



INSTITUTIONEN FÖR KULTURVÅRD

I sökandet efter delaktighet

Praktik, aktörer och kulturmiljöarbete

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Abstract

This dissertation concerns national heritage management as it is performed as an established institutional practice and a politically defined engagement. Since the late 1990's an overarching political objective has been to ensure "everyone's participation in heritage and heritage management" (Prop. 1997/98:114, 2012/13:96). Even though participation and inclusive practices continue to be urgent issues in policymaking – both nationally and internationally – a series of unsolved questions can be identified on how a negotiation of established engagements should be implemented, carried out and handled. The aim of this research is to analyse how participation as a political objective has been governed, interpreted and put into practice by public heritage actors in Sweden during the time period between 1997 and 2017.

Based in the context of critical heritage studies the research seeks to unravel a series of different aspects, such as the relations between actorhood and institutionalised practices, the interaction and positions of influence, and lastly, claims on heritage and ability to highlight an imaginary (shared) past. The theoretical approach combines the concept of 'policy implementation process' (Bengtsson 2012) with 'structuration theory' (Giddens 1993). Focus is on the circulation of ideas and on what 'happens along the way' as actors interact with policy and structures of stabilized actions. The research uses a combination of three examining studies and three case studies. In these studies, heritage management and participation are explored from an intertwined perspective, travelling through the processes of regulation, policymaking, implementation and effects through a direct interaction between public and civil actors. The case studies chosen all have the character of an 'arranged dialogue process' that aims towards integrating public and civil actors in heritage practice. The main source material consists of policy documents, project materials and oral statements.

The dissertation identifies participation as a still unfixed, uncertain and contested concept. The implementation of participation as a political objective in heritage management (public administration and authority-making), therefore collides with a set of constraints. Consequently, participation continues to be more of a normative ideal for how to act, rather than an established new practice for heritage management. The discussion of results considers, firstly, that the arrangements needed to fulfil policy are depending on special efforts made by public actors to arrange a wider space for interaction and influence. Secondly, a renegotiated interpretation of participation is transiting the ideas of how, whom and what should be taken care of: heritage is used to overcome older asymmetries on who is being recognised and represented. The conclusion drawn, is that there is a need for acknowledging the enduring heterogeneity of the contemporary, by reinterpreting and highlighting new parts of the past.

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