CALL FOR PAPERS

Cultural Heritage: Constitutions, Conflicts and Conventions

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It is probably unsurprising that cultural heritage concepts and the UNESCO conventions which deal with them have caused mixed reactions in the scientific community. These range from partial endorsement of the aims and objectives of the conventions to an outright rejection of the concepts as vague, unscientific, politically reactionary and, therefore, even dangerous. At the same time, some academics have pointed out that the efforts to promote and protect cultural heritage has duplicated the work carried out by anthropologists, sociologists and ethnologists for over a century, without seriously touching upon the advances and debates in those areas. This special issue of Tsantsa will focus on current research which critically examines both tangible and intangible heritage issues.

The concept of “heritage”, and more particularly the one coined by UNESCO, is the result of complex processes of political negotiation at national and international levels. The examination of intangible cultural heritage brought about by the UNESCO conventions reveals normative and often conflicting understandings of culture and diversity, where nationality, tradition and representativeness play important roles. These conflicts and negotiations are often harbingers of national bureaucratic interventions. Ideologically connoted, such interventions affect the representations and practices of communities, groups and individuals in the culturally creative sector. It is no wonder that states, as contracting parties, actively implement the convention within their own borders. The UNESCO cultural heritage is thus also national heritage. This opens up important questions about the objectives, the efficacy and the ways in which states treat this heritage. Do serial applications or international cooperation for the submissions of applications represent new, or even reverse, trends? Generally, cultural achievements are attractive, and so it might seem paradoxical to include memorials such as Robben Island, Hiroshima or Auschwitz. How should we deal with this “heavy” heritage? What are the relevant conflicts and discourses here? A few countries, for example Germany and Switzerland, are in the ratification or implementation phase of the UNESCO Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage. What are the consequences for anthropological research projects? How are they dealing with issues of intangible cultural heritage, and what processes of negotiation and problems can be identified here?
In regard to these questions, articles should consider one or more of the following topics:

- Heritage and the State
- Serial and transnational cultural heritage
- “Difficult cultural heritage”: memorials as cultural heritage
- Ways of dealing with intangible cultural heritage

Languages: German, French, and English

Abstracts:
- 2500 characters (including spaces)
- Short CV
- Deadline: 1 February 2013
- Please send your abstract to: silke.andris@unibas.ch and florence.graezerbideau@epfl.ch

Article:
- Length of article: 40,000 characters (including spaces and bibliography)
- The following additional things will be required if your article is accepted:
  - Short summary (max. 500 characters, if possible in English, otherwise in the language of the article)
  - 4 – 6 keywords
  - short CV and contact information

Further guidelines can be found here: http://www.seg-sse.ch/pdf/Richtlinien_fuer_AutorInnen.pdf

Schedule:
01 February 2013: due date for abstract
15 June 2013: due date for article
            peer review
15 October 2013: feedback
01 January 2014: due date for final article
May 2014: publication of Tsantsa (19/2014)