OMÓWIENIA I RECENZJE

Fiona R. Cameron, *The Future of Digital Data, Heritage and Curation: in a More-than-Human World*, ISBN: 978-1-00314-960-6, Routledge, London 2021, pp. 308

In an era where digital transformation shapes every aspect of our lives, the field of cultural heritage and curation is undergoing a profound metamorphosis. Digital data, heritage and curation is not just a topic of academic inquiry but a pressing reality that we are rapidly evolving into. *The Future of Digital Data, Heritage and Curation: in a More-than-Human World* by Fiona R. Cameron is a thought-provoking and timely exploration of digital cultural heritage and its implications in the contemporary world. Cameron's work stands out for its critical examination of how digital cultural heritage is conceptualized and applied to data. The book is particularly insightful in its exploration of new theories, curatorial practices, and the development of a more-than-human museology, which feels especially relevant in an era increasingly dominated by digital interactions and transformations.

The book is divided into nine chapters. Each chapter builds upon the premise that digital data and heritage are evolving in a complex, interconnected world, necessitating a reevaluation of traditional heritage concepts and practices. The opening chapter establishes the foundations for the book. It begins with an illustrative anecdote of former President Donald Trump's morning routine of tweeting, using this to showcase how diverse data sources, from presidential tweets to outputs from automated systems, are becoming part of our digital heritage. The author sets out the book's main objectives: to critique the existing concepts of digital cultural heritage, develop new theories, and propose innovative curatorial practices. This chapter serves as a roadmap, previewing the rich concepts and international examples that will be explored in subsequent chapters.

Transitioning from the introductory concepts, Chapter 2 delves into the history of digital cultural heritage. The focus is on its official recognition, notably

through UNESCO's Charter on Digital Heritage in 2003. The chapter critically examines the human-centric nature of this heritage and challenges the idea of universal human cosmopolitanism in digital cultural heritage, using such examples as the digitization efforts of the Google Digital Cultural Institute. It concludes by advocating for a broader understanding of digital heritage as encompassing various digital realities, thereby disrupting traditional heritage frameworks.

Building on the previous chapter's historical context, Chapter 3 presents digital data as a product of modern heritage concepts. It discusses how heritage practices in the digital age are intertwined with global capitalism and data economies, exemplified by the urgent need to preserve digital data like Trump's tweets. This chapter expands the notion of heritage, suggesting it encompasses various sectors of society and personal digital memories, thereby proposing a broader definition of what constitutes heritage.

Chapter 4 critically examines the notion of digital cultural heritage as object forms. It challenges traditional views of objects in museum and heritage practices and argues for a more-than-human perspective. The chapter uses case studies, such as the Smithsonian's 9/11 collection, to demonstrate how digital cultural heritage transcends human-centered, technical, or bounded interpretations and embodies broader ecological and non-human processes.

In Chapter 5, the discussion shifts from objects to ecological formations. The author introduces new theoretical and curatorial frameworks that view digital cultural heritage as part of a more extensive ecosystem. This chapter uses examples like Trump's tweets and the digitization of the American Airlines Flight 11 jump seat belt to illustrate how digital heritage can be understood as dynamic ecological compositions.

Chapter 6 critiques how digital data is transformed into artefactual legacies. It examines current practices in digital collecting and preservation, using examples such as Trump's tweets and the Wikileaks 9/11 collection. The author proposes three approaches to archiving: preserving artefacts as moments in time, keeping digital heritage active within the realm of the original, and maintaining ecological compositions actively in the world.

Chapter 7 builds on the previous discussions by proposing new curatorial practices for digital cultural heritage. It introduces the concept of "ecological composition" and suggests modifications to curation that embrace post-object thinking and worldwide practices. Using diverse examples like Trump's tweets

and data from sex robots, the chapter redefines curatorial roles and practices in the digital age.

Chapter 8 explores the future of digital data and heritage in a more-than-human world. It considers the impact of AI, automation, and emerging technologies on heritage concepts. The chapter argues for inclusion of non-human entities in heritage and discusses the role of digital cultural heritage in environmental issues, such as climate change and environmental justice.

In the final chapter, the author synthesizes the ideas presented throughout the book into a new concept of more-than-human digital museology. This chapter differentiates between traditional human-centric heritage practices and more-than-human ecological formations. It suggests a reimagining of heritage that is inclusive of various digital realities and practices, emphasizing the dynamic and ecological nature of digital cultural heritage for future generations.

Throughout the book, the author seamlessly transitions between chapters, building a comprehensive and interconnected argument. Each chapter advances the discussion, from setting the theoretical groundwork to critiquing current practices, and ultimately proposing a radical rethinking of digital data, heritage, and curation in a more-than-human world.

The Future of Digital Data, Heritage and Curation is a seminal work that offers a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to the study of digital cultural heritage. Blending concepts from digital humanities, cultural heritage management, information management, and environmental studies, Cameron's book stands out for its depth and breadth. This interdisciplinary nature is one of its core strengths, enabling a nuanced understanding of how digital heritage intersects with various aspects of contemporary society.

At the heart of the book is its critical and philosophical depth. Cameron offers insightful critiques and reflections on how digital cultural heritage, both digitally born and digitized, is perceived and preserved. This critical approach challenges the predominantly Western-centric views of digital heritage and enriches the discussion with a global perspective. The diverse range of case studies from around the world adds to this strength, allowing Cameron to explore digital heritage in varied cultural contexts.

Another significant contribution of Cameron's work lies in its theoretical innovations. The book introduces groundbreaking concepts such as a more-than-human museology, expanding the scope of what is traditionally considered heritage. This includes the inclusion of non-human entities like AI, automated

systems, and biological entities, offering a visionary outlook on the future of heritage. These innovative theories are not only academically stimulating but also have practical implications. Cameron proposes new curatorial practices that are essential for professionals managing and curating digital data in our contemporary and future world.

Perhaps one of the most unique aspects of Cameron's book is its focus on the environmental implications of digital cultural heritage. In an era where the environmental impact of digital technologies is increasingly scrutinized, the book's examination of digital heritage's role in climate change and environmental injustice is both timely and crucial. This perspective not only adds to the book's interdisciplinary nature but also highlights the urgent need for sustainable practices in the management of digital cultural heritage.

Furthermore, the book is lauded for its engagement with contemporary issues, making it highly relevant to current societal and technological trends. The inclusion of contemporary phenomena, such as the analysis of former President Trump's tweets, underscores the importance of current events in understanding the dynamics of digital heritage.

The book, while a comprehensive and visionary work, encounters certain limitations. Its interdisciplinary approach, while a strength, also introduces a level of complexity and specialized language that may challenge accessibility for a broader audience, particularly those new to digital humanities or cultural heritage management. The book's heavy emphasis on theoretical perspectives, while insightful, could overshadow practical applications, potentially limiting its direct utility for practitioners in the field. The focus on theoretical discussions over methodological approaches might limit its usefulness for practical research applications, and the scope of its global case studies, although diverse, might not comprehensively represent the vast spectrum of digital cultural heritage worldwide. Additionally, its forward-looking nature leads to speculative predictions about the role of AI and non-human entities in heritage, predictions that may not fully account for unforeseeable technological and societal changes.

Taken together, *The Future of Digital Data, Heritage and Curation: in a More-than-Human World* is an invaluable resource for academics, students, and practitioners in the fields of museums, archives, libraries, and digital humanities. Its comprehensive analysis, innovative ideas, and forward-looking perspective make it an essential read for anyone interested in the evolving

landscape of digital heritage and curation. Cameron's work is a testament to the richness and complexity of digital cultural heritage in the modern world, offering both critical insights and practical solutions for its preservation and interpretation.

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