The image shows a stone wall in a landscape, overlaid with a blue gradient. The text is white and reads: 

# The Roman Limes on the Lower Rhine: A European Border's Visibility in Landscape and Museums

by Renger de Bruin, Astrid Hertog  
and Roeland Paardekooper



**R**enger E. de Bruin studied History at the University of Utrecht. He received his Ph.D. at the same university in 1986. He worked as a researcher and lecturer at the universities of Utrecht and Leiden in the Netherlands and Greifswald in Germany. In 1994, he joined the Centraal Museum Utrecht, where he worked as curator for urban history until August 2017. Currently, he is a senior researcher at the Department of History and Art History of the University of Utrecht.

**A**strid Hertog is an art historian and museologist trained at UCL. For over 20 years, Hertog has worked in museums and heritage institutions from Programme Manager Exhibitions, to Marketing and Fundraising. She is currently the owner of Closer to Culture, a cultural management company. One of her assignments was the position of Director for the Roman Limes Foundation Netherlands. She was a board member of ICOM Netherlands from 2011 until 2017.

**R**oeland Paardekooper is Director of the ICOM Affiliated Organisation EXARC (International Organisation of Archaeological Open-Air Museums and Experimental Archaeology). He received his Ph.D. from the University of Exeter. Paardekooper was knighted in 2012 for his services to archaeology and open-air museums. In 2015, he was awarded the Museum Horizon Award by the Hans Manneby Memorial Fund for Museum Development.

Although museums are important for cultural landscapes, they are not included in World Heritage Site.

The ICOM General Conference held in 2016, in Milan, was dedicated to the theme ‘Museums and Cultural Landscapes’, during which ICOM Netherlands hosted a session entitled ‘The Roman Frontier along the River Rhine—the role of museums in revitalising cultural landscapes’. It dealt with the Roman heritage of the cultural river landscape in the Netherlands and parts of Germany, and was jointly organised by ICOM Germany, ICOM-CECA (Committee for Education and Cultural Action), EXARC (International Organisation of Archaeological Open Air Museums and Experimental Archaeology), the Netherlands committee of ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), ICOM-MPR (International Committee for Marketing and Public Relations) and the Foundation ‘Roman Limes Netherlands’. The result was a multidisciplinary session with archaeologists, museologists, tourism specialists and policy makers.<sup>1</sup>

This session was an opportunity that allowed to discuss World Heritage Site (WHS) nomination, cultural landscapes and museums altogether. Although museums are important for cultural landscapes, due to their archaeological collections, educational goals and public awareness through tourism, they are not included in World Heritage Sites. Furthermore, ICOM is not officially involved in the nomination procedures and elections, a disadvantage for the cause of museums. Yet, a step forward was made during the ICOM Advisory Committee meeting in Milan on 9 July, 2016, with the adoption of the so-called Catania Declaration on Museums and World Cultural Heritage. ICOM complemented this with statements and calls for action to sharpen and clarify the correlation between museums and World Heritage Sites. The present article will develop a case study, that of the Roman Frontier (also known as Limes), in order to highlight the various roles museums play for World Heritage Sites. In the first section, the historical background of the Roman Frontier along the River Rhine will be described (Figs. 1a and 1b). The Interpretation Frameworks and how these are applied in museums using storylines will then be explained, and an overview of the initiatives and the cultural infrastructure along the former Roman frontier, in both the Netherlands and in Germany. Finally, we will address cooperation between Dutch and German authorities in the World Heritage Site nomination process, as well as the role ICOM can play in promoting World Heritage Sites in general.

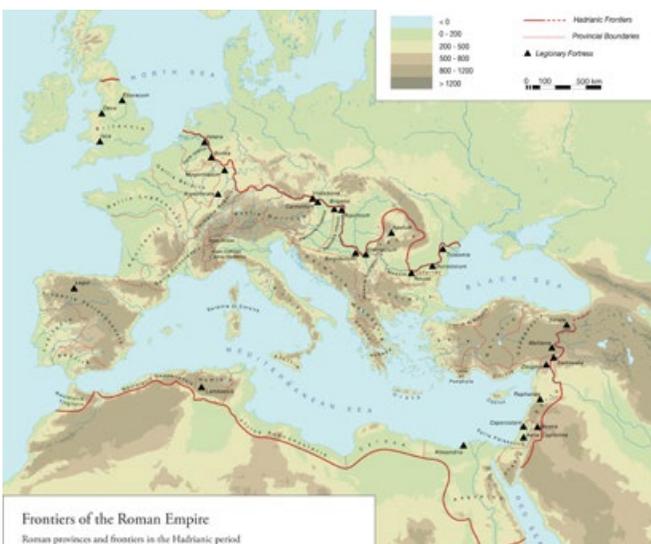


Fig. 1a. Map of the frontiers of the Roman Empire. © D. J. Breeze and Culture 2000 Frontiers of the Roman Empire project

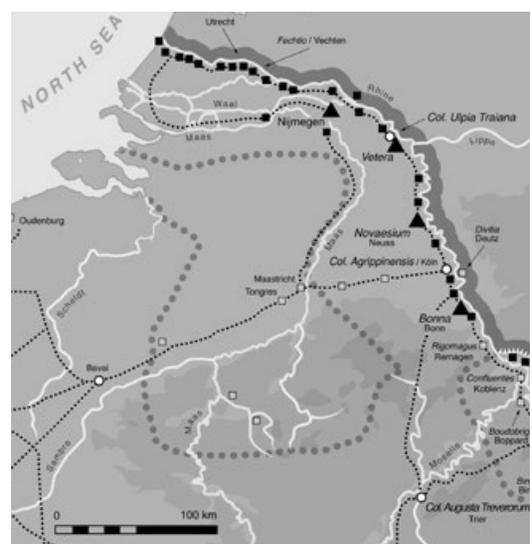


Fig. 1b. Map of the frontier in the province of Lower Germany. © D. J. Breeze



Fig. 2. Hadrian's Wall. © David Breeze

## The Limes: Historical overview

After the failed attempt to conquer the lands between the Rhine and the Elbe, the Romans decided to strengthen their northern border along the natural frontiers of the Rhine and the Danube. In between the two rivers, they built a wall over land, in the provinces of *Germania Superior* and *Rhaetia*. Today this line is known as the Upper-Germanic-Rhaetian Limes. The project of fixing the border on the European continent began under Emperor Tiberius and was concluded under Claudius around 50 CE.

After the conquest of Britain, the Romans tried to march as far north as possible, but were continuously repelled by Celtic tribes of the North. Emperor Hadrian decided to build a wall at the narrowest point, which was named after him: Hadrian's Wall (around 130 CE, see Fig. 2). The Antonine Wall, situated further North, was a similar project that was never fully completed.

The Roman Frontier was a complex phenomenon, involving several forms of organisation. It was bound to evolve over time, as it overlapped new political territories. Fortified buildings, for instance, were made to serve other functional purposes. In the 7th century CE, the Frankish ruler conceded the Castellum Traiectum, situated in present-day Utrecht, to a religious missionary, Wilibrord, who used it as a mission post, as did his successor, Boniface, to convert Germanic tribes north and east of the river Rhine. Subsequently, the castellum Traiectum became the residence of the bishops of Utrecht.

Under Roman rule, the Limes delimited the Empire from 'barbaric' territories, but in times of peace, it would assume an open character. As a consequence, Roman influence reached remote parts, such as Denmark and Latvia, where Roman artifacts were found. The full Limes stretches over 20 present-day countries on three continents. A part of the line has been listed in the UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1987, namely, Hadrian's Wall in the United Kingdom.

In 2005 and 2008, the Upper-Germanic-Rhaetian Limes (Obergermanisch-Raetischer Limes) in Germany and the Antonine Wall were added to the list among other sites, and more are to be integrated. The Dutch government decided to nominate the Rhine section of the Limes as UNESCO World Heritage for 2021, in cooperation with the German states of North Rhine-Westphalia (Nordrhein-Westfalen) and Rhineland-Palatinate (Rheinland-Pfalz). So will Austria do the same with a portion of the Danube border, in cooperation with Bavaria. Further nominations of the Danube line by countries in South Eastern Europe are expected.

The first speaker in the session, British archaeologist David Breeze, gave an overview of the European Roman Frontier, elaborating on the similarities and differences of this varied borderline, highlighting the specificities of the Limes along the Lower Rhine.<sup>2</sup>

All of the frontiers that protected the Roman Empire were similar in many ways, but notable differences also exist, in particular as regards the landscape through which the individual

sectors of the frontier ran (Breeze 2011b). It is not as simple as acknowledging that frontiers ran along rivers, through deserts or across mountains, for within each category there are distinctions. The Roman frontier on the Lower Rhine is a case in point.

The two sections of the frontier in the province of *Germania Inferior* offer interesting contrasts, particularly due to the fact that the Rhine delta in the Netherlands is unique. There are two types of borders in *Germania Inferior*: a normal river frontier in Germany, and smaller fortresses in the Rhine delta. We can observe how the Romans adapted their frontier installations to the different terrains through which they ran. In the delta, archaeological preservation is excellent, due to wetland conditions, which offers considerable advantages in making the case for World Heritage Site status. Yet both sections offer challenges to museum curators, particularly due to the relative invisibility of the Roman military archaeological sites.

Breeze discussed how the external Roman world could be brought into the museum. This question is of considerable importance as tourism continues to grow in Europe. Visitors arrive with their own cultural values, and it is important that museums relate to these. Museums and their movable artefacts are not part of World Heritage, which in essence is immovable. However, they are the best places to explain multi-phased sites and in doing so, attract visitors to the sites. Museums function as gateways to the surrounding landscape, and a good museum visit leads to repeat visits of museums and sites.

## Interpretation Frameworks, tourism and storylines

An Interpretation Framework consists of a univocal structure, a main storyline where all sites and museums play a specific part in the storyline. This can be picked up by any organisation working in the area of the Interpretation Framework and therefore, offers a strong message, part of the tourism branding of the area.

For Hadrian's Wall, the Interpretation Framework was based on the review of Outstanding Universal Values. A description of Outstanding Universal Value is a compulsory document for World Heritage nominations. The Interpretation Framework was used for interpretational, educational and marketing purposes and describes global themes, as well as each of the particular sites, excavations and museum collections of the Limes. It enables the cultural institutions and tourist organisations along the sites to tell a common, coherent story, but also, to differentiate the various sites by highlighting regional and local storylines.

For the Upper-Germanic-Rhaetian Limes, a similar Interpretation Framework has been produced. Using the approach of Hadrian's Wall to incorporate an Interpretation Framework, lead themes were identified, in tune with the larger framework. Every core theme is linked with a geographic part of the Limes, in keeping with the principle of "one site, one lead theme" (Flügel 2015). The advantage is that stories are not repeated at different sites and visitors can more easily experience the relevance of the story told. In Germany, site clusters have been developed because in some cases it is impossible to explain the full Limes story. For every site mentioned in the Interpretation Framework, one iconic finding has been identified, standing for the site and the local story as a whole. Finally, for every site, a short list of vital actions and priorities has been defined, such as a refurbishment of the museum or the production of educational material.

Different levels were designed, from larger museums with corresponding influence, to the smallest local museums. The German interpretation framework includes all existing interpretation sequences in museums and monuments. The Danube Limes Interpretation Framework for Austria and Bavaria had the status of a recommendation as part of the prescribed management plan of the Austrian-Bavarian UNESCO application (Flügel 2015). The criteria for single local lead themes and site clusters are based on the collections and monuments and the archaeological cultural landscape. The Netherlands has just finished the outlines of the Interpretation Framework for their part of the Lower Rhine Limes. Defining a strategy on how to implement this will be the next step. However, much has already been done along the Dutch Limes, even before any official nomination.

Beyond policy documents concerning the conservation and protection of the sites or landscapes, World Heritage Sites are also about the appreciation by people both now and in the future (Roessler 2016). The World Heritage Information kit describes benefits for tourism:

*[...] Finally, the inscription of a site on the World Heritage List brings an increase in public awareness of the site and of its outstanding values, thus also increasing the tourist activities at the site. When these are well planned for and organized respecting sustainable tourism principles, they can bring important funds to the site and to the local economy (UNESCO World Heritage Centre 2008). Tourism will be an important element in the development of the Limes landscape, as it has been for many other World Heritage Sites.*

Frederike van Ouwerkerk, expert in cultural tourism, discussed how the Roman Limes is actually a memoryscape that can be developed into a challenging tourist destination by using storylines as a connecting thread between landscape and museums in order to make the past visible and tangible.<sup>3</sup> Van Ouwerkerk argued that all cultural landscapes are by definition human-made, shaped over the ages by specific events that have created distinguishing characteristics. Cultural landscapes can therefore be seen as memory spaces, with memories specific to each landscape and which can be translated into stories. These stories are part of the landscape's identity and can draw sizeable audiences to visit the destination.

Most visitors would not be content with the mere sight of ruins. They come for a challenging, unique experience: the story behind the ruins. Museums make the story visible and tangible with the artefacts in their collection. These museums can play an important role in bringing diverse stakeholders together in order to design this unique experience. Combining a museum with the heritage and landscape beyond its walls conveys a sense of history, time and place. This emotion can be heightened by edutainment techniques, used to bring the unseen history of the place to life within and beyond the museum walls.

In connecting memoryscapes and museums that are geographically distant or that extend across borders, a storyline becomes a trail and creates coherence. These storylines incite people to stay longer, to spend more time and become more involved, enabling them to learn more and remember their visit much longer. The story of the Roman Limes has the potential to create such a storyline and connect places throughout Europe. Although a great deal of work must still be undertaken, the storyline of the Roman Limes is becoming increasingly visible and tangible, and emphasises shared memories of the Roman past. This echoes and acts upon the European Commission for Culture wish to create a feeling of being European by raising people's awareness of their shared history.

The ICOM Affiliated Organisation for Archaeological Open Air Museums and Experimental Archaeology (EXARC) focuses on the various ways of interpreting the past through reconstruction or otherwise. The array of interpretation methods and the sheer professionalism we find in museums such as Colonial Williamsburg (US) or the Tower of London could inspire museums along the Limes. Even though viewing virtual and augmented reality on a smartphone seems to be the new rule, in fact, diversifying the public is the key challenge for museums in the short term.

This confirms the need to use different means and methods to disseminate the message. Criticised by others, the learning phases discussed by David Kolb in *Experimental Learning* (1983) still provide insight into the divergent ways people prefer to learn, and are often used as a tool in designing exhibitions, products and services for a broad public (Fig. 3). Museums are storytellers, recounting compelling stories. They need to fall back on the main storylines the Interpretation Framework provides, but the ways in which these stories are told need to be varied.



Fig. 3. Roman ship De Meern 1 in Museum Castellum Hoge Woerd, excavated in 2003.  
© Astrid Hertog



Fig. 4. Castellum Hoge Woerd. Visualisation of the castellum, ingeniously built above the remains of the Roman Castellum in De Meern/Utrecht.  
© Aafke Holwerda

## Dutch initiatives and the cultural infrastructure

A highlight of the Dutch Limes initiatives is the 2015 opening of the Museum Castellum Hoge Woerd, with its unique Roman ship assemblage. The museum is part of Castellum Hoge Woerd, a modern interpretation of the local Roman fort (Fig. 4). The premises offer a wider range of cultural and leisure facilities to the local community, including a theatre, a nature education centre, meeting rooms and a courtyard, which hosts outdoor events. It has a clear potential to become one of the major interpretative hubs for the Lower Rhine Limes where the Roman storyline is made explicit. The museum seeks to combine a physical feeling of place and size with a personal experience, making extensive use of interactive displays, virtual reality and social media.

The Dutch archaeologist Erik Graafstal, addressed the topic of reconstruction of the Roman military structure in the Rhine delta with the case study of the Castellum Hoge Woerd in the western part of the city of Utrecht.<sup>4</sup> He pointed out that making the unseen visible is a particular challenge in the context of the Roman frontier in the Netherlands. Firstly, in terms of original substance, there is not much to be seen above ground. Secondly, unlike the British and German contexts, the landscape setting has changed beyond recognition, due to natural conditions such as changing riverbeds as well as human activity, directly affecting the landscape, in a densely populated area. Finally, conservation policies have traditionally been very strict, limiting research aimed at the better understanding and presentation of sites, for example. Extensive archaeological research is only carried out when the soil is to be disturbed by construction work.

Within these limitations, an impressive array of interpretative devices and site museums has emerged in recent years. After a period of restraint and minimalism, a bold approach has been conceived, with a wide scope for local initiatives. Urban planning with strong attention to archaeological research led to extensive excavations in Leidsche Rijn, a new district of Utrecht. Challenges remain, nevertheless. The key themes of the Lower Rhine Limes conjure up complex storylines, such as the dynamic river landscape, a river frontier as a transport corridor, or the archaeological value of preserved organic materials. All of this requires strong museum support, and the challenge for the future is to offer exciting combinations of indoor information and outdoor experience. The recently delivered Dutch Interpretative Framework is crucial to aligning the separate initiatives with connecting themes and an overall branding and storyline.

Next to Castellum Hoge Woerd, the longer-standing institutions such as the National Museum of Antiquities (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden) in Leiden, the Museum het Valkhof in Nijmegen and, to a lesser extent, the Centraal Museum in Utrecht, are on the museological frontline. However, small museums like the Stadsmuseum Woerden or the Museum Baron Van Brakell in Ommeren are raising awareness that these towns and villages were once part of the Limes. Alongside the older organisations, the archaeological park of Archeon, established in 1994 near Leiden, also deserves mention.

Archeon was originally meant to be an open-air laboratory for experimental archaeology, but developed into a highly popular archaeological amusement park with Roman reenactments and demonstrations of Roman practices. There are future plans to exhibit Roman ships that were found in the area. In addition to Castellum Hoge Woerd, several other public sites have been set up in recent years. DOMUnder in Utrecht offers an experience tour underneath the DOMsquare, where visitors can discover 2,000 years of history and ruins such as the Roman fort Castellum Traiectum. Recently, a few Castella were visualised in the landscape where they were situated, by marking the outlines of the Castella with low stonewalls: Fectio near Utrecht

(October 2016), Meinerswijk (March 2016) near Arnhem and Fort Nigrum Pullum at Zwammerdam (where the visualisation is being modernised).

In the framework of the World Heritage nomination, Dutch authorities undertook initiatives to make the Limes better known, which was quite a challenge in a time when the Dutch Interpretation Framework was not yet in place. A 2013 questionnaire showed that public awareness was extremely low: the word 'Limes' had stronger connotations with citrus fruit than with the Romans. The role of museums is to make the Limes better known; the challenge is to create public support for cultural heritage. In order to increase awareness of the Roman frontier in the Netherlands, the Stichting Romeinse Limes Nederland (Foundation Roman Limes Netherlands), a cooperative effort by museums, heritage boards and private organisations, was established.

Beyond promoting the Limes nationally by supporting exhibitions and educational programmes, the Foundation has supported initiatives by communities, volunteers and entrepreneurs to revitalise the Limes in areas where it is invisible and not represented in museum collections. This programme was the result of a joint collaboration between a company, which provided financial support to the project, and the provinces where the Limes is located. Examples of initiatives undertaken include setting up Roman gardens and orchards, designing a theatre play and a school project to visualise the Limes on one neighbourhood's pavement.

## German initiatives and the cultural infrastructure

Quite different from Archeon is the approach of the LVR-Archaeological Park Xanten (LVR-APX) in North Rhine-Westphalia, near the German border with the Netherlands. The park opened in 1977 and has developed into a complete site museum: the LVR-Römer Museum was added in 2008 (Fig. 5). Martin Müller, the director of the park and museum, presented the case of the site, giving an overview of its development since opening in 1977.

With some 600,000 visitors in 2015, the LVR-APX sits atop German rankings, with a 35 per cent increase in visitor numbers following the opening of the museum in 2008 in an enlarged park. According to cost-effectiveness studies and experience, the LVR-APX is a strong factor in economic and tourism development in the town and region. It marks the first time that significant investment was made in a cultural project within the field of archaeology—advantageous in that subsidies can be drawn from the purse of cultural heritage preservation, as well as from the considerably larger state and federal town development funds.

The Roman settlement Colonia Ulpia Traiana (CUT), with its approximately 73-hectare plot, and the remains of the Roman harbour are listed as archaeological sites. At the same time, the possibility of using the entire archaeological site as a museum will form the basis of LVR-APX's pedagogical work. A central objective is the visualisation of the finds below ground level, which is a substantial challenge, as we have seen in the Dutch examples.

The Archaeological Park recreates the Roman city in its prime. The system of the ancient street network has been restored. The meadows in the parkland show the former blocks of houses. All of the reconstructed buildings have been built upon their original locations over the archaeological remains. The city wall in the southeast part of the Colonia has been fully reconstructed, as has the northern city gate. The amphitheatre and the harbour temple have been partially reconstructed, with the raised podium of the temple also acting as a protective building for the archaeological remains. Also fully reconstructed, including the interior furnishings and decoration, is the Roman inn with its baths, which are fully functional and sometimes heated as an archaeological experiment. The large Xanten baths covered a whole block. The building constructed to protect the excavated ruins provides an impression of the size and shape of the structure. The *basilica thermarum* in front of the baths has been built in an architectural style that complements the protective building, and has been used as a museum since 2008.



Fig. 5. Römer Museum in LVR-Archaeologisches Park Xanten in Germany. © Axel Thuenker



Fig. 6. Limuseum in Rufenhofen, along the Upper-Germanic-Rhaetian Limes, which is already listed on the WHS list. © Oliver Heintl

The LVR-APX is in many respects a model project for North Rhine-Westphalia. It is an important site where the Interpretation Framework is presented in straightforward storylines. Due to its high profile, the Archaeological Park Xanten has become synonymous with the Romans and Roman culture on the Lower Rhine, and is thus well suited to bring the World Heritage Site of the Lower Germanic Limes in general, and the related Roman remains in and around Xanten specifically, to a broader public. A display of the original military finds from the Colonia Ulpia Traiana under protective buildings is planned for the future, and a large exhibition area for the presentation of the World Heritage Site of the Lower Germanic Limes, with a clear focus on the area of the German Lower Rhine, is to be created within the APX.

In the German part of the Lower Rhine Limes, besides Xanten, the main players are the Römisch-Germanisches Museum in Cologne and the LVR Landesmuseum in Bonn. However, smaller museums such as the Clemens-Sels-Museum in Neuss also focus on the Limes. The role of museums and the cooperation among authorities is institutionalised in the Römische Museen am Limes in Deutschland foundation (the Roman Museums on the Limes in Germany foundation). The infrastructure along the Upper Germanic-Rhaetian Limes is far more developed than on the Lower Rhine (Fig. 6).

The German archaeologist Christof Flügel focused on the Upper Germanic-Rhaetian Limes.<sup>3</sup> He explained the Interpretation Frameworks and showed a selection of museum projects along the Roman Limes in Southern Germany. The Upper Germanic-Rhaetian Limes is, as outlined above, already part of the transnational serial World Heritage Site, 'Frontiers of the Roman Empire', together with Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall. Currently, preparations for the inscription of the Austrian-Bavarian Danube Frontier as an additional part of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire are underway. Based on the example of Hadrian's Wall, the Danube Limes Interpretation Framework (DLIF) considers for the first time a transnational interpretation strategy approach for museums and sites in Austria and Germany. The entire area is divided into regions, each with its own interpretation of the larger story of the Danube Limes. Together, these stories form a coherent interpretation framework. This could also serve as a model for other sections of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire, such as the Lower Germanic Limes in Nordrhein-Westfalen and the Netherlands.



Fig. 7. DOMUnder: exploring the remains of the Roman castellum underground in the Centre of Utrecht. © Mike Brink

Taking the example of the Limesmuseum Ruffenhofen on the Upper German-Rhaetian Limes, a Roman museum that opened in 2012 following the inscription of the Upper German-Rhaetian Limes on the World Heritage List, Flügel explored the possibilities of storytelling and personal engagement in museum concepts along the Limes (Pausch 2012). Multimedia applications, especially virtual reconstructions bringing to life a lost world, have become increasingly important. However, the experience in various Roman museums in Bavaria clearly shows that the production is often underestimated in terms of scientific input, time and finances. As the images created for multimedia productions remain in the visual memory of the public, the efforts undertaken can be justified, if they comply with international charters. Sound research before a presentation is vital, combined with a continuous quality control once the presentation is in place.

Dutch and German museums are planning a large exhibition on the Rhine Limes for 2021, the year of the World Heritage assignment. As a sneak preview, the Centraal Museum Utrecht and Museum Het Valkhof in Nijmegen already presented two smaller exhibitions on aspects of the Limes in 2016 (Fig. 7). The two museums showed newly developed maps by Olav Odé, resembling present-day satellite views, but depicting the geographical situation of 200 CE. On these maps, the results of recent archaeological research have been processed. Together with large prints of the maps, important finds from the Dutch part of the Rhine Limes were presented. The museum in Nijmegen focused on the Roman army, with finds of helmets, while the Utrecht museum focused on trade, with several coin hoards and commodity goods such as *terra sigillata*. Nijmegen highlighted the defense function of the Limes, whereas Utrecht showed that the Limes did not just serve a defensive purpose, but was, at least in times of peace, a transparent line with intensive communication and trade between people on both banks of the river.

Towards 2021, a plan will be drawn up and executed with all (site) museums and parks along the Dutch Limes, presenting the common story of the Limes with regional accents in temporary and permanent exhibitions and educational products. The Interpretation Framework will serve as a basis alongside already existing Limes products, such as exhibitions, animations, apps and an interactive Limesmap.

## The World Heritage Site nomination process and ICOM

The non-visibility of the Lower Germanic Limes in the landscape constitutes a problem; but once the Limes in Europe is listed as UNESCO World Heritage, it will be the largest World Heritage zone in Europe. The nomination of the Lower Rhine Limes requires close cooperation between German and Dutch authorities.

The Dutch and German policy makers Tamar Leene and Thomas Otten described the administrative and scientific cooperation undertaken for the World Heritage nomination process.<sup>6</sup>

The transborder nomination of the Lower Germanic Limes is proposed as an addition to the existing World Heritage Site, Frontiers of the Roman Empire. Dutch and German authorities will stimulate research on their respective territories, and the parties will jointly devise common principles for the selection of the areas and sites to be nominated for World Heritage status, and the delimitation of the World Heritage Site and its buffer zones. Main aspects also include the implementation of a management plan for the future World Heritage Sites and the cooperation with the museums and NGOs along the Limes. This also involves a highly skilled approach to an enhanced transboundary understanding and interpretation of our historical landscape. Museums, including recently established and forthcoming ones, should strengthen cooperation to achieve this transnational interpretation.

The International Conference on 'Museums and World Cultural Heritage' held in Catania, Italy, from 16 to 18 October, 2015, resulted in a declaration on the role of museums in World Heritage Sites. Presently, neither the community nor the visitors can appreciate the strict correlation between collections and their cultural and environmental heritage.

The Declaration highlights the need to adapt management practices according to the institution type, i.e. museums, archives, libraries, archeological and natural sites or monumental complexes, insofar as their primary purpose, regardless of their specialisation, is the conservation, preservation and protection of cultural and environmental heritage. In accordance with the ICOM Code of Ethics, the text delineates the different missions of museums: 'i) to collect, increase and broadcast the knowledge of this heritage; ii) to present their heritage showing the connections with its original context; iii) to engage the people in an active participation to the protection, interpretation and presentation of the inherited heritage as a resource for a sustainable development'.

Conversely, the Declaration calls for UNESCO Sites to 'increase the museological and institutional functions of museums; motivate museums and Institutions to have an active role in the protection, interpretation and presentation of the surroundings', and managers to 'ensure that the governance of the sites integrate in their management museums and other institutions and places of culture existing in them; promote their involvement in the protection, conservation, interpretation of the heritage inscribed on World Heritage List.'

Following its adoption at the ICOM General Conference, national committees were encouraged to reflect and redefine the role of museums within WHL sites, so as to enhance their function within the site they belong to.<sup>7</sup>

Administrative and scientific cooperation is key to the World Heritage Site nomination.

In the present article, we strove to demonstrate that museums should have a role in World Heritage Site nominations and requirements. As the example of the Roman Limes demonstrates, there is a need to better integrate tangible and intangible, movable and immovable World Heritage. All along the Lower Rhine Limes, museums—some of which are gateways to the cultural landscapes they present—serve as important agents for education and storytelling, combining pedagogical tours within their walls, and an outdoor experience. Using the Interpretation Frameworks for the local storylines, museums set the region into the big picture of the Roman Limes and can invite local communities to make the Roman past their own past, thus creating identities and memoryscapes. They are custodians for the archaeological objects excavated, and connect the intangible and tangible Roman history, integrating tangible and intangible, movable and immovable World Heritage. Both larger and smaller museums play a role in explaining the history, and have clear connections to the region. The ultimate aim is public awareness, understanding and appreciation of World Cultural Heritage culture. It is our conviction, therefore, that ICOM should act as one of the advisory bodies in the procedure of World Heritage Site nominations.

#### NOTES

- 1 All contributions will be published in a forthcoming e-publication by ICOM Netherlands (TBA).
- 2 David Breeze was Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Historic Scotland from 1989 to 2005. He subsequently led the team that successfully nominated the Antonine Wall as a World Heritage Site in 2008 and served as a Chairman of the International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies until September 2015 (Breeze 2011a).
- 3 Frederieke van Ouwerkerk is a senior lecturer in Culture, Tourism and Communication at NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences (Netherlands).
- 4 Erik Graafstal is a senior archaeologist at the Department of Cultural Heritage of the City of Utrecht (Netherlands) and Director of Museum Castellum Hoge Woerd, in the western part of the city.
- 5 Christof Flügel is Chief Consultant for the archaeological museums at the Bavarian Museums Service in Germany (Archäologische und Naturwissenschaftliche Museen, Bergbaumuseen; Welterbe Limes).
- 6 Tamar Leene is National Programme Manager Limes for the Dutch provinces of Utrecht, Gelderland and Zuid-Holland. Thomas Otten is National Programme Manager Limes on behalf of the German State of Nordrhein-Westfalen. He is also founding director of the new Jewish Museum in Cologne.
- 7 The full text of the Siena Charter is available online at: [http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user\\_upload/pdf/News/Carta\\_di\\_Siena\\_EN\\_final.pdf](http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/News/Carta_di_Siena_EN_final.pdf)

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