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RESEARCH PUBLICATION

Lost in Translation – How Policy Enactment Get Stuck in the Digital Fix

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ABSTRACT

According to narrative trends, digitalization has the potential to deconstruct existing power structures and increase participation and democracy in society; however, we will argue, it is unable to accomplish these changes on its own. Specifically, the deconstruction of existing structures cannot happen through digitalization alone; instead, these results depend on how digitalization is done. It is important to focus on understanding what happens in the digitalization process, what is transformed, as well as when it is done, and by whom. We will, therefore, combine a policy enactment framework with a critical analytical framework of digitalization to create a possibility to address the institutional power aspects of digitalization in a specific setting i.e., cultural heritage. We do this by analyzing how policy enactment, which is a way to understand policymaking as a process of organizational interpretations and translations by diverse policy actors, affects the construction of cultural heritage. The results show how digitalization easily becomes a process that is unable to question, it tends to engulf all other values, and cultural heritage is turned into meta-data, getting ‘clicks’ on the internet and attracting tourists to the region.

Keywords

Policy Enactment | Digitalization | Cultural Policy | Cultural Heritage

INTRODUCTION

In the European policy *Digital Cultural Heritage*, it is claimed that with digital technologies, cultural heritage “breathes a new life,” and new technologies “bring cultural heritage sites back to life” (www.ec.europa.eu). The narrative is that digitalization gives cultural heritage new forms of existence, provides something that has been previously inaccessible, and takes cultural heritage into new arenas. Given an understanding of cultural heritage as a concept that results from a cultural process that must be thought through and cannot be defined beforehand (Vecco, 2006), these kinds of statements raise questions

regarding what digitalization gives, provides, and brings. As Loulanski (2010) notes, the *objectified*, *glass-covered*, and *frozen* heritage of the past is now discussed in relation to an understanding of a reappearing and alive *functional heritage*. Cultural heritage is, as such, understood as a constituent, normative concept, filled with content and meaning during the process of defining it. Or, as Hylland (2014) states, citing Owe Ronström's argument, there is no unified meaning of the cultural heritage concept, and it is important to study the underlying processes creating and defining cultural heritage and the actors involved. The construction of cultural heritage, what it is and may be, is a process of prioritization that involves certain knowledge, values, and professionals.

In this study, the underlying argument is that it is important to focus on understanding what happens in the digitalization process: what is transformed, when is it done, and by whom? Of particular interest is what should be included and embraced as cultural heritage or not (Macdonald, 2005), as well as who should be invited and incorporated into the process, which are both sensitive areas. As such, the processes of digitalization and the construction of what does and does not count as cultural heritage are staged within a system of power consisting of knowledge, access, and values (Valtysson, 2017). This means that professional knowledge in the cultural sphere must be translated and connected to digitalization practices, which have, for a long time, been kept separate from issues of power, boundary-marking, exclusion, and norm reproduction (Cecez-Kecmanovic, Klein & Brooke, 2008). The understanding that digital artifacts (in this case, digitalized cultural heritage) both carry and strongly mediate certain values and norms is a growing area in disciplines studying digitalization; however, it is still rather underexplored and minimally visible in actual doing of digitalization (i.e., the study of design practices). Although information systems (IS) research and informatics draw heavily from the social sciences, the explicit link between norm critique and design knowledge is still rather marginalized, although issues of power, inscription, and emancipation have been raised since the 1970s (see, e.g., Akrich, 1992). However, a growing field of critical design has surfaced, and various researchers, such as Bardzell and Bardzell (2013) and Dunne and Raby (2001), have begun to study and analyze both how norms are inscribed in digital solutions and how we could do things differently if we are aware of norm reproduction. One example is the analysis of how normative perspectives are embedded in interaction design (see Lundmark & Normark, 2012; Lundmark, Normark & Räsänen, 2012). A focus on doings, practices, and empirical settings in relation to narratives is essential for a deeper understanding of how digitalization is done and what it entails.

In addition to the awareness of norm reproduction mentioned above, what is often foreseen when analyzing digitalization practices are the results of different institutional steering mechanisms that affect these practices, for example, policies. The digitalization of cultural heritage is made in the context of public sector development, with its logic of public policymaking and civil servants to translate and enact the policies. In these processes, policy enactment, which is

a way to understand policymaking as a process of organizational interpretations and translations by diverse policy actors, has a crucial impact on the construction of cultural heritage. Newman (2005) argues that there is a need to explore how governmental strategies are enacted, negotiated, and contested in specific sites. In the case of a digitalized cultural heritage, we need to unpack the enactment process to understand why some artifacts are prioritized, stored, and disseminated as part of a narrative, in the creation and selection of cultural heritage. Furthermore, as previous research has shown, the ways in which local politicians and civil servants (i.e., policy actors), through enactment, interpret and translate policies may have significant consequences for the overall implementation process (see, e.g., Ball et al., 2011; Braun et al. 2010, 2011, Nyhlén & Giritli Nygren 2015). We argue that the relationships among policy-making, expected outcomes and values, and established practices should be analyzed to create a deeper understanding of how these are made in everyday practices on different levels.

To highlight the policy enactment process and its effects on what the digitalization of cultural heritage is and can be, this paper analyzes a regional initiative that involves creating a digitalized cultural heritage portal where the content is supposed to be user-generated. The analysis will focus on a deeper knowledge of boundary-making, as well as deconstruct and disentangle assemblages of the meaning and content of cultural heritage, in the interaction of policies of digitalization. The aim is to analyze the case with a norm-critical analytical framework and study the idea of a digitalized cultural heritage from policy to practice. As such, we are studying the intersections of digitalization and policy enactment in cultural heritage with the following research question: What happens to the meaning and content of cultural heritage when it is digitalized?

In the next section, we present the theoretical framework used as both a positioning in relation to digitalization and cultural heritage and a toolbox operationalized in an analytical framework. Thereafter, the methodological choices and the empirical case are described in section three, followed by a results and analysis section and a conclusion section that discusses possible contributions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE

In this paper, we argue that it is rewarding to combine critical information systems studies with policy enactment to further the understanding of the doings, the practice and empirical settings when digitalization is highlighted as in the European *Digital Cultural Heritage* policy. This paper is linked to the critical tradition in IS research in terms of questioning existing forms of knowledge production and, especially, its use of hegemonic discourses, its taken-for-granted character, and its embodiment in different digitalization processes. This in line with Orlikowski and Baroudi's (1991) understanding of the critical stance, where the focus is on taken-for-granted assumptions, and the objective

is to expose deep-seated structures, as well as Walsham's (2006) emphasis on construction, enactment, and historical and cultural contingencies. This also questions the idea that the design of digitalization processes is taken for granted as a constructive and unproblematically prescriptive practice that has the objective of making representations of a wanted future (Livari, 2007). The narratives of digitalization become potential study objects and, in this case, invite an analysis of the narrative that with digital technologies, cultural heritage "breathes a new life" and an analysis of how digital artifacts support such representations and evaluate and justify their existence. The study object is also empirically situated in line with Haraway's understanding that the translation or enactment is not made in a vacuum; instead, boundary conditions exist that affect the designer's possibilities, autonomy, and scope (see, e.g., Haraway, 1988).

To further emphasize normative practices in relation to the digitalization of cultural heritage, we draw from the tradition in political science focusing on policy enactment rather than the perspective of policies as being simply implemented. Cultural policy is created at the national level in policy documents, public investigations, letters from the government, and so on, but it is at the local level that cultural policy is turned into everyday practices. Policymaking is seen as a creative process of translating the abstractions of policy ideas into contextualized practices (Braun et al., 2011), and as it is enacted, it is possible to say that individual regions generate their own policies when they translate and embed aspects of national policymaking into their own cultures and working practices (cf. Ball, 1997, 2008). In this case, policy enactment is conducted through a process of everyday making of policy via practices of digitalization. It is done by actors in different organizational positions and from different professional backgrounds. When studying how policies are implemented and legitimized, our aim is not to simplify but, rather, to demonstrate the complexity involved. This complexity comprises not only acknowledging stakeholders' conflicting interpretations but also being sensitive to the rich, detailed, and idiographic meanings that participants assign to them (see Shore et al., 2011).

To understand the relationships among formal policies, institutional interpretations, and local policy actors, we believe that it is also important to remember that policy actors are positioned differently and adopt different positions in relation to policy. Politicians might be positioned differently than, for example, librarians or professionals at a museum, and their translations and interpretations might vary due to their different formal positions and areas of responsibility (i.e., how they are attempting to transfer their perceptions into concrete activities). In this case, positions determine which cultural artifacts are uploaded. Therefore, to unpack the process of policy enactment, we must also take into account the ways in which different types of roles and organizational positions are embedded in this process (Ball et al., 2011). As Fischer et al. (2007) suggest, institutional frames and positions organize attention and biases in the ways in which actors understand problems, choose to act upon them, and view themselves and their roles in the process. Translated to the case of cul-

tural heritage, it is possible to see everyday policymaking as a process of institutional sense-making, activated when politicians and civil servants attempt to find meaning in what their organizations have done or should do.

Taken together, the theoretical framework used in this article combines traditions within the IS discipline and the policy enactment perspective since competing constructs of meaning are available in both the design of digitalization and the enactment of policy. This approach means that we address how social structures, culture, economy, and institutional settings are effecting digitalization processes. We do this to understand how digitalization policies are translated into everyday activities and processes, such as cultural heritage. Departing from the view that the design process begins before digitalization, we argue that the policy enactment process is highly relevant to the design process and the outcome of digitalization processes. What is interesting, then, is to create a deeper understanding of the nature behind the normative constructs and the enactment process to understand how digitalization affects what cultural heritage is and can be.

METHODOLOGICAL CHOICES AND THE EMPIRICAL CASE: A REGIONAL INITIATIVE OF CREATING A DIGITAL CULTURAL HERITAGE PORTAL

This article is based on analyzing the interpretations, negotiations, and choices made in the enactment process of digitalizing cultural heritage. The empirical material is based on a defined case of a digital cultural heritage portal in a Swedish region, which will be further described in the following paragraphs. In this paper, we frame the digitalization of cultural heritage as a process of enactment or a way of capturing how meaning is created in and through everyday policy making, therefore we have chosen to use a qualitative inductive thematic analysis method described by Braun and Clarke (2006). The analysis focuses on condensing and organizing larger amounts of data and developing themes and is performed in two phases. The initial phase of the analysis, which consists of familiarizing oneself with the material, was partially completed during the interview process since the authors conducted all interviews together. Then, the analysis proceeded to the second phase: searching for themes and extracting and grouping quotes and sentences. Finally, the themes were reviewed, defined and named.

The cultural heritage portal studied is a gathering point for links, facts, pictures, information, and advice in the field of culture. The portal is one of the results of a collaboration among the region's county archives, county library, and county museum. The portal was set up in 2005, and the original intention was to create a portal that links to other web pages containing digitalized cultural heritage from the region. We began to study the process in 2015 when the work was mainly focused on developing the portal to include 'sharing functions' where private persons and organizations can share their cultural heritage

material. The purpose of the portal is to collect, store, and display cultural heritage material from the regional county. The portal should function as a gathering place and a hub with the purpose of creating increased accessibility through a common entrance (www.abmresurs.se, <https://kulturarvvasternorrland.se/om-portalen.aspx>). The analysis of the empirical setting of the regional portal is part of a research project called ‘Whose culture?’. The research project, as a whole, addresses issues of who contributes to what becomes representations of cultural heritage and what happens to these representations when they are transferred to a digital portal. In addition to the empirical material presented here, we also developed a method for reflexive design and norm-critical interventions (Nyhlén and Gidlund L., 2018).

The digital cultural heritage portal focused in this article is primarily project-based and funded by various external channels. Throughout the existence of the portal, there has been a project manager who is based at the county museum, a project group that has primarily served as a reference group, and an information technology (IT) manager who has made the technical decisions and alterations. It is important to note that the cultural heritage portal project is linked to a larger European network of projects, Europeana, that focus on the digitization of cultural heritage. Since the digital cultural heritage portal was already designed and in operation, we used a classical qualitative method for case studies (Flyvbjerg, 2005). The material will help us understand the intersection of policy and practice in relation to digitalizing cultural heritage, as well as identify action spaces in everyday work situations. Since cultural heritage is the cultural form that is often digitalized first (Hylland, 2014), we studied this portal as a typical case of how the digitalization of cultural heritage from a region is achieved.

To analyze everyday working practices, we performed in-depth interviews with key actors involved in the work with the digital cultural heritage portal. We used qualitative informant interviews to capture the informants’ thinking patterns and narratives. The aim of the interviews is to disclose choices made in relation to the initiative via the digital cultural heritage portal and speech acts about the initiative; therefore, the main effort of the study has been devoted to the six in-depth interviews. The participants were all chosen based on their participation in the project group responsible for the cultural heritage portal. Participation in the study was voluntary, and the informants were selected via nomination by the project manager. We interviewed all of the project members for the digital portal: the project manager, an archivist at the National Archive, the county museum director, the head of cultural affairs at the County Council, a county librarian, and the IT manager at the County Museum. The informants, in this case, are positioned at different administrative levels but are all agents and subjects of policy enactment in different ways.

TABLE 1 INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Interview participant
The Project Leader for the Digital Cultural Heritage Portal project
The Archivist at the National Archive
The County Museum Director
The Head of the Cultural Affairs at the County Council
The County Librarian
The IT-manager at the County Museum

During the interviews, we discussed the informants' relations to the concept of cultural heritage and the digital portal. The standpoint was always that digital culture is a 'doing,' or a constantly ongoing social construct, that is performed by a number of actors. The participants were often key actors in their professional roles. "Who creates cultural heritage, and what is it?", "Who contributes, and with what kinds of material?", and "How are people participating?" are examples of questions asked during the interviews.

Enacting digitalized cultural heritage

Following Ball et al. (2011), we focused on the informants' formal organizational roles when unpacking the policy enactment process, taking into account the ways in which different sorts of roles and organizational positions are embedded in the process. Through the narratives of the informants, there is uncertainty about not only the aim of the digital portal but also what cultural heritage really is and who should be included in the production of cultural heritage. In addition to having different roles in the project (e.g., manager, politician, archivist, librarian), the informants had different narratives, expectations, and ambitions concerning what the portal project entails.

The theme of having a broad understanding of cultural heritage and displaying a vast representation of the region's diverse cultural heritage was presented as crucial. To accomplish this, the narratives followed an often reoccurring theme of keeping the portal 'open' to the representation of all sorts of material. However, narratives concerning everyday practices often reduced this discussion to technical matters and finances. In the discussion regarding what type of material should be uploaded to the portal, the responsibility was placed on the IT technician, who was positioned as the individual responsible for ensuring that the material is not offensive. There was also a discourse about individualizing responsibility to each user by using the 'creative commons' concept. The portal was built according to this logic so users would reflect on the material and its appropriateness (Librarian). Hence, it becomes evident how cultural heritage as a constituent normative concept, which is filled with meaning, is detached from professional positions and institutions, and the process of prioritization, which

has crucial importance (Hylland, 2014), is left to the portal's IT technician, but it is primarily the responsibility of the users.

The empirical material will display a situation where, inspired by Broom and Besters (2010), we claim that information technology elicits a dynamic of its own in which the political ends come to depend heavily on the technical means. Consequently, the policy runs the risk of being stuck in a 'digital fix' (i.e., a technological fix focusing on information technology). We can also identify a rather instrumental view of technology where it is to be merely an instrument that can be deployed to achieve a political end. We will argue that such an instrumental view fails to grasp the 'engulfing' potential implied by IT. Using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, we identified three major themes in the material: issues of defining cultural heritage, technological issues in the process of digitalization, and using digitalized cultural heritage as a means for marketing the region.

Finding cultural heritage: Defining what it is and digitalizing it

In the narratives, the portal seemed to become a container for slightly different goals depending on the interviewee's institutional position (Ball et al., 2011). For some, it was about "reaching out to those we usually do not reach," (Director county museum) while for the project leader it was about "extracting as much material as possible to get a high number of deliveries for the EU-level"; since the portal is also connected to the European Europeana project, (see also Valtysson 2012). Another standpoint is that the portal was about creating a gathering point "to show whatever people would like to see to get a high number of users" (IT technician). Based on their expectations and professional roles, the informants had different perspectives and thereby enacted different understandings of the portal (Ball et al., 2011; Fischer et al., 2007).

The informants all share the idea that the portal should be user-oriented (i.e., people should be able to upload material to the portal). However, their ideas differ regarding what kinds of material should be allowed to be uploaded. Therefore, the enactment process differs, which affects how the informants understand what cultural heritage is and whether their role is to define cultural heritage or allow the users to define it. Some of the informants clearly stated that the concept of cultural heritage is stretched in both time and place and that it is whatever the one creating it would like it to be: "it is something you define yourself." However, others (e.g., the librarian) suggested that the portal should only include artifacts of events that have taken place in this specific region. A third enactment of the concept of digital cultural heritage suggested that it is the individual—that is, the county citizen—who demarcates it. This means that if a county citizen did something in another geographical location, it should count as cultural heritage and can be legitimately uploaded in the portal. One example of this perspective is when the archivist said,

It [cultural heritage] can be pictures from the travels of county inhabitants who went to [the] Gran Canarias during the sixties.

Other studies confirm that in the field of digitalizing cultural heritage, no selection guidelines seem to be available. Instead, the individual cultural institution or professional participating in the project decides what should be uploaded. This uncertainty and lack of common guidelines are reflected in the use of digital cultural platforms (Valtysson, 2017). The archivist's quote above also suggests that older (i.e., traditional) images or cultural expressions, rather than contemporary images or expressions, are important to the digital portal. Hence, the term cultural heritage, in our material, refers to what Giaccardi (2012: 2) calls "digitally born" forms of heritage based on retrospective logics of preserving what is of value in what we have inherited from the past. This perspective is further enhanced in the portal's name—the cultural heritage portal—which reflects historical rather than contemporary cultural expressions. Therefore, the policies are enacted into everyday practices that translate cultural heritage to be about heritage, something in the past and not in the present or ongoing. When the overarching demarcation is based on geographical location, the necessity that "the whole county is represented", as stated by the librarian, is stressed in the participants' narratives. This idea displays an enactment of cultural heritage as representing the county from a geographical aspect and not based on ideas about including a broad range of different types of cultural representations in the portal.

In discussions about what cultural heritage is and what it is supposed to be when uploaded to the portal, the librarian said that it is important to remember that the portal had its origin in a discussion about "Who gets to be seen?" This narrative signals a strategy aimed at achieving an inclusive cultural heritage: what it is, and who gets to produce it. It is also an example of how participation is enacted into being an issue of being visually represented in the portal. In other cases, where the digitalization of cultural heritage has been analyzed (Valtysson, 2017), arguments for preserving things that risk being lost in their analog form are prioritized, and it is interesting that this kind of argument is absent in our material. It also means that being 'visually' represented in the material of the portal is how the idea of user orientation is enacted as being about the uploaded material and not about who is uploading it.

Since there was a lack of public interest in the portal, it stayed rather empty for several years, and the informants had to use different strategies to get materials uploaded. When analyzing the strategies, it becomes evident how project finances and personal networks are crucial for the actual output or what is uploaded to the digital portal (i.e., what cultural heritage is). The informants said they tried to reach out to various groups; however, the success of getting groups to upload material was connected to the project groups ability to provide assistance during the uploading process, which required additional project funding, according to the project leader and IT-technician. Hence, what becomes the cultural heritage of the county is determined by the amount of

available funding. This is evident in the narratives; several projects have financed people who help specific groups or institutions (e.g., folk museums or traditional fishing villages) upload their material into the portal, according to the IT technician. Hence, adapting to available funding from the EU in everyday practices impacts what is uploaded into the portal. This means that the understanding of what cultural heritage is or can be is not only affected by the definitions and the enactment of those of the local professionals working in the field but also highly connected to practices and processes defined at the EU level (see also Valtysson, 2012).

In the context of increasing the amount of uploaded material, the informants created everyday practices designed to “find” material to upload to the portal. They reached out to different groups and organizations, which became a practice that was highly dependent on personal contacts. In this process, the understanding of cultural heritage is broad, and the understanding of cultural heritage as “everything” gets lost in the enactment process since the material becomes representations of what is possible to find through personal networks of the civil servants working with the portal. Hence, the hopes and aspirations of increased public participation, which are tied to the digitalization of cultural heritage (Hylland, 2014; Scott Sørensen, 2016; Deuze, 2006; van Hooland, 2006), are not being fulfilled since the everyday practices make personal contacts omnipresent. In the narratives, there was a hope that the digitalization of cultural heritage could be a way to challenge what culture and heritage currently are; however, there was also resignation to being able to digitalize only those artifacts that were already in the library, museum, or archives. This is why reaching civil society groups and private individuals and encouraging them to upload material was perceived as being so important. However, when determining how to reach out and identify possible contributors, the project group used existing “invitation lists” that essentially addressed local history groups. This indicates an enactment process where everyday practices embody the upholding of existing forms of producing knowledge (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991). In response to a direct question during an interview regarding working practices to find the “civil society”, the head of cultural affairs answered that this is something “one just knows”. The selection mechanisms of what cultural heritage is remain the same, despite digitalization and the ambition of being a user-creator platform. In this way, the rather instrumental view of technology displayed by the informants contributes to the loss of the potential distortion effects that digitalization bring. The case with the portal show how political ends, which is cultural heritage, in this case, become dependent on digitalization (compare Broom & Besters, 2010).

With time, technology will come: waiting for the right solutions

The narratives include stories that are often strongly influenced by “good intentions” meeting everyday reality (cf. Haugsevje et al., 2016), as well as ideas regarding ways to increase participation, getting as many “clicks” as possible and user-oriented solutions where anyone can upload “anything”. There-

fore, the informants have adopted practices of ‘outreach’ (Scott Sørensen, 2016) and the idea that digitalization will automatically bring increased participation (Valtysson, 2017). However, there is also a villain in the story; the narratives refer to technological problems as hindrances to the participatory ideal, and the *right* technological solutions will eventually solve the perceived problems with participation and user orientation.

The material displays an expectation of enthusiastic cultural participation, production, and distribution of users and that this will happen due to digitalization (compare Valtysson, 2012). This is displayed in the narratives where there was a general theoretical understanding and problematization of, for example, the concept of representation, and in these narratives, the technological aspects became omnipresent. Specifically, there was a notion of how important it is to avoid reproducing old patterns of inequalities by including minorities in the production of the region’s cultural heritage. In the attempt to include a broader representation of the region’s cultural heritage, there was an attempt to invite a group of Roma to upload material to the portal. The Roma association, however, declined, with the argument that they did not want to contribute to legitimizing the presentation of the cultural heritage of a majority that has discriminated and treated them with inequality for so long (Project Manager). This raises the question: on whose terms should inclusive strategies and participation be decided? Being invited to participate on terms decided by the majority or being asked to contribute as a supplement or an amendment is not an inclusive strategy. The case thereby represents a situation where the constructive and prescriptive practice of IT (Livari, 2007) was not considered before creating the portal; instead of asking people how they would like to participate, they were invited to participate in a stage where they were transformed into mere passive producers rather than active users.

When it comes to everyday practices and inclusive practices this are done, the informants tended to reduce it to making use of available technical solutions (i.e., they were only able to be inclusive when there was already a technical solution at hand). The technical solutions that became central in the narratives were designed to produce equal opportunities to participate regarding disabilities. In this way, including minorities in the representation of the region’s cultural heritage resulted in silence: it evaporated in the narratives focusing on designing inclusive technical solutions for the disabled. In response to a direct question about including minorities, for example, the Roma and the Sami, and why this is not done in practice, an often-recurring answer was that this would come with time. The Director of the County Museum said,

We would like to include them [the Sami], but we have not got there yet.

Minorities other than the Roma and the Sami are mentioned rarely, if ever, and when they are, it is in relation to a neo-liberal market discourse of supply and demand (Virolainen 2016; Mangset et al., 2008). This is picked up and enacted in the practice of only buying books that customers ask for; the librarian says,

“It is only possible to have a supply of culture that is demanded.” This statement reflects the understanding that minorities are not a potential market for culture.

There were interesting turns in the narratives since there are project resources to be spent on making the portal more inclusive, but it is instead framed as *with time, technology will solve this issue*. As the director of the county museum stated, “there are resources, but it [inclusive practices] is not done.” Why it is not done is related to narratives of it being something to strive for in the future; “It is a long-term goal,” said the director of the county museum. Hence, the informants do not see themselves as able to transform the technology but, instead, put themselves in a waiting position: they get stuck in the “digital fix” (compare Broom & Besters, 2010). Similarly, public documents concerning the portal reflect trust in technology and digitalization, stating that “everyone can be a part of creating cultural heritage” once it is online (www.lansstyrelsen.se/vasternorrland). The underlying assumption reflects a traditional notion that everyone is equally skilled and has equal opportunities to participate, which is strongly linked to the notion of culture becoming available once its digitalized. We argue that if participation does indeed increase in number and strength following digitalization, there is a need for a more nuanced discussion about representation. Following Calhoun (1995), the argument is that participation is often presented as seemingly universal (e.g., involving various categories, such as customers, clients, users, and citizens). However, certain identities and cultural expressions are prioritized at the expense of others. The narratives are characterized by numerous visions, but the visions and ideas evaporate through everyday practices. When asked questions about how to realize these visions, the narratives were largely insecure, simply stating that the group was trying: “We are in the start of that process”, and technology will solve the problem if it is just given time.

There is also uncertainty surrounding the user orientation and whether it increases participation and representation. The uploading process was described, by the director of the county museum, as a “one-way communication” in which institutions digitalize artifacts but do not know who the “receiver” is. Once again, the digital solution associated with the portal was framed as the solution to this problem. Hopes were expressed that, following the process of becoming digital, new participants could contribute, the project could reach new groups, and the museum’s mission of reaching as many people as possible would be easier to accomplish (see Calhoun, 1995). There were also hopes of a more dialogical communication (versus the one-way transmission currently undertaken by the museum). The aim of reaching “new groups” that may wish to contribute to the portal was also linked to digitalization, as if digitalization itself would provide a new arena with new participants. However, all of the interviewees, in different ways, referred to the portal as being in a “waiting mode”. They had not truly launched the portal or been marketing it because it needed updates. Once it got these updates, it would become attractive, and so would the geographic region, which also links to the next theme identified in the material.

Becoming attractive both as a portal and as a region

All informants shared the understanding that the portal was “for everyone” and expressed a will and an ambition to include as many different identities and types of cultural artifacts as possible. Again, the solution to the perceived problem is technology. The informants frequently mentioned technological solutions, for example, a specific “sharing function” in the portal, which enables “everybody” to upload their material (i.e., texts and images) just like “on Facebook”. The aim of the portal is enacted into the practice of getting as many “clicks” as possible or as many visiting tourists as possible. Hence, cultural heritage is entangled with regional politics and the idea of becoming a region attractive to tourists makes very “Swedish” images of, for example, idyllic nature or red wooden houses trimmed in white, positive to upload. The political ambition is that the material uploaded to the portal attracts as many users to the portal and, in the long-term, as many visitors to the region as possible. As the director of the museum says:

We are supposed to work for the county, in the county... to promote tourism.

Using the portal to attract tourists is linked to the organization of cultural heritage politics in Sweden. The responsibility for cultural heritage is at the county council-level, meaning that the issue of cultural heritage is in a political organization sorted under the department of regional development and economic growth (Head of Cultural Affairs).

Among some of the informants, there was a clash between cultural values and economic aspects that became evident in the field of cultural heritage. The cultural policy has sought to preserve culture in an anti-capitalistic way; however, this has changed over time, and the debate about economic growth has increased. This issue is now decisive for projects financed by the county council according to the director of the museum. However, in other narratives, these two perspectives go hand-in-hand since culture and economic growth are supposed to be included in all other political issues and will always be connected to inclusiveness and democracy according to the head of cultural affairs.

CONCLUSION

This article has shed light on the digital politics of cultural heritage and how power and possibilities are still tied to cultural professionals, as well as how this relationship gets lost in the translation of cultural policy in a digital context. We departed from the notions that policy enactment in a digital context might not always be deliberative, conscious, and elaborated on and that the enactment process always takes place within formal and socially accepted norms with reference to development paths and possible futures (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991; Walsham, 2006; Ball et al., 2011; Shore et al., 2011). Our argument is that it is, therefore, important to attempt to uncover these doings

and use frameworks and tools to analyze this situation in order to take situated meanings into account. We chose a combination of policy enactment and critical strands in information systems research to reveal how everyday policy-making is a process of institutional sense-making of digitalization. The process is activated when politicians and civil servants attempt to find meaning in what their organizations should do in relation to the increasing demands of digitalization. When we study the idea of a digitalized cultural heritage from policy to practice, we can show how cultural heritage gets entangled in the digital fix and how digitalization itself may distort the idea of what cultural heritage is or may be. The technological framework transforms cultural heritage into something that can be uploaded, or finding someone that is able to upload it, getting many “clicks” and using it for marketing purposes. In this way, the process of digitalization engulfs the broad and inclusive idea of cultural heritage.

As Valtysson (2017) points out, digitalization has the potential to shift power relations between who is allowed to choose, form, and disseminate/distribute the narratives that constitute cultural heritage and through which communication channels they travel; however, our case shows that this potential is not fulfilled. Taken together, the analysis of the interviews has made it clear that the process of enacting policy in the development of a regional digital cultural heritage portal involves demarcations about what cultural heritage is, where inclusive aspirations evaporate in everyday practice. Trust in information technology for the purpose of collecting, gathering, and saving cultural heritage is motivated by its promises: 1) improved user involvement, which means added democratic value, and 2) increased attractiveness of the region.

One of our main findings concerns stories about digitalization and technology, which represent one of the most prominent themes across all the informants' narratives. Technology is positioned at the center and is presented as both a villain and a savior. The technological solutions and processes of digitalization are presented as the cause of almost all problems that the portal is described to have, preventing the project group from implementing more inclusive strategies and preventing the portal from being widely used and marketed. However, technology is also presented as the solution to all of the perceived problems, such that the informants expected new technologies to pull the portal out of its ‘waiting mode’ and allow it to flourish and be used. In the striving for increasing participation, the story told is that new technologies and digitalization will create a new arena with new participants, which will increase the number of different types of representations of cultural heritage. Therefore, the technical and digital aspects of the portal are positioned at the center, such that all enactment processes are very dependent on them. This makes not only the discussion about understanding and interpreting the concept of cultural heritage but also the discussion about altering everyday practices almost irrelevant. In both cases, the enactment get stuck in digitalization, where digitalization itself is really never questioned or challenged: digitalization must be done!

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