and macro contexts in which it is existed following in this the hermeneutics viewpoints.

There is limited research which refers to the significance of applying constructivist perspectives in regard to PIN of AH. For instance, the linkage
between SCC factors in constructing the interpretive experience of visitors has been barely explored. Similarly, this can be said about the influence of PC factors and their connection to the personal experience of visitors. Also, the used methods in this study have aimed at exploring the controversial issues in PIN of AH, practically in their contexts, and utilized this for the benefit of producing balanced perspectives amongst different stakeholders. For instance, the reconstruction of tomb 401 at Bat (Section 9.2.1). Also, instead of excluding the alternative interpretations for AH inherited by local communities as at Shir (Section 9.2.5.1), their inclusion can bring benefits for all stakeholders, including hosts and guests. Besides, both constructivist and constructionist perspectives were highly considered in ICPI as this has been discussed in chapters eight and nine.

- The use of case study approach and various sources of evidence in understanding PIN of AH in Oman represents a compelling practical example for the importance of using such methodology in deepening and widening the knowledge about a particular phenomenon as discussed in Section 4.3. This has been underpinned by applying the ‘criterion sampling’ technique which ‘can add an important qualitative component to a management information system or an ongoing program monitoring system’ (Patton 1990: 177).

- Also, and as discussed in Section 4.4.3, this study represents an example for what is known as the applicability of ‘analytic generalization’ used in case study method (Yin 2003: 32) where the selected units of analysis (archaeological sites) represent and provide clear evidence for the current general status of PIN at

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374 For instance, the consideration of these alternative interpretations helps in communicating a ‘whole context’ to the audience.
archaeological sites in Oman. Again, this has been supported by using criterion and opportunistic sites discussed in Section 4.4.2. The gathered evidence from a particular unit of analysis presents similar findings where one issue can be repeatedly seen in more than one site.

10.4.3. Practical Perspectives

- The findings in chapters five, six and seven emphasized the critical meaning of considering three main factors, i.e. PC, SSC, and SCC, in any PIN for AH as it is the case in Oman. As these contexts are strongly interlinked to one another, they should be addressed holistically through integrative approaches. The different issues discussed in regard to these factors could become a directive and source of evidence for some of the major issues in AH management, archaeotourism and heritage PIN in Oman. Also, they could work as incentives to consider the application of new approaches in AH management and development and the heritage tourism in general. Certainly, there could be other understudied factors which are not covered in detail in this study; however, the gathered data and pictures can be archived for further research as one of the advantage for case study is that it ‘provides a data source from which further analysis can be made’ (Blaxter et al. 2006: 74).

- The study and its findings can be linked to action and their insights contribute to changing practices which is another advantage for the case study approach (Blaxter et al. 2006). To explain, this study provides some direction and reference to those who are dealing with heritage attractions and PIN industry in order to better realize the value of integrative approaches in heritage PIN in
communicating the myriad values mentioned in Chapter Three and creating a competitive destination without threatening the sustainability of touristic attractions. Also, it makes them more mindful about the critical significance of considering SCC and community participation during the Audit and Integration processes before moving to the next stage, Planning and Themeing (Figure 8.6). By so doing, the long-term objectives for Oman’s Economy in regard to the tourism sector could become more achievable (see Section 2.8), especially that ICPI encourages phased PIN when needed which is another practical aspect, i.e. managerial realities are counted.

- This study emphasizes the importance of specialization in designing PIN at archaeological sites instead of total dependency on generic imported and expert-led practices from different contexts; a special consideration must be given to both the interpreted subject/object and its micro and macro contexts.

- Using the Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation technique to design thematic interpretive programs that are capable to interlink both the core and peripheral heritage resources is one practical contribution to PIN of AH in particular, especially in a country with rich living AH such as Oman. This is important, where the majority of archaeological sites are located in rural and mountainous remote areas where the physical context within and around these sites represents a source of threat for their sustainability.

- Also, this study tells those people responsible for heritage PIN in Oman that considering the use of a constructive approach in interpreting archaeological sites, as confirmed by this research, is by far better than applying positivistic
approach in shaping the knowledge of visitors and communicating a mindful interpretive experience\textsuperscript{375}.

- The research findings confirmed the critical need for the development of new policies and directives in regard to AH management and heritage tourism, especially during this establishment phase of the tourism industry in Oman. Creating a new operational strategy to enforce the practical implementation and enforcement of these policies is important as well.

- This study has called for building a practical collaborative partnership amongst the major stakeholders of AH which should be a primary goal as working in isolation will neither serve the long-term objective for the heritage tourism in Oman, nor will it sustain the irreplaceable archaeological resources. This is vital due to the growing interest in heritage resources in Oman; if not their integrity and their interpretation might be compromised for short-term economic benefits (see Section 3.4).

- The study has concluded that in practical sense there are three main interconnected channels where PIN could play a major role in communicating the values of AH to the public; they are: formal education; the media; and public archaeology.

- The study expands the understanding about the critical role of PIN in sustaining AH. The recognition and application of this fact is important for SSC as this repeatedly confirmed by the findings, e.g. community PIN.

\textsuperscript{375} Unfortunately, the latter approach has been used continuously even at the renovated Omani Museum and the newly-established museum in al-Balid as this confirmed by the field visits in September 2007.
10.5. LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This thesis has limitations which simultaneously can be considered as directions and opportunities for further research in the future. These limitations can be summarized in the following points:

- The study area has been limited to AH in Oman due to time, distance and funding constraints. PIN of AH in some of the neighbouring countries, such as Egypt and Jordan, is relatively more developed (Shunnaq et al. 2008). Thus, comparing and studying the current status of PIN for AH at these countries would enrich this kind of research and add insight to our understanding of heritage PIN in the Arab countries, e.g. the application of integrative approaches in interpreting AH to the public. Also, conducting comparative studies with those countries that have a shared history with Oman, such as U.A.E (e.g. Magan culture), would help in strengthening collaborative practical and theoretical research in regard to PIN. Consequently, this could provide more holistic perspectives for the key issues facing PIN of heritage resources in the region. Also, this would amplify the expected values (i.e. socio-economic, educational, and recreational) from PIN in micro and macro sense.

- Although the study referred to other heritage resources that are strongly interlinked to the selected archaeological sites and AH in general, such as Wadi Dawkah, the turtle reserve and historical quarters, however, these resources need to be investigated systematically in depth as these represents main attractions for

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376 Denscombe (1998: 39) argues that the physical, social and historical boundaries are major effective elements in case study approach which refers to the exclusion of factors that occur outside the boundaries which could ‘have genuine impact on activities, processes and relationship within the case study’; they also include the ‘difficulty in dealing with those occasions when outside factors temporarily intrude on the zone of the research’.

377 Both Oman and U.A.E are members of the GCC.
both the Omani and foreign visitors. Also, their integration in PIN plans will require further empirical oriented research. The criterion sites selected for this study and the methods used in collecting the required data could work as guidelines for these research.

- Accessibility to some archaeological sites could be another constraint where the researcher faced difficulties in accessing at least on of the selected sites, Shir, due to its remote and mountainous location.

- Another limitation is the local community actual participation in PIN, community PIN, needs to be more explored in regard to its application in PIN of AH. For instance, this would shed light on what would be most important to people and most resistant to change if interpretive programs were to be designed at a particular site.

- Similarly, although the research findings demonstrate the limited involvement of the private sector in interpreting AH in Oman and the several reasons behind this, further research should be carried out, knowing that the government considers this sector as one of the key players, if not the most important one, in developing and managing the tourism industry in Oman in the long-term, including heritage attractions.

- As appeared from this study, the limited role of education sector and the media in communicating AH values via various interpretive media could become the key reason behind the current status of PIN for AH in Oman. Thus, in-depth research are urgently required if these two sectors are meant to become active tools in using PIN methods to communicate, appreciate and protect
archaeological sites in Oman and simultaneously developing PIN as a profession and as a discipline in practical and theoretical sense.

- Although, this study describes the applicability and practicality of the proposed ICPI model and the *Thematic Chronological-Spatial Interpretation* technique in communicating the values of AH in Oman, their evaluation requires empirical, team-work and problem-oriented research. It should be realized that ICPI is part of the solution in the wider macro-context in which PIN and archaeotourism is situated.

As this can be considered as a catalytic prelude study to PIN and heritage-based tourism in Oman, it is suggested that further research is needed in such aspects as:

- **The unique interpretive elements in Omani heritage**, e.g. frankincense, copper. For instance, maritime archaeology is of a national significance for the history of Oman as AH evidences to this via Magan culture remains, yet, there is no particular research on how this heritage can be utilized in heritage tourism through interpretive provision. One reason for this might be the difficulties in accessing the related sites in comparison to the dry land sites.\(^{378}\)

- **Approaches to heritage PIN for school and higher education in Oman.** As this has been one of the utmost pressing points mentioned by the research findings, therefore, it is vital to conduct systematic research in regard to this subject instead of applying previous practices which might be unsuitable for the Omani context and its educational system.

\(^{378}\) In fact, although maritime archaeology and underwater archaeology represent major part of archaeology all over the world, yet, there is a shortcoming in research relative to its interpretation to the public (e.g. Aiello 1998, Jameson and Scott-Ireton 2007).
PIN and branding Oman as a cultural heritage destination. As Oman is at the early stage of branding its touristic products, including heritage resources, it is important that MOT conducts oriented-research towards this subject to improve the quality of the total tourism chain.

As Omani government is interested in niche tourism, it would be important to conduct field-research on the role of PIN in increasing niche markets in Oman.

Dissonant PIN and AH where, for instance, in-depth studies concerning the impact of SCC on PIN for AH resources in particular, can be of a special interest for those countries where this aspect represents a driving factor in some regions such as the Middle Eastern and Islamic countries.

The concept of sustainable PIN and heritage attractions management where so far, there is more theoretical research than practical on the application of sustainability concept in interpreting heritage resources to the public.

The development of research methods relative to the concept and role of community-based research in heritage PIN is a critical element in accomplishing sustainable heritage tourism and various benefits to both the interpreted heritage and the involved stakeholders.

10.6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is hoped that this research provides an insight about PIN for one of the understudied heritage resources, AH, especially in developing countries. Also, although the major aim of this study is to fill a particular gap in the social sciences, yet the research findings could practically help the stewardship of AH in many other countries, specifically with similar problems in PIN, to adopt integrative approaches in addressing
these problems. Certainly, the unique contexts of these countries need to be seriously
and carefully considered in interpretive planning.

It is very important to bear in mind that this research does not claim that it has presented
an exhaustive detailed discussion for all aspects of the researched subject as ‘the search
for the whole is hard work’ (Tilden 1977: 40). Thus, new methods and tools are
expected to shed light on many other issues and enable a better understanding in the
future. Besides, like in other social sciences research, there can not be one objective
final conclusion for a particular enquiry.

Professionalism in PIN is highly required as PIN has become more complex, integrated
with different sectors, and multi-disciplinary oriented. Therefore, specialists in PIN of
AH are critically needed and must be trained properly. It is hoped that the newly-
established international organization, ICIP, will provide the technical and financial
assistance to its state members in accomplishing this mission, especially in less
developed countries. ICIP organization should be reminded to consider the ‘specific’ or
‘idiographic’ issues for each state member as possible. In line with this, the role of PIN
as a cross-cultural communicator should be strengthen and supported. It is one effective
way to deepen the understanding of tourists for the heritage of a particular area in the
world and its universal concepts. Therefore, it is a global responsibility.
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APPENDICES
## Appendix One: The Criterion and Opportunistic Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion Sites</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>al-Maysar</strong></td>
<td>A mining and smelting settlement in Wadi Samad, al-Sharqiyah region, dated to the late third millennium B.C. It was excavated by a German team in the 1980s. Although the building remains of the eastern part of the settlements have suffered from erosion by the water stream of Wadi Samad, the preserved settlement remains extend over 200 x 70 m. Archaeological excavations revealed structural remains made of mud-brick and stones, soap stones vessels, pottery, furnaces, copper ingots and seals (Weisgerber 1983: 1992).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bahla Fort</strong></td>
<td>Located in Bahla Oasis, al-Dhakhliyah region, it is the first Omani sites to be included in the World Heritage List in 1987 due to its reflection for the military architecture in its different periods of occupation. Also, it contains impressive Islamic decorative elements in plaster and wood. The fort was built on an earth mound within the city ancient wall (ca. 13 km long) and is surrounded by cultivated lands, date palms, and historic monuments such as the old market, the Grand Mosque and the old quarters of the town, <em>harat</em>. The fort is triangular walled complex (ca. 200m square). The main features of the fort are the gate corridors, al-Qasabah (the oldest part), the houses in its south-eastern and south-western parts, defensive towers and the public buildings (al-Busaidi 2004). In addition to the Islamic remains, there are some pre-Islamic parts as well. In cooperation with Moroccan team and other international experts, MOHC started the restoration of the fort and other affiliated sites, such as the Grand Mosque, in 1993. In 2001, MOHC signed an agreement with W.S. Atkins, a British company, to prepare heritage management plan for the whole Oasis in which the fort is located. There were different archaeological excavations carried out by French and German archaeologists which unearthed remains belonging to different historical eras, e.g. soft stone vessels, local pottery sherds and Chinese porcelain. Yet, there is a lack of systematic research and many gaps in our understanding of the sequence of historical events (MOHC 2004) (see also <a href="http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/433">http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/433</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bat, al-Ayn, al-Khatam</strong></td>
<td>Bat together with al-Ayn tombs and al-Khatam tower were inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1988. Its importance comes from its location on the ancient trade routes. The main site Bat was excavated by Danish expedition in the 1970s and later in 2005 by German-Omani team which carried out restoration for 1145 and reconstruction for tomb 401 (Weisgerber 2005). Basically, there are five main towers, necropolis, and settlements. The necropolis consists of a large number of beehive tombs, Hafit types and Umm an-Nar types, dated to the third millennium B.C. The tower 1145, which is located south of the</td>
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necropolis, is the most distinguished tower; it is about 20 m in diameter and about 6-8 m high. It was built of limestone blocks with a well in the centre. In addition to these remains, archaeologists unearthed ancient canals, human skeletons, pottery pots, soft stone and bronze vessels, copper artefacts, daggers, arrowheads and cylinder seal (Frifelt 1976, 1985, Weisgerber 2005) (Also, see [http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/434](http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/434)).

**The Land of Frankincense Sites**

A group of sites located in Dhofar region and consists of four main sites: the ancient port of Khor Rori; al-Balid; Wadi Dawkah; and Shisur Wubar. These sites were inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2000, because they are evidence of the ancient frankincense and incense trade ([see http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1010](http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1010)). They are located in an area renown for cultivating the frankincense trees as in Wadi Dawkah. Khor Rori, excavated by American and Italian experts, was a main port during the pre-Islamic period from which frankincense was exported (Avanzini 2002). Shisur Wubar, excavated in the early 1990s, is an inland centre from which frankincense was exported by caravans to other parts of Arabia and Syria. The excavations unearthed fortress remains, pottery, glass and frankincense-related wares. These remains are dated by archaeologists to the first century B.C and early and middle-Islamic periods (Zarins 2001, MOHC 2003). As for al-Balid, the site was surrounded by an ancient wall and fortified with water trenches, several gates and six towers. The excavations revealed that al-Balid was an active medieval centre that had contacts with ports in China, India, East Africa, Yemen, Iraq and Europe. Incense and frankincense were its main exports. Several findings were revealed such as The Grand Mosque with 114 columns, pottery, porcelain and coins (Zarins 2001, MOHC 2003).

**Ras al-Jinz**

Located in Ras al-Jinz Turtle Reserve, 11 km to the south of Ras al-Hadd, al-Sharqiyah region, that marks the eastern extremity of the Arabian Peninsula. It has been excavated by a French-Italian team since 1980s. Groups of prehistoric settlements and related burials cairns suggest continuity of occupation from Early Holocene times to the Iron Age. The archaeological evidence made clear that the economic bases of earlier settlement were not much different from the present ones, fishing and seafaring trade. Ras al-Jinz2 has produced some of the most important archaeological findings in Oman that confirm the ancient international contacts between ancient Oman and other civilizations in Indus Valley and Mesopotamia. Some of these findings are mud-brick buildings, Harappan painted jars, Indus inscriptions, chlorite vessels, copper objects (e.g. rings, pins, fish-hooks), stamp seals, ivory comb, incense burner, copper necklace and bitumen (Cleuziou and Tosi 2000).

**Shir Tombs**

This site, which was briefly studies by a German team in 1995, is located in al-Qabil, al-Sharqiyah region. Shir tombs lie on the rounded mountain crest some 1700 m above sea level. At Shir, different types of tombs can be observed such as conical tower and igloo-shaped towers.
These tombs differ in size, height and manner of construction (e.g. they may have single or double wall construction). The towers are positioned in rows and their entrances face approximately east. The largest are preserved to a height of over 7 m. In their form and manner of building the towers are most closely related to the so-called beehive tombs of the Hafit Period, early 3rd millennium B.C. They have a single small burial chamber and stand to a height of 3 m. Approximately, the chronology of these tombs extends from the second half of the third millennium B.C to Iron Age and probably pre-Islamic periods. The archaeological objects were mostly Early Iron Age potsherds (Yule and Weisgerber 1998).

<table>
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<th>Opportunistic Sites</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Arja</strong></td>
<td>A copper mining and smelting settlement, located in Sohar, al-Batinah region, surveyed and excavated by different archaeologists, especially German archaeometallurgists. Arja is located in rich copper deposits in Wadi al-Jizzi where there is a number of slag heaps, mines, remains of furnaces, irrigation canals, settlements, copper ingots and potsherds dated to different periods, especially the Islamic period. Nearby Arja, a large prehistoric early smelting settlement has been discovered where stone circle, jasper tools and flakes cover its surface as well as potsherds from later periods (Costa, 1978, Weisgerber 1978b). Without excavations, little more can be said about these significant sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bausher</strong></td>
<td>Located in Bausher area, in Muscat region, excavated by different archaeologists since 1979, (Costa et al. 1999). Bausher is an example for a living examples of traditional life preserved within the capital area and supported by the availability of natural resources and security. Due to its strategic location, Bausher area was a major point on the old caravan routes. In addition to the historic buildings, such as forts, castles, irrigation canals and old quarters, there are different ancient settlements and numerous stone tombs possibly ranging from the third millennium B.C to the first millennium B.C. Archaeological excavations unearthed various objects such as human remains, soft stones, pottery, beads, swords. one of the most famous archaeological features of archaeology at Bausher is the Honeycomb Cemetery, located in the middle of Wadi Bausher; which is formed of large wadi boulders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qalhat City</strong></td>
<td>Located in Qalhat in Sur, al-Sharqiyah region. This Islamic seaport is situated on a small triangular coastal shelf overlooking the Arabian Sea. Qalhat’s position on the main sea route from India to Persia and the Gulf and the possibility of year-long sailing on the monsoon winds from Qalhat to and from India are the city’s defining characteristics (Bhacker and Bhacker 2004). Some of its main features are Bibi Maryam mausoleum (14th century AD), water...</td>
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cisterns, tombs with inscribed gravestones, *hammam* and the Great Mosque. Also, fragments of Islamic glass, pottery, coins and Chinese porcelain can be easily found all over the city. Since no systematic archaeological excavations have yet been carried out, thus the history of Qalhat is poorly documented which makes it difficult to reconcile the wealth significance of the city. Qalhat appears in the 13th-16th centuries AD in the accounts of foreign travellers and the Portuguese conquistadors as a bustling, cosmopolitan seaport at the centre of Indian Ocean monsoon trade and Arabian capital of the Hurmuz dynasty (Bhacker and Bhacker 2004) One of the best historical accounts about Qalhat was written by Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Battuta, a famous Moroccan traveler from the 14th AD, who talked about the city when it was ruled by former rulers from Hurmuz (see al-Zadjali 1997, Bhacker and Bhacker 2004, Costa 2004).

| **Shenah** | Shenah, located in al-Qabil in al-Batinah region, is an area of high biological, geological, archaeological and cultural diversity. In regard to its archaeology it is mainly composed of a great number of limestone beehive tombs, similar to those found in Bat and petroglyphs. Two techniques were used to make Shenah petroglyphs which are pecking and chiselling. Most images are zoomorphs, e.g. sheep, leopard, camel, gazelle, ibex and horse (Insall 1999). |
| **Sohar Fort** | The fort is located in Sohar city, al-Batinah region. It was excavated by French team in the 1980s in order to provide guidelines for its restoration which started in 1992. The excavations uncovered some structures from the 14th century AD and also the level of the city prior to the building of the fort. The final results of these excavations were a division of the history of Sohar Fort into twelve levels of cultural phases extend between the 2nd century AD and 17 century AD. The archaeological findings include coins, glass bottles, ceramic and porcelain (MOHC 1996, Kervran 2004). |
| **Tawi Ubaylah** | A copper mining and smelting settlement located in Mahadah area, al-Dhahirah region. Here, there are Bronze Age, Iron Age and Early Islamic slag and other installations, but there was never a survey in the vicinity and surroundings for tombs, settlements and forts (Gerd Weisgerber: personal communication: 14/April/2006). Some of the most observable archaeological features are building remains, roasting pits, sherds of pottery, hammer stones. |
Appendix Two: Field Visit Form

Public Interpretation of Archaeological Heritage and Archaeotourism in Oman
Field Visit Form

- Section One

The Site Name:  Code Ref.:

Location:

Date of Visit:

Group:

Section Two: Notes and Comments
Appendix Three: An Expert Survey Form

Public Interpretation of Archaeological Heritage and Archaeotourism in Oman
A survey of experts in archaeological interpretation for the public

The Aim:

The public interpretation refers to the presentation of archaeological sites and findings to the non-specialists such as tourists, school parties and local communities through various interpretive media such as guided trails, tours guides, on-site exhibition, audio/video tours and panels. The focus of this research is the critical issue of archaeological site interpretation to the public in the Sultanate of Oman. Interpretation is considered essential to the achievement of a myriad of values, including educational, economic, social and cultural values. One major aim for public interpretation is to enliven archaeological sites, as well as sustaining their environment for present and future generations.

I have specially selected archaeological interpretation experts and I hope you will be willing to complete the survey. The survey comprises open-ended questions that should enable you to provide as much detail as you feel you want to in your responses. I would like to thank you for your valuable concern and your help in advance. I should mention that all information that you provide is confidential and used for this research only. Please let me know if you have any queries in relation to this survey.

Thank you for your help.

Yaqoub Al-Busaidi
PhD. Candidate
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff
E-Mail: albusaidi55@yahoo.com or yabusa@squ.edu.om

- Section One: Personal Details:

Name: Position:
Institution: Specialty:
Nationality (optional):

Section Two: Fieldwork experience in the Sultanate of Oman (Please move to the Section Three if you do not have fieldwork experience in the Sultanate of Oman).
2.1. From your fieldwork experience in the Sultanate of Oman:
(a). What fieldwork experience do you have in the Sultanate of Oman?

(b). What do you think of the location and accessibility of your site?

(c). How about the archaeological significance and scale of excavation?

(d). What are the opportunities for generating income from visitors to your ongoing dig or after?

(e). What ways would you think of to provide more specialist services for specialist groups?

(f). What sources of practical help and financial support would you recommend for the site interpretation?

(g). How about promoting the site and working with the media?

(h). Please comment on the public reaction, curiosity, and involvement in your excavation.

(i). What about the recreational pattern in the area – is it in an area which is popular with tourists, or day visitors interested in heritage or is it an area which has only local residents?

(j). In regard to the duration – is the site opened for a short-term, seasonal, or year-round and on going?

(k). In relation to the site, do you think that on-site interpretation is of interest of further education class or community?

(l). Do you think that the sites are adequately promoted?

- Section Three: Interpretation Methods

3.1. What do you think of the following interpretation methods for archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman:

(a). Experimental archaeology (on site/off site).

(b). Site reconstructions/construction (on site/off site).

- Section Four: Public Interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman

4.1. Is public interpretation important for archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman? Why?

4.2. Do you think that the past is presented properly to the public through on-site/in situ interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?

4.3. Do you think that the past is presented properly to the public through off-site interpretation such as museums, exhibitions, and public media?
4.4. How would you describe the current public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman?

4.5. From your experience, would you say that the general public is interested in archaeology in the Sultanate of Oman?

4.6. From your point of view, what are the main constraints/ issues that face public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman? Are there any examples you would like to provide?

4.7. In your opinion, what are the most important steps needed to develop public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman?

4.8. How would you describe the role of public interpretation in archaeological sites sustainability?

4.9. What would you suggest are good examples of on-site interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?

4.10. What would you think are bad examples of on-site interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?

4.11. Are there any examples of sites which are currently not interpreted, but you think should be interpreted as a high priority? Why?

4.12. Are there some sites which you do think should NOT be interpreted in the Sultanate of Oman?

4.13. In your opinion, is it important to have public interpretation for archaeological sites in every region or local area in the Sultanate of Oman? Why?

4.14. Which interpretive methods would you recommend for remote sites?

4.15. How do you see the relationship between the public interpretation and education in the Sultanate of Oman?

4.16. In the Sultanate of Oman, how do you see the connection between the public interpretation and archaeological tourism, in particular what are the main:

a). **Strengths** of interpreting archaeological sites to the tourists;

b). **Weaknesses** of interpreting archaeological sites to the tourists;

c). **Opportunities** of interpreting archaeological sites to the tourists; and

d). **Threats** of interpreting archaeological sites to the tourists.

**Section Five: Recommendations**

5.1. Are there any themes that would you like to be developed through archaeological sites; e.g. copper mining trails, caravan trails?
5.2. What recommendations would you make in relation to archaeological site development in relation to the public interpretation (e.g. facilities, security, staff, registration)?

5.3. Are you aware of any studies or documents related to the topic of public interpretation in relation to the Sultanate of Oman or United Arab Emirates?

5.4. Is there anything else which you would like to tell me about in relation to public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman?

Once again, thank you very much for your participation in this project. Your support is highly appreciated. Please let me know if you would like to receive a copy of my analysis of the findings.
Appendix Four: Interviews

Appendix 4.A: Structured Interview

Public Interpretation of Archaeological Heritage and Archaeotourism in Oman

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The Aim:
The public interpretation refers to the presentation of archaeological sites and findings to the non-specialists such as tourists, school parties and local communities through various interpretive media such as guided trails, tours guides, on-site exhibition, audio/video tours and panels. The focus of this research is the critical issue of archaeological site interpretation to the public in the Sultanate of Oman. Interpretation is considered essential to the achievement of a myriad of values, including educational, economic, social and cultural values. One major aim for public interpretation is to enliven archaeological sites, as well as sustaining their environment for present and future generations.

I have specially selected archaeological interpretation experts and I hope you will be willing to complete the survey. The survey comprises open-ended questions that should enable you to provide as much detail as you feel you want to in your responses. I would like to thank you for your valuable concern and your help in advance. I should mention that all information that you provide is confidential and used for this research only. Please let me know if you have any queries in relation to this survey.

Thank you for your help.

Yaqoub Al-Busaidi
PhD. Candidate
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff
E-Mail: albusaidi55@yahoo.com or yabusaid@squ.edu.om

- Section One: Personal Details:

Name: Position:

Institution: Specialty:

Nationality (optional):

Section Two: Fieldwork experience in the Sultanate of Oman (Please move to the Section Three if you do not have fieldwork experience in the Sultanate of Oman).
2- From your fieldwork experience in the Sultanate of Oman:

2.1. What fieldwork experience do you have in the Sultanate of Oman?
- Two seasons at the site of Manal, Sultan Qaboos University Expedition;
- Ras al-Hadd and Ras al-Jinz – French-Italian expedition;
- Bawshar, Ministry of Heritage and Culture;
- Bandar al-Jassah, project supervisor;
- Wadi Indam;
- Qarat Kibrit
- Architecture research.

2.2. What do you think of the location and accessibility of your site?
All sites are easy to be reached, the main roads are asphalted.
Promotion is missing.

2.3. How about the archaeological significance and scale of excavation?
Ras al-Jinz and Ras al-Hadd are very important for archaeologists because they provide evidence from several periods from the third millennium B.C- the first millennium B.C.

The site of Ras al-Jinz is located inside the Turtle Sanctuary which is a national environmental park.

The site of Manal is dated to the second and first millennium B.C. It provides us with early examples of structures during these periods.

2.4. What are the opportunities for generating income from visitors to your ongoing dig or after?
From my experience, I noticed that many tourists visit the sites. These sites represent one of the main resources for tourists to learn about the history of Oman. For example, Ras al-Jinz and Ras al-Hadd are typical sites for this. In addition to the archaeological sites, there are also the green-back turtles. These coastal sites are typical for tourism because they provide both natural and cultural attractions.

Manal is a good touristic site, but it needs development. It is only ca. 100 km from Muscat. I suggest an open air museum that displays the site and the life-style of the inhabitants.

2.5. What ways would you think of to provide more specialist services for specialist groups?
They could be good examples to create experimental archaeology.

2.6. What sources of practical help and financial support would you recommend for the site interpretation?
There are two main things; technical support and promotional work. The technical side includes preparing the sites for visitors without compromising their integrity. After doing this, the role of promotion comes as an important part to attract visitors.
The financial support could involve different participants. In addition to the governmental support, private sectors, international institutions, and societies must be involved in the development plan. It is possible that the Ministry of Tourism creates promotional exhibitions for these sites. The project of Bausher is one of the main projects that the Omani Historical Association is planning to do. The project aims at creating databases about archaeology and the living heritage of Bausher area in order to use them for future planning. This will be done in coordination with the Ministry of Heritage and Culture, The Ministry of Housing, and Muscat Municipality. One main goal of the project is to see the possibility of developing some archaeological sites in the area. There will be a web site about the project contains various information about the area. The supervision board will include different experts from Bait Zubair Museum, Sultan Qaboos University, Ministry of Heritage and Culture and others.

2.7. How about promoting the site and working with the media?
There was no promotion at all. What you see is only repeated old pictures/out of date from the 80s, and inappropriate presentation and interpretation. The role of the media in raising the public awareness of archaeology and promotion is not available.

2.8. Please comment on the public reaction, curiosity, and involvement in your excavation.
Omani people are always interested and curious to know about archaeology. Archaeology, as a discipline, is not a common mainstream in Oman. From my experience, I think people are eager to learn history through archaeology. At all sites, Manal, Ras, al-Jinz and Wadi Indam I noticed that people were very interested.

I do encourage people to be involved in archaeological excavation. This was one of my ideas at the Paleolithic site of Qarat Kibrit in Adam. I invited school students to visit us while we were doing archaeology.

2.9. What about the recreational pattern in the area – is it in an area which is popular with tourists, or day visitors interested in heritage or is it an area which has only local residents?

Bar al-Jassah area has been already developed to attract tourists. The project is managed by Bar al- Jassah Company which is owned by al-Zubair. There is a plan to reconstruct off-site models for the ancient graves inside the ‘cultural village’ at the Bar al-Jassah Resort. The story of the site will be interpreted according to scientific documentations. The excavations at Bar al-Jassah were rescue archaeology. The only way to reach the sites was by boats; nowadays, there is a constructed road leads you directly to the planned area. The current hotels are built on the same archaeological area; the company removed all archaeological features.

2.10. In regard to the duration – is the site opened for a short-term, seasonal, or year-round and on going?
Seasonal, except for Bar al-Jassah which was year-around fieldwork.
2.11. In relation to the site, do you think that on-site interpretation is of interest of further education class?
For sure it is; however, the investment of archaeological sites in education is very limited. The situation in Bahrain and the Emirates is better off.

2.12. In relation to the site, do you think that on-site interpretation is of interest for the local community?
Certainly, it is important. Always the local community benefits from any developing projects. If we prepare archaeological sites for visitors, the local income will increase. In addition to the economic values, there are also educational.

2.13. Do you think that the sites are adequately promoted?
No, they are not.

- Section Three: Interpretation Methods

3- What do you think of the following interpretation methods for archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman:

3.1. Experimental archaeology (on site/off site).
It will be great if we could benefit from experimental archaeology in interpretation within museums as in the Emirates, e.g. seafaring life-style. It is a good promotional tool. I recommend preparing conferences, workshops, programs and activities in order to benefit from experimental archaeology.

As a topic, I suggest to experience caravan trails by using archaeological sites and materials. For example, tourists may experience the ancient trails from Bat to al-Mysar. A joining exhibition is also recommended.

3.2. Site reconstructions/construction (on site/off site).
I think it depends on the type of site, its condition, and its developing plan. At the site of Ras al-Jinz, there are Umm Nar graves. By comparing similar graves from the same period we might be able to reconstruct some of the graves within the site.

- Section Four: Public Interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman

4.1. Is public interpretation important for archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman? Why?
For sure, because we need it and for the moment there are no interpreted sites.

4.2. Do you think that the past is presented properly to the public through on-site/in situ interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?
Not developed.

4.3. Do you think that the past is presented properly to the public through off-site interpretation such as museums, exhibitions, and public media?
Not existed.
4.4. How would you describe the current public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman?

Very weak.

4.5 From your experience, would you say that the general public is interested in archaeology in the Sultanate of Oman?

Sure they are; however, the problem is that archaeology is not a common discipline among Omanis except for few people who have heard of Magan, but they haven’t experience it in physical sense.

4.6. From your point of view, what are the main constraints/ issues that face public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman? Are there any examples you would like to provide?

a. -There are no national specialists, except for a limited number from the mid 90s. There is increasing awareness among Omani archaeologists.

b. There is no financial support. People who are in charge do not consider archaeology as a priority, and as essential resource for Omani heritage. From my research experience in Adam in the vernacular architecture, the Municipality of Adam destroyed many historical quarters in order to build modern structures. People who are in charge have no idea about the Royal Decree of NHPL1980.

c- Archaeologists are not involved in developing committees.

d- Archaeological sites restoration and sustainability are not a priority.

4.17. In your opinion, what are the most important steps needed to develop public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman?

Employing Omani archaeologists and training them properly.

Outreaching programs to the public.

Promotional programs and activities in relation to archaeological tourism.

4.18. How would you describe the role of public interpretation in archaeological sites sustainability?

The current situation shows that visitors pick up some archaeological materials from archaeological sites. One main reason for this is that there is no awareness because there is no interpretation. Interpretation must be done carefully and we have to set regulation for visitors.

Interpreting and promoting an archaeological site does not necessarily mean protection, it could be the opposite. So it is important to guide people and manage their visits properly to ensure the safety of the presented sites, especially fragile areas.

Interpretation must play a dual role in every site; promotion and protection. Visiting policies are important.
4.19. What would you suggest are good examples of on-site interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?

Al-Balid, Ras al-Hadd, Ras al-Jinz, Ras al-Hamra, Wadi Indam

4.20. What would you think are bad examples of on-site interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?

As an archaeologist, I can not consider any site as a bad example.

4.21. Are there any examples of sites which are currently not interpreted, but you think should be interpreted as a high priority? Why?

Wadi Indam is a very good example and new excavated sites. There are a lot of excavated materials. The accessibility to the site is little bit difficult, but this problem can be easily overcome.

Bar al-Jassah is a practical example since the area has already been developed. I recommend also the site of Ras al-Jinz.

4.22. Are there some sites which you do think should NOT be interpreted in the Sultanate of Oman?

Qalhat, is a very important site, but we should not do any interpretation until we conduct a systematic archaeological fieldworks. Our current knowledge is very little. The previous archaeological works were done by non-specialists unfortunately. The Jew cemetery must be interpreted; it is part of Oman’s history.

4.23. In your opinion, is it important to have public interpretation for archaeological sites in every region or local area in the Sultanate of Oman? Why?

It is very important. I think archaeological works should be divided equally and systematically among all areas in Oman instead of concentrating in few sites. I prefer that each Wilayat develops its own archaeological sites. At the national level, there must be priorities; some sites deserve urgent work than others because of their special situations.

4.24. Which interpretive methods would you recommend for remote sites?

For those remote sites which are located far from Muscat they must be interpreted and promoted more because tourists like to go in adventures rather than staying in the Capital. Some remote sites must not be interpreted at all for tourists.

4.25. Do you think that we can develop archaeological tourism in the Sultanate of Oman?

There is no doubt about it. Oman is very rich archaeologically. Many archaeological sites are located in developed and attractive areas; many of them can be positively promoted.
- Section Five: Recommendations

5.1. Are there any themes that would you like to be developed through archaeological sites; e.g. copper mining trails, caravan trails?

As I mentioned before that people hear and read about Magan, but they haven’t experienced it through off site or on-site interpretations. I suggest documentary films, TV shows and other media. Also, it can be interpreted through various archaeological sites in both inland and coastal areas. This is in addition to the presentation and interpretation of the role of Magan in the ancient world.

5.2. What recommendations would you make in relation to archaeological site development in relation to the public interpretation (e.g. facilities, security, staff, registration)?

Creating systematic archaeological databases for all sites in Oman is very essential in any developing plan. Archaeological sites should be linked to other development plans. For example, at the site of Bawshar, our plan first is to create databases systematically. As I said, these databases contain all information about the site, archaeology, environment, geology, ethnography, and so on.

The Ministry of Heritage and Culture should coordinate with the Ministry of Housing in order to prevent any further misuse of those areas with archaeological sites, as well as to avoid any future conflict between the government and the public.

Promotion is very important either at the national or international level. Private sectors must play an essential role in archaeological sites development.

5.5. Are you aware of any studies or documents related to the topic of public interpretation in relation to the Sultanate of Oman or United Arab Emirates?

Not in relation to the Oman and Emirates.

5.6. Is there anything else which you would like to tell me about in relation to public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman?

I suggest that you involve the public in your research.
The Aim:
The public interpretation refers to the presentation of archaeological sites and findings
to the non-specialists such as tourists, school parties and local communities through
various interpretive media such as guided trails, tours guides, on-site exhibition,
audio/video tours and panels. The focus of this research is the critical issue of
archaeological site interpretation to the public in the Sultanate of Oman. Interpretation
is considered essential to the achievement of a myriad of values, including educational,
economic, social and cultural values. One major aim for public interpretation is to
enliven archaeological sites, as well as sustaining their environment for present and
future generations.

I have specially selected archaeological interpretation experts and I hope you will be
willing to complete the survey. The survey comprises open-ended questions that should
enable you to provide as much detail as you feel you want to in your responses. I would
like to thank you for your valuable concern and your help in advance. I should mention
that all information that you provide is confidential and used for this research only.
Please let me know if you have any queries in relation to this survey.

Thank you for your help.

Yaqoub Al-Busaidi
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University of Wales Institute, Cardiff
E-Mail: albusaidi55@yahoo.com or yabusaid@squ.edu.om

- Section One: Personal Details:

Name: Position:

Institution: Specialty:

Nationality (optional):

Section Two: Fieldwork experience in the Sultanate of Oman (Please move to the
Section Three if you do not have fieldwork experience in the Sultanate of Oman).
4. From your fieldwork experience in the Sultanate of Oman:

2.1. What fieldwork experience do you have in the Sultanate of Oman?
1- Ras al-Jinz with the French-Italian expedition;
2- Manal for two seasons;
3- al-Balid;
4- Rescue archaeological works, Bawshar, Mahlayiah in Wadi Indam (ca. 90 graves), Rijlah (Rustaq);
   Most archaeological sites that I worked at are graves;
5- I worked on the project of ‘the National Heritage List’ which aims to list and register
   significant archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman, e.g., Qalhat, Shir, Arja,
   Bawshar and many forts and castles.

2.2 What do you think of the location and accessibility of your site?
   It depends on the site.

2.3. How about the archaeological significance and scale of excavation?
   Most of my experience is based on salvage archaeology and not oriented excavations
   because we don’t receive any students as it used to be. The methodology of rescue
   archaeology is different from the oriented one in regard to work order and process.
   There are sites of a national significance such as Arja, al-Blaid and Wadi Safafir

2.4. What are the opportunities for generating income from visitors to your
ongoing dig or after?
   In order to generate income, first, there should be visible attractive features and a good
   interpretation so visitors benefit from their visit and enjoy it as much as possible. If
   there is a possibility to restore sites, this will be even better in order to make site more
   understandable and preserved. Some ancient graves at the site of Bawsher, for instance,
   can be restored, clarified and prepared for tourists.

   I recommend that large-scale sites, such as Wadi Indam and Qalhat, to be conserved,
   restored and to make them accessible, provide facilities and create some gift shops. This
   is happening at many forts and castles that are managed by the Ministry of Tourism. If
   we are not able to do so, then I suggest the building of a museum that presents various
   archaeological sites. At least, this might help in boosting archaeological tourism.
   Archaeological sites are different from forts and castles in a sense that each
   archaeological site has its own artefacts, environment and landscape, story, meanwhile,
   most forts and castles look alike.

2.5. What ways would you think of to provide more specialist services for specialist
   groups?

   For sure, I expect specialists are more knowledgeable than the average tourists. It would
   be much easier to explain archaeological process, terms and the digging techniques at
   the site for the specialists who are expected to ask in details questions about the site,
   materials, pre-excavations, during the excavations and after the excavations works. The
   average tourist would be interested in basic information about the site and
   archaeological works provided that they are presented to him/her in enjoyable ways.
2.6. What sources of practical help and financial support would you recommend for the site interpretation?
1- Private sector,
2- Financial subsidiaries in order to promote archaeological sites by the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Heritage and Culture.
3- An interdisciplinary committee includes various specialists, including archaeologists, architects, tourism experts, photographers, surveyor, etc.

2.7. How about promoting the site and working with the media?
The media was not there, except for the sites of Manal and Bawshar. The local papers exaggerated in presenting Manal, knowing that it is only a normal archaeological excavation. The papers published about Bawshar because the archaeological expedition was a joint project between the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, not because of the importance of the site. There is no continuous support for public archaeology from the media in Oman, all news about archaeological sites were momentary and for once. The case of the site of Ras al-Hamra has not been presented to the public.

2.8. Please comment on the public reaction, curiosity, and involvement in your excavation.
People were interested in helping and providing us with the best support they could give. Some of them brought pictures of archaeological sites that have not been surveyed before such as in Izki. We got a lot of people at the sites who want to see them and the new excavated materials.

On the other hand, at the site of Mahalliyah, we got some people who were thinking that we were digging for gold. Other people were against excavations because of the exhumation for some skeleton. There is no awareness. I think it is a good idea to invite people to participate in ongoing archaeological excavations in on way or another; however, we must consider archaeological sites security. The public involvement will raise their awareness about the site in particular and about archaeology in general.

2.9. What about the recreational pattern in the area – is it in an area which is popular with tourists, or day visitors interested in heritage or is it an area which has only local residents?
It depends on the location of the site. For example, Qalhat and Ras al-Hadd are two active and strategic sites where you can find natural and cultural attractions. Shir is also a great remote site to be visited. Arja is not really active or attractive for the moment.

2.10. In regard to the duration – is the site opened for a short-term, seasonal, or year-round and on going?
Short-term depending on various circumstances; for instance, the weather is a very important element in archaeological fieldworks in the Sultanate of Oman. It is really difficult to work in the summer. We did it once at the site of Rjailah in Rustaq.
2.11. In relation to the site, do you think that on-site interpretation is of interest of further education class or community?
Yes it is.

2.12. Do you think that the sites are adequately promoted?
No, I have not come across any interpreted or promoted site.

2.13. Have you been with your family, relatives, and friends to any of the archaeological sites?
No, I have not, because I don’t think that they would be interested in archaeological ruins without any interpretation, not attractive. Most archaeological sites are not for visiting, but for archaeological works.

- Section Three: Interpretation Methods

3.1. What do you think of the following interpretation methods for archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman:

1. Experimental archaeology (on site/off site).
It could be used at some archaeological sites. For example, you can design burials or funeral customs with related materials.

3.2. Site reconstructions/construction (on site/off site).
I suggest the creation of 3D digital reconstructions and natural-size models from the same materials at Bat, Qalhat and Bawshar.

- Section Four: Public Interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman

4.1. Is public interpretation important for archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman? Why?
For sure, it is important because it is difficult to understand archaeological sites without interpretation, especially for non-specialists. There must be interpretive tools. Also, it depends on visitors’ profile, i.e. age, education, purpose of visit. So, here interpretation provides the opportunities for all people to communicate with the site. Interpretation creates sense of pride and raise awareness among the public. Moreover, it is an educational tool for teachers and necessary for tourists.

4.2. Do you think that the past is presented properly to the public through on-site/in situ interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?
No, I don’t think so. The main focus is forts and castles. The history of mining in Oman is theoretically known to some extent, but it is not interpreted through physical evidence.

4.3. Do you think that the past is presented properly to the public through off-site interpretation such as museums, exhibitions, and public media?
There is no renovation. There is no national archaeological museum. Although the stores at the Ministry of Heritage and Culture are packed with archaeological materials, there are no exhibitions, temporal or permanent, to show the new excavated sites and their materials.
4.4 From your experience, would you say that the general public is interested in archaeology in the Sultanate of Oman?
Yes, they are; however, there is not much available to learn about archaeology or archaeological sites in Oman. There are some people who keep asking me different questions about archaeological excavations and the nature of our job. Also, there are those people who link archaeology to grave digging and bone collectors. This is a common impression among many people. However, there are some people who are really curious and interested.

5.2. From your point of view, what are the main constraints/ issues that face public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman? Are there any examples you would like to provide?
Financial resources are very limited; Many people who are in charge do not appreciate archaeological sites as an important national resources; Bureaucracy; and Few trained experts.

5.3. In your opinion, what are the most important steps needed to develop public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman?
Site classification and registration to select sites with priorities for interpretation; Attractive facilities and infrastructure; Promotion.

5.4. How would you describe the role of public interpretation in archaeological sites sustainability?
Till now this concept is not developed in Oman.

5.5. What would you suggest are good examples of on-site interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?
Bawshar, Qalhat, Bat, Shir, Ras al-Jinz

5.6. What would you think are bad examples of on-site interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?
Manal, because there is not much to show; maybe in the future, but not now.

4.10. Are there any examples of sites which are currently not interpreted, but you think should be interpreted as a high priority? Why?
Bat is a priority. Its archaeological features are visible.

a. Are there some sites which you do think should NOT be interpreted in the Sultanate of Oman?
No, I can not think of any.
b. In your opinion, is it important to have public interpretation for archaeological sites in every region or local area in the Sultanate of Oman? Why?

It is recommended.

c. Which interpretive methods would you recommend for remote sites?

There should be a cooperative effort among all governmental sectors to facilitate accessibility to archaeological sites.

d. How do you see the relationship between the public interpretation and education in the Sultanate of Oman?

They are connected. In Oman, there are a lot of gaps in teaching history in schools through archaeology. Many periods are not included in the school curricula. The ancient history of Oman is briefly taught to the school students. I suggest that we start from the fifth grade to teach pupils about archaeological sites and link them to historical facts. Also, it is important to present archaeological sites through attractive reading, audiovisual and learning-by-doing materials, as well as programs and activities. There should be some kind of coordination between the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Heritage and Culture and the Ministry of Education. I suggest that some images for archaeological sites and findings to be printed on school stationeries and books.

e. In the Sultanate of Oman, how do you see the opportunity to establish archaeological tourism?

Oman is endowed with various archaeological sites which are located in different geographic regions, e.g. the inland, mountainous and coastal sites. Visiting archaeological sites can be part of adventure tourism; however, archaeological tourism can not be boosted till we develop our archaeological sites for visitors.

Section Five: Recommendations

5.1. What recommendations would you make in relation to archaeological site development in relation to the public interpretation (e.g. facilities, security, staff, registration)?

I hope there will be:

1- A national archaeological team in the future;
2- Regional centres to protect archaeological sites;
3- Trained Omani experts

a. Are you aware of any studies or documents related to the topic of public interpretation in relation to the Sultanate of Oman or United Arab Emirates?

No, I am not.
5.7. Is there anything else which you would like to tell me about in relation to public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman?

1- I suggest on-road panels nearby archaeological sites which give basic information about the site. Some warning panels are posted far from the real site or in a place where the site is invisible. This misplacing might expose some site to be destroyed by vehicles or people because many people think that archaeology means forts and towers only.

2- Benefiting from the best available interpretive methods and tools and apply them to selected sites in Oman, e.g. 3D reconstruction.

3- Interpretation must be renewed and designed in a way that attracts visitors repeatedly.

4- The establishment of archaeological studies centre either independently managed or supervised by the Ministry of Heritage and Culture. It should have its own financial resources.

5- Publishing archaeological studies to the public.

6- Seminars, lectures, conferences. In the present, there are only seasonal reports.
Appendix 4B: Unstructured Interview

Public Interpretation of Archaeological Heritage and Archaeotourism in Oman

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The Aim:
The public interpretation refers to the presentation of archaeological sites and findings to the non-specialists such as tourists, school parties and local communities through various interpretive media such as guided trails, tours guides, on-site exhibition, audio/video tours and panels. The focus of this research is the critical issue of archaeological site interpretation to the public in the Sultanate of Oman. Interpretation is considered essential to the achievement of a myriad of values, including educational, economic, social and cultural values. One major aim for public interpretation is to enliven archaeological sites, as well as sustaining their environment for present and future generations.

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Thank you for your help.

Yaqoub Al-Busaidi
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- Section One: Personal Details:

Name: Position:

Institution: Specialty:

Nationality (optional):

1- What fieldwork experience do you have in the Sultanate of Oman?
I have become interested in tourism in Oman since 1997.
2- How do you describe the relationship between archaeological tourism and public interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?
The first thing in anything that is new is you have to build awareness. To educate people to appreciate what they have in their land. Doing that is a quite major work, because you will start from scratch. We still observe our traditions. We still observe who we are. Matter of appreciating archaeological sites is very important to start from scratch because as the older people are dying, this will go away. It is very important that we revive our traditional history; in Oman crafts are dying out.

3- Do you think that tourist guidance is well developed in the Sultanate of Oman?
No, but give them a chance.

4- What do you suggest to develop the tourist guidance in Oman?
Training Omanis people, every region must have its own tourist guides. This will give more accountability and stewardship to particular people to be in charge of a specific area. A local tour guide is more aware of their living heritage or archaeological sites around the area. This will benefit the locals from tourism development.

5- What do you think of the advantage of archaeological tourism in the Sultanate of Oman?
We have a great raw materials for tourism, we must benefit from them as much as we can
Appendix 4C: Semi-Structured Interviews

Public Interpretation of Archaeological Heritage and Archaeotourism in Oman

| Code: AM12 | Type of Interview: Semi-Structured (English) |
| Date:      | Place:                                    |

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- Section One: Personal Details:

Name:  
Position:  

Institution:  
Specialty:  

Nationality (optional):  

Section Two: Fieldwork experience in the Sultanate of Oman (Please move to the Section Three if you do not have fieldwork experience in the Sultanate of Oman).
2- From your fieldwork experience in the Sultanate of Oman:

2.1. What fieldwork experience do you have in the Sultanate of Oman?

I worked in al- Hamra
I did a survey in the whole of the area.
I excavated as well in Tiwi Salim. I was interested in choosing small sites that would close a gap in the knowledge we had at that time.

2.2. Please comment on the public reaction, curiosity, and involvement in your excavation.

It depends on what I was finding. At Tawi Salim it was alright while people didn’t recognize that was a burial, but there was a secondary burial in one tomb and people could see that was a skeleton…I lost my labour force.

- Section Three: Interpretation Methods

3- What do you think of the following interpretation methods for archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman?

(a). Experimental archaeology (on site/off site).
No, I don’t think anything of it. It’s a modern idea that’s ok in Britain where they know the structure. You need a lot to know before you start experimenting. You need much more knowledge before you start experimental archaeology. I mean over here experimental archaeology came into fashion when we knew what we had and then we were asking questions that occurred the result of our excavations and the knowledge we have acquired. You still need to know much more about your archaeological background. Otherwise it is rather a waste of time.

(b). Site reconstructions/construction (on site/off site).
At Tiwi Salim, I don’t think so. I wouldn’t recommend it. No, because if people go down to have a look at them they can see in the ground what they are…You don’t want to waste money…On the other hand, who is going to make the journey right down to Tiwi Salim? You can have a small museum adjacent to the site with models. With electronic guide the people can go and walk around.

- Section Four: Public Interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman

4.1. Is public interpretation important for archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman? Why?

You can not generalize; there are certain sites that people can see exactly what they are. People like to be told of what they are looking at, because you are talking down to them, people don’t like that. You got to get yourself into them. The public would be interested if the government is going to found archaeology either in the universities or in the museums. It is basic [the public interpretation].

4.2. In your opinion, what are the most important steps needed to develop public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman?
First, you want to get over in the school, the education world level. What the past is and how it is represented in your country. So that young people who will have more of interest from the over generation will go out and have a look at sites.

You must also try if there is an interest of your school teachers. Get them to take the children around to the museums…to look at the exhibit, to give the children a questionnaire to look at various questions which will make the children look and see. So at the moment in Ras al-Khaimah, children go to museums and al-Ain…

I don’t know how much of the site is still exist (Tiwili Silim). You need to have a plan and brief explanation of what people are looking at. Tell them what they are, they are not just a heap of stones; it’s a burial. Tell them what the age if they able to read the story that you can make up about it based on the published resources. It is easier to interpret the past to the public with cast, costumes or forms. People from all ages and nationalities will be interested in that staff.

5.2. How would you describe the role of public interpretation in archaeological sites sustainability?
You have to ask an expert, I am an archaeologist not a museum person.

5.3. What would you think are bad examples of on-site interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?
You would know better than I because I haven’t been there since the 80s. You may have a lot to show at Ras al-Hadd. You got interesting villages and different architectural techniques in Ja’alan and Ibra.

There is the historical aspect; you look at your history and what did they represent, turning points in the history of this country. They got to be understandable; they got to be attractive; they got to be easily interpreted particularly the castles; people always like castles.

5.4. In your opinion, is it important to have public interpretation for archaeological sites in every region or local area in the Sultanate of Oman? Why?
No, you got to use common sense. If there is only one site of minimal interest in the area forget it. If there are sites in a certain area that have a potential interesting to people who may want to come to that area, even the local know what it is. In Ibri, for example, there are a plenty of prehistoric areas around there such as Bat. You should have a little note about cemeteries or tombs, different types of tombs. They are barely discovered and a gain a plan showing the site. You got the fort…and then there is the village itself.

5.5. Which interpretive methods would you recommend for remote sites?
I wouldn’t bother with them…, if there is a professional archaeologist who wants to go, help him to get there, but to the general tourist…no, because he is not going to appreciate what he is looking at if he hasn’t gotten any background to understand it. Why should you take the local trouble, money, time to help somebody is not going to be worth helping.
5.6. How do you see the relationship between the public interpretation, archaeological tourism and local community in the Sultanate of Oman?
Unless the locals who run the spot are enthusiastic and care about their monuments, you can’t tell everyone to look after everything. So talk to the locals to get interested and if there is one person who can be encouraged until they think he can be in charge of the site. Then when a tourist comes, he could be provided with a few notes about the area.

5.7. In the Sultanate of Oman, how do you see the connection between the public interpretation and archaeological tourism,
Well, for tourism you got to look at the practical issues. Which site is going to be the best to show to the public because they don’t want to spend time travelling to all sites when they only got ten days. So you have to plan overall and think: are you going to divide tourists among certain regions, different regions around Nizwa; you got plenty to show them there of various periods. Don’t think of it in a national level, [start regional], because that is too big start list.

5.8. Do you think that archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman can be developed for touristic purposes?
Oh yes; providing you go for top level expensive tourism. It is not a country that I would recommend to go for packaged charts because you got the wrong type of people, who only want to drink. They will horrify the local people and they won’t have the money. You need a tourist who is prepared to spend because they are interested in coming to learn about your culture. The lower level, I mean I may sound snobbish, but they will not come because they take quite a lot for their package and their flight and they will want to save the rest to drink [I mean the mass tourist]  

5.9. How often you get people asking you about archaeology in Oman?
Yes, I did encourage them.

4.11. What are the main weakness of public interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?
You haven’t gotten enough archaeologists yet, because who otherwise is going to interpret.

4.12. What are the main Strengths of public interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?
The existence of an independent institution in relation to the national heritage. I remember when I went down to Tiwi Salim, the big rock outcrop, I was terrified to find French who were working on the road construction. They are taking away half of the tombs on one side of that rock outcrop with the same time that I was working on other excavations of tombs. No men from the Department of Antiquities were trying to stop them. That was in the 70s. It is minimal, not only in Oman, but here [Britain] also. You got to build it up
- Section Five: Recommendations

5.1. What recommendations would you make in relation to archaeological site development in relation to the public interpretation?

First of all if I am going to a national museum I would want to look at the finds and the plans of the site. I would want to be able to see details about what is going on in that region. If I go to a small/local museum next to an antiquity all I need is a brief note giving its name, who excavated it, what it is and its stages. And I need to see a plan...photographs of the excavations at various stages in the excavations. I want to see what it looks like when it was a heap of stone. Then when they started excavations; what did they find? I want to see what the find were?

You got to make the locals feel that those monuments are of important to them personally.

a. Are you aware of any studies or documents related to the topic of public interpretation in relation to the Sultanate of Oman or United Arab Emirates?

No, I am not.

5.8. Is there anything else which you would like to tell me about in relation to public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman?

Look at your site and say will the public is going to fall into deep trenches if an excavation is going on we want to protect the public? You also got to think of the locals

You can not compare Britain to Oman because you haven’t got the same social structure, or archaeology which was built on country societies and mature elite; the upper classes were interested in the 18th/19th centuries. All counties archaeological societies stated from the 19th century onwards. Museums through the country came into beings at that time. You got another hundred years to catch up. Look from the size side of your country, you haven’t done very much yet. The Department of Antiquity could do much work.

5.9. What you think of the current state of public interpretation for Magan civilization?

I don’t think you can focus on that because to the average visitors or the person here, nothing has called Magan…if you go out and say to a member of the public: What you think of Magan? …hah [doesn’t know]. You have to realize that no one has heard of it; very few people know anything about the Sultanate of Oman. You got to tell them.

What you need is a main museum; the main museums are in Muscat. I don’t know where else you got museums at the moment. Also, the school text books

5.5. What do you think of archaeology as entertainment business?

I don’t like that because it gives the false impression. I mean in Time Team on the television. They go on into a site, they work away, and in the weekend they have the answer. The public don’t know the whole lot of research which has been done before they get to the site. When they have the finds…it’s a false impression.
Public Interpretation of Archaeological Heritage and Archaeotourism in Oman

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4. From your fieldwork experience in the Sultanate of Oman:

2.1. What fieldwork experience do you have in the Sultanate of Oman?
First time I came in Oman, it was in 1977. In 1978, I made a survey of the copper occurrences of Oman that could have been used in prehistoric time. At that time, I was excavating in Buraim, in UAE. We were making a survey of copper ores that could have been used in Sur. So, we made surveys of ancient copper mines in Iran, Afghanistan and in Oman because Oman was supposed to be the Magan copper of Mesopotamian texts and this is what we demonstrated. At Ras al-Jinz we started excavations with Tosi in 1984/85.

2.2. What do you think of the location and accessibility of your site?
We used driving on dirt road, which some of them were very tough. Now, we have asphalted road, brand-new going from Sur and from Alashkharah direct to here. So, accessibility is OK. Now the site is in a turtle reserve which is operated as far as I understand by the Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Environment and this mainly aimed at turtles. This is a place where people should get explanation that this is not only natural but also cultural and we got many projects been discussed in the last 10 years. And of course now things are going on and we hope the people to build a museum in which things presented in two ways; one is with photographs and texts and so on. Also, some objects which are presently belong to the Department of Antiquities, can be displayed here...

So, we have two big sites which are RJ2 and RJ1. RJ2 is the one below; it is a mud brick site and this is very fragile. What we used to do is after every year of excavation we covered it with dirt, because it is the best way to preserve it, the only way to preserve it. There are many studies all around the world about how to preserve the mud brick but most of them failed. What we should do and what we have been asked to do by the Ministry of Heritage is to prepare this year for a reconstruction of the houses we excavated just nearby the site. We are now reopening the site to make or finish the plan. We already have the plan, but we want to check some details and we have already selected a place where we can rebuild these houses. The problem is that these houses should be rebuilt only on the condition that there will be a permanent care for them. We all know that mud brick architecture is very fragile, the weather is not always very nice, heavy winds, sometime heavy rains and this is very damageable for the houses. There should be a proper care for the house full year.

For the higher part RJ1 which is preserved as it was except few excavations we made; it is preserved as it was 4000 years ago. Then we excavated one house on the edge and this has been determined as Wadi Suq house, ca. 2000 BC. Then we have excavated there mainly grave of Umm an-Nar type of 2500 B.C. So, what we would like to have is at the same time steps to reach; I would not recommend making the steps on the path we use to go because this path is 4000 years old and if we have too many tourists going through there this is maybe damageable and this is not such an easy track. We may have to build some real steps. What we should do in that case is to have a pathway on the top where people should walk and not walk elsewhere. Of course, this is a very specialized tourism, not all people who would like to see that. The houses are ok and inside the
houses we can put some photographs of the objects where were found inside each room. We do hope that this will be done in the next 2 or 3 years.

I think we have already recommended the Ministry, even the preceding Minister, His Highness Sayid Faisal. We wrote him a letter says that this should be included in the World Heritage both from a natural and cultural side. This area says all what is east of mountain of Jabal Khamis, south of Sur and north of Wadi al Batha; it is a fabulous place for cultural heritage.

2.3. Is the suggested houses will be the same as the original one?

Well, we will try that, same size, same period, same plan, the same type of construction. We know the type of construction. Every one of the students here with me is working on that; on this mud brick and there is a specialist for this kind of things. Now, after that, the roofing, but basically we don’t know from here, but we have excavations from Iran for instance, 3rd millennium B.C. They show that the roofing was made nothing very spectacular like it was made in ancient houses Oman, the beams, the mats and the earth …So we can be confident that this will be close to the reality. The thing that we really don’t know is how high the wall, but you can imagine, just to show…

2.4- How about the archaeological significance and scale of excavation?

In my opinion this site [Ras al-Jinz] and the sites in Ras al-Hadd are really significant not only at the level of the history of Oman, but at international level. Ras al-Hadd and this part are places where since 4500 years the Omani people of that time were trading with India. This has been the place, from which the Arab sailors went to China from which they even converted these areas to Islam in Indonesia. There are those people who moved Islam to Indonesia. This is a very important place for the history of the Arab and the history of mankind. It is a very very important place. Most people wouldn’t know about Babylon, and so on. It is quite difficult to tell the people that this is really a very important place, but each time I show this to some of my colleague they say: ‘WOW’. It is a very important site. What we did is only part of what has to be done? There are remains for the next generation, but I do hope that we can continue for some time.

2.5- What are the opportunities for generating income from visitors to your ongoing dig or after?

I think, this is already included in cultural heritage parts. The thing is that there should be a local museum. There is a kind of cultural centre, visitor centre where everything about the turtles will be presented and so on. Archaeological findings should be presented at the same time…this is part of the history, even of man relation. The people in Ras al-Jinz were exploiting turtles, they were killing some of them, they were having eggs and so on. These people should understand that these turtle were important resource…we are ready to provide photos. Also, the materials belong to the Department of Antiquities, but I think there is already being an agreement that the Department of Antiquities will send here not only photos, but also objects so the tourists can see them. On the other hand, this Ras al-Jinz is a single site, this should be considered also in
accordance with Ras al-Hadd and the Castle of Ras al Hadd where there should be a museum.

Obviously, tourists will pay to enter the site. This is going to be part of the management plans for this area for tourism. A lot of tourists would be interested in this cultural thing. I am sure that once properly done, but it needs a lot of investment before. It is a long term investment and sometimes expensive, but I am sure this can come along with the turtles, maybe even we can imagine that one day it will be more important than the turtles.

2.6. Do you get any school students, or visitors from the public and tourists?

Schools still, tourists we have from time to time. Actually I have seen most of the tourists don’t know about it, so they just pass and see … and if possible and if they are interested I always give them explanations, but of course when we are not here, the site is not even visible, which has been a good protection for the site, but when we are here we welcome anybody. We have got already several times classes. I remember years ago there was a class of girls from the Ras al Hadd, secondary school. If the people want to come we welcome them. Of course I have a lot of other things to do, I can not welcome people everyday, but if curiosity comes more and more we can have one of the members of the team in charge of that work.

2.7. Do you feel that the people in Ras al Jinz are interested?

What is amusing is that they understand what we are doing; they become interested about participating in the work. For instance, some years ago we found the head of big tuna fish abandoned there in prehistoric time and they recognized that, they recognized the fishing equipments. Ten years ago, we found a Mabkharah, when they took it out they recognized it immediately, it was a mabkharah (incense burner) and one of them took it and passed it under his dishdashah in a traditional way. After that, I showed it to Sheikh Nassir al Ameri, the Sheikh of Ras al Jinz and suddenly he disappeared with the object and I screamed: ‘What is going to happen’? His son told me: ‘He is going to show it to my mother’ So, that means something may really be of interest to the local people more than we may think.

2.8. This leads me to ask about the importance of ethno-archaeology in interpretation?

We do it already. We made a lot of work with that. Some years ago, at the beging of the project actually, we got British ethnographer William Lane Caster, who made one of the most classical books on Bedouins in Jordan and he came here and he went all around. He wrote things for us which been published in scientific journals and we have used that to interpret our data. This is extremely important. Most of our reconstructions for the society we have done depend on ethnography. For instance, fishing, two years ago we had meetings with local fishermen and they explained a lot of techniques to us, and this is to understand what was in the past and they were very interested in our data to.
In the 4th millennium B.C, they made fish hooks not from metal, but from shells of oyster and these hooks we always felt maybe they were not useful because they were almost closed and the fishermen said: ‘no, no, no it is very good for tuna fish’. We have learned a lot of things from them. I think the way of life of this part of Ja’alan basically is preserved until modern time. Now, we are in the village of Ras al Jinz where there are stone houses. When we arrived here there was no one stone house, everybody was living in *barasti*. Then the first stone house was that of the Shiekh and after that all wanted to live in stone houses, because people don’t stay here all the year, they are seasonal. These people who we excavated were seasonal too, ethno-archaeology is very important to understand, it will be a way to explain to people that the past is important, because they will recognize their own way of life in the past.

2.9- What sources of practical help and financial support would you recommend for the site interpretation?

At the moment, all excavations are paid mainly by France and Italy, but we already got some sponsor from the Ministry of Heritage in terms of provide housing in Muscat and one or two cars for a season and some workmen. We would like to have more, but you know also the resources are limited. We also attracted some Omani donors. For instance, yesterday I came here with a car fully loaded with milk, water and other staff that were given by Omani sponsors. This is the kind of help we need for our work. They just do it because they think what we are doing is interesting, so the more interest is raised, the more support we get. Now, of course interpreting the data of archaeological sites is something which is very wide, so what we would like to have is more geological information and aerial pictures.

Now modern archaeology is really relying on satellite images. Basically, we have, but we would like Oman National Survey Authority to be more involved in what we are doing. We are ready to give all the data, we have made GIS, but the maps, the classical maps 1:100,000, of this area have been done quite long time ago. For example, we know that this grave is on the top of the hill and when we look it in the map it says it is below the hill….Now, we know that the map is the problem…I am sure that all old map must have a lot of incorrect data. We don’t ask access to secret data, it is not our goal, but anyway of entering all the sites in the general data available to that consults is extremely important for interpretation because we have made a lot of study about paleo-climate and the change of coastal lines in the last 5 and 6 millennium. It is also important that we can give back to the local authority so that they can know that this should be protected and so on.

Another thing we did with the Ministry is we have the gentlemen Khamis, son of the Sheikh, who is a very knowledgeable person, we know him since 20 years, and he has been working with us for sometimes and he is helping us in making investigations. He knows about archaeology, he is interested in archaeology, and he is now in temporary contract with the Ministry of Heritage to check archaeology here, he knows some English so he can communicate with people. He is not an archaeologist, he will never become an archaeologist, but it is important to include local people with local knowledge, knowledge of the tribal lineage. Because you will be able first to know about everything when they come and also to explain to the other people of the area
with local authority that says: ‘please do not move’, this is much better than any other administration or any archaeological safety. So we really would recommend that in these areas where you have knowledgeable people like that, they should be involved.

2.10- How about promoting the site and working with the media?

We made several papers in the press, e.g. Oman daily, Observer….TV has never been here since long time ago. I think I got the TV interview here 20 years ago. I remember very well in fact. What we would like really like to have and has been a constant. There are now some very big companies like National Geography who are doing movies on this kind of things. I tried several times to attract them. They are interested, but they said: ‘where are the treasures, we have no treasures’. We should speak about that. There was a time with the former director with Ali al Shanfari who said: ‘I think we should go to the press’, so we wrote a paper both in Arabic and English, but the impact of that I don’t know.

We also made some public lectures almost every year we tried to do a public lecture in the Historical Society of Oman. Sayid Faisla invited us to make a lecture at the Cultural Club and there were some people who are interested. It is out of our control, the media people are not easy. There was some attraction of the media with the boat, unfortunately the first boat we built has sunk, but we will try to do something again. If you look at the books, they are all repeating the same things that we have done 20 years ago. The British team in Bisyia has a lot of new data coming out.

2.11. Please comment on the public reaction, curiosity, and involvement in your excavation.

Generally speaking, it is everywhere the relation to the past is not easy. I also met people who said: ‘why are you going to excavate there’. On the other hand, there are people who are really interested. We invest a lot of public money, so we should give back some. It should be done with accordance to the country itself; there should be a constant cooperation between local medial, local institutions and us. I see more future than years ago.

People of the village are familiar with what we do...they are not afraid; they know that we have been excavating bones and all that and nothing happened. You have to do in accordance with the people if they don’t like they don’t like, but basically if they see you to do the things, they become confident after sometimes; it is ok. It is interesting for them to see how we are processing this. Archaeology is very ttractive to people, but very often it is mixed with treasures and so on. They should be aware of fact when we said something about the people in the past, it is grounded to some evidence. We can give an access for a short stay for people from secondary schools. They can come, excavate and stay with us.
2.12- Do you think that the site is adequately promoted?

No. this is not a critique, it is just the fact. We hope that in the future when you come here and see no site they said what the story of the site is. So, if we make the houses, the museums, they will understand.

- Section Three: Interpretation Methods

3- What do you think of the following interpretation methods for archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman:

3.1- Experimental archaeology (on site/off site).

The Magan boat was a scientific experimental archaeology, well it sunk, but we learned a lot of things much more, much much more than we expected from the beginning. As we want to make a new one we will probably learn more and more and this is also even if it was a disaster, it was a method to promote. It has been in all papers and in Indian Journals. The houses we want to rebuild are to some extent experimental archaeology. The next Magan project will be sponsored by France, Italy, and we hope to have some money coming from National Geography and from foreigner companies or local companies from Oman or foreigner companies in Oman.

3.2- Site reconstructions/construction (on site/off site).

This is a problem. For instance, take the Rustaq Fort, some foreign tourists say: ‘this is completely new’, so, the European people love the ruins, and most of the things that have been developed by international agencies, such as UNESCO, ICOMOS, ICROM, are a kind of rules to do preservation, but not reconstruction. Some people would prefer reconstruction. To some extent they are both rights. I don’t think to rebuild the houses on the spot because that is an archaeological site and it is not finished with excavation and it is really needed, but we have selected a place where we can reconstruct the houses. This is not a question to reconstruct the whole village but, to give an idea, people need that. These walls are too fragile; you can not build anything above them. The best thing is to leave them in the ground.

At Bat, I would not recommend to rebuild a stone tower. I think Bat should be left as it is. Some of the tombs at Bat are still quite good, so that they give the real idea of what it was. So, there is no need to make a reconstruction from which we are not going to be sure. Maybe at Bat we can rebuild one. Umm al Nar tombs are nice facing stones. From the beginning, I think in the second millennium, Wadi Suq people took stones out of these graves.

- Section Four: Public Interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman

4.1. Is public interpretation important for archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman? Why?

Sure, it is.
4.2. Do you think that the past is presented properly to the public through on-site/in situ interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?

Not yet. Sometimes, there has been confusion between research and presentation. There are too different things. The people who provide me with money in France, they will never provide it for presentation. They are specialized international agencies for doing presentation like UNESCO.

4.3. Do you think that the past is presented properly to the public through off-site interpretation such as museums, exhibitions, and public media?

We have given some materials for exhibitions. We have participated even with people from the Department of Antiquities. Just two years ago, there was one small exhibition made for this Magan Conference; it got good coverage from the media also; the exhibition was for three days. We made another exhibition 12 years ago in Crown Plaza in Muscat for 5 days. The problem now is that we need a national museum plus local museums. There is a small local museum in Sohar Fort. There is the Omani Museum near the Ministry of Information belongs to the Ministry of Heritage. There have been a lot of improvement, but the archaeological materials still the same from the excavations from the early 70s. You need a real National Museum. For example, the mabkharah which is highly significant, where is it? It is in a box in the Department of Antiquities. I have seen some people who say: ‘ok you take these objects to your country and we don’t have them’. Well I said ‘I am sorry the objects are back into the Department of Antiquities. We never took except for analyses.

One main problem is the lack of facilities which is very important. There should be an exhibition travelling across Europe and the States, e.g. Magan. We have already contacted some of the major museums in Paris, Greece; we can do that. The Metropolitan Museum of Arts in New York has initially agreed, in Italy, in Rome, in Venice, German museums, and the British Museum. So what should be done is a travelling exhibition that should be an occasion to take the materials out of the boxes, to restore them, to prepare them, and this why the national museum is under preparation. This should go around Europe.

4.4. From your experience, would you say that the general public is interested in archaeology in the Sultanate of Oman?

Very interested; people here have not been educated for archaeology. This takes time; it comes slightly in the text books, in the school. It has been everywhere like that in my country too.

4.5 From your point of view, what are the main constraints/ issues that face public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman? Are there any examples you would like to provide?

Nation museum, local museum, national inventory. You should have a national inventory. National inventory is not a small thing. The data of the Ministry of Heritage should be in GIS system. So that any ministry dealing with construction, because they don’t know and they destroy the site. A national inventory should be done. Then this
inventory should be adapted every year. The national inventory for Oman I think would employee easily 40 people… This is a real problem. Also, there is the promotion in the press; everything must be done.

4.6. In your opinion, what are the most important steps needed to develop public interpretation of archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman?

4.7. How would you describe the role of public interpretation in archaeological sites sustainability?

One of the problems is I think that something like fishing or trade with outside which is deeply rooted in Oman. Again, the fishermen here feel interested in what we do. Archaeology has to meet somewhere what is in the mind of people, I can not be in mind of an Omani, I will never be, but I can propose something. It is up to you to accept or reject it. Of course, by discussing with Omanis, this is the best way. Also to make a presentation of what I have in mind that will be interesting for them. There are some societies who just simply not like the past to be investigated, because the past is the gift of God. You are not allowed to change the past. This is in the main system.

4.8. What would you suggest are good examples of on-site interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?

Ras al Jinz, Ras al Hamra, Bat, Zukayit.

4.9. Are there some sites which you do think should NOT be interpreted in the Sultanate of Oman?

The problem is that we should think at the moment in term of sites that maybe are endangered by too many tourists.

4.10. In your opinion, is it important to have public interpretation for archaeological sites in every region or local area in the Sultanate of Oman? Why?

Sure, which is important for the local community.

4.11. Which interpretive methods would you recommend for remote sites?

Shir is not a place where you can drive. The thing not to do is an asphalted road.

4.12. Do you think that archaeological tourism is bad for archaeological sites?

No as long as it is controlled and as long as people don’t plundering the site.

4.13. In your opinion what are the main problems that we are facing in interpreting Magan Culture?

Magan is a problem in general. Magan was a name given to this society by the Mesopotamian. So, now we have to figure out what was exactly Magan. We used a lot of local data. We should be careful also in the fact that Magan was in the past and the past has never looked exactly like the present. What I would really try to avoid is the
idea that Magan and Oman are the same thing. There has been a lot of historical changes. We still have a lot to learn about Magan.

4.14. What would you suggest to Interpret Magan?

4.15. Are you aware of any studies or documents related to the topic of public interpretation in relation to the Sultanate of Oman or United Arab Emirates?

There have been two or three papers one is by Daniel Potts in the conference which took place in Abu Dhabi 2003.
The Aim:
The public interpretation refers to the presentation of archaeological sites and findings to the non-specialists such as tourists, school parties and local communities through various interpretive media such as guided trails, tours guides, on-site exhibition, audio/video tours and panels. The focus of this research is the critical issue of archaeological site interpretation to the public in the Sultanate of Oman. Interpretation is considered essential to the achievement of a myriad of values, including educational, economic, social and cultural values. One major aim for public interpretation is to enliven archaeological sites, as well as sustaining their environment for present and future generations.

I have specially selected archaeological interpretation experts and I hope you will be willing to complete the survey. The survey comprises open-ended questions that should enable you to provide as much detail as you feel you want to in your responses. I would like to thank you for your valuable concern and your help in advance. I should mention that all information that you provide is confidential and used for this research only. Please let me know if you have any queries in relation to this survey.

Thank you for your help.

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- Section One: Personal Details:

Name: Position:

Institution: Specialty:

Nationality (optional):
1-How long have you been working in Oman?
16 years in Oman, from 1989.

2-Do you think that public interpretation is important for archaeological sites?
Yes, I think it is very important because I can tell that a majority of the tourists, who come to visit Oman, come with the objective of learning about the heritage, the culture and the history of this country. The heritage, the culture and the history of the country is embodied in the various heritage sites that exist in the forts, museums, tombs, and frankincense trail. That is what people come for here. So, if you have a general interpretation of archaeological and heritage sites of Oman and make clearer to the travelling public, I think it will elicit a great interest in the destination.

3-Do you think that archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman are well presented and interpreted?
It is well presented to the people who are very keen to know. For example, I will tell you that at Ras al-Hadd and Ras al-Jinz there is the eco-resort of the green-back turtles or Ubar, the lost city in Salalah, or for example the frankincense trail. They are only known to very few people, a few segment of the entire population of the countries who are only tourists to Oman. For example, Germany is the biggest market for Oman, but there are only a few operators who are coming from German who actually are interested following these trails. Actually, they go to Bat graves, the history of al-Busaid Dynasty, go to adventure routes cross the Wahiba Sand, and go to Ras Madrakah. Larger parts do a general tour of Oman. So, if the public interpretation of the archaeological and heritage sites of Oman are more developed, promoted and advertised and made known to the world a wide, it will lead to a greater interest in these aspects.

I don’t think they are presented properly. At Al-Hottah Cave, for example, they actually make it accessible to tourists by building a small railroad system which it doesn’t pollute the atmosphere. If you go to Ras al-Hadd/ Ras al-Jinz resort, people want to go and see the green turtles hatch and lay their eggs during the night. The accommodation available is very very minimal. The existing facilities are not up to the market. The archaeological site at Ras al-Jinz is barely visited…it is not very known.

As for the off site interpretation, Bai az-Zubair is the most popular museum which features many unique items. The Omani-French museum is also very very visited. Jibrin Museum and Nizwa Fort are definite in any tourist calendar. More than that, sites such as Bibi Miriam and Job Tomb in Salalah are lesser known.

4-Do you get people who want to Bat, who want to go to Ras al-Jinz just to see archaeological sites?
Yes, we do get very little request for that, and people who are seriously into this eco-tourism aspects, want only this aspect. People who do not want to stay in a five star hotel, they want to spend a week with the Bedouins for example, they want to cross Bilad Seet on a camel back or horse back, they want to live in the desert, they want to discover the people of Misfah, they want to recreate the trail that did Thesiger in the 70s. People wanna do that.
5- How would you describe the current public interpretation for archaeological sites?
I would imaging there are a lot of rooms for improvement. We need to position Oman in heritage, culture and archaeology, and natural beauty.

You see when you promote a destination you got to look at all segments of the traffic. You can’t look only at the people who are interested in winter sun and the beach or the people who want to live in five stars hotels. You have to look at all segments. I am telling you that people who are interested in ancient history, culture, heritage and archaeology are not few numbers. There are other people to whom alcohol does not mean anything. There are a lot of Europeans who do not drink a drop of alcohol and consider it as a poison to their bodies. You have to reach to the segments of the market who are interested. You have to reach them through tourist board, geological society, and the Ministry of Heritage and Culture.

6- From you experience do you think that Omani and non-Omani here in the Sultanate of Oman are interested in touring archaeology in the Sultanate of Oman?
It is a question of educating them and presents it [archaeology] in a manner which is easily understandable. Anything in history, you can make it extremely interesting or extremely boring. You have to present it in a manner which excites the mind to know more. For example, if you go to Jibrin Fort and you have a guide who is guiding you through the whole process…History is a story telling, and if you can get somebody who can tell the story in effective manner…if you present archaeological facts and data in a manner which is interesting and understood by the common man there will be a huge opportunity. We miss this in Oman. We don’t have enough people who know or talk in the profession. We are just starting this industry.

7- In relation to the tour guidance do you train Omanis and non-Omanis?
Yes we do the normal things. We have in-house program. When the traffic is not so much, our entire team who work in Bahwan Tourism go out into the field; they go, they create the itineraries and talk to the Bedouins, talk to the local people.

8- What do you think the main constraints that we have in the Sultanate of Oman in relation to the public interpretation?
We are very young in the business. It is a nesting industry. The industry is growing up from a small beginning. We are in a process of learning. Infrastructure for example, at Ras al-Hadd/Ras al-Jinz, I know that the Ministry has a very ambitious plan of developing an eco-resort on the outskirt of Ras al-Jinz and Ras al-Hadd. I am sure it will happen. It is not like we want thousands of people go to Ras al-Jinz and destroy the fine ecological balance; it has to be linked with the environment.

Infrastructure is one. The second thing is the publicity, the promotion and the positioning. Oman is not choosing what part it should take. There are many aspects of environment, in terms of the security, in terms of natural and cultural heritage, in terms of immigrations, in terms of visa regulations, in terms of accessibility, the frequency of flights. All these are contributing to the traffic coming in and the allocation of budget. We need people who will be in a responsible manner who portray the image of Oman in
the international market. All these are integrated to developing a better interest. Therefore, if you look at it a process, we are growing and developing these various contributes which are necessary to develop Oman as a destination for winter sun, for archaeological tourism, for special interest groups, for adventure, for education and for so many things. We still in Oman in learning process. The weather also is a main problem.

9- What are the main steps to overcome those mentioned issues?
OK, passage of time is very important. With modern time, technology, free flowing of information and people from every walkways of life. Passage of time itself will bring transformation and awareness. There are more Omanis who are travelling abroad than it used ten years ago.

10- What do you think of the media and archaeological tourism?
Whenever I look at the papers, e.g. the Observer, there are always supplements about the wadis, mountains, museums.

11-How about archaeological museums?
Yes, you don’t have that kind of museums.

12- How do you describe the relationship between public interpretation and sustainable tourism?
There should be a plan and program to preserve it in a manner that the next generation benefit from learning about it. It is absolutely imperative that the proper public interpretation of all archaeological and historical sites and are covered and controlled by the authority in the land to preserve that antiquity and the original contents, so it doesn’t get destroyed…like the green back turtle that come to Ras al-Jinz. So if you doing it unplanned and in unreasonable way the turtle will stop coming there, the whole habitat will get destroyed.

13- What would you see as a good example to do on-site interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?
The lost city of Ubar is UNESCO heritage site. It is a possibility, there is a lot of interest in the Empty Quarter, Ruba al-Khali, there is a lot of people come from France, Germany, who come and travel to Ruba al-Khali.

14- what would you think as a bad-example to do on-site interpretation in the Sultanate of Oman?
I don’t think so. It is the responsibility of every government and every country to preserve, promote and perpetuate the knowledge of its natural heritage and culture and archaeology and history….Everything is not commercial, everything does not have to earn money. A certain part of national works of every country must go to preservation of its identity, of its origin, of its people, of its history, of its local community and the unit society. These have no commercial implication.
15- Do you think that it is necessary to have in every region of Oman interpreted archaeological sites for tourists?
Necessarily, because every region is different in term of its geographical features, its beauty and even in the archaeological sites. So, I would imagine that every region should be promoted to the best of its people.

16- What type of interpretation would you suggest for those remote archaeological sites?
You have to make it accessible. There are so many ways of accessing them. There are route ways that take people up to the mountain sites. The promotion is very important

17- How do you see the relationship between public interpretation of archaeological heritage and education?
Very closely related, the students must read about it in the school curricula …archaeology must be taught at a primary school level for them to develop an interest for that.

18- What is the visitor profile of the cultural tourists?
Usually, senior citizens, + 50 years old, who are well educated, who have money, who are deeply interest in history, culture and heritage, and they are very informed. No young people.

19- Have you thought of preparing historical trails or heritage days at Bahwan Travel Agency?
We though about it, domestic tourism hold a huge opportunity also. We realized that potential domestic tourism. We have excursions and holidays programs. We got a lot of enquiries from the local residences: ‘I wanna go in a dolphin trip’, ‘I wanna go to Ras al-Jinz to see the turtles’, ‘I wanna go to the mountains, Jabal Shams’, ‘I wann go to Salalah to drive across the desert’.

19- you got special interest tourists in archaeology?
Yes, we do, for example the UK Geological Society.

20- Do you think that there is need to target a particular group of people?
Yes, most direct route to access people interest in archaeology is obviously to go to the history department at universities, to the archaeological society, the geological society, to associations and clubs which specialized in history and cultural heritage tours. You can access them in the internet; you can go to world travel affaires, and international markets

21- How many tourist guides you have?
We have 14 tour guides, more than half of them are Omani. There is nothing like an Omani guide talk about his country. We have an Omani guide who take the German tourist in a guided tour in the Grand Mosque and speak in German. There is nothing better than that. We encouraged and sponsored some Omanis to go and study in Germany.
22- Do you conduct any survey in relation to your tourist?
We do have feasible studies to know how many came for adventure, how many came for sea and sands…

23- Are there any type of evaluation?
We go on inspection trips, al-Maha Camp, Ras al-Hadd, Wahiba Sand Camp, to see the facilities, are they appropriate for sending our clients. On the other side, we have what is called ‘feed back form’. We ask our clients to give his/her feed back about how were the facilities, e.g. did you enjoy your stay, did the guide tell you about everything? Wasn’t it a pleasant atmosphere?

24- Are there any cooperative programs between you and the Ministry of Tourism?
We are a partner to the Ministry of Tourism in very significant manner. Like, for example, the Travel Channel from the United Kingdom came to shoot a film on Oman. The Ministry makes a reference to us and we make all the arrangement for them so that they cover every aspects of the destination and real presented in the film they make. Also, we are cooperating with Sultan Qaboos University and the Travel Agency at the Dept. of Tourism.

25- What do you think of creating joining projects with other countries for example, Yemen?
Yemen is a huge destination, it is deep in history, it is just politically not stabilized. I already have enquires for a joining Omani Yemeni expedition from the biggest German company. We are very interested in promoting Oman and Yemen. I got enquires for four people on the 31 of December 2005 who are coming from Yemen to the Omani borders.