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Who cares?

**Differences in the valuation of Holocaust memorial sites
between ethnic groups in Groningen**

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Summary

Traditional views on how the Holocaust should be remembered and respected seem to be fading. The *Damschreeuwer* whom, in 2010, disturbed the two minutes of silence during the annual Remembrance of the Dead is a striking example of this. Occurrences such as this, combined with the prominence of Holocaust heritage memorials in the Dutch landscape, ensure that research into the factors involved in the valuation, both aesthetic and symbolic, of these sites might prove to be valuable. In particular, given Europe's and The Netherlands' increasingly multi-ethnic population, this research focuses on the differences in valuation of three Holocaust sites between various ethnic groups in the city of Groningen, The Netherlands. In order to obtain insight into this issue, the main research question is "*to what extent, and in which ways, does the valuation of Holocaust memorial sites differ between ethnic groups?*" Several sub-questions are developed around this theme to support the main question, dealing with issues such as pre-existing knowledge of the sites among the present population as well as the different components of valuation. Through a survey amongst 168 participants the research found that there are in fact differences in valuation between ethnic groups. The main findings are that heritage has been used to promote an imagined community, or a sense of a collective identity among residents of the city of Groningen, and that pre-existing knowledge has an important influence on both the initial aesthetic and symbolic valuation of heritage sites.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

“The past becomes a burden when it prevents the individual from living in the present. Whether seen as monumental, antiquarian or critical – the greatness of the past becomes a burden when it eclipses the present and the future” (Nietzsche, 1980, in Kattago, 2009, p.378). This may serve as an explanation for why, at present, there appear to be signs that traditional views on how the Holocaust should be remembered are not universal and are no longer being adhered to. The most striking example of this is of the man now known as the *Damschreeuwer* who, during the annual observance of two minutes of silence during the Remembrance of the Dead in 2010, caused a mass panic by starting to scream. In the ensuing stampede, sixty-three people were injured, of whom two were injured severely (AT5, 2010b). The *Damschreeuwer* was later quoted as saying that he found the ceremony a, “dull happening” (AT5, 2010a), indicating that he felt little respect for the service taking place at the time. Another example can be found in the successful attempt by the organization *Federatief Joods Nederland* to forbid the remembrance of nine German soldiers buried in the town of Vorden, Gelderland during the Remembrance of the Dead in 2012. While the mayor and the town’s committee for the Remembrance of the Dead clearly felt this would have been acceptable, they came under considerable criticism for their beliefs (Reformatoisch Dagblad, 2012).

The Holocaust is an historical event etched into the collective memories of large portions of the world’s population. Although the ranks of survivors of the Holocaust in the Netherlands are gradually thinning out, younger generations are frequently reminded of the events that transpired in Europe in the period between 1939 and 1945. Continued inclusion of World War Two (the War) and the Holocaust in school curricula, periodic reminders in the media, often in the form of documentaries and movies, and the annually recurring Remembrance of the Dead (May 4th) and Liberation Day (May 5th) in the Netherlands, ensure that events like the Holocaust, and World War Two, will not soon be forgotten (van Vree, 1995). However, as the examples discussed above illustrate, views on how these events should be treated are apparently not universal.

The present population is also reminded of the Holocaust in the form of Holocaust memorials throughout various cities. Although the term “Holocaust” initially referred to the “Nazi program to systematically exterminate all Jews... since the 1990s, it has expanded to include Nazi programs to decimate or eradicate other groups as well” (Marcuse, 2010, p.54). Knowledge about the extent of the Holocaust, and the horrors it entailed, spread only gradually among the wider public, “which then struggled to find proper expressions of its understandings of the events” (Marcuse, 2010, p.55).

A prerequisite for the production of memorial sites is that the public experiences them. If there is no message transmitted to potential users, then what is the use of creating a memorial? It follows from this logic that it might prove to be valuable to research the effects that memorials have on different *types* of users. Given The Netherlands’ ever-increasingly multi-ethnic population, and given that the Holocaust was, ultimately, a

European *problem*, research into the ways in which various ethnic groups value Holocaust memorials nowadays might be interesting; the hypothesis being that people of European descent will attach greater meaning to these sites than people of non-European descent. For this purpose, the following research question has been developed:

To what extent, and in which ways, does the valuation of Holocaust memorial sites differ between ethnic groups?

1.2 Research goal

This research attempts to explain the extent to which the valuation of Holocaust memorial sites (henceforth also to be referred to as *Holocaust sites* or *sites*) differs between ethnic groups in the city of Groningen.

1.3 Research questions

So that the research goal could be reached, the following research questions were pursued:

1. What does the present population know about Holocaust sites?
 - a. Can the present population situate the selected sites geographically?
 - b. To what extent is the present population aware of the sites' background stories or symbolic meaning?
2. How does the present population value Holocaust sites?
3. Does valuation of the sites change after background information is provided?
4. Do variations in valuation exist between ethnic groups?

1.4 Reading guide

Chapter two discusses the theoretical framework that forms the basis of this research; Chapter three provides a schematic overview of the interrelatedness of these theories; Chapter four addresses the methodology utilized to fulfill the research goal. Chapter five discusses the results of the data collection; and, finally, Chapter six attempts to draw conclusions from the research as a whole, as well as making suggestions with regards to further research on the topic.

2 Theoretical framework

In this section, several relevant concepts are discussed which are central to the research.

2.1 Heritage

“Heritage sites are an important element in the construction of a national identity” (Johnson, 1995, p.51). Sites help to develop a common identity, or “imagined community” (Anderson, 1991, p.5) among diverse populations comprising many different immigrant cultures (Pretes, 2003). Pretes uses three sites in the American state of South Dakota – Mount Rushmore, Wall Drug Store, and Rapid City Dinosaur Park – as the basis for his research. His findings indicate that the three sites, although differing in size and degree of recognition, help, “to disseminate national guiding fictions, promoting a discourse of national inclusion and a past shared by all Americans” (2003, p.140).

In this research, heritage is seen as, “a social construct shaped by the political, economic and social concerns of the present” (Peckham, 2003, in Graham and Howard, 2008, p.2). The demands of the present determine which portions of the past are to be designated as heritage in the present, in order to be bequeathed to future generations. However, pasts do not exist in the present, and since preserving something that does not exist is impossible, heritage is, “about creating something, not about preserving anything” (Ashworth, 2007, p.2). Indeed, heritage is closely tied to questions of power, as power creates heritage; “heritage is not something that exists in the world awaiting discovery (Feintuch, 2007).” The degree to which a “collective identity” has been achieved will be determined by examining the valuations by the various ethnic groups of the Holocaust sites included in this research.

2.2 Power

Heritage in Europe is, by definition, a balancing act between the needs and demands of a multitude of cultures or parties. Heritage has been – and continues to be – used as a tool to homogenize society in an effort to construct the imagined community as a, “basis for a collective identity, which is part of individuals’ building of an identity” (Council of Europe, 2009, p.70). Faulconbridge (2012, p.735) states that power is the way in which, “actors marshal and exercise resources as part of attempts to shape the behavior of others...” Each assignment of value to an object by a group is a demonstration of power, as it is an attempt to influence the way in which others view that object. Power is also an attempt to transform places; “it is the ability to transform the traces of others in order to achieve certain strategic goals” (Foucault, 1980, 1984, in Anderson, 2010, p.54). As regards to heritage, power determines what is seen as heritage and which cultural identities matter in the context of particular times and places (Feintuch, 2007). “Heritage is a culturally directed process of intense emotional power [that is] both a personal and a social act of making sense of, and understanding,

the past and the present” (Smith, 2006, p.304). Following this line of thought, it stands to reason that valuation of the Holocaust sites will be highest among members of the Dutch ethnic group; it is members of this group whom have constructed the sites in order to convey messages and transform public spaces.

2.3 Valuation of heritage

Schwartz (1992, p.1) defines value as the “criteria people use to select and justify actions... and events...; as criteria rather than as qualities inherent in objects.” As such, the value of heritage must not be seen as a fixed entity, but rather as a subjective quality applied to tangible heritage sites by both individuals and groups of people. In this research, value is seen as being “defined by something or somebody. Value should not be taken as values in ‘the system of values and beliefs” (van Campenhout, et al., 2008, p. 12). Paraphrasing Schwartz (1992, p.10), groups attach value to tangible heritage sites in order to perpetuate and strengthen the notion of a “shared past”. Combined with the fact that, “physical attributes are not easily or clearly translated into inner experiences, nor vice versa” (Coeterier, 2000, p.13), this approach entails that each individual will value heritage differently, as value is subjective rather than objective.

In order to value an object, one must experience it; experience, in turn, is achieved through perception via one’s senses. As such, value, or valuation, is equivalent to ‘aesthetic perception’ (Goldman, 2006). Perception is the collection of sensory stimuli, recording information from the environment via the senses and subsequently processing that information through the mind. In other words, perception is the act of attaching meaning to stimuli from the environment (Coeterier, 2000, p.12). The process of valuation begins as soon as we attach a meaning, either implicitly or explicitly, to the perceived object. As meaning determines value, valuation can only occur after a meaning has been attached to the object (Coeterier, 2000, p.40).

2.3.1 Aesthetic value

According to Coeterier (2000, p.177-178), aesthetic valuation is based on the physical observation of *form*, which contains five aspects, namely: (1) *completeness*: whether or not all the original elements are still present (also applies to the surroundings: the more complete the surroundings, the higher the valuation); (2) *uniqueness*, or individual expression (is the monument a unique specimen?); (3) *beauty*: a combination of culturally determined factors, including dimensions and proportions, details, use of color, and materials; (4) *craftsmanship*, comprising two aspects: the design (the underlying idea) and the technical execution; and (5) *level of care*, or maintenance (if something falls into a state of degradation, its valuation decreases). The research will not delve into much detail concerning these individual components of aesthetic valuation; however, it was deemed valuable to introduce them here briefly, as the concept of aesthetic valuation, as a whole, will play a prominent role in the research.

2.3.2 Symbolic value

A symbol is something that represents something else by association, resemblance, or convention, especially a material object used to represent something invisible. In other words, a symbol is an object that is used to make tangible that which is intangible (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2003). As regards to heritage sites, they “may comprise no more than empty shells of dubious authenticity but derive their importance from the ideas and values that are projected on or through them” (Graham and Howard, 2008), the ideas and values entailing, in this case, the tragedy of the Holocaust. Of the four aspects that play an important role in determining an object’s value – shape, function, knowledge, and familiarity (Coeterier, 2000, p.176) – knowledge, or information about the object, is deemed to be of great importance for symbolic valuation. “Knowledge adds something to the experience. It does not make an object more beautiful, that is [determined by its] shape, but it gives it more meaning. The effect of knowledge on valuation starts with the seemingly simple rule: to know if you find something beautiful or ugly, you must first know what it is... If you don’t know what it is, you will never really know how you feel about the object” (Coeterier, 2000, p.179-180). Coeterier provides the reader with the example of a ruin. When shown a photograph of the object, some people found it to be beautiful because of its status as a unique historical object, while others labeled it as ugly because they viewed it only as a derelict castle. These feelings were reflected in opinions regarding what should be done with the ruin; those who recognized its historical value believed it should be maintained while the other group called it for it to be demolished (2000, p.180). This example illustrates how strongly knowledge affects opinions and views on objects and, therefore, heritage. The degree to which this is true for Holocaust heritage will be determined via the survey.

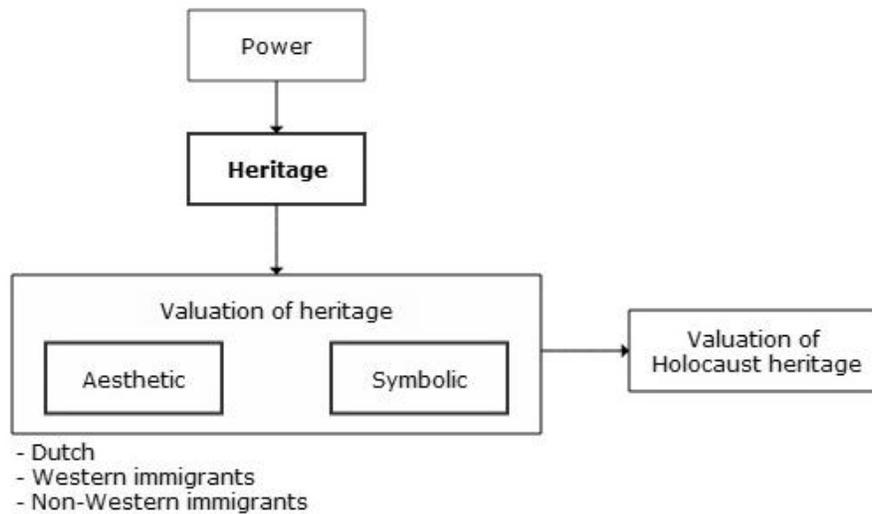
2.4 Holocaust heritage

Europe’s common heritage consists of, “all forms of cultural heritage in Europe which together constitute a shared source of remembrance, understanding, identity, cohesion and creativity (Council of Europe, 2005).” The existence of Holocaust heritage is an exercise in “legacy of the past” as a burden rather than as tradition, heritage or inheritance. Nietzsche states that, “the past becomes a burden when it prevents the individual from living in the present. Whether seen as monumental, antiquarian or critical – the greatness of the past becomes a burden when it eclipses the present and the future” (Nietzsche, 1980, in Kattago, 2009, p.378). As mentioned earlier, the creation and maintenance of heritage sites is an instrument for constructing a collective identity; these shared meanings “form collective memories and help trace how the past persists into the present and presages into the future. In this sense, victims [Dutch society] may utilize atrocity heritage as a catalyst in the formation of group cohesion...” (Podoshen & Hunt, 2011, p.1334). In keeping with this line of thought, “cultural reproduction [the creation of heritage] can influence collective memory and result in a particular sense of national and cultural identity” (Domic, 2000, p.14). As such, in this research, Holocaust

heritage is seen as monuments and other man-made heritage sites created with the intention of continuing the remembrance of the events of the Holocaust so as to forge a collective identity or imagined community. A prominent example is the Holocaust Memorial in the center of Berlin, Germany – containing memorials honoring Jews, homosexuals, and Sinti and Roma peoples murdered during the Holocaust (Foundation Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, 2013) – which was very clearly created with the intent of educating visitors on the horrible loss inflicted on the peoples of Europe during the Holocaust.

3 Conceptual Model

Figure 1: Conceptual Model



Source: Knoops, 2013a.

The conceptual model (Figure 1) provides a schematic overview of the relation between the various elements discussed in the Theoretical Framework. As the demands of the present determine which portions of the past are to be designated as heritage in the present, power has a strong influence on heritage, which is the central theme of this research. Heritage, in turn, is central to the concept of valuation and its two components, aesthetics and symbolism. These three concepts – power, heritage, and valuation of heritage – culminate in the valuation of Holocaust heritage.

4 Methodology

In this section, the chosen research method is introduced and explained.

4.1 Method

This research made use of a survey to collect primary data. A survey is a useful and effective research method for several reasons. Firstly, data collection can be streamlined; it can be tailored to fit the research aims and objectives through the selection of relevant and effective questions. As a result, superfluous data will be avoided. Secondly, it is possible to reach a large number of respondents. A larger sample size allows for more reliable conclusions to be drawn about the population as a whole. This is useful as the research aims to determine the ways in which residents of Groningen, as a whole, value the different functions. Thirdly, a survey will enable the generation of standardized, quantifiable, and empirical data, making it easier to draw inferences from the gathered data (O'Leary, 2010).

However, the chosen method does pose several challenges. For one, the ability to draw significant conclusions about the population is dependent on technical proficiency in statistical analysis. Also, it is only possible to receive answers to the questions asked. If the survey omits questions, which, in hindsight, appear to have been relevant, valuable information will be missing. This ties into another challenge, namely that it is not possible to obtain additional information from respondents at a later date, and that it is not possible to capture body language or emotional responses. The participants will remain anonymous, meaning that, once the survey is completed, the opportunity to obtain additional information passes as well (O'Leary, 2010).

By collecting quantitative data, it is possible to generalize, meaning that conclusions can be drawn about the population of the city of Groningen as a whole. To be able to do this, the sample must be large enough and be representative of the population. A sample may be considered representative when the distribution of its characteristics is comparable to that of the population. In this research, these characteristics include gender, age, ethnicity, religion, and education level (O'Leary, 2010).

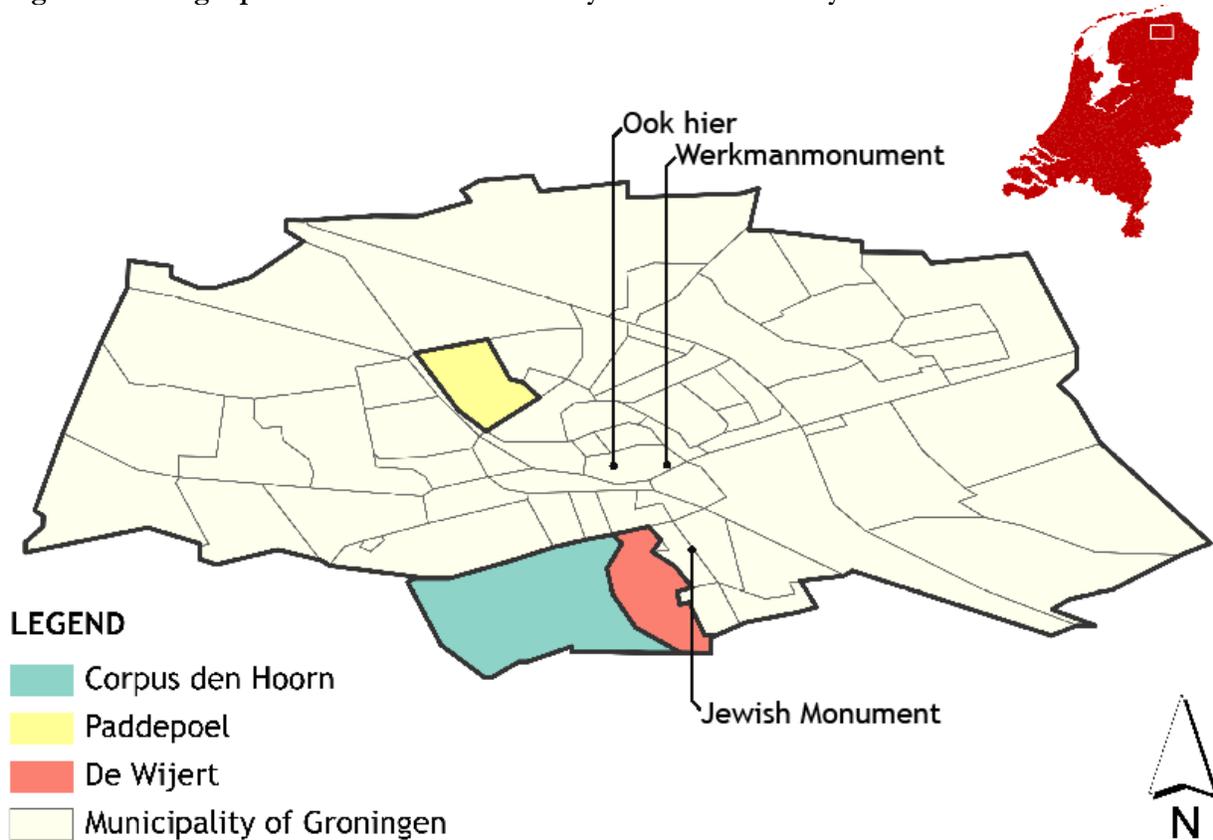
4.2 Data collection

The surveys were conducted on three separate days in the period between Saturday, April 6, 2013 and Wednesday, April 24, 2013. With the aid of two roommates, the researcher reached a total of 168 respondents. Both roommates were sufficiently informed beforehand about the content and purpose of the survey; therefore, data resulting from 'their' respondents was deemed to be reliable. Also, respondents were selected randomly in order to overcome coverage error (O'Leary, 2010). As the respondent pool consisted of both Dutch and non-Dutch speakers, the survey was available in two formats: a Dutch and an English version. The Dutch version can be found in Appendix 1, the English version in Appendix 2.

4.3 Respondents

The ethnic groups used in this research – Dutch people, Western immigrants and Non-Western immigrants – were differentiated based on an official classification. A Dutch person is a person whose parents were both born in the Netherlands; a Western immigrant is someone originating from a country in Europe (excluding Turkey), North America, Oceania, Indonesia or Japan; and a Non-Western immigrant is someone originating from a country in Africa, South America or Asia (excluding Indonesia and Japan), or Turkey (Statistics Netherlands, 2013). In order to draw reliable conclusions about the ethnic groups, it was of great value to conduct the survey in areas that would yield the most even ethnic mix of respondents possible. For this purpose, three neighborhoods were selected on the basis of their status as *ethnic enclaves*, or areas that are, “at once the home of a vital subculture and a significant locus of attachment for its residents” (Hummon, 1996, p.781). As such, the neighborhoods to serve as survey locations were *De Wijert* (Dutch people), *Corpus den Hoorn* (Western immigrants), and *Paddepoel* (Non-western immigrants); these areas are situated geographically in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Geographical Location of Survey Sites and Survey Locations



Source: Knoops, 2013b.

To determine whether the sample was representative of the entire population of the city of Groningen, the distribution of several personal characteristics in the sample was compared to those in the population as a whole. The most important requirement of the data was that the different ethnicities were represented equally well in the sample. This was in fact the case, as Dutch people accounted for thirty-five percent of the respondents, Western immigrants for thirty percent, and Non-Western immigrants for thirty-five percent as well.

4.4 Data analysis

The data resulting from the survey among 168 respondents was entered into an Excel worksheet, which was subsequently used as input data for SPSS. The outcomes of the statistical tests are used as a basis for the *Results* section.

4.5 Ethical issues

The research did not run into any ethical issues. As the respondents were people chosen randomly on the street, they are presumed not to have felt coerced into participating. However, some care was taken to ensure that participants gave informed consent. This included, but was not limited to: informing the respondent of the nature and purpose of the study; informing the respondent of his or her right to discontinue the survey; assuring the respondent of the confidential and anonymous nature of his or her participation; and allowing the respondent to make self-directed and self-determined choices (O'Leary, 2010, p.41).

The survey participants were informed that they will remain anonymous and that any requested personal information will be used purely for educational purposes. The respondents were informed of this at the beginning of the survey, and reminded of it once more before answering personal questions regarding gender, age, country of birth, religion, and highest level of education attained or currently enrolled in.

As the participants were of various ethnic backgrounds, cultural differences came into play. Distrust may have played a role among participants of a non-Western background. However, it is of the opinion of the researcher that these difficulties were overcome and did not interfere with the reliability of the data.

4.6 Cases

To operationalize the research, three Holocaust sites in the city of Groningen were selected as a focal point. The sites to be used as subjects were selected from a list of official World War Two memorials in the Netherlands (The National Committee, 2013a). The National Committee for 4 and 5 May is the organization officially charged with, among other things, “giving direction to the [form] commemorating and celebrating [takes]... [and enhancing] understanding about the purpose and significance of remembrance and celebration” (The National Committee, 2013b).

The main criteria used when selecting the cases were visual appearance and how interesting or fascinating their background stories were deemed to be by the researcher. As such, the sites (portrayed at the end of both Appendices) to be considered in this research are:

Werkmanmonument (Heresingel)

The *Werkmanmonument* is a bronze sculpture of a truncated tree. It is five meters tall and two meters wide.

The sculpture is a metaphor for violence and human suffering. For the artist, Armando, the sculpture symbolizes power and tenacity, but also vulnerability. The sculpture is an allusion to the trees in which the artist used to climb as a young boy but which were truncated during World War Two; trees are silent testaments to all that happened during the War (Mens & Dier in Steen & Brons, 2013).

Ook hier (Folkingestraat)

The phrase *Weggehaald* (translated to *removed*) has been milled out of the bricks in the side-façade of a building in the Folkingestraat.

The artist, Peter de Kan, wanted to portray the sense of loss and emptiness felt in the Jewish Quarter of the city of Groningen during and after the War. By placing the phrase between parentheses, this feeling is further accentuated. The artist wanted to depict, “that which has been lost, without being replaced” (Staatingroningen.nl, 2013b).

Jewish Monument (Verlengde Hereweg)

Six hands, each placed on a pedestal, constructed by Eduard Waskowsky.

Each hand portrays a different message; the first hand is balled in anger while the second reaches toward heaven. The three upright hands portray despair and the two hands lying on the ground portray sadness and resignation. The uneven concrete wall behind the hands alludes to the Nazi-terror and the “crumbled state of Judaism” (Staatingroningen.nl, 2013a).

5 Results

In this section, the results of the data collection process will be presented.

5.1 Pre-existing knowledge of sites

Survey participants were asked to locate each site geographically on a map. Subsequently, three classifications of geographic knowledge were made, namely: *Good* (accurate within 500 meters of actual location), *OK* (accurate between 500 to 1000 meters of actual location), and *Poor* (further than 1000 meters from actual location); the results are portrayed in Table 1.

Several observations can be made about the data presented below. First, *Ook hier* suffered from the lowest degree of geographical knowledge; roughly eighty-one percent of the respondents fell in the *Poor* category while only about five percent of respondents were able to locate the monument within five hundred meters of its actual location. Second, the Jewish Monument enjoyed the greatest degree of geographic knowledge, with about twenty-four percent of the respondents locating it within five hundred meters of its actual location. Third, geographic knowledge pertaining to the *Werkmanmonument* fell between the two other monuments; almost sixty percent of the respondents possessed OK knowledge. However, the group possessing *Good* geographic knowledge concerning this monument was small (roughly seven percent) (Table 1).

Table 1: Geographic knowledge, per site

Knowledge (%)	Ook hier	Werkmanmonument	Jewish Monument	Average
Good	4,7	7,2	23,5	11,8
OK	14,0	56,8	38,8	36,5
Poor	81,3	36,0	37,7	51,7

Table 2: Recognition, per site

Recognized (%)	Ook hier	Werkmanmonument	Jewish Monument	Average
Yes	7,3	18,7	37,3	21,1
No	92,7	81,3	62,7	78,9

Several inferences can be made from these observations. Good geographic knowledge was lowest for *Ook hier*, highest for the Jewish Monument, with the *Werkmanmonument* in the middle; this sequence corresponds to the monuments' prominence in the streetscape. *Ook hier*, tucked away from view in an alley, suffered from the lowest percentage of people able to locate it accurately; the *Werkmanmonument*, easily visible but not very unique among the surrounding trees, enjoyed only a slightly higher degree of recognition; the Jewish

Monument, a prominent element in the streetscape, was located most within five hundred meters by almost a quarter of the respondents.

These findings are reinforced by the fact that degrees of recognition have a similar sequence, namely that *Ook hier* was recognized the least, the Jewish Monument the most, with the *Werkmanmonument* ‘sandwiched’ between them (Table 2).

5.2 Valuation of the sites

Table 3 shows the initial aesthetic and symbolic valuations of the three sites; a distinction is made between whether respondents recognized the site or not. In this manner, it is possible to determine whether recognition (pre-existing knowledge) plays a role in the initial scores for aesthetics and symbolism. It is difficult to discover a pattern for the effect of pre-existing knowledge on aesthetic valuation. While mean aesthetic scores were higher for the *Ook hier* memorial, no difference existed for the Jewish Monument, and for the *Workmanmonument* average scores were actually lower when recognized by respondents. For symbolic valuation, however, there does appear to be a pattern, as the mean scores for this category are considerably higher when respondents recognized the sites than when they did not. This indicates that, while aesthetic valuation may be somewhat random, people tend to value a monument higher symbolically when they have some form of pre-existing knowledge, as theory suggests (Coeterier, 2000, p.179-180).

Table 3: Initial valuations, symbolic and aesthetic, based on recognition of site

Aesthetic valuation

Mean score	Ook hier	Werkman-monument	Jewish Monument	Average
Recognized	3,7	4,3	4,7	4,2
Not recognized	2,9	4,7	4,7	4,1

Symbolic valuation

Mean score	Ook hier	Werkman-monument	Jewish Monument	Average
Recognized	7,0	6,9	7,7	7,2
Not recognized	3,9	3,6	4,6	4,0

5.3 Differences between ethnicities

The next step is to examine any differences between ethnicities. Good geographic knowledge is most prevalent among Dutch people; Western and Non-Western immigrants have comparatively poor geographic knowledge, with around fifty-eight and fifty-six percent of these groups unable to locate the sites within one thousand meters, respectively (Table 4). Coupled with geographic knowledge is recognition of the sites, about

which similar inferences exist for recognition; it is highest among Dutch people, and lower, but roughly similar, for Western and Non-Western immigrants (Table 5).

Table 4: Geographic knowledge, per ethnicity

Knowledge (%)	Dutch	Western immigrants	Non-Western immigrants
Good	13,0	13,2	9,2
OK	46,3	28,7	34,6
Poor	40,7	58,1	56,2

Table 5: Recognition, per ethnicity

Recognized (%)	Dutch	Western immigrants	Non-Western immigrants	Average
Yes	27,0	17,0	19,3	21,1
No	53,0	83,0	80,7	78,9

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare aesthetic valuation before and after background information was provided, as well as symbolic valuation before and after information was provided, for each ethnic group. The resulting data shows that there are in fact significant differences in both the aesthetic and symbolic valuations before and after information was provided.

Table 6: Mean initial scores, symbolic and aesthetic, per ethnicity

Mean initial score	Dutch	Western immigrants	Non-Western immigrants	Average
Aesthetic	4,9	4,5	4,1	4,5
Symbolic	4,9	4,6	4,6	4,7

Table 7: Mean valuation score change following provision of background information, per ethnic group

Mean score change	Dutch	Western immigrants	Non-Western immigrants	Average
Aesthetic	1,4	1,1	0,9	1,1
Symbolic	2,2	2,8	2,7	2,6

The provision of background information had a positive effect on both aesthetic as well as symbolic valuation of Holocaust memorial sites for all ethnic groups in Groningen (Table 7). The mean increase in aesthetic valuation is highest for Dutch people (1,4) and lowest for Non-Western immigrants (0,9); the mean increase in symbolic valuation is highest for Western immigrants (2,8) and lowest for Dutch people (2,2).

5.4 Aspects influencing valuation

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test if any of the following variables significantly predict respondents' initial aesthetic and symbolic valuations:

- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Age
- Religion
- Highest level of education completed (or currently enrolled in)
- Geographic knowledge

Aesthetic valuation

As regards to aesthetic valuation, only the variables *ethnicity* and *geographic knowledge* are of significance. Together, they explain around eleven percent of the variance in aesthetic valuation scores. The variable *ethnicity* is negatively correlated with aesthetic valuation – mean aesthetic value scores are highest for Dutch people and lowest for Non-Western immigrants, with Western immigrants in the middle – indicating that aesthetic valuation could contain cultural aspects. Dutch people may have a very different view of what constitutes beauty than someone with a foreign background. This notion is confirmed by the fact that aesthetic valuations by Western immigrants are closer to those by Dutch people than those by Non-Western immigrants are; Western immigrants tend to share a more similar cultural makeup to Dutch people than do Non-Western immigrants. This observation corresponds with theory concerning power that was discussed earlier (Smith, 2006, p.304). As the three memorial sites were commissioned and created by Dutch people, it stands to reason that the sites' aesthetics correspond with a 'Dutch idea' of beauty. In this sense, it appears that the dominating group (the Dutch) has succeeded in transforming the places surrounding the sites.

Geographic knowledge holds a positive correlation to aesthetic valuation, meaning that, as geographic knowledge improves, aesthetic valuation scores rise. However, the reasons for this are not immediately apparent; further research into the relationship between geographic knowledge and aesthetic valuation is needed.

Symbolic valuation

As regards symbolism, geographic knowledge is once again worth mentioning; the factor is very strongly correlated to symbolic valuation. As stated earlier, the level of geographic knowledge of the sites is an indication of the degree of pre-existing knowledge; pre-existing knowledge is apparently an important determinant regarding the level of symbolic meaning one attaches to an object. This corresponds with theory related to symbolic valuation discussed earlier, namely that pre-existing knowledge plays an important role in

this type of valuation, as “to know if you find something beautiful or ugly, you must first know what it is... If you don’t know what it is, you will never really know how you feel about the object” (Coeterier, 2000, p.179-180). This is confirmed by the fact that symbolic value scores were considerably higher when a site was recognized than when it was not (Table 4). The importance of knowledge as regards to symbolic valuation is also demonstrated by the fact that the mean scores for this category increased for all groups after information about the sites was provided (2,8 for Western immigrants; 2,5 for Non-Western immigrants; 2,4 for Dutch people; Table 6).

6 Conclusions

In conclusion, it can be asserted that the valuation of Holocaust memorial sites differs between ethnic groups. Dutch people initially adjudge Holocaust sites higher both aesthetically and symbolically than both Western and Non-Western immigrants, signifying that, indeed, heritage is a result of actors exercising resources in an attempt to shape others' behavior (Faulconbridge, 2012, p.735). The fact that Dutch people assign a higher score to the memorials than their foreign counterparts, even without recognizing them, or knowing which meaning is intended to be conveyed, suggests that the dominant group (the Dutch) have succeeded in transforming the spaces surrounding the sites (Foucault, 1980, 1984, in Anderson, 2010, p.54).

The research discovered the possible presence of an imagined community (Anderson, 1991), evidenced by the fact that the initial discrepancies in symbolic valuation leveled out following the provision of background information. Once knowledgeable about the meanings intended to be portrayed by the sites, all groups came to value them roughly equally highly, indicating that values pertaining to the Holocaust are shared, at least to some degree. It seems that the fear that respect for the Holocaust may be fading – borne of the occurrence of such “events” as the *Damschreeuwer* – may be unfounded and unsound.

The research has highlighted Holocaust memorials as a focus for gaining a firmer grasp on the valuation of memorials; further work must be done, however, to develop a clear picture of the ins and outs of valuation of memorials in general as, disappointingly, there seem to be factors at play when predicting valuation that were not included in this research. The effects of pre-existing knowledge are an interesting starting point. A more in-depth look into various forms – other than geographic knowledge – might prove to deliver valuable insights into both aesthetic and symbolic valuation. Research into factors not included in this research is also a valid point of departure. As many of the factors discussed here – ethnicity, gender, age, religion, level of education, and geographic knowledge – do not contribute much to the prediction of valuation, the search for factors that *are* of influence must continue.

Research into the individual components of aesthetic valuation – completeness, uniqueness, beauty, craftsmanship, and level of care – might also prove to be valuable. The scope and time-constraints on this research did not permit for these elements to be treated individually; otherwise, these aspects of valuation would certainly have been investigated in detail.

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Appendix 1

Survey

May I have 10 minutes of your time to fill in this questionnaire for my Bachelorproject for the University of Groningen?

I am conducting research into the differences in valuation of Holocaust memorials between ethnic groups in Groningen.

You will remain anonymous; any personal information I will ask you to provide is purely intended to enhance the statistical analysis to be performed on the results. The results will be used only for educational purposes.

If you have any questions you can contact my supervisor, Mr. G. van Campenhout:

g.van.campenhout@rug.nl

Step 1

I will now show you a series of photographs. After each photograph, I would like you to tell me how you rate the object:

1. **Aesthetically**, on a scale from **1 (Very ugly)** to **10 (Very beautiful)**.
2. **Symbolically**, meaning how powerful you perceive any message you think the memorial portrays, on a scale from **1 (Very weak)** to **10 (Very powerful)**.

Site	Category	Score									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I	Aesthetics										
	Symbolism										
II	Aesthetics										
	Symbolism										
III	Aesthetics										
	Symbolism										

Step 2

Did you recognize any of the objects?

Site	Recognized
I	
II	
III	

Step 3

I will now show you a map of the city of Groningen. Please situate the following points geographically:

1. Current location
2. Locations of the various sites

Step 4

I will now provide you with some background information about the various memorial sites included in this survey. After each segment, I would like you to once again tell me how you rate the site, both **aesthetically** and **symbolically**.

1. Werkmanmonument

This monument is a bronze sculpture of a truncated tree. It is a metaphor for violence and human suffering. The artist, Armando, created the sculpture to symbolize power and tenacity, but also vulnerability. The sculpture is an allusion to the trees in which the artist used to climb as a young boy, but which were truncated during World War II; the tree is a testament to all that happened during the war.

2. Ook hier

The phrase *weggehaald* (translated to *removed*) has been milled out of the bricks in the side-façade of a building. The artist wanted to portray the sense of loss and emptiness felt in the Jewish Quarter (Folkingestraat) during and after World War II. By placing the phrase in parentheses, the feeling is further accentuated. The artist wanted to, “depict that which has been lost, without being replaced (Staatingroningen.nl, 2013b).”

3. Jewish Monument

Six hands, each placed on a pedestal. Each hand portrays a different message; the first hand is balled in anger while the second reaches toward heaven. The three upright hands portray despair and the two hands lying on the ground portray sadness and resignation. The uneven concrete wall behind the hands alludes to the Nazi-terror and the crumbled state of Judaism.

Picture	Category	Score									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I	Aesthetics										
	Symbolism										
II	Aesthetics										
	Symbolism										
III	Aesthetics										
	Symbolism										

Step 5

I will now ask you to provide me with some personal information. Remember: you will remain anonymous; this information is intended purely for educational purposes!

- 1. **Gender:**
- 2. **Age:**
- 3. **Country of birth:**
- 4. **Country of birth (parents):**/.....
- 5. **Religion:**
- 6. **Highest level of education attained:**

VMBO (LBO or MAVO)	
HAVO	
VWO	
MBO	
HBO	
WO	
Other	

You have now completed the survey!

Thank you very much for your time. The information that you have provided me will prove invaluable in completing my Bachelorproject!

1.



2.



3.



Appendix 2

Enquête

Mag ik 10 minuten van uw tijd om een enquête in te vullen voor mijn Bachelor scriptie voor de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen?

Ik doe onderzoek naar de verschillen in waardering van Holocaust herdenkingsbeelden voor de verschillende etnische groepen in de stad.

Uw identiteit blijft anoniem; de persoonlijke informatie waar ik aan het einde van de enquête naar zal vragen wordt puur en alleen naar educatieve doeleinden gebruikt.

Als u nog vragen hebt kunt u contact opnemen met mijn begeleider, Mr. G. van Campenhout:

g.van.campenhout@rug.nl

Stap 1

Ik laat u een serie foto's zien. Na elke foto zal ik vragen twee cijfers te geven met betrekking tot uw waardering van het object:

1. **Esthetisch**, op een schaal van **1 (Heel lelijk)** tot **10 (Heel mooi)**.
2. **Symbolisch**, dus de mate waarin u gelooft dat er een boodschap wordt weergegeven, van **1 (Heel zwak)** tot **10 (Heel sterk)**.

Site	Categorie	Cijfer									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I	Esthetisch										
	Symbolisch										
II	Esthetisch										
	Symbolisch										
III	Esthetisch										
	Symbolisch										

Stap 2

Herkende u een van de objecten?

Site	Herkend
I	
II	
III	

Stap 3

Ik laat u nu een kaart zien van de stad Groningen. Ik hoor graag het volgende van u:

1. Onze huidige locatie
2. Locaties van de verschillende herdenkingsbeelden.

Stap 4

Ik zal u nu voorzien van enige achtergrondinformatie over de verschillende herdenkingsbeelden die voorbij zijn gekomen. Ik wil u vragen om na elk verhaaltje opnieuw een cijfer te geven voor de **esthetiek** en de **symboliek** van het object.

1. Werkmanmonument

Een bronzen beeld van een boomstam. Het is een metafoor voor geweld en menselijk lijden. De kunstenaar, Armando, ontwierp het beeld om kracht, vasthoudendheid, onverzettelijkheid en opstandigheid te verbeelden, maar ook kwetsbaarheid. Het beeld is een toespeling op de bomen waarin de kunstenaar als kleine jongen klom, maar die tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog werden afgekapt, De boom is een stille getuige van wat er in de oorlogsjaren gebeurd is.

2. Ook hier

De zinsnede *weggehaald* is gefreesd uit de stenen in de zijgevel van een gebouw. De kunstenaar, Peter de Kan, wilde het gevoel van verlies en leegte benadrukken dat in de Joodse wijk (Folkingestraat) tijdens en na de Tweede Wereldoorlog werd gevoeld. Door de zinsnede tussen haakjes te plaatsen wordt het gevoel verder versterkt. De kunstenaar wilde laten zien, “dat [wat] verdwenen is, zonder terug te plaatsen wat verdwenen is (Statingroningen.nl, 2013b).”

3. Joods Monument

Zes handen, elk op een stokkel. Elk van de handen vertoont een eigen expressie. De eerste is een gebalde vuist waaruit woede spreekt; de tweede daarentegen strekt zich in geloof naar boven uit. De drie staande handen drukken vertwijfeling uit, terwijl de twee liggende handen verdriet en berusting symboliseren. De onregelmatige muur van betonblokken op de achtergrond refereert aan het afgebrokkelde jodendom door de nazi-terreur.

		Score									
Picture	Categorie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I	Esthetisch										
	Symbolisch										
II	Esthetisch										
	Symbolisch										
III	Esthetisch										
	Symbolisch										

Stap 5

Ik ga u vragen naar een aantal persoonlijk kenmerken. NB: u blijft anoniem; deze informatie wordt puur en alleen gebruikt voor educatieve doeleinden!

1. **Geslacht:**
2. **Leeftijd:**
3. **Land van geboorte:**
4. **Land van geboorte (ouders):**/.....
5. **Geloof:**
6. **Hoogste (huidige) niveau onderwijs:**

VMBO (LBO or MAVO)	
HAVO	
VWO	
MBO	
HBO	
WO	
Overige	

U heeft de enquête succesvol afgerond!

Hartelijk dank voor uw tijd. Uw antwoorden op mijn vragen zullen van grote waarde zijn voor mijn onderzoek en het afronden van mijn Bachelorsdiploma!

1.



2.



3.



