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Unreviewed Mixed Matters Article:

Event Review: NEMO Training Course 'Regional Development through Heritage in Sweden' in Östersund, Sweden

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EXARC is an associated member of NEMO, the Network of European Museum Organisations. 'The leading principle of NEMO's activities for members is to empower the network to help professionalise museum and heritage work though exchanging and discussing with colleagues from other countries.' (www.ne-mo.org). Annemarie Pothaar is an EXARC Board member with a special interest in Interpretation, who was invited to send in a letter of motivation and expectation, to attend the NEMO training course. She was selected to attend

the one day training course on 29th June 2018 in Östersund Sweden. This was facilitated by the Jamtli Foundation and the Nordic Centre of Heritage Learning and Creativity (NCK). The meeting was attended by six colleagues coming from different countries, including the Netherlands and Azerbaijan. The theme of the meeting was how heritage can contribute to regional development, including the educational impact, but also working towards cultural diversification and economic development.

> At the National Art Gallery we noted how the gallery space was not geared towards heritage learning; we had to be quiet allowing no discussions and no space to stand together as a group of people. This contrasted largely with the interpretation vision used in the open-air space, where the multisensorial, multiple intelligence of learning styles all have a place and are actively sought after.

The hosts

'Jamtli Foundation runs a large open-air museum in Östersund in the middle of Sweden. Displaying the history of the region, by taking the diverse background of the people like refugees and the indigenous Sami people into consideration, they face challenges to think carefully about what they represent and how they present it in the museum. Jamtli is well connected to the social and education sector in the region and works with different operators to broaden their audience. The museum is also engaging in various activities on a European level and involved in a number of EU-projects, winning several prizes.' www.jamtli.com

'The NCK is a Nordic-Baltic research and development centre, owned by Museums and archives in the Nordic and Baltic Countries. NCK aims to approach, better understand and enhance learning through heritage. They perceive cultural heritage as a valuable resource that can facilitate, amongst other things, the development of new competences and contribute towards a sustainable and inclusive society where learning is a lifelong process. In a political context they use heritage learning to promote social inclusiveness and regional development'. www.nckultur.org

The vision

The NCK and Jamtli foundation are well known through the visionary approach towards Heritage and Life Long Learning, set up by director Henrik Zipsane, who unfortunately was unable to attend the meeting and his presence and the opportunity to meet in person, was sorely missed. Read more of Zipsane's ideas and vision at: http://didarchtik.exarc.net/files... and http://nckultur.org/wp-content/uploads/...

Both organisations are very much worth taking a closer look at; from the business end of how they are financed; on their approach of heritage as a social resource; on intercultural dialogue; and not in the least for their educational methodologies and research. Jamtli has a

long tradition of special focus on pedagogical work in an open-air environment. The cooperation between these two organisations means they work closely on the borderline between theory, practice and research combined.

The Meeting

After the introduction of NEMO and the history and relevance of both host organisations as presented above, the participants presented themselves in various ways. As time was too short for proper discussion and examples, this was mostly a presentation of identity and some reference to the theme of the day. The participants included:

- Milena Milosevic Micic, board member of the Balkan Museum Network;
- Tamara Faár, head of Visitor Service Department at Hungarian Open-Air Museum with a very interesting Museum Methodology and education centre www.mokk.skanzen.hu;
- Marjan Ruiter, director of the Zeeuws Museum, the Netherlands;
- Ciprian Stefan, board member of The National Network of Romanian Museums with a very interesting point that local people need to embrace the use of heritage crafts again to make it worth for young people to keep up traditional skills and to make a living from it www.muzeulastra.ro;
- Gunel Madadli, staff member of the Administration of State Historical-Architectural Reserve “Icherisheher” under Cabinet of Minister of Azerbaijan Republic; and
- Annemarie Pothaar, board member of EXARC who presented EXARC as a relevant knowledge and network partner and also gave a small hint towards live historic interpretation with www.imtal-europe.org

After lunch we had a very short and speedy tour of the open-air museum of Jamtli and the newly reopened adjoining National Art Gallery. We had a short visit to various locations in the open-air setting, which focussed on the projects including housing for refugees, funded by Jamtli Foundation and the representation of minorities in the Saami display. This is currently not interpreted, honouring the wish of the indigenous community. At the National Art Gallery we noted how the gallery space was not geared towards heritage learning; we had to be quiet allowing no discussions and no space to stand together as a group of people. This contrasted largely with the interpretation vision used in the open-air space, where the multisensorial, multiple intelligence of learning styles all have a place and are actively sought after. Possibly this is the result of the brand new cooperation with the National Collection of Art and a hesitant first start, or just our own knowledge and experience of other examples with a more holistic approach. Downstairs was a very well equipped and welcoming hands-on arts centre, again only geared towards children and families. It would have been nice to see these two, the original art and hands-on, mix in single space.

In the late afternoon several of Jamtli Foundation and NCK's projects were presented in which their methodology of 'pressure cooker' with ten questions to define yourself and 'creative labs' to combine arts, crafts and new business opportunities were very notable. Research has shown that this area in Sweden is mostly dependant on the tourism tradition of sports and nature, and that the cultural tourism side is not that mature. But, for potential visitors, culture and heritage are the main reasons for choice destination. This calls for a redefinition of tourism and the tourist as co-creative actors forming their own experience. In other words, from sight-seeing to sight-doing. NCK provides a sound research base and practical methodologies to develop new cultural and heritage programming and products. Jamtli Foundation, by the nature of how the organisation is set up, helps spread this knowledge through various regional organisations by providing staff and experience in broad fields.

Jamtli further explained their project regarding refugee housing, which were built to help the local community and how they welcome refugees in the museum. They also provided an short summary on how Jamtli works with the local community and providing young people with their first summer jobs in the open-air museum setting.

Proceedings

The proceedings of a one day training course are to be debated, especially when key figures are not present and programming is altered and rushed on execution. However, due to prior knowledge on the theme of the day, a special interest in the focal points and a wider experience in the heritage field, it was a pleasure to re-visit Jamtli and to get to know all host organisations and participants. It was an opportunity for networking and personally see new developments in action. All three organisations are very appealing partners for EXARC, possibly working together as international partners in future funded projects. NEMO can provide a practical exchange on several topics, and both the Jamtli Foundation and NCK are interesting podiums to test general research cases from which we could all learn and profit from. I can very much recommend visiting the three institutions and their activities.

Visiting Jamtli

In preparation to the meeting, Annemarie visited Jamtli the day before the course. She had last visited the museum in 2012, just outside the main season and was now very interested in the so called 'History Land'; with all open-air locations staffed by live (historic) costumed interpreters during 6 weeks in summertime only. It was apparent that the standard of not using the English language during conversations between live interpreters and visitors (only in the representation of the 70s allowed by Jamtli) was a barrier to the general experience of 'History Land'. No live interpretations were available when visiting alone and only one interpreter would speak English to me out of sight of other visitors, except for the historic shop employees. One would have felt more welcome if the interpreters acknowledged the individual and yet spoke Swedish when trying to explain something. Moreover, as Jamtli has

proudly chosen to be geared towards family activities, a single visitor feels left out, as you are unable to actively engage with History Land. Not only are the activities not accessible to the individual, but you also feel ignored, even though not intentional, as this is could be an unwanted side effect of the focus towards groups (families) and not inclined by purpose.

As a follow up Annemarie went to Skansen open-air museum in Stockholm to see how for example the Sami people were represented in that museum. In Stockholm the interpreters are allowed to speak in English with the visitors and have extra English spoken programmed activities due to the influx of tourists all season. In the Sami context there was an interpreter of Sami descendance. From a modern day viewpoint, the interpreter explained the difficult position and underrepresentation of Sami people in Swedish society. It is very odd to see a modern country like Sweden making a point of taking in refugees to stimulate regional development, but on the other hand almost forgetting and making traditional life difficult for their own indigenous peoples.

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Gallery Image

FIG 1. NATIONAL ART GALLERY AT JAMTLI. PHOTO: ANNEMARIE POTHAAR

FIG 2. HANDS-ON ART GALLERY SPACE. PHOTO: ANNEMARIE POTHAAR

FIG 3. INTERPRETATION FOR CHILDREN GOING ON IN THE BAKERY, AND WOMAN AND CHILD VISITOR IN CONVERSATION. THE PHOTOGRAPHER GETS IGNORED. PHOTO: ANNEMARIE POTHAAR

FIG 4. INTERPRETATION IN ONE OF THE MANOR HOUSES. AFTERWARDS I FOUND OUT THE CHILDREN ARE ENGAGED IN TIME TRAVEL, BUT TO ME AS A SINGLE VISITOR IT WAS NOT CLEAR ON SITE. THERE WAS SWEDISH CONVERSATION GOING ON, BUT I WAS IGNORED AND NOT GREETED AND FELT UNWELCOME. PHOTO: ANNEMARIE POTHAAR

FIG 5. ADVERTISEMENT OF THE TIME TRAVEL FOR CHILDREN. PHOTO: ANNEMARIE POTHAAR

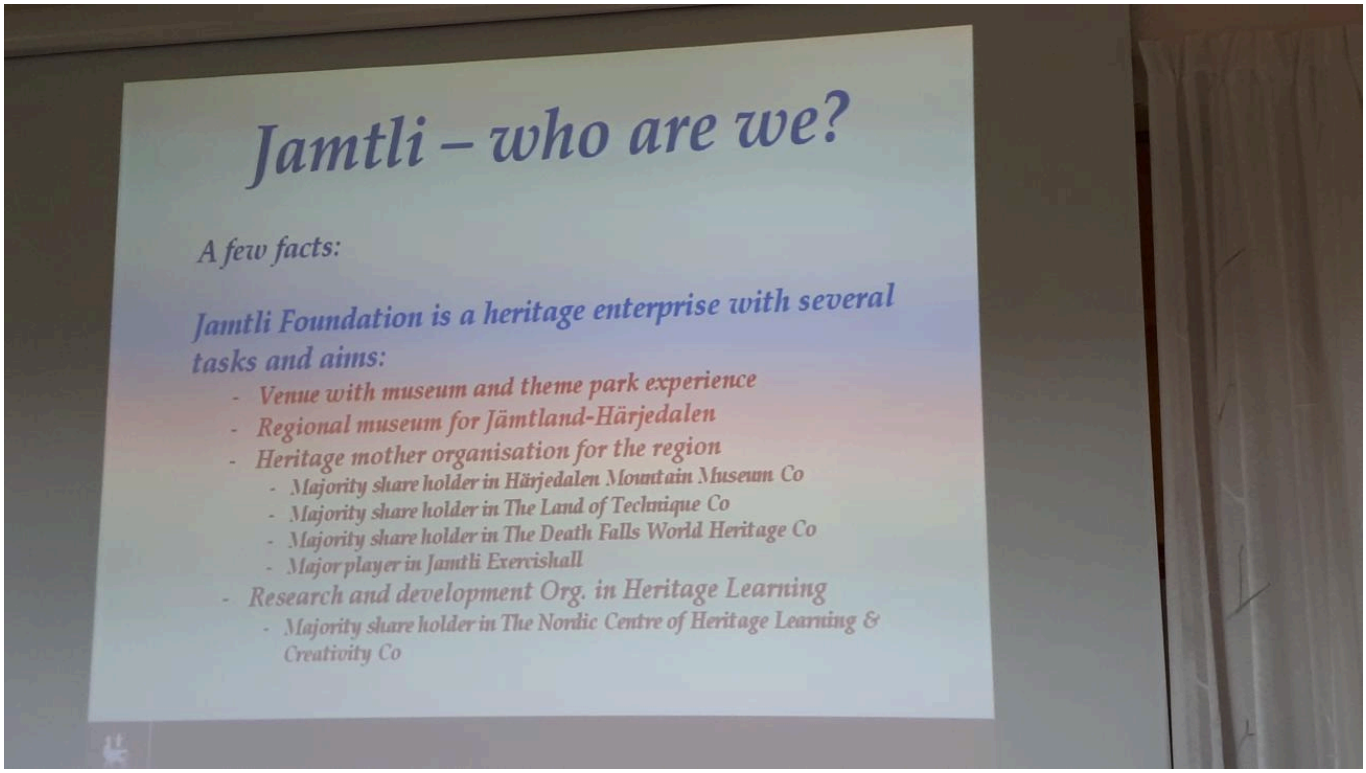

FIG 6. SLIDE EXPLAINING JAMTLI FOUNDATION. PHOTO: ANNEMARIE POTHAAR

FIG 7. PARTICIPANTS OF THE ONE DAY CONFERENCE IN CONVERSATION WITH THE 1970'S INTERPRETER. PHOTO: ANNEMARIE POTHAAR

FIG 8. PARTICIPANTS OF THE ONE DAY CONFERENCE DISCUSSING THE SAMI DISPLAY AT JAMTLI. PHOTO: ANNEMARIE POTHAAR

FIG 9. REFUGEE HOUSES FINANCED, BUILT AND OWNED BY JAMTLI FOUNDATION ON THE SITE OF THE OPEN-AIR MUSEUM. PHOTO: ANNEMARIE POTHAAR

FIG 10. CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN TIME TRAVEL, AS A REGULAR VISITOR, YOU ARE WELCOME FOR A SHORT PEEK INSIDE BUT ONLY OBSERVING, NO INTERACTION. PHOTO: ANNEMARIE POTHAAR