



GÖTEBORGS UNIVERSITET

Arkeologi i all offentlighet

Arkeologihistorie i Norge belyst ved fortidens veier som
historie- og minnekunnskap

av

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Archaeology in the Public Domain: The History of Norwegian Archaeology based on the History and Memory Work of Ancient Roads

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Abstract

In this thesis, the historiography of Norwegian archaeology is studied by a closer examination of how the historic material culture of roads and vehicles («ancient roads») is narrated and memorised in history writing and in cultural heritage practices. A vast body of historical and heritage-based literature on roads, from the 1870s to the present, is examined as historical knowledge interfacing academic, political and popular rhetoric and uses of the past. The main aim of the thesis has been to gain knowledge about public uses of archaeology, and more precisely how archaeological and historical knowledge of roads becomes a means for various modes of remembrance in society. Theoretically, the thesis explores the advantages of using a dialogic discursive historiographical approach that takes into account genre, chronotope and carnivalism as analytical concepts. In the most basic sense, the theoretical outlook in the thesis gives access to «a history of inter-diciplinarity», which thereby challenges pure disciplinary approaches towards archaeological historiographies.

In the historiographical study, the distinction between *realism* and *romanticism* has become a literary and epistemological background for understanding historiographical processes and dynamics. While the realism movement of the late 19th century made a basic outlook for popular

and institutional interpretations of «ancient roads» in the first half of the 20th century, romanticism became the main baseline during the second half of the 20th century. The thesis reveals the emergence of an institutional knowledge domain, forwarded by administrative sectors, where «ancient roads» as common historic knowledge and cultural heritage are challenged by sectorial claims of the past. The fusion of popular culture and consumer culture in administrative heritage practices have produced an idealised past, which is used in political rhetoric, emphasising «sectorial appeal» and «sectorial romanticism».

The thesis concludes that the ethical implications of commercialized and politicized uses of the past, exposed by sectorial administrative units, provoke a debate about the role archaeology as an academic discipline and humanistic scientific knowledge play in the public realm. The ethical considerations are particularly important with regards to how «applied» research is perceived in the public domain, and more specifically in administrative political uses of the past. These ethical considerations are discussed in conjunction with democratic ideals of public archaeology in an effort to define a nuanced stance to public involvements that interfaces professional, political and popular uses of the past.

Key words: Heritage Studies, Public archaeology, historiography, Critical Discourse Analysis, Bakhtin, ancient roads, Norway.

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