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CCHS NEWS

Cultural heritage is a vital issue today

News: May 26, 2017

A recognition of the progress made in the work with cultural heritage. That's how the Ministry of Culture describes the new Cultural Heritage Bill. What do researchers working with the issue think? We ask Astrid von Rosen, researcher at the University of Gothenburg and coordinator for the Archives Cluster at the interdisciplinary Centre for Critical Heritage Studies (CCHS).



What do you think of the bill?

– It's both inspiring and a challenge, says Astrid von Rosen, researcher at the University of Gothenburg and coordinator for the Archives Cluster at the interdisciplinary Centre for Critical Heritage Studies (CCHS). I think it's good that it's based on a so-called expanded concept of cultural heritage, that is, on a theoretically up-to-date and reflective approach that challenges the somewhat inflexible earlier ideas about cultural heritage, and affirms complexity. In this way, cultural heritage becomes actively co-creative and performative; it's more about what it 'does' than what it 'is'. What I find lacking in the bill is a deep-going and critically aware revamping of the concept of the archive, which I believe will be needed when concretising the cultural heritage policy in the near future. It will be exciting to see what emerges in the comprehensive investigation of archives that is also coming.

How does it relate to the work being done at CCHS?

– CCHS and the bill share, as I see it, a similar fundamental view of cultural heritage. This view is based on post-colonial theory and research, the struggle for human rights and social justice, and aboriginal people's understandings of culture and heritage. The bill accordingly allows for a pluralisation of perspectives and contexts. Emphasizing knowledge, creativity, participation and collaboration requires new competencies and instruments that facilitate navigating in an area that is, and must be allowed to be, shifting and complex. In this regard, CCHS can offer critically up-to-date, internationally recognised and theoretically grounded research. CCHS also possesses the competence to examine key concepts and debates, as well as to develop theoretical tools and methods to facilitate navigation in the unstable – and therefore also transformable – field of cultural heritage.

Why are questions of cultural heritage so important today?

– We live in a world that often is described as global and digital, but that also is filled with severe conflicts and deep social injustices. Studying and working with cultural heritages involves giving attention to the

reverberations of the past in the now and its influence on the future. This task may always have been important, but it is absolutely vital today. If humanity is unable to name and symbolise – speak, write and live together with – questions about history, memory, identity and power, then it will be difficult or impossible to uphold a democratic society and human dignity. Cultural heritage is also an issue for universities because it stresses the need for research and higher education that can encounter and enrich cultural heritage policy, not least in the humanities.

Cultural heritage is often described as an emotionally laden and polarised issue. Do you agree?

– People are different and live in different circumstances, so it's not surprising that views on the ownership, representation and accessibility of cultural heritage can differ enormously and that conflicts arise. One example is how the selection of a tangible or intangible heritage always has a back side in the form of what isn't chosen, given resources, or seen as valuable. Another example concerns how the ongoing mass digitalisation of society, with its great potential to enhance democracy, also risks falling into technological utopianism. Parts of the cultural heritage cannot easily or adequately be digitalised – and this poses an important challenge, not least in relation to migration. Also, the new cultural heritage policy reflects a paradigm shift where previous institutional viewpoints and structures are challenged, which can give rise to frictions. In my view, it appears to be of crucial importance to strive to better understand and name the powerful forces that can be unleashed in and by archives. This might happen, for instance, when examining a belief in an archive that does not actually exist, or investigating emotionally charged aspects of what otherwise appear to be neutral or objective archival sources. In this lies an important future task for researchers and practitioners. One must be able to think in new ways without forgoing the important function of archives in legal processes.

Read more about the new proposition: [Snack och verkstad i regeringens kulturarvspolitik](#)

Read more about CCHS: [Centrum för kritiska kulturarvsstudier](#)

Photo: Astrid von Rosen together with Fredrik Linder/Ministry of Culture, Karl Magnusson/Heritage Academy and World Cultural Museum, Mats Persson/Swedish Museums, Rolf Källman/National Archives of Sweden and Britta Söderqvist at Kulturförvaltningen during a panel discussion at heritage Academy's Spring Conference where the Cultural Heritage Bill was presented.

CCHS LECTURES, SEMINARS, SYMPOSIUMS, CONFERENCES

University of Gothenburg

CCHS will participate at Almedalsveckan, Gotland 2017

Information and events in Swedish.

Möbler, inredning och hållbart återbruk - ett långt och lyckligt liv i den cirkulära ekonomin

Tid: 2016-07-06 kl. 10:30-11:30

Plats: Västsvenska Arenan i direkt anslutning till Almedalsparken, intill Kruttornet, Gotland

Seminarium: Möbler, inredning och hållbart återbruk - ett långt och lyckligt liv i den cirkulära ekonomin. Välkommen!

Föreläsare: Staffan Appelgren och Anna Bohlin, Göteborgs universitet, Klusterledare för CCHS/MGHF



Integration av nyanlända

Tid: 2017-07-03 kl 13:00-14:00

Plats: B23, Campus Gotland, Cramérgatan 3

Seminarium: Integration av nyanlända.

Deltagare: Fred Nyberg, U-FOLD, Uppsala universitet; Elisabeth Punzi, Göteborgs universitet, Klusterledare för CCHS/HW; Solvig Ekblad, Karolinska Institutet; Christian Frödén, Gränspolisen; Mohamad Hassan, Kommunalråd (L), Uppsala kommun; Karin Meyer, Apotekarsocieteten; Charlotte Skoglund, Karolinska Institutet Moderator: Annika Jankell, journalist

Heritage Academy: Forum Kulturarv 2017

Time: 10/11/2017 at 12:00 PM

Location: Lisebergsteatern

Exhibition: Welcome to the Heritage Academys "Forum kulturarv" - annual event 2017!

"Forum kulturarv" (Focus heritage) is an exhibition for ongoing and forthcoming heritage projects. If you are interested in exhibiting a heritage project please contact anita.synnestvedt@archaeology.gu.se

You can already sign up for the event at the website below:

<http://www.trippus.net/Kulturarvsakademin2017>

More information to come. Welcome!

Lecturer: Maja Hagerman and Qaisar Mahmood.

Organizer: CCHS/Heritage Academy



EXTERNAL NEWS AND EVENTS**Postdoctoral position in Digital Humanities with specialisation in digital text analysis**

The Department of Literature, History of Ideas and Religion is one of the six departments within the Faculty of Humanities, and has some 100 employees (roughly 30 of whom are doctoral students) and roughly 1,000 students. For more information about the department, go to <http://lir.gu.se/>

The Centre for Digital Humanities (CDH) conducts research on and applies the tools and perspectives that digitalisation has to offer in the study of texts and cultural heritage. CDH's operations, which began in 2015, are firmly rooted in a transdisciplinary approach and method development, and digital text analysis is one of the fields in which CHD aspires to expand its research.

Digital methods have a long tradition at the University of Gothenburg (GU), particularly in view of the prominent position that language technology, the Swedish Language Bank and the Centre for Language Technology occupy at GU.

For more information about the Centre for Digital Humanities, go to <http://cdh.hum.gu.se/>
More information on the position can be found [here](#). Final application date: 2017-08-22

Postdoctoral position in design, craft and society with a focus on migration

The Academy of Design and Crafts (HDK) and School of Global Studies (SGS) are looking for a postdoctoral candidate to conduct research on the relationship between design/craft and migration studies. HDK and SGS with this announcement are looking for meeting points between design, craft and migration studies. We are interested in post-doctoral proposals that combine perspectives, methods and forms of dissemination from design/craft and migration studies. HDK and SGS are in particular interested in research that combines theoretical, empirical and artistic practices and research outcomes that combine article publications and artistic expressions such as artefacts, documentation of interventions, exhibitions and the like. The research is conducted at HDK and SGS as well as within the Centre on Global Migration (CGM). Employment is for a limited period of two years. The application deadline is August 15 2017. Read more [here](#).

Postdoctoral position in Indigenous Heritage - Material Culture

The Department of Heritage and Society of the Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden

Project description: This Post-Doctoral position is part of the ERC Starting Grant Project BRASILIAE. Indigenous Knowledge in the Making of Science: *Historia Naturalis Brasiliae* (1648). BRASILIAE takes the book *Historia Naturalis Brasiliae* (HNB), published in 1648 by Willem Piso and George Marcgraf, as its central focus and proposes an interdisciplinary study of the role of indigenous knowledge in the making of science. Situated at the intersection of history and anthropology, its main research objective is to understand the transformation of information and practices of South American indigenous peoples into a body of knowledge that became part of the Western scholarly canon. It aims to explore, by means of a distinctive case study, how European science is constructed in intercultural settings. This Post-Doc will be working within the BRASILIAE team, consisting of a Principal Investigator, the Post-Doc, and two PhD candidates, along with partners from Naturalis Biodiversity Center (Leiden) and the Museu Paraense Emilio Goeldi (Brazil).

This Post-Doctoral project focuses on the material culture associated with indigenous knowledge-practices that are presently kept in European museums and collections. Since the mid-twentieth century, anthropologists and historians have been trying to locate and document the multiple collections of Brazilian indigenous materials taken from Brazil to Europe. However, no systematic effort has been made so far to reconnect the historical Tupi collections in museums to indigenous knowledge-practices. This project develops an inventory of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Tupi indigenous objects in European museums related to knowledge-practices such as medicinal and shamanic rituals. It aims to generate new knowledge about the historical processes that led to the formation of these collections in the early modern period. This project includes a workshop meeting that brings together indigenous experts and museum specialists to study a previously selected collection of material culture associated with indigenous knowledge practices.

Information: Enquiries can be made to dr. Mariana De Campos Françaço, email m.de.campos.francozo@arch.leidenuniv.nl.

Applications: To apply for this vacancy, please send no later than 30 August 2017 an email to Yvonne Haring y.m.haring@arch.leidenuniv.nl. More information [here](#).

Centre for Critical Heritage Studies wish you all a great summer!

This is the last CCHS Newsletter before summer holidays, we will be back with the next Newsletter in August. Please follow us on [Facebook](#) for regular updates.



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