

Introduction

0.1.1: Purpose and scope

The purpose of this thesis is to develop discussion around the practice of restoration with respect to emerging contemporary theories relating to the safeguarding of the intangible heritage. It aims to reposition the practice of restoration in a global context by making comprehensible the idea of intangible heritage and our understanding of authenticity in relation to this.

Over the past three decades, the concept of intangible heritage has gained credence within the international heritage community. This is partly attributable to the expansion of the field of heritage – now a global phenomenon – but it also reflects wider concerns relating to the cultural impact of global economic, technological and political forces. Put concisely, *intangible heritage refers to the values that are attributed to a historicity of understanding as represented by the activities of people in the present* (author's definition). It therefore concerns cultural identity and our sense of continuity and connectedness to the past. Intangible heritage is for many a vital 'living mediation' of the material past – i.e. the 'tangible heritage' – that deepens its significance and thus meaning-conferring qualities. This thesis explores the interrelatedness of the tangible and the intangible heritages together with our understanding of authenticity – particularly as it relates to the practice of restoration.

The thesis argues that in Western civilisations intangible heritage became 'separated' from tangible heritage and thus lost its sense of connectedness to the material past. And that heritage (as a result) tends to be understood as if it were a completed development – essentially relating to a historiography of materials alone (i.e. tangible heritage) – thus contributing towards a sense of discontinuity and a resultant diminishing of its living vitality within the wider heritage community.

The thesis reveals that the central locus of this history (and with it its sense of fracture) has become the museum – the repository where tangible heritage is housed, organised, interpreted, conserved, restored and displayed in such ways as to confer meaning upon the material world. And how, for example, the professional discipline

of conservation is an extension of archaeo-museological practice which has been shaped by the Western (essentially European) scientific epistemological tradition – the basis of which is reductionist and methodologically abstract.

In relation to this, the thesis examines European restoration theory – the basis of professional practice internationally – in particular the ideas of Cesare Brandi. It explores the ways in which Brandi has been understood in terms of the tangible and intangible paradigms and his work is considered from an epistemological and ontological view together with its relation to aspects of authenticity within restoration – as expressed in terms of materials and techniques, function and use, spirit, integrity, feeling and expression (i.e. the *process* of restoration) – and how these ideas have impacted on the stock of knowledge in the field.

The thesis suggests that historical conceptions of conservation and restoration have been predicated upon a misreading of influential European thinkers – Brandi among them – that has done much to contribute to prevailing tensions and disparity within the wider heritage community. In light of this, it will propose that the competing claims of the tangible and intangible can be reconciled in a concept of ‘authentic process’ thereby enabling the transition from a ‘modern’ materials-led and (arguably) ethno-centric understanding of heritage to what can be described as a ‘post-modern’ anthropocentric vision – which embraces cultural divergence. The thesis argues that this vision is (thus) culturally ‘productive’ – not scientifically ‘reductive’.

0.1.2: Methodologies

This thesis is based on research largely drawn from the literature that has impacted upon the field and includes seminal texts, formal documents, books about practice, and various institutional sources. An analysis of key literature (which forms the basis of the thematic structure of this thesis) aims to reveal the underlying assumptions upon which the discipline of conservation is established (discussed above). Furniture and decorative arts conservation-restoration is the primary area of exploration. However, it is important to point out that due to the theoretical nature of this research many of the ideas developed may well be relevant to other heritage domains, such as (for example) architecture. To that end, a number of case-studies are referenced in order to reinforce the main arguments.

This examination of the literature is also complemented by primary research obtained by engaging the field through discussions / interviews with respected members of the field (some of which have been transcribed)¹ and personal observations on site visits, seminars and conferences. Perhaps inevitably not all of these discussions have been transcribed but with respect to those that have, all of the interviewees are or have been involved in education and training over the past thirty years. They therefore have perspective (a quality which the author himself only has in limited amount) which is important to the *qualitative* nature of this research. This fieldwork is (nonetheless) further complemented by the author's experience in the field over the past seven years – in particular in education and training – in the area of furniture and decorative arts and a lifetime's acquaintance with the buildings sector.

Notes were taken by the author, which were transcribed and sent back to the respective interviewees for their verification, allowing the interviewee to reflect and reconsider the views initially expressed. No references to interviews in this thesis have been made without the interviewees' authorisation and/or their own amendments. This was done in order to guarantee the truthfulness of the views expressed. However, the author should like to stress that although some of the research methodologies developed in the social sciences have proved useful in formulating the interview material, he is not a social scientist and that this thesis is an arts and humanities thesis.²

By being in education and training the transcripts tended to be assessed by the interviewees as if they were academic papers that they themselves had written – so they were assessed with the appropriate level of scrutiny. This slow but necessary process also provided the author with insight of the field which revealed to him that the issues around education and training were not unlike those that he had been aware of for some time in the buildings sector. The same level of insight could not so

¹ The transcriptions are filed at the Furniture Research Centre, Faculty of Creativity and Culture (formerly Faculty of Design), Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College, High Wycombe and may be made available by contacting Professor Jake Kaner.

² U. Flick, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, Sage 2002 (first published in 1998); M. Travers, *Qualitative Research through Case Studies*, Sage 2001; and W. Foddy, *Constructing Questions for Interviews and Questionnaires*, Cambridge, 1993 were all useful texts in helping the author decide how to approach interviewing and understand their limitations.

easily have been achieved by (for example) formulating questionnaires. And language presented another difficulty; for example, in the literature, the author identified something in the region of twenty 'new' technical terms that have been introduced to the field of furniture and decorative arts over the past decade – all of which in one way or another describe what is commonly known as restoration. This variability of terminology in the field makes it very difficult (if not impossible) to formulate a question with the word 'restoration' in it and know with certainty that it has been interpreted in a consistent way by the respondents. So questionnaires were considered to be of limited value.

Nevertheless, from this beginning, further questions were formulated and directed towards the 'higher' reaches of the conservation profession through personal communications (such as emails) and online networks – which provide an international field of reference. Some of the responses have also been included in the main text but there are some who wished their identity to remain anonymous that have not been included. The questions that were posed can be described as a late effort by the author to put some of the issues raised by this research to the wider profession. This was done in order to continually challenge the ideas that the author had hitherto established from his earlier work but they are very general in nature. The range of views expressed about conservation and restoration was (nonetheless) one of the main reasons why the author felt the need to develop the study at a general theoretical level. The text should be read with this in mind.

It should also be noted that the interviews (and related questions) only serve a small aspect of this research in order to provide some form of 'grounding' for the ideas expressed. And although the interviews / discussions were interesting (and perhaps a bit lengthy at times), what is most relevant to this research is the recognition that standards of competence in practice have declined and that this has happened during a period of extraordinary change in the field, coincident with the processes of professionalisation (which determines such things as education and training and ethics). To reiterate, this thesis is largely based on the premise that professionalisation (and all that this entails) re-defines the process of restoration by (for example) influencing various aspects of authenticity such as, materials and techniques, function and use, spirit, integrity, feeling and expression and that this is

related to the scientific epistemological basis of the field of conservation and its subsequent ‘technological’ orientation.

In addition to the interview material (and discussions), a number of case-studies proved useful in showing the kind of restoration work carried out in the name of professional conservation. These have been referenced in the main text in a supplementary way – merely to reinforce or give some clarity to the points raised by the text; these are all accessible electronically. Referring to case-studies in this way was preferable to replicating images or providing other photographic material mainly because of the difficulty in obtaining suitable images.

In this connection, it needs saying that during this research the author discovered that gaining access to documentation in museums and galleries is not straight forward. Typically, documentation is filed in the respective conservation departments and *not* freely accessible – unlike, for example, in a public library. At one well-known institution the Freedom of Information Act (which entered force in January 2005) was negated by the Data Protection Act. At another, the author was advised that the charge for images was £30 per image – which did not include related documentation. Moreover, when documentation was made available the quality of the images was poor and therefore not publishable. Hard-copies of published case-studies, which can be obtained by printing them or by inter-library loan (which are usually black-and-white photocopies) means also that the quality of the images is a problem. Therefore (for this thesis), a brief description of the kind of work done is provided in the main text together with the relevant URL so that the reader can access the complete case-study (as with all book and journal references).

The author also found that documentation filed in training institutes (such as universities) can also be difficult to access. And there are also ethical issues to consider; for instance, it is clearly unfair to present students’ work in a critical light. And usually the institutions do not tend to allow access without the students’ permission. This again is (rightly) due to Data Protection. In one particular instance, the author was advised that permission must be sought through the relevant Faculty, who might then approach the student (assuming they know their whereabouts) who might themselves require permission from the owner of the object. The only time

that work was relatively straight forward to examine was at Degree Shows but these are annual events. In addition to this, dealers and collectors do not tend to like students photographing how their finest objects have been restored. Therefore, in the author's experience, the field was (at times) not easy to research.

But it is also important to recognise that there are inherent limitations of using images and other photographic material – which might be interpreted inconsistently; for instance, it is not possible to capture a gradual qualitative decline in competence in the restoration field photographically. How (for example) would a photograph depict, definitively, restoration work that has been executed with only reasonable competence or convincingly image a poorly applied (or 'wrongly' chosen) surface-finish? In addition to this, most images would be illegible in black-and-white format and therefore subsequent copies of this thesis in black-and-white could lead to further confusion / misinterpretation. Another limitation of images is that they do not reveal the proficiency (i.e. efficiency) with which something was done – which is a vital (and sometimes obscure) underlying quality of competence. And (finally) it was felt that photographic images could not, in any real sense, capture the essence of the wider ideological issues that are raised by this thesis and would risk detracting from this primary purpose. For these reasons, this is a theoretical and literature-based study which has chosen not to rest its case on images.

The interviews / discussions and personal observations formed much of the work undertaken in the second year of this research; the theoretical ideas were developed concurrently. This ensured that the author had some understanding of the wider ideological issues in the field, such as the C19th. arguments about the wholesale reconstruction of medieval architecture (which gave definition to the terms 'conserve' and 'restore') and the antagonism between the characteristically scientific / technical and the arts and humanities aspects of the sector.³ It has been suggested that this latter phenomenon relates to the professionalisation of the discipline of conservation which has been described as undergoing a 'paradigm shift' at a

³ The historical debate between what it means to 'conserve' and 'restore' and the relationship between the scientific / technical and the arts and humanities aspects is well-noted in architectural restoration, paintings and sculpture; see for example, *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price (*et al*), The Getty Conservation Institute, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996.

European-wide level, developing from a craftsman-based approach and thinking to a scientific and research-based academic discipline.⁴ The interviews were in many ways an attempt to reveal how this (so-called) ‘paradigm shift’, apparently augmented by professionalisation, manifested itself in practice⁵ and whether there was a consensus around the view that there has been a decline in standards of competence.

It is important to note here that someone who has been assessing standards nationally over the past fifteen years is in a good position to comment on standards of competence but someone who has been teaching in a single institution (even for a longer period of time) would not necessarily have this perspective. The interview with Richard Higgins (for example) is an important one because of his many years experience in assessing standards nationally.⁶ In addition to this, practitioners (and other professionals) may be aware of the increased use of modern materials in restoration but do not readily relate this to levels of competence. In this sense, it was the author that maintained the connection between how the materials that are used in practice relates directly to standards of competence – which in turn determines the stock of knowledge in the field. The recognition that the use of such materials typically requires less competence (modern materials invariably require less expertise to apply than traditional materials) and that their use has increased in recent times, adds to the hypothesis that there has been a decline in competence.

Through this fieldwork, combined with the study of key literature, this thesis considered the following questions: Why does the discipline of conservation advocate the scholarly study of material culture, set out to explain in a scientific way the materials of which it is made, and the nature and the causes of its deterioration, while at the same time advocating its restoration / repair / maintenance in an intentionally abstract and superficial (and sometimes arguably deceptive) way? In what way is such ‘non-like’ restoration authentic? And finally, in light of this: is the

⁴ R. Larsen, ‘Comments to FULCO – A Framework of Competence for Conservator-Restorers in Europe’. *A Discussion Paper for the Vienna Meeting 30th Nov - 1st Dec 1998*. ENCoRE Newsletter, March 1999. Available from: <http://www.kulturnet.dk/homes/ks/encore/> [Accessed on 7th February 2005].

⁵ The author believes that taken together the essence of this (so-called) ‘paradigm shift’ is captured in the interviews.

⁶ R. Higgins, *Interview with the author* (by telephone), 11th October 2005.

discipline of conservation passing on to future generations, their inheritance ‘in the full richness of its authenticity?’⁷

Now, in the endeavour to find some answers to these questions it was essential to take into account how such materials are interpreted from one context to another; there are, for instance, differences between practice in the public sector and the general expectations of the private sector. This disparity necessitated a closer look at some of the most influential literature from further a-field, such as, museums and archaeology, architecture and the fine arts – ideas and methods from all of which (as this study will illustrate) have come together to form the basis of professionalisation in the discipline of conservation. Key literature is discussed next.

0.1.3: Literature review

In terms of key literature, it was (as suggested above) necessary to examine wider influences which were fundamental to this thesis in a critical light. But it is important that the reader recognise that this is not necessarily in terms of the context for which the key literature was written but in a critical light with respect to how the ideas have been applied to contexts for which they were not necessarily written. With respect to this, there are two outstanding texts worthy of note – one of which was published during the course of this research. These are Jukka Jokilehto’s *A History of Architectural Conservation*⁸ and Laurajane Smith’s *Uses of Heritage*.⁹ There is inevitably a degree of overlap between some of the ideas expressed in both of these texts but there are some very important differences between them and this thesis, outlined below.

With respect to Jokilehto’s *A History of Architectural Conservation*; firstly (and most obviously) it concerns architecture – much of which might typically be described as archaeological in kind. The text is, nonetheless, broad-ranging and provides a

⁷ *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites: ‘The Venice Charter’*, held at the 2nd International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), Venice, 1964. Available from: http://www.icomos.org/docs/venice_charter.html [Accessed on 15th October 2003]. The word ‘its’ (as used here) has replaced ‘their’ in the original text.

⁸ J. Jokilehto, *A History of Architectural Conservation*, Butterworth-Heinemann, 1999.

⁹ L. Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, Routledge: in press at the time of writing this thesis but due for publication in August 2006.

comprehensive study of the history of heritage preservation. The similarities (with this thesis) lie in Jokilehto's interpretation of the development of Western culture evidenced in, for example, the apparent transition from 'traditional' to 'modern', or the influence of Enlightenment philosophy and the subsequent emergence of the so-called 'modern historical consciousness'. He also discusses how the wholesale restoration of religious monuments in England in the C19th. was linked to a resurgence of religious zeal which in turn informed the reactionary tendencies of the conservation movement – described as a 'monument cult' – which was spearheaded by John Ruskin and his followers. And although Jokilehto acknowledges the importance of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (jointly founded in 1877 by John Ruskin and William Morris), he does not mention the influence of the Arts and Crafts Movement (inspired by Ruskin and Morris) nor the legacy of its vision of heritage preservation (which is discussed in this thesis).

However, Jokilehto does mention the establishment of the modern practice of archaeology and the various European theories and concepts that have developed around it throughout the C20th. – including a brief account of Cesare Brandi's influence. However, his view is given from what might be described as an art-historical perspective and does not explain in any detail the reductionist methodology that underpins Brandi's abstract approach to restoration. Jokilehto also acknowledges the figures of Paul Philippot and Harold Plenderleith and their influence (including Brandi's) on the development of the field of conservation – particularly through their association with the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), Rome. Their combined influence on the understanding of heritage in Europe (and throughout the West) is important to this thesis.

Jokilehto's text also covers recent trends such as, the importance of values and how this relates to the concept of authenticity. However, although he mentions the *Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994)¹⁰ he misrepresents this document by providing a definition of authenticity (which was elaborated with Paul Philippot) which does not

¹⁰ *The Nara Document on Authenticity* drafted at the Nara Conference on Authenticity in relation to the World Heritage Convention, Nara, Japan, 1994. Available from: http://www.international.icomos.org/naradoc_eng.htm [Accessed on 14th May 2004].

reflect that which was represented by the *Nara Document* – which related to *process* and (unlike Jokilehto) was not limited to original materials and form. Consequently, Jokilehto's (and Philippot's) perception of authenticity is different to that represented by key documents published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in recent years. These documents, together with the work of the Getty Conservation Institute, the Smithsonian Institution and the Nara Conference on Authenticity are discussed at length in this thesis. Key heritage declarations, charters and conferences from around the world which reveal recent trends are also examined.

Jokilehto mentions the scientific approach to restoration but this he describes in terms of materials and techniques used in practice not in the broad historiographical sense of the meaning (developed by this thesis). Also (and arguably consequently), he tends to interpret 'values' as inherent qualities of objects (i.e. tangible heritage) and not as a condition of the cultural milieu from which they are generated – a necessary recognition in (for example) the safeguarding of the intangible heritage. It can be argued, therefore, that Jokilehto's understanding of heritage is largely born out of the Western intellectual tradition (and which therefore may generically be understood as 'Western materialism'). And it is (arguably) because of this, that he emphasises the *materiality* of the past, but (unlike this thesis) does not take into account the importance of intangible heritage.

In contrast with this, Smith's *Uses of Heritage* challenges traditional Western definitions of heritage that focus on the materiality of the past which she argues promotes an unchallenging and consensual view of both the past and the present. In so doing, Smith highlights the function of an 'authorised' concept of heritage which she argues is used to reinforce particular cultural identities in a socially conservative way. Smith subsequently develops an alternative conception of heritage around themes of memory, performance, identity, intangibility, dissonance and place. Again, there is a degree of overlap with this thesis – particularly with respect to the authorising institutions of heritage which (in this thesis) are identified as the scientific / technical and political-institutional sectors. Also, Smith's reference to control (which she explains in relation to Western archaeology undertaken in areas where indigenous cultures live) is not unlike the ideas represented herein regarding

the dominance of the scientific approach to heritage and which (this thesis argues) is not very good at taking into account alternative reasons for preserving the past (such as those which have become embodied in the concept of the intangible).

The key difference between Smith's *Uses of Heritage* and this thesis lies in the ideological thrust of her text which (as the title indicates) essentially focuses on the *use* to which tangible heritage is put in order to evoke a sense of the past. This 'sense' is understood as 'memory' – which is a definitive aspect of intangible heritage. In this thesis the parameters are aligned to focus on how intangible heritage is evoked and sustained in the performance of (re-)creating the historical document (i.e. the tangible heritage) through the processes of maintenance / repair / restoration. Therefore, in some respects, this thesis 'sits between' these two seminal texts.

Other recent texts related more specifically to the discipline of conservation worthy of special mention and which are referenced in this thesis are Elizabeth Pye's, *Caring for the Past: Issues in Conservation for Archaeology and Museums*¹¹ and Chris Caple's, *Conservation Skills: Judgement, Method and Decision Making*.¹² Although Pye acknowledges that there are different perspectives about heritage in different contexts, her text (as the title once again indicates) is essentially based around the practice of archaeological conservation in the museum environment. In relation this, Pye advocates what can be described as a superficial approach to restoration (based primarily on the visual appearance of the 'tangible' object) which is intended to aid its understanding – and which is (contentiously) believed to respect the original maker's creative intentions. This is based on the definition of restoration provided by (for example) the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (UKIC) and the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) and which is reinforced by the *Venice Charter*¹³ and the

¹¹ E. Pye, *Caring for the Past: Issues in Conservation for Archaeology and Museums*, James and James, 2001.

¹² C. Caple, *Conservation Skills: Judgement, Method and Decision Making*, Routledge, 2000.

¹³ *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites: 'The Venice Charter'*, held at the 2nd International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), Venice, 1964. Available from: http://www.icomos.org/docs/venice_charter.html [Accessed on 15th October 2003].

Burra Charter.¹⁴

Pye also provides an interesting history of conservation (which she traces back to Pliny the Elder) which reveals that the scientific basis of conservation originates historically in archaeology. However, although Pye discusses the scientific basis of conservation, this is essentially from the point of view of practice and not in the wider epistemological sense mentioned above. It is, therefore, important to note that this is a history of a particular methodological approach to conservation – not heritage preservation *per se*. Pye does not mention Cesare Brandi (the ideas upon which the professional field of conservation has been established internationally – as this thesis will show) but she does refer to *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*¹⁵ (reviewed below) which discusses ideas developed around the fine arts – particularly paintings and architecture.

In this connection, Pye notes that in archaeological conservation theoretical discussion is underdeveloped, suggesting the need for the discipline to draw on such wider influences. Consequently, although conservation ethics are mentioned, there is little discussion about the theoretical underpinnings of such ethics. Importantly, the text Pye refers to (i.e. *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*) provides only an edited version of fine arts restoration theory which omits the philosophical assumptions that underlie it (and therefore also conservation ethics). This thesis provides a thorough examination of Cesare Brandi's *Theory of Restoration*¹⁶ in order to clarify this.

Part of the historical discussion provided by Pye includes the names of key figures in the archaeo-museological field of conservation such as, Harold Plenderleith. And although Pye also mentions the influence of Ruskin and Morris (through for example, the founding of SPAB), a discussion of their influences and how and by whom their ideas were put into practice is not provided. Consequently, the historical distinction between what it means to 'conserve' (a term commonly associated with

¹⁴ *The Australian ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance: 'The Burra Charter'*, adopted by the Australian National Committee of ICOMOS, 1979. Updated version available from: <http://www.icomos.org/australia/burra.html>

¹⁵ *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price (*et al*), The Getty Conservation Institute, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996.

¹⁶ C. Brandi, *Theory of Restoration*, Nardini Editore, 2005 (first published in 1963).

Ruskin and Morris) and to ‘restore’ (frequently associated with Eugene Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc) which Pye uses to justify the role of contemporary ‘scientific’ conservation (as if fulfilling Ruskin’s legacy) is overly simplified and misleading because it does not take into account their conflicting positions regarding the *process* of restoration – in particular with respect to the use of modern materials and techniques.

This understanding (which is nearly 150 years old) is partly because of Pye’s failure to take into consideration how the concept of authenticity has developed over the past four decades (since the concept was introduced by the *Venice Charter* in 1964) particularly through the agency of UNESCO. Consequently, Pye’s understanding of intangible heritage – which is bound to the concept of authenticity – is also overlooked (or at best misunderstood). In this sense, Pye’s understanding is similar to Jokilehto’s (above) and does not take into account how the process of restoration determines the historical document itself and that this is recognised today as vital to sustaining historical authenticity. In connection with this, although Pye mentions the *Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994)¹⁷ she does not take into account the key aspects of authenticity developed by the *Nara Document*. This is a vital omission. This thesis attempts to bring clarity to the issues by foregrounding the relevant historical arguments and locating them in the context of recent trends in contemporary preservation theory.

Importantly, Pye acknowledges the cultural significance of heritage and explains (contentiously) that in the West the idea of cultural significance is a relatively recent phenomenon. This is a peculiar thought given the accumulation of innumerable collections of tangible heritage in Western institutions (which infers that such collections have been developed with disregard to their cultural significance). Yet interestingly, both the disciplines of archaeology and (by extension) conservation are the outcome of the need to care for and study such collections; disciplines which have at the same time assumed responsibility for their restoration.

¹⁷ *The Nara Document on Authenticity*, drafted at the Nara Conference on Authenticity in relation to the World Heritage Convention, Nara, Japan, 1994. Available from: http://www.international.icomos.org/naradoc_eng.htm [Accessed on 14th May 2004].

With respect to the practice of restoration, although Pye acknowledges the importance of materials and techniques in, for example, thatching and industrial machinery – she does not explain why such traditional craft practices should be limited to such heritage. Surely the idea of authentic process (suggested here) could / should be essential to other heritage domains – not least our vast museum collections? This is all the more important given that Pye acknowledges that museum pieces – particularly those that are well-known (and usually therefore considered the most important) – are restored more frequently for this very reason. The idea of authentic restoration and the role of the traditional arts and crafts are important to this thesis and are discussed at length.

In Pye's *Caring for the Past* the conservator is positioned in such a way to mediate the 'otherness' of cultural significance (i.e. the so-called intangible aspects). However, this infers that it is possible for the conservator to 'stand outside' of the cultural milieu in which he/she exists (which would be necessary if they are to make such 'objective' judgements) – which is *de facto* nonsensical. Such positions are perhaps assumed partly because of the somewhat 'neutral' and 'disengaged' nature of the museum context in which the modern 'scientific' conservator's role originated. However, this view does tend to underpin the conservators' role as managers of tangible heritage and therefore also (although it is unclear to what extent) as controllers and mediators of meaning – which is surely contentious. This thesis argues that this positioning of the conservator has contributed to many of the conceptual issues identified by Pye (such as the importance of significance, values, and authenticity) but which remain undeveloped in her text (and problematical within the field as a whole).

In connection with this, Pye acknowledges the lack of recognition of what she refers to as 'manual skills' but (significantly) she fails to link this to the idea(s) of authenticity; and intangible heritage as a determining factor of authenticity. Indeed, she does not develop discussion around the practice of restoration in any real depth. Finally, while Pye does make clear the role that archaeological conservation has played in the development of the conservation profession, her accounts (being published in 2001) do not take into consideration the most recent documents with respect to professionalisation – which are examined in detail in this thesis.

Chris Caple's views about conservation and restoration discussed in his *Conservation Skills* are also developed from an archaeological perspective (and are therefore not dissimilar to Pye's, above). However, his ideas are applied to non-archaeological heritage. In fact, Caple makes explicit that they are intended to be for all forms of tangible heritage – which is surely contentious? Nonetheless, by focusing directly on what is done to the object, Caple provides some very useful ideas about judgement and decision-making in practice. However, it needs saying that his ideas do tend to reflect the institutionalised environment within which a conservator (in the archaeological sense) works. As such (perhaps inevitably), he does not develop discussion around the fact that such judgements are (necessarily) pre-conditioned by the institution within and for which decisions are ultimately made.

For instance, in museums (and related institutes) the primary values considered in the preservation of tangible heritage are typically the 'aesthetic' and the 'historical' (Caple describes objects as 'historic documents' and 'aesthetic entities'). This does not necessarily incorporate (for instance) the social, the religious and/or the spiritual particularities of culture. Such judgements (and therefore intentions) may thus be described (at best) as limited. In a general sense, this view does not necessarily alter when the museum conservator considers (for treatment) objects outside of his/her 'home' environment; a situation which has no doubt contributed to tension in the field between public and private sector practitioners.

Caple discusses the nature of conservation in detail but discussion around the nature of restoration in the sense of what is *added to* the historical document (which is an integral part of conservation) is disproportionately lacking. For instance, his 'Revelation, Investigation, Preservation (RIP)' model omits 'Restoration' altogether – despite being a common enough practice in museums. It does, nonetheless, provide a very useful guide to how the practice of conservation is understood in the public sector generally. It is, therefore, important to note that the three core elements of Caple's 'RIP' model means that the whole thrust of practice is towards removing that which is not valued (such as un-original material) and then suspending the object in time (which is, of course, what museums have always done).

Therefore, although Caple describes the object as an ‘historic document’ he does not explain how the process of restoration might enhance or hinder this (or even sustain it authentically). That is to say, in no sense is it made clear that the object transcends time and that by this orientation towards removal and suspension there no longer *is* (in any real and meaningful sense) a historical document from the moment of ‘suspension’ onwards. In other words, Caple does not make clear how the process of restoration is in itself a form of cultural expression (whatever the context) which sustains the object and which therefore contributes (or arguably *should* contribute) to its meaning-conferring qualities. Therefore, it can be argued that Caple’s ‘RIP’ model (which is also an acronym for ‘Rest In Piece’ – which infers ‘death’) is restricted (inevitably) by the institutionalised environment whence it was conceived. Once again, this thesis explores these issues at length.

In connection with this, Caple briefly discusses the ideas developed in the C19th. by Ruskin and Morris (and implies the common distinction between what it is to ‘conserve’ and to ‘restore’ described above). However, his interpretation of heritage preservation overlooks the importance that these leading figures conferred upon the traditional arts and crafts and therefore does not reflect the Ruskin-Morris philosophy (as later put into practice through the SPAB and the Arts and Crafts Movement); a philosophy which this thesis argues has become central to contemporary heritage preservation theory.

Caple does provide an interesting history of the practice of scientific conservation which shows the association of archaeology with the modern discipline of artefact conservation – exemplified in particular in the work of Harold Plenderleith. Indeed, Caple’s work (and perhaps for that matter Pye’s too) might be described as an extension of Plenderleith’s. However (to reiterate), their ideas about conservation and restoration tend to be limited to the aesthetic and the historical value of tangible heritage which together form the basis of conservation ethics and are a characteristic of the scientific basis of practice. This is largely attributable to the wide influence of Cesare Brandi’s theory of restoration. And although Brandi’s methods are discussed, his influence on the field of conservation internationally (in terms of its methodological approach to restoration) is notably understated; this thesis subjects

Brandi's approach to a rather more sustained critique.

Finally, although Caple emphasises the importance of 'knowledge' in judgement and decision-making, his *Conservation Skills* exhibits no understanding of how the concept of authenticity has developed over the past forty years; for instance, he does not mention the *Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994)¹⁸ or intangible heritage in relation to this. This is a crucial omission because it throws into question the authenticity of restoration that does not take these broader aspects into account. This thesis examines the relatedness between intangible heritage and authenticity to offer an account that is at odds with that developed by Caple (and Pye).

Both Caple's and Pye's texts are what might be described as object-focused in the sense that they do not develop enough discussion around the idea that actions are governed by *many* intangibles. This is because, in terms of archaeological conservation and restoration, they tend to be limited to dimensions of the object they refer to as the 'aesthetic' and the 'historical'. In this sense, the conservator's intentions are narrow. Both texts reflect the institutional context out of which they have been developed (which has no doubt contributed to this apparent narrowness).

Another relatively recent and important publication considered during the course of researching this thesis was *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*.¹⁹ The influence of this publication on the practice of conservation and restoration cannot be overestimated. It arrived at a time when the discipline of conservation was endeavouring to establish itself as a profession in the mid-1990's. It is for this reason that there are a number of important issues developed by the text that are relevant to this thesis that need mentioning.

Perhaps most notably, the ideas expressed in this compilation of papers are first and foremost most relevant to fine arts heritage – in particular, paintings, sculpture and monuments (including archaeological). However, the monuments referred to tend to

¹⁸ *The Nara Document on Authenticity*, drafted at the Nara Conference on Authenticity in relation to the World Heritage Convention, Nara, Japan, 1994. Available from: http://www.international.icomos.org/naradoc_eng.htm [Accessed on 14th May 2004].

¹⁹ *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price (*et al*), The Getty Conservation Institute, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996.

be of the national architectural types such as, churches and cathedrals and other well-known ‘stately’ buildings – there is no mention of (for example) vernacular architecture. In addition to this, in terms of the wider practice of conservation and restoration, there is no mention of (for example) the decorative arts and crafts (most relevant to this study), and specialist areas such as, furniture, clocks, industrial machinery, textiles, paper and so on. And whereas the ideas expressed may have some relevance to such other domains, the well-known Western art canon of connoisseurship (i.e. Western aesthetics) expressed *in words* by authors such as, Berenson, Bell, Clark, Ruskin, and Wolfflin – were surely not written with these fields in mind. Taken together their views create a very negative image of the practice of restoration – characterised by Friedlander, for example, as: ‘...a necessary evil’.²⁰ Perhaps it is as well then, that neither he nor any of the above contributors were restorers.

Ruskin and Morris’s polemical views about restoration are of particular interest to this thesis, but this publication omits any account of the Arts and Crafts practitioners who gave practical shape to their ideological vision. However, their ideas, by appearing in just about every conservation text published in recent times (including Pye’s *Caring for the Past* and Caple’s *Conservation Skills*) have become thoroughly well-established in the modern discipline of conservation and the anti-restoration sentiment entrenched within it. But does practice reflect their vision? This thesis takes a closer look at how Ruskin and Morris’s C19th. ideals were given practical shape in the century that followed.

Not unrelated to this, there are some important writings in *Historical and Philosophical Issues* with respect to the role of science and technology in conservation-restoration practice by (in particular) Coremans, Torraca and Urbani. These, combined with the writings of Paul Philippot (a central figure in the establishment of conservation as a scientific discipline internationally through his work at ICCROM and his association with Brandi and Plenderleith), have been very significant with respect to the remit of this thesis. Philippot’s admonition of the

²⁰ M. Friedlander, ‘On Restorations’, in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price (*et al*), The Getty Conservation Institute, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996 (pp.332-334).

traditional arts and crafts as: ‘misled’ and ‘faked expression’²¹ (and therefore ethically illegitimate) – expressed under the title ‘Historic Preservation: Philosophy, Criteria, Guidelines’ – was of particular interest in the sense that it suggests what might be construed as an anti-craft attitude (which arguably coalesces with the anti-restoration sentiment mentioned above). The reasoning behind such a contentious view (which is subsequently used to legitimise the scientific approach) is not given in any depth by Philippot but is discussed in this thesis in terms of its legitimacy.

In addition to this, the opposing of the figure of Eugene-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc ‘restorer’ to the figure of Ruskin and Morris ‘conservator’ is (again) overly simplistic, underdeveloped and (perhaps inevitably) misleading. It, nonetheless, goes some way to sanctifying the contemporary ‘mission’ of conservation – i.e. the conquest of the ‘good’ conservator over the ‘evil’ and ‘deceptive’ craftsman-restorer. This research will argue that this view is untenable and that such a view is (mistakenly) grounded in the writings of Cesare Brandi – a figure who is held in high regard in the public sector – and augmented by ill-considered notions of professionalism.

In relation to this (and most relevant to this study), is the inclusion in *Historical and Philosophical Issues* of excerpts of Brandi’s *Theory of Restoration*²² – amounting to only twenty-five pages (the English text published in 2005 is 186 pages). This is important because the selection does not include the philosophical and methodological arguments upon which Brandi’s theory was elaborated – a vital omission, which will be made clearer in this thesis. Also, the text does not illuminate how or why Brandian theory has become the basis of international professionalisation (and all that this entails) and the ever-increasing domains of heritage that it encompasses – issues also discussed in this thesis.

It would appear then, that through the publication of *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage* (and the comment made by Pye above) that the discipline of archaeology – hitherto bereft of a theory of restoration –

²¹ P. Philippot, ‘Historic Preservation: Philosophy, Criteria, Guidelines, I’, in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price (*et al*), The Getty Conservation Institute, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996 (pp.268-274).

²² C. Brandi, *Theory of Restoration*, Nardini Editore, 2005 (first published in 1963).

now has one. However, these ideas were developed around paintings and sculpture (and limited to certain kinds of architecture) and are therefore by no-means ideal for other heritage domains (such as those mentioned above) in which it is now functioning through its (apparent) universal adoption (and which has formed the basis of the professional discipline of conservation). The implication of this (mis-) appropriation of Brandian theory forms a central part of this thesis.

In relation to this, there are some key institutions (and related publications) that have also been influential in the establishment of the professional discipline of conservation. The most notable of these is the International Council of Museums (ICOM) – whose influential definition of the conservator-restorer (1984) was entirely based upon fine arts restoration theory (and so implicitly Brandian). The European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations (ECCO),²³ for example, later (in 1993) adopted the ICOM definition – thereby preserving the influence of the museum sector and making Brandian theory (by now explicitly) the basis of European-wide professionalisation. In this regard, the ICOM definition and the formal documentation of ECCO are of particular relevance to this study and form a significant element of the literature.

The literature around codes of ethics have also been of great interest, emerging from institutions like the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC), the Australian Institute for Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM), the International Institute of Conservation-Canada (IIC-Canada) and the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (UKIC). Such literature has been employed to bring about international standardisation of the field (another important aspect of this study). More specific to the United Kingdom, this thesis has reviewed the literature published in relation to the recently formed Institute of Conservation (ICON) – which has adopted the ECCO guidelines. This includes various papers published in association with the Society of Archivists (SoA) – which are also examined in this thesis.

In line with these developments, this thesis also considers a number of other

²³ The European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations (ECCO) – documents available from <http://www.ecco-eu.info/>

relatively recent publications – all similar in kind – relating to the practice of conservation (including those referred to above). For example, in furniture and the decorative arts, *Conservation of Furniture*;²⁴ *Upholstery Conservation: principles and practice*;²⁵ *Lacquer: Technology and Conservation*.²⁶ These are referred to in this thesis mainly to show how these areas of heritage have developed in recent times. Of particular interest is the technical-orientation of the most recent publications which attests to the scientific basis of conservation. Consequently, these texts are quite unlike earlier craft-oriented publications such as, *Antique Furniture Repairs*;²⁷ *The Restorers' handbook of Furniture*;²⁸ *Discovering and Restoring Antique Furniture*;²⁹ *Upholstery Restoration*;³⁰ and *Classic Finishing Techniques*³¹ - all essentially what might be described as practice-based texts. This apparent re-orientation of the field as reflected in the literature (and which has occurred concurrently with the processes of professionalisation) is very important to this thesis because it represents what has been referred to as a 'paradigm shift' in the field from a craft-based approach and thinking to scientific one.³² This is central to the idea of epistemological fracture that underpins this thesis.

The *Conservation of Furniture*, for example, has been described as the definitive text on the professional practice of furniture conservation,³³ so it is worthy of consideration here. Perhaps what makes this publication stand out, in the first instance, is its size – some 800 pages dedicated to various aspects of conservation including furniture history, a wide range of materials (including plastics and polymers, organics and metals), their physical characteristics and reasons for their deterioration, approaches to conservation (including principles of) and an admirable section on traditional gilding. However, what also stands out is how scientific and

²⁴ S. Rivers (*et al*), *Conservation of Furniture*, Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003.

²⁵ D. Eastop, (*et al*), *Upholstery Conservation: principles and practice*, Butterworth-Heinemann, 2001.

²⁶ M. Webb, *Lacquer: Technology and Conservation*, Butterworth Heinemann, 2000.

²⁷ C. Hayward, *Antique Furniture Repairs*, Evans Brothers, 1976.

²⁸ D. Alcouffe, *The Restorers' Handbook of Furniture*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1977.

²⁹ M. Bennett, *Discovering and Restoring Antique Furniture*, Cassell, 1990.

³⁰ D. James, *Upholstery Restoration*, Guild of Master Craftsman, 1997.

³¹ S. Allen, *Classic Finishing Techniques*, Sterling, 1994.

³² R. Larsen, 'Comments to FULCO – A Framework of Competence for Conservator-Restorers in Europe'. A Discussion Paper for the Vienna Meeting 30th Nov - 1st Dec 1998. ENCoRE Newsletter, March 1999. Available from: <http://www.kulturnet.dk/homes/ks/encore/> [Accessed on 7th February 2005].

³³ This view is based on general comments made to the author during his fieldwork.

technical this text is – compared to its earlier equivalents.

It might also be described as archaeological in the sense that the principles of practice are derived from precisely the same sources (i.e. the UKIC, AIC etc.) as Pye's and Caple's texts, discussed above. And in this connection, it is in its advocacy of the use of modern 'non-like' materials and techniques for restoration that marks this publication out from the characteristically practice-based manuals (mentioned above) which essentially discuss how to do 'like-for-like' restoration (hence their craft-based, and unscientific orientation). And discussion around wider concepts such as, authenticity and intangible heritage is similarly (as with Pye's and Caple's texts) not developed; something which this thesis seeks to redress.

Although it needs acknowledging that the information contained within *Conservation of Furniture* may be useful to practice – especially in terms of preserving the materials (which may be the primary intention within museums but which is frequently not the case outside of such contexts) – in terms of the practice of *restoration*, it can be argued that this is of little benefit if the practitioner is not him/herself a master of his/her art/craft. The text does not make this clear. One would have thought this is a vital omission given that restoration is (by definition) a central aspect of the discipline of conservation. It is also, therefore, potentially misleading. In this regard, there is only *one* illustration of restoration (in the *adding to* sense) on a piece of furniture given in the 800 pages of text; the replacement of a small piece of veneer.³⁴ This is the level of restoration one can expect to be taught in the first few months of a Higher National Diploma (HND) – hardly, therefore, exemplary of the *supreme levels of artisanship* frequently demanded by the most esteemed heritage (such as that housed in our national institutions).

Much of the remainder of the text focuses on the surface finish of objects and how to clean them but *not* on complex restoration problems, such as (for instance), the replacement of major losses (at least 30%) in (for example) veneer-work (such as marquetry or Boulle-work). And there is no information about major repairs to case furniture such as, splitting and warpage or missing drawers or table-leaves. Discussion

³⁴ S. Rivers (*et al*), *Conservation of Furniture*, Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003 (p.447).

around carving is also limited, and where this is mentioned it is contentious; for example, it describes how: ‘...the cheaper and reproducible processes of moulding were used to duplicate the qualities of more laborious carving and polishing’.³⁵ Such strategies would (surely) be anathema to a master carver and yet this book was (apparently) intended: ‘...to provide a benchmark for all those involved in caring for our heritage’.³⁶ The questions around the materials and techniques used for restoration are a central feature of this thesis because it not only determines the physical make-up of the historical document but it also brings concepts such as, authenticity and intangible heritage into play. And although Cesare Brandi is mentioned, his influence on the field of conservation is understated; all aspects this research aims to make clear.

Not unrelated to this, in general terms, the *Conservation of Furniture* noticeably downplays the *process* of restoration (to the point of virtually omitting the term altogether – again, not unlike Pye’s and Caple’s texts, discussed earlier) and the knowledge necessary to this – in particular traditional art/craft expertise. At the same time, the reading of this text, which employs the vocabulary and syntax of a scientific language, in no sense cultivates the kinds of aesthetic sensibilities (i.e. intangibles) necessary for the highest quality of practice. Moreover, there is no theoretical explanation as to why a scientific approach should form such a prominent role in what is essentially the conservation and restoration of artistic heritage. And (to reiterate) while such scientific / technical information (and related materials) is undoubtedly useful for retarding the decay of objects, it can be argued that this alone does not enhance the meaning-conferring qualities of the historical document in restoration – especially in terms of its historical authenticity. How for instance, can ‘non-like’ restoration be considered authentic? And surely it can be argued that when: ‘...cheaper and reproducible processes of moulding [are] used to duplicate the qualities of more laborious carving and polishing’³⁷ *this* kind of imitation would be a ‘faked expression’ (to use Philippot’s terms). Again, these are issues explored in this thesis.

³⁵ S. Rivers (*et al*), 2003 (p.124).

³⁶ S. Rivers (*et al*), 2003 (p.241).

³⁷ S. Rivers (*et al*), 2003 (p.124).

In addition to the above texts there are other publications referred to in this thesis written around particular case-studies of work undertaken in various institutions, such as those collected in the British Museum's *The Art of the Conservator*.³⁸ This publication has an interesting introduction by Oddy about the professionalisation of conservation and its distinction from related fields such as, the traditional arts and crafts (seemingly an aspect of the so-called 'paradigm shift', mentioned above). A number of similar academic papers are also referred to throughout this thesis mainly derived from the work of the Wooden Artefacts Group of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) together with some examples from the Victoria and Albert Museum. These in-house records are used in order to illustrate the arguments developed by this thesis.

Other texts recommended to the author with respect to locating suitable case-studies include *The Conservation of Decorative Arts*³⁹ and *Gilded Wood: Conservation and History*.⁴⁰ However, the case-studies detailed in both these publications are not complex in terms of restoration (in the sense of *adding to* the historical document). That is to say that the objects were virtually all intact with little or no requirement for major loss-compensation (such as described above). In this sense (again), most of the treatments focused on the surface of the objects such as, how they were cleaned and/or stripped back to 'reveal' the original. Publications of this kind have therefore not proved useful for providing case-studies of restoration.

Two useful publications by the British Museum which brought to light the disparity in the field over the practice of restoration were: *Restoration: Is it Acceptable?*⁴¹ and *The Interface between Science and Conservation*⁴² together with (in a wider sense) Beck's *Art Restoration: the culture the business the scandal*.⁴³ Beck's *Art Restoration* describes the 'restoration establishment' and the problems relating to what he describes as the over restoration of fine arts heritage – relating to in

³⁸ *The Art of the Conservator*, edited by A. Oddy, British Museum Press, 1992.

³⁹ *The Conservation of Decorative Arts*, edited by V. Horie, Archetype Publications, the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation (UKIC), 1999.

⁴⁰ *Gilded Wood: Conservation and History*, edited by C. Hutchins, Sound View Press, 1991.

⁴¹ *Restoration: Is it Acceptable?* edited by A. Oddy, British Museum Occasional Paper No. 99, British Museum, 1994.

⁴² *The Interface between Science and Conservation*, edited by S. Bradley, British Museum Occasional Paper No. 116, British Museum, 1997.

⁴³ J. Beck (*et al*), *Art Restoration: The Culture, the Business, the Scandal*, John Murray, 1993.

particular the use of advanced technologies which he refers to as ‘scientific restoration’ (a phrase which will be used in this thesis). However, Beck’s concerns are entirely based on discussion around the fine arts and do not take into account the wider theoretical issues of heritage preservation and how the field has developed in recent times. And although this publication is not referred to in this thesis, it does suggest that the ideas expressed herein relating to (so-called) ‘scientific restoration’ in furniture and decorative arts are relevant to other domains of heritage.

Restoration: Is it Acceptable? revealed the kinds of issues that exist in the field of conservation relating to the practice of restoration in a wide range of heritage domains. It notes (for example) that the term ‘restoration’ has largely become discredited in recent times and that ‘conservation’ is used as a euphemism for restoration. Not unrelated to this was the distinction made between the role of the conservator and the (so-called) craft ‘restorer’ and the emergence of conservation as a technologically-motivated discipline; reinforcing the idea that the perception of the historical arts and crafts from the perspective of museum-based practice is not a positive one.⁴⁴ The extent of intervention and materials and techniques used for restoration (which one writer distinguished as ‘subtractive’ and ‘additive’ restoration)⁴⁵ was a recurrent theme. However, by focusing mainly on collections in museums this publication does not take into account wider theoretical concerns – relating, for example, to what is done by museums for and on behalf of culture itself. This is important when one considers concepts such as, authenticity and intangible heritage, discussed in this thesis.

The Interface between Science and Conservation is a useful publication for showing the emergence of scientific conservation at the British Museum and shows clearly the relatedness between science and the use of modern ‘non-like’ materials for restoration. Again, the issues are mostly discussed in relation to the problems of preservation in museums. However, one particular paper by Yasunori Matsuda expressed the impact of modern ‘scientific restoration’ methods introduced to Japan

⁴⁴ This is a peculiar position for a museum to adopt given that some fine craftspeople that I spoke with during this research (who have much knowledge of museum-practice) explained how much restoration work in museums not all that long ago was qualitatively inferior.

⁴⁵ The idea of restoration in the *subtracting from* sense and in the *adding to* sense was a common one expressed to the author during his fieldwork and is used throughout this thesis.

in the 1960's by a small number of restorers who had trained in Europe (or America). This had an important effect on the role of traditional craft practices in Japan. The cultural impact of the scientific approach to heritage preservation is central to this research – and so Matsuda's paper provided useful food for thought.

While the scientific basis of tangible heritage preservation has matured throughout the scientific / technical and political-institutional sectors of Europe over the past three decades, other ideas about heritage have evolved simultaneously. These were augmented chiefly by UNESCO (as alluded to earlier) – arguably the world's principle heritage organisation – and have run *in tandem with* UNESCO's strategic course in relation to tangible heritage preservation instigated by the *World Heritage Convention*, 1972.⁴⁶ These alternative ideas have subsequently become formally known as the intangible heritage and are represented in various UNESCO recommendations and conventions such as, the UNESCO *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore*, 1989⁴⁷ and the UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 2003.⁴⁸ These key institutional documents (and others) are examined in this thesis – and again form a vital part of the literature.

The development of the concept of the intangible heritage is important because it challenges the received and authorised notions of 'heritage' developed throughout the West (although essentially European in origin). This thesis argues its effect is revealed in recent publications by the Smithsonian Institution⁴⁹ and the Getty Conservation Institute⁵⁰ who have taken the lead in redefining the nature of heritage

⁴⁶ *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (World Heritage Convention), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), adopted by the General Conference, Paris, 1972. Available from: http://whc.unesco.org/world_he.htm [Accessed 15th February 2005].

⁴⁷ *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore*, UNESCO, 1989. Available from: http://www.unesco.org/culture/laws/paris/html_eng/page1.shtml [Accessed on 15th October 2003].

⁴⁸ *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, UNESCO, 2003. Available from: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001325/132540e.pdf> [Accessed on 15th February 2004].

⁴⁹ *Safeguarding Traditional Cultures: A Global Assessment of the 1989 UNESCO Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore*, Centre for Folk-life and Cultural Heritage, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, 1999'. Available from: <http://www.folklife.si.edu/resources/Unesco/mccann.htm> [Accessed on 15th October 2003].

⁵⁰ *Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*, Getty Conservation Institute, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 2002. Available from:

preservation and its role in contemporary culture. Such texts have therefore also provided a useful point of reference for this thesis.

Although the concept of intangible heritage remains underdeveloped and thus lacks precise definition (hence the author's general definition offered above) the recent documents published by UNESCO have brought greater clarity. Crucially, they indicate the general movement towards synthesis between the tangible and the intangible heritages – an idea developed by this thesis. This has had an important effect on our understanding of authenticity and is represented by the *Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994)⁵¹ – published in association with UNESCO. However, this document has been omitted from the formal approach to tangible heritage preservation developed within the Western scientific / technical and political-institutional sectors (as evidenced in the key texts reviewed earlier). Consequently, the concept of authenticity therein remains undeveloped (still largely based on the *Venice Charter* over forty years ago when the term was first introduced).

There is, therefore, a clear need to examine the findings of the Nara Conference (upon which the *Nara Document* was based) to show how this might impact on the way conservation and restoration is understood throughout the West. This is examined in this thesis together with a review of recent heritage declarations, charters and conferences from around the world in order to illustrate how the epistemological basis of the international heritage preservation movement has been transformed in the contemporary (so-called) 'post-modern' era.

Many of these theoretical developments are discussed in Viñas's *Contemporary Theory of Restoration*.⁵² There is, therefore, a degree of overlap between some of the ideas expressed by Viñas and this thesis. However, there are also some important differences; firstly, in broad terms, *Contemporary Theory of Restoration* focuses closely on the methodologies that inform the practice of conservation rather than seeing the practice of conservation as a cultural phenomenon. This is important

http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications/pdf_publications/assessing.pdf [Accessed on 15th October 2003].

⁵¹ *The Nara Document on Authenticity* drafted at the Nara Conference on Authenticity in relation to the World Heritage Convention, Nara, Japan, 1994. Available from:

http://www.international.icomos.org/naradoc_eng.htm [Accessed on 14th May 2004].

⁵² S. Viñas, *Contemporary Theory of Conservation*, Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, 2005.

because the view adopted by Viñas suggests that conservation is a discipline that is disconnected from culture itself (and therefore in a sense abstract); a conception which he links to the primary ‘values’ upon which practice has been founded and the scientific basis of conservation. Consequently, Viñas perceives the general trend in contemporary theory with respect to cultural values as a movement from ‘objects’ to ‘subjects’ – described as ‘values-led’ conservation. This subject / object dualism is important to this thesis and forms an important element of the discussion.

Now, these wider international developments in heritage preservation theory (this thesis will argue) are not unlike the vision conceived in England in the C19th. which led to the founding of the heritage preservation movement. John Ruskin was a key figure in establishing ideas about heritage and the problem of restoration (his continued influence was clarified in the seminal texts referred to earlier). However, what remains unclear is how Ruskin’s vision of preserving heritage was far more complex than preserving historical monuments alone. And although his ideas about the wholesale reconstruction of medieval architecture were expressed in his *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*,⁵³ knowledge of this alone does not illuminate the reasons *why* he criticised such practice.

In order to improve our understanding of the thinking behind the C19th. preservation movement (which was later put into practice by William Morris, SPAB and the Arts and Crafts movement etc.) this thesis (re-)considers ideas expressed in C19th. literature in work such as, Thomas Carlyle’s, *Past and Present*,⁵⁴ and his, *Sign of the Times*;⁵⁵ Augustus Pugin’s *Contrasts or A Parallel between the Noble Edifices of the Middle Ages, and Corresponding Buildings of the Present Day: shewing the Present Decay of Taste* (1836) and *True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*.⁵⁶ Other relevant texts by Ruskin include *The Stones of Venice*,⁵⁷ his *The Storm Cloud*

⁵³ J. Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, Cassell, 1909.

⁵⁴ T. Carlyle, *Past and Present*, New York University Press, 1977 (first published in 1843).

⁵⁵ T. Carlyle, ‘Sign of the Times’, in *The Collected Works of Thomas Carlyle*, Chapman and Hall, 1858 (first published in the *Edinburgh Review*, 1829).

⁵⁶ A. Pugin, *Contrasts or A Parallel between the Noble Edifices of the Middle Ages, and Corresponding Buildings of the Present Day: shewing the Present Decay of Taste* (1836) and *True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*, this combined version published by Spire Books, 2003.

⁵⁷ J. Ruskin (edited and abridged by J. Links), *The Stones of Venice*, Pallas Editions, 2001 (originally published in 1851).

of the Nineteenth Century⁵⁸ and *Selections from the Writings of John Ruskin*.⁵⁹ All this helped reveal a broadly conceived anthropocentric vision of heritage preservation.

With respect to the contrasting positions of Ruskin / Morris and Viollet-le-Duc (oversimplified in many contemporary sources), Martin Bressani's, 'Notes on Viollet-le-Duc's Philosophy of History: Dialectics and Technology',⁶⁰ provided a useful insight together with Scott Demel's *Architectural Additions*⁶¹ - particularly with respect to the materials and techniques (i.e. the process) of restoration. The formal documents of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)⁶² proved useful too, as did Matthew Denney's PhD thesis *Arts and Crafts and Vernacular Furniture*⁶³ which provides a comprehensive account of how the arts and crafts philosophy influenced furniture design and construction.

Greater understanding of the leading C19th. protagonists' visions of heritage improves our understanding of contemporary ideas relating to the safeguarding of the intangible heritage – which has a long history in the United Kingdom. In this connection, the recent publication: *From William Morris: Building Conservation and the Arts and Crafts Cult of Authenticity, 1877-1939*⁶⁴ discusses SPAB and the Arts and Crafts Movement and argues that their relatedness was characterised by a 'modern cult of authenticity' – which (this thesis argues) can be seen to foreshadow recent developments on the international heritage scene led by UNESCO (as discussed above).

In this connection, publications such as, *Power of Place*,⁶⁵ *A Force for the Future*,⁶⁶

⁵⁸ J. Ruskin, *The Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*, 1884. Available from: <http://www.uta.edu/English/danahay/storm.html> [Accessed on 15th April 2005].

⁵⁹ J. Ruskin, *Selections from the Writings of John Ruskin*, Smith Elder and Co., London, 1865

⁶⁰ M. Bressani, 'Notes on Viollet-le-Duc's Philosophy of History: Dialectics and Technology', in *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* (JSAH) XLVIII: pp.327-350, 1989.

⁶¹ S. Demel, *Architectural Additions*, MA Thesis, 1997. Available from: <http://www.demel.net/th-ch1.html> [Accessed on 3rd December 2004].

⁶² Available from: http://www.spab.org.uk/education_scholarship_history.html

⁶³ M. Denney, *Arts and Crafts and Vernacular Furniture*, PhD Thesis, 1997.

⁶⁴ *From William Morris: Building Conservation and the Arts and Crafts Cult of Authenticity, 1877-1939*, edited by C. Miele, Yale University Press, 2005.

⁶⁵ *Power of Place*, English Heritage, 2000. Full text available from: <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.1447> [Accessed on 27th April 2006].

Sustaining our Living Heritage;⁶⁷ and the report on skills shortages by the National Heritage Training Group (NHTG)⁶⁸ and *Maintain our Heritage*⁶⁹ submitted by De Montfort University, have also been considered by this thesis. Together they show how this international trend is influencing the United Kingdom and have played a part in re-defining the role of museums in recent years – a phenomenon discussed in the following publications: *Renaissance in the Regions: a new view for English Museums*;⁷⁰ *Diversify*;⁷¹ *Too Much Stuff*;⁷² and *Museums and 21st Century Life*.⁷³

Finally, with respect to the analysis provided throughout this text there are a number of other important publications deserving of acknowledgement, and these are: A. Schutz, *Structures of the Life-World*,⁷⁴ which provides a historiographical analysis of epistemology from a phenomenological point of view. Schutz's analysis is particularly useful for understanding how the 'stock of knowledge' (his phrase) within a particular field is historically transformed when a different interpretative methodology supersedes an existing one; such as, the introduction of scientific epistemology to a field in which traditional art / craft perspectives (i.e.

⁶⁶ *The Historic Environment: A Force for the Future*, Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), 2001. Available from: http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/archive_2001/his_force_future.htm [Accessed on 27th April 2006].

⁶⁷ *Sustaining our Living Heritage*, Heritage Lottery Fund, 2002. Available from: http://www.hlf.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/AF4898F5-ADD7-4735-BC01-D2080BEC62B4/0/sustaining_heritage.pdf [Accessed on 27th April 2006].

⁶⁸ *Traditional Building Craft Skills: Skills Needs Analysis of the Built Heritage Sector in England*, National Heritage Training Group (NHTG), 2005. Available from: http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/upload/pdf/craft_skills_report.pdf [Accessed on 15th December 2005]

⁶⁹ *Maintenance Education and Training for Listed Buildings 'Maintain our Heritage'*, submitted by De Montfort Expertise Limited, Leicester, 2003. Available from: <http://www.maintainourheritage.co.uk/pdf/module6intro.pdf> [Accessed on 15th December 2005].

⁷⁰ *Renaissance in the Regions: a new view for England's museums*, The Council of Museums, Archives and Libraries, 2001. Available from: http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets/R/rennais_pdf_4382.pdf [Accessed on 15th October 2005].

⁷¹ *Renaissance museums for changing lives. Diversify! The impact of Positive Action Traineeships*, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, 2004. Available from: http://www.museumsassociation.org/asset_arena/text/on/diversify_mlaevaluation.pdf [Accessed on 15th October 2005].

⁷² *Too Much Stuff*, the National Museum Director's Conference, 2003 Available from: http://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/images/publications/too_much_stuff.pdf [Accessed on 15th October 2005].

⁷³ *Understanding the Future: Museums and 21st Century Life*, Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), Museums and Cultural Property Division, 2005 (p.12). Available from: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/31419198-35C1-4A00-8C12-CB0572EC9B57/0/UnderstandingtheFuture.pdf> [Accessed on 30th June 2005].

⁷⁴ A. Schutz, *Structures of the Life-World*, William Heinemann, 1974.

historiographies based on practice) previously prevailed. This has been useful for understanding the so-called ‘paradigm shift’ from craft to science in the field of conservation and how this changes the role of the traditional arts and crafts with regard to the practice of restoration.

The concept of ‘life-world’ (or ‘world of life’) which is used throughout this thesis in order to interpret the fundamental distinction between the tangible and intangible heritages is attributable to the philosophy of Edmund Husserl. A contemporary writer on Husserlian phenomenology is Sebastian Luft whose ‘Husserl’s Theory of Phenomenological Reduction: Between Life-World and Cartesianism’⁷⁵ has been particularly useful in understanding Cesare Brandi’s methodological approach to restoration. In addition to this, Husserl’s ‘Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man’,⁷⁶ was useful in explicating the nature of scientific activity as a ‘problem-solving enterprise’ which leads to an ‘infinite number of tasks’ and which has a tendency to present itself ‘culturally’ as the solutions to the problems *it* has created.

Christopher Dawson’s, *The Crisis of Western Education*⁷⁷ discusses – from a theological perspective – the relatedness between Christian culture and the scientific / technological order that underpins secular education. Like Herbert Marcuse’s *One Dimensional Man*⁷⁸ which has been particularly useful in understanding – from a philosophical perspective – the social, cultural and political implications of the institutionalisation of technical and rational ‘positive’ thinking manifested in the dominance of the scientific / technological order. Similarly, *Objectivity and Cultural Divergence*⁷⁹ proved a useful collection of papers, some of which discuss the problems of methodological objectivity (the basis of scientific methodology) which (it argues) has contributed to the decline of the world’s cultural diversity by purging its distinguishing metaphysical characteristics.

⁷⁵ S. Luft, ‘Husserl’s Theory of Phenomenological Reduction: Between Life-World and Cartesianism’ in *Research in Phenomenology*, 34 (pp. 198-234), The Netherlands, 2004

⁷⁶ E. Husserl, ‘Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man’, lecture delivered in Vienna, 10th May 1935 (often referred to as: ‘The Vienna Lecture’) in Edmund Husserl, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, translated with Notes and an Introduction by Quentin Lauer, Harper Torchbooks, 1965.

⁷⁷ C. Dawson, *The Crisis of Western Education*, Sheed and Ward, New York, 1961.

⁷⁸ H. Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*, Routledge, 1964

⁷⁹ *Objectivity and Cultural Divergence*, edited by S. Brown, Cambridge University Press, 1984.

The problem of cultural divergence has been identified by UNESCO and is central to the idea of safeguarding intangible heritage. Other useful texts on this subject included *Rethinking Objectivity*⁸⁰ and Hans-Georg Gadamer's *Truth and Method*⁸¹ which discusses the problems of the domination of the scientific epistemological model in Western culture which (Gadamer argues) leads to the 'discrediting' of other forms of knowledge and the subsequent 'closure' of thought. He also discusses the importance of knowledge inherited by tradition and the so-called 'impasses of historicism' – useful in understanding intangible heritage and the problems of modern historical consciousness. Roy Tseng's *The Sceptical Idealist: Michael Oakeshott as a Critic of the Enlightenment*⁸² was helpful in clarifying key philosophical positions of the European Enlightenment. Of particular relevance to this thesis is positivism in historiography and the distinction between abstract historiography and history understood as a way of living; again, fundamental to intangible heritage.

What emerges from all of this literature is that it is clear that the formal and 'authorised' conception of heritage has been shaped largely by Western state-affiliated institutions and organisations – in particular museums. But the literature also reveals the dualistic nature of the heritage field which is reflected in the subject / object distinction between the intangible and the tangible heritages, respectively. This tends to centre on our understanding of authenticity which materialises in restoration and is in turn determined by methodological tools employed in interpreting and valuing heritage. This general understanding informs the thematic structure of this thesis; an overview to the contents of which follows next.

0.1.4: Guide to the organisation of the text

This thesis is divided into a three-part structure which aims to deconstruct an ideological division in the field of conservation-restoration. Part I and Part II centre upon two primary themes: the preservation of 'tangible' heritage and the safeguarding of the 'intangible' heritage. Part III argues that the competing claims of

⁸⁰ *Rethinking Objectivity*, edited by A. Megill, Duke University Press, 1994.

⁸¹ H-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Sheed and Ward, 1975.

⁸² R. Tseng, *The Sceptical Idealist: Michael Oakeshott as a Critic of the Enlightenment*, Imprint Academic, 2003.

the tangible v. intangible heritages have a long history in the United Kingdom and have recently once more (re-)emerged in the form of a ‘post-modern’ recovery of the idea of the intangible. Each of these three constituent parts has an introduction and a conclusion. They are also each divided into chapters – each consisting of subsections – in which ideas are traced and developed to form the conclusions to the constituent parts. The initial conclusions to Part I and Part II are shown to be central to the issues raised in Part III. A final Conclusion brings together the discursive strands of the thesis and attempts to bring them to resolution.