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Generating roadmaps for research in museums

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Acronyms of the CIVIS universities

AMU	Aix-Marseille Université
NKUA	National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
UB	University of Bucharest
ULB	Université libre de Bruxelles
UoG	University of Glasgow
UNIL	University of Lausanne
UAM	Universidad Autónoma de Madrid
SUR	Sapienza Università di Roma
PLUS	Paris Lodron University of Salzburg
SU	Stockholm University
UT	Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen

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Materials for reflection & exchange

Generating Roadmaps for Research in Museums

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Routes overview

Quick look at the research abstracts

Route 1

1. Ebba Vikdahl, SU, Stockholm

Preliminary title of thesis: *The (Dis)Enchanted Folk. Magic Objects, The Nordic Museum and the Construction of Folk Belief in Sweden, 1890-1940*

Bio

I am currently a PhD student in Ethnology at Stockholm University. I began my doctoral studies in February 2023, and I am now about half way through. My supervisors are ethnologist Lotten Gustafsson Reinius, who is also affiliated with the Nordic Museum where I am conducting my research, and ethnologist Lars Kaijser.

Abstract

My research examines the role of magic in Swedish society around the turn of the 20th century, focusing on the transition of 'folk magic' from marginalized popular practices to being framed as cultural heritage by museums. I explore how objects associated with folk magic, like amulets and sacrificial stones, were collected, reinterpreted, and displayed at the Nordic Museum, and how these shifts reflect broader societal changes and power dynamics. The preliminary aim of my thesis is to investigate the processes whereby 'folk magic' was transformed into a modern scientific and museal object.

Keywords: Folk belief, magic objects, The Nordic Museum, Transformations, Turn of the 20th century

[Read the full text](#)

2. Ruth Egger, UT, Tübingen

Fabricated Geographies: Collecting Global Dress and Textiles in European Cabinets of Curiosities, ca. 1550–1750

Bio

Ruth Egger is a Research Assistant and Doctoral Student in History at the University of Tübingen, Germany. Previously, she worked in several museums including the Kunstgewerbemuseum Berlin, the Landesmuseum Württemberg and National Museums Scotland. Following an initial training as master dressmaker she was a Costume Maker at the Salzburger Landestheater.

Abstract

Combining the histories of museums, knowledge, and dress, the dissertation focuses on the understudied collection category of clothing and textiles in European cabinets of curiosities. It demonstrates that 'foreign clothes', 'wonderous fabrics', and dress from different regions in Europe were common in princely, private and academic collections between the mid-16th and mid-18th centuries. The author tackles the question why European collectors were interested in acquiring dress and how the objects reflected and shaped their perceptions of the world? A close analysis of artefacts from different continents and

inventories from the Holy Roman Empire, Scandinavia, Italy and the United Kingdom is contrasted with other forms of knowledge production including travelogues, maps and costume books.

The study renders an interpretation of ethnographic clothing as passive things onto which 'knowledge' gained from travelogues was projected to create clear differentiations between an exotic 'other' and the Christian European self as too simplistic. It argues that collections of global dress fostered cultural comparison between Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Beyond the curiosity for 'outlandish' things as collection impetus, the dissertation explores how collectors *Fabricated Geographies* through the sensual engagement with materials and their appropriation to create novel ways of thinking about the world.

Keywords: dress, textiles, cabinet of curiosities, knowledge production, geography, worldmaking

[Read the full text](#)

3. Sofia Papaspyrou, NKUA, Athens

Footsteps of Paul in Greece: A Cultural Route Re-Visited

Bio

Sofia Papaspyrou is an archaeologist-museologist and a PhD candidate at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. Her research focuses on the impressions and experiences of travellers following the cultural route of the Footsteps of Apostle Paul in Greece, within the fields of museology, tourism, and contemporary pilgrimage.

Abstract

The "Footsteps of St. Paul" Cultural Route in Greece follows the Apostle's Second Missionary Journey, marking the introduction of Christianity to Europe. Unlike traditional pilgrimage routes, its sites are primarily of archaeological rather than purely religious significance, presenting unique challenges in interpretation. Despite its historical and cultural value, the route is often presented as a series of disconnected locations, making it difficult for visitors to experience as a cohesive journey. This study explores how travellers engage with the route and how museums, archaeological sites, and tourism professionals can enhance its accessibility and authenticity.

Using a mixed-methods approach, the research included a literature review, fieldwork, and a visitor survey. Central to the study was *Diavas eis Makedonian*, an experimental walking tour where nine volunteers walked 215 kilometers from Kavala to Thessaloniki, documenting their experiences. Key findings highlight the potential of slow travel and thematic interpretation in fostering a deeper connection with the route. Addressing infrastructure gaps and integrating museological strategies can help establish the "Footsteps of Paul" as a meaningful pilgrimage, benefiting both travellers and local communities.

Keywords: Footsteps of Paul in Greece, Walking Via Egnatia, Cultural Routes, Religious tourism, Contemporary pilgrimage

[Read the full text](#)

4. Vlad Ciur, UB, Bucharest

European Cultural Heritage: Ancient Roman Lighting Equipment in the Northern Dobrudja (1st-7th centuries AD)

Bio

My name is Vlad Ioan Ciur, I am 24 years old and currently I am working as a junior archaeologist at the History and Archaeology Museum in Tulcea, Romania. I am also a PhD student at the University of Bucharest. My area of research is based on Early and Late Roman archaeology in the modern-day region of Dobrudja.

Abstract

The material culture of ancient societies represents a direct connection to a distant past, inspiring admiration and curiosity in visitors when carefully exhibited in a museum, but also offering very important information for the researchers in their quest of reconstructing the manifestations of prehistorical and historical communities. My

PhD thesis is constructed around a specific category of the archaeological record, i.e. the lighting equipment, mainly the pottery lamps dated in the 1st to the 7th century AD.

This chronological period coincides with the Roman occupation of Dobrudja, in the South-East of the present-day Romania. The effects of the romanization of this region are now visible and studied through multidisciplinary research, and the artifacts discovered during the archaeological excavations are often displayed in museums, in order to promote the local cultural heritage. Such is the case of lamps, a unique category of the archaeological record, being highly appreciated by the public in museums for their variety in shape and decoration, while also being of great interest for archaeologists due to the precious information that can be extracted by studying these instruments. Relevant aspects regarding ancient trade, cultural particularities and many other topics can be explored through this particular field of research.

Keywords: Roman lamps, Roman archaeology, Iconography, Roman *limes*, Ancient trade routes.

[Read the full text](#)

Route 2

1. Chryssa Bourbou, NKUA, Athens

Museum and climate crisis. Impacts and changes to the climate and the contemporary museums

Bio

Chryssa Bourbou has a PhD in Bioarchaeology and a MAS in Cultural Heritage and Museology. She is currently working on her second PhD about the role of museum in climate crisis, and leading at the same time the Sustainability and Climate Action Working Group of NEMO. Her main professional activities as a curator at the Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania (Hellenic Ministry of Culture) include the bioarchaeological study of archaeological populations, the curation of temporary exhibitions and cultural activities for public outreach.

Abstract

The 21st century is witnessing the lasting impacts of human activity on the atmosphere, terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems of the planet. Climate crisis is undoubtedly one of the most important challenges of humanity and a known phenomenon for decades. However, raising public awareness on the subject is a complex and delicate procedure. Museums, as a modern type *agora*, are ideal places for engaging the public in the difficult discussion of climate crisis. At the same time, they are themselves unsustainable consumers, rarely calculating their environmental impact. Are museums aware of their potential to play a leading role in dealing with the climate crisis? Why museums should take a stand on the matter and develop a new ethical museum ecology? In this presentation, we will briefly present some preliminary results, based on the two-year research conducted for the PhD thesis that investigates the role of contemporary museums in tackling the climate crisis.

Keywords: Climate crisis, environmental sustainability, barriers, levers

[Read the full text](#)

2. Hsiao-Chiang (Hope) Wang, UoG, Glasgow

Co-creating the Values of World Heritage Sites with Refugees: a world view perspective

Bio

Hsiao-Chiang (Hope) is a UNESCO RIELA Scholarship holder. Her doctoral research focuses on leveraging UNESCO designations as sites of restorative integration. She holds an MSc in Museum Studies from the University of Glasgow, where she conducted the decolonising museum websites project with the Hunterian Museum. Currently, she serves as a PhD tutor in the EDUMaH programme and works with the Hunterian visitor experience team.

Her research interests include heritage interpretation, critical heritage studies, peacebuilding, creative methods and refugee integration

Abstract

This research explores the co-creation of values at World Heritage Sites (WHSs). It builds a conceptual framework grounded in value co-creation theory and employs Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodologies. The study initiates educational interventions based on World View Theory across three Scottish WHSs: the Antonine Wall, the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh, and New Lanark. This interdisciplinary research draws on critical heritage discourse, refugee studies, heritage interpretation, and value theory.

The study formulates a WHS value co-creation framework, co-creates heritage interpretations, explores effective and ethical approaches to heritage education, and highlights the potential of WHSs in refugee integration and peacebuilding.

Keywords: Value co-creation, World Heritage, Heritage interpretation, Heritage Education, Refugee integration, Participatory Action Research

[Read the full text](#)

3. Luisa Vögele, UT, Tübingen

The Kunstkammer of the Dukes and Duchesses of Württemberg as a Figure of Aesthetic Reflection: Attributions of Value and Processes of Canonization

Bio

Luisa Vögele studied Cultural and Historical Anthropology in Regensburg (GER), Karlstad (SWE) Tübingen (GER). During her master's programme, she worked as a student assistant and gave tutorials. In 2023 she finished her master's degree and started working as a research associate and PhD candidate at the CRC 1391 'Different aesthetics'.

Abstract

The *Kunstkammer* (Cabinet of Curiosities) of the Dukes and Duchesses of Württemberg in Stuttgart (Germany) unites a wide variety of objects from different contexts, aiming to collect the *macrocosmos in microcosmo*. Despite its start as a private collection, it must be regarded as an institutionalised entity, which served just as much as a representation of the Duchy as of the Duke himself. Originating in the late 16th century, the collection's legacy persists to the present day – as regional cultural inheritance in the Württemberg State Museum.

I examine the collecting, organising and cataloguing practices of various actors – as plural authors of the collection – at the point of transition from the 18th to the 19th century. Intending to break up the male dominated narrative of a euro-centric collection, I especially focus on female actors in the collection, as well as the object group of the so called 'Exotica'. Following the heuristic concept of 'figures of aesthetic reflection' of the CRC 1391 "Different Aesthetics" I ask: How do practices of organisation, order and arrangement create various aesthetics in the Stuttgart *Kunstkammer*?

Keywords: Kunstkammer; cabinet of curiosities; cultural heritage; aesthetics; aristocratic collecting

[Read the full text](#)

4. Julie Pezzali, SUR, Rome
Italian Museography and Art Criticism in '900

Bio

Julie Pezzali is a Ph.D. student in art history at Sapienza Università di Roma. She is currently studying, under the supervision of Professors Irene Baldriga and Valter Curzi, twentieth-century museology, focusing on events that took place in Italy between the years of Fascism – characterised by a cultural and museum policy both conservative and propagandist – and the Post-War period, when the newly established democratic and liberal Republic faced the challenge of reconstructing historic buildings, home to museums, which had been damaged by bombs.

Abstract

My research, covering the 30s and 50s, focuses on a specific geographical area: Central and Northern Italy. This context, where some of the most significant museographic innovations took place at the turn of the Second World War, is essential to understand the complexity of the subject, both quantitatively (on the 180 reorganisations carried out across the country, about half involved institutions in Northern and Central Italy) and qualitatively, due to the diversification of forms and models applied on the reorganisation of the museum collections (modernism, conservatism, 'modernised restoration').

Keywords: Museography, Museology, Restoration, Second World War, Fascism, Italy

[Read the full text](#)

Route 3

1. Yi Chen (Amy), UoG, Glasgow

Exploring the impact of cultural identity of Third Culture Kid (TCK) and Cross Culture Kid (CCK) on understanding museum narratives

Bio

First year PhD student in education from University of Glasgow. My research interest is museum education and inclusive museum, focusing on multiculturalism and racial equality. I used to work with the National Trust of Scotland (NTS) on research into racial equality education in historic houses and provided policy briefings for the NTS.

Abstract

Globalization has brought about a reconfiguration of cultural diversity (Colomer, 2017: 923), people living among multiple cultures/societies may experience psychological and sociocultural crises, including conflicts of cultural identity (Szabo & Ward, 2015: 13). As groups with complex and interwoven culture identities, belonging and special cultural needs (Colomer, 2017: 913), Third Culture Kid (TCK) and Cross Culture Kid (CCK) has come into the public eye and attracted attention in the fields of education and mental health (Moore and Barker, 2012, p.553). Although some scholars have published relevant studies on how cultural heritage faces the transformation of cultural identity brought about by globalization (Colomer, 2020), research on the effect of cultural identity in specifically on museum education seems to be a vacuum. Thus, this research assesses how museums respond to changes in the expression of culture, identity and belonging in the context of globalization

by exploring TCK and CCK's respond in museums. This research plan to explore how the sociocultural factors that constitute identity can be used to reconfigure museum narratives to accommodate changing cultural diversity, and how the practitioners of museum education can better respect and include the multicultural culture identities of museum visitors and how to reflect them in the design of museum curriculum.

Keywords: Museum Education, Inclusive Museum, Cultural Identity, Multiculturalism, Third Culture Kid (TCK), Cross Culture Kid (CCK)

[Read the full text](#)

2. Lana Balorda, UT, Tübingen

A Way of Life: Sarajevo's streets as spaces of connection and interdependence

Bio

Lana Balorda obtained her MA in Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Tübingen in 2022. As a doctoral candidate and research assistant employed in the SFB 1070 "ResourceCultures" project, Lana is furthering her research on commemorative practices in Sarajevo with a particular focus on place-making in the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Abstract

Caught between the frontline of the siege and "Sniper's Alley", the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina sheltered staff and heritage in the capital Sarajevo during the 1992-95 war. In the aftermath, the curators laboured to collect, preserve, and present everyday life under the siege in the first exhibition of its kind. Entitled *Opkoljeno Sarajevo* or Besieged Sarajevo, the exhibition, which was initially installed in 2003 has been continually transforming since.

Sarajevo's memoryscape is dominated by ruptures caused by various conflicts that have taken place here over the last two centuries, and the past presented in the History Museum remains contested. Moreover, the museum itself is nurtured in a disputed space that since the conflict in the 1990s continues to be an object of debate as government officials fail to resolve its legal status.

The focus of this paper is the most recent extension of the Besieged Sarajevo exhibition, *Put života* or the Way of Life, which diverts attention away from the hostile line of division that was the Sniper's Alley, to the lifeline that ran parallel, providing shared spaces of shelter and sustenance. These lines and narratives run in parallel but also in opposition to one another, the Way of Life emphasizing connection, interdependence, and survival.

Keywords: museums, affect, Sarajevo, contested past, place, commemoration

[Read the full text](#)

3. Karin Tetteris, SU, Stockholm

Displaying colours – Early modern heritagization of military flags in the Great Armoury of Sweden

Bio

I have worked as a museum professional for twenty years in Stockholm, mainly with textile collections at the Royal Armoury and the Army museum. I did my bachelor's degree in Art History and my Master's in Heritage studies before doing a doctorate in Art History. My research interests include Early Modern collections, festivals and material culture in general.

Abstract

Military flags were a part of Early Modern visual culture, ubiquitous in public spaces. My thesis aims to initiate a new line of inquiry examining them as important agents in political, social, and cultural performances such as military rituals and triumphal displays. It aims, furthermore, to contribute to the history of Swedish museums in general and arsenals and armouries as Early Modern museums. It investigates the practices of using, capturing, and preserving flags as war trophies by which The Great Armoury in Stockholm emerged as a museum in the seventeenth century. Focus is on analysing assemblages of practices, spaces, objects, and humans in which the agency of the flags was created and performed. Thus, my study is positioned at the intersection of heritage studies and art anthropology.

My thesis contributes primarily to two areas of research: the visual and material culture of war, and Early Modern museums. Flags are objects produced for warfare and collections of captured flags are also products of war. Investigating the history of such collections is imperative for understanding their political and social implications, then and now. A historical perspective can therefore shed light onto the deep roots of the close and complicated relationship between war and heritage.

Keywords: Early Modern museum practices, depiction, cataloguing, display, rituals

[Read the full text](#)

4. Maria Krini, NKUA, Athens

Mosaic floors: Issues on their restoration and exhibition in museums

Bio

Maria Krini is a Conservator of Cultural Heritage (MSc-NTUA), employed at the Hellenic Ministry of Culture. She holds an MSc in Museum Studies (Leicester University) and she is a PhD candidate in Museology (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens). Her research interests focus on conservation theory and ethics and collections' exhibition.

Abstract

The reintegration of missing parts in cultural heritage artefacts has always been a critical debate for conservators, raising dilemmas on the methods and the materials to be used, but above all on the ethical aspects of the interventions, balancing between the authenticity and the aesthetics.

This research focuses on the restoration of ancient mosaics and the way they are presented in museum exhibitions. A thorough examination of the techniques and the materials used for the conservation of mosaics that are exhibited in archaeological museums in Greece is conducted and it delivers a variety of examples on restoration methods and exhibition solutions. The philosophy of the interventions as well and the decision-making process are sought, through archival and literature research, a survey for professionals and selected interviews with key stakeholders and experts. The final scope is to investigate how mosaics' restoration mediates with their interpretation by the museum visitors.

Keywords: Mosaics, conservation-restoration, decision-making, museum exhibition, interpretation.

[Read the full text](#)

Route 4

1. Evangelia Christodoulidou, NKUA, Athens



The Pedagogy of Archaeology in Cyprus. From the school to the excavation field

Bio

I am a PhD candidate at the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Athens and the title of my thesis is 'From School, to Museum and Excavation: The Pedagogy of Archaeology in the Primary and Secondary Education of Cyprus'. I hold an MA in Mediterranean Archaeology from the University of Cyprus and a BA in History and Archaeology from the University of Athens. I have participated in several archaeological excavations in Cyprus and Greece and various international conferences, seminars and workshops. My research interests include Public Archaeology, Archaeology and Education, Museum Studies and History Teaching.

Abstract

The teaching of Archaeology in typical learning environments like schools can result to multiple benefits for the students. The investigation of the subject in the case of the public schools of Cyprus is a multidimensional research effort that resulted to interesting outcomes. The primary objective of my research is to establish the current state of Archaeology through the utilized teaching material of History. The second objective is to propose and implement creative Archaeology lessons for the classroom that are aligned with the typical learning framework. The main goal is to highlight that the archaeological evidence is a valuable source for understanding the importance of cultural heritage and develop citizenship by strengthening cultural values to students.

Keywords: Classroom Archaeology, Curriculum, Content Analysis, Sand-Box Dig

[Read the full text](#)

2. Mara-Floriana Buliga, UB, Bucharest

Female identities in the Middle and Late Bronze Age between the Southern Carpathians and the Balkans - Studying some museum collections

Bio

Mara Buliga is a curator and archaeologist at Oltenia Museum Craiova, Romania. At the moment she is doing a doctoral research program at the University of Bucharest, with the title "Female identities in the Middle and Late Bronze Age between the Southern Carpathians and the Balkans". Her PhD supervisor is Dr. Sorin-Cristian Ailincai.

Abstract

This research explores the construction and expression of female identities in the Middle and Late Bronze Age (c. 2000-1200 BC) between the Southern Carpathians and the Balkans. By integrating gender archaeology, identity theory, and material culture studies, the project analyzes personal ornaments, mortuary practices, and figurative representations to illuminate the complex dynamics of feminine identity. Utilizing museum collections, such as those at the Oltenia Museum but not only, the study examines anthropomorphic figurines and other artifacts to understand how female forms were represented and perceived. The research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of female roles and status in prehistoric societies, contributing to the development of new methodologies in gender archaeology and promoting interdisciplinary collaboration.

Keywords: Middle and Late Bronze Age, gender archaeology, identity, anthropomorphic figurines, personal adornments.

[Read the full text](#)

3. Anna Leshchenko, UT, Tübingen

ICOM and the global debate on the museum's identity

Bio

Anna Leshchenko is a research associate at the Ludwig-Uhland Institute, University of Tübingen, exploring recent controversies within ICOM surrounding museum redefinition and ethics. As vice-chair of ICOFOM, associate editor of *Curator: The Museum Journal*, and advocate for museum-university collaborations through the CIVIS Alliance, she actively engages in contemporary museological debates and international cooperation.

Abstract

In 2019, a contentious debate about redefining the term "museum" was ignited after a failed attempt to adopt a new "museum" definition in Kyoto during the General Conference of ICOM, revealing internal tensions and global cultural divides. By 2022, ICOM reached a definition that many ICOM members labeled as a "compromise" while simultaneously revising its Code of Ethics (2022–present), marking another crucial shift. My research examines these intertwined processes, analyzing how debates about identity and ethics reflect broader institutional, cultural, and geopolitical tensions within ICOM. Using semi-structured interviews with active ICOM members, complemented by analyses of archival records and public statements, the project looks into how these discussions showcase governance practices, organizational politics, and ICOM's international role. Preliminary findings suggest significant friction between European and non-European members, emerging from colonial/postcolonial tensions, differing professional paradigms, and geopolitical dynamics. Additionally, governance structures within ICOM, such as the non-transparent processes by which influential Standing committees are formed, indicate underlying power dynamics. I argue that the debates around museum definitions and ethics are symptomatic of broader institutional challenges, reflecting deeper cultural and professional cleavages in the museum sector globally.

Keywords: museum definition, ICOM, governance, global museology, decolonial museology, institutional power dynamics, Critical Discourse Analysis

[Read the full text](#)

4. Erik Solfeldt, SU, Stockholm

The Archaeology of Vega Expedition: Excavations along the North Siberian coast, 1878 – 1879

Bio

Erik Solfeldt is a PhD candidate at the Department of Archaeology and Classical Studies at Stockholm University. Combining archaeology and museum ethnography, he specialises in the study of animism(s) and material culture among past and present hunter-gatherers and hunter-herders of northwestern Eurasia.

Abstract

This PhD dissertation explores animism(s) and material culture among hunter-gatherer and hunter-herder communities in northwestern Eurasia, challenging Western-centric archaeological perspectives through ethnoarchaeological analysis. Utilizing ethnographic analogies within a contemporary, decolonial framework informed by the ontological turn and new animism, the research critically re-examines archaeological interpretations of prehistoric practices. Diverse ethnographic sources—including human-fire relations, material spirits, shamanic burials, and human-animal interactions—are juxtaposed against archaeological findings dating from approximately 40,000 to 4,000 BCE. Preliminary findings highlight the necessity of viewing material artefacts as inherently animate beings, advocating for museum representations rooted in immanent rather than transcendental approaches. Additionally, collaborative analyses of Nordenskiöld's Vega collections suggest the presence of Siberian Paleo-Inuit cultures, enriching archaeological narratives with indigenous Chuckchi ethnohistorical perspectives.

Keywords: Museum ethnography, visual ethnography, animism, Siberia

[Read the full text](#)

Exploring the Routes

Full details

□ Route 1

1. Ebba Vikdahl, SU, Stockholm

Preliminary title of thesis: *The (Dis)Enchanted Folk. Magic Objects, The Nordic Museum and the Construction of Folk Belief in Sweden, 1890-1940*

Abstract

My research examines the role of magic in Swedish society around the turn of the 20th century, focusing on the transition of 'folk magic' from marginalized popular practices to being framed as cultural heritage by museums. I explore how objects associated with folk magic, like amulets and sacrificial stones, were collected, reinterpreted, and displayed at the Nordic Museum, and how these shifts reflect broader societal changes and power dynamics. The preliminary aim of my thesis is to investigate the processes whereby 'folk magic' was transformed into a modern scientific and museal object.

Keywords: Folk belief, magic objects, The Nordic Museum, Transformations, Turn of the 20th century

Bio

My name is Ebba Vikdahl, and I am currently a PhD student in Ethnology at Stockholm University. I began my doctoral studies in February 2023, and I am now about half way through. My supervisors are ethnologist Lotten Gustafsson Reinius, who is also affiliated with the Nordic Museum where I am conducting my research, and ethnologist Lars Kaijser.

Ebba Vikdahl's research project

My research explores the role of magic in Swedish society around the turn of the 20th century, a time marked by significant societal changes—urbanization, the declining influence of the church, new scientific discoveries challenging the Bible, and the rise of alternative spiritual movements. Amidst this upheaval, cultural history museums, like the Nordic Museum, begin collecting stories, objects, and practices related to 'folk magic'. This marks a shift in authority, as the definition of 'folk magic' moves from the church and judiciary to science and museums. Practices once mocked or condemned are now framed as part of Swedish cultural heritage.

The preliminary aim of my thesis is to investigate the processes whereby 'folk magic' was transformed into a modern scientific and museal object. This I do by focusing on the Nordic Museum's collection, organization, and display of so-called "folk magic objects" around the turn of the 20th century. Folk belief objects are here to be understood as items associated with the magical practices and beliefs of the Swedish peasantry, commonly used for healing illnesses or protecting against dark forces. For instance, these can include amulets, sacrificial stones, branches, and bundles of hair. By following the journey of these

objects into (and out of?) the museum, I look at how they were reinterpreted, translated and re-charged, and how these changes relate to issues of power, as well as enchantment and disenchantment.

My material includes a variety of archival documents, such as exhibition catalogues, archival records, photographs and illustrations of folk belief objects, correspondence between museum officials, museum maps, the objects themselves and more. Theoretically, I draw on posthumanism and materiality theory, which emphasize that also objects possess agency. I am inspired by the “following the object” method, tracing the movement and transformation of objects through different contexts.

So far, I have gathered most of my research material and have a fairly clear outline for the thesis (which will be a monograph). I have also written drafts for two chapters. However, I have not yet published any of my research in the form of articles or similar works.

As for the results, I'm cautious about drawing any firm conclusions, as there is still much writing and thinking ahead. However, based on my observations so far, it seems that the museum served as a custodian of potentially threatening artifacts from old Swedish society. By rebranding folk belief as cultural heritage, the museum both preserved magic (as history) and facilitated a transition to a modern era 'free' from magic. At the same time, by framing the engagement with magical objects as scientific inquiry, the museum allowed people to approach magic without jeopardizing their legitimacy as modern individuals.

Key challenges and difficulties

Orienting materials. Gathering information about the magical objects has proven to be quite challenging, as the materials are divided between two separate sections in the museum: the object collection and the archive. This division creates gaps in the available data. My task has largely been to try to reunite these materials. Since the objects were not originally organized in relation to my specific research questions, it has often felt like detective work, trying to uncover potential leads in the archive. Additionally, much of the material seems to have been somewhat forgotten, which has led me to search through locked cabinets and hidden corners of the museum.

Handling extensive material. Given the vast size of the Nordic Museum's collection of folk magic objects, I've had to consider how to effectively translate this into a manageable and readable analysis for my thesis. It's not feasible to cover all the objects, nor can I assume that readers will be familiar with them without further explanation. At the moment, I've selected five types of objects to focus on, with two of them being the 'main characters.' I'll assess how well this approach works as I progress.

Diversity of denominations. The term 'magic' is not an easy concept to navigate, not least due to its heavy baggage of negative connotations. However, I have found it—at least for now—to be the most accurate term to describe these objects. At the beginning of my project, I assumed I could simply use the museum's emic term for these objects, but I quickly realized that there is no singular term; instead, there is a wide variety of different ones. The question of how to name these objects remains something I continue to reflect on.

2. Ruth Egger, UT, Tübingen

Fabricated Geographies: Collecting Global Dress and Textiles in European Cabinets of Curiosities, ca. 1550–1750

Bio

Ruth Egger is a Research Assistant and Doctoral Student in History at the University of Tübingen, Germany. Previously, she worked in several museums including the Kunstgewerbemuseum Berlin, the Landesmuseum Württemberg and National Museums Scotland. Following an initial training as master dressmaker she was a Costume Maker at the Salzburger Landestheater.

Abstract

Combining the histories of museums, knowledge, and dress, the dissertation focuses on the understudied collection category of clothing and textiles in European cabinets of curiosities. It demonstrates that 'foreign clothes', 'wonderous fabrics', and

dress from different regions in Europe were common in princely, private and academic collections between the mid-16th and mid-18th centuries. The author tackles the question why European collectors were interested in acquiring dress and how the objects reflected and shaped their perceptions of the world? A close analysis of artefacts from different continents and inventories from the Holy Roman Empire, Scandinavia, Italy and the United Kingdom is contrasted with other forms of knowledge production including travelogues, maps and costume books.

The study renders an interpretation of ethnographic clothing as passive things onto which 'knowledge' gained from travelogues was projected to create clear differentiations between an exotic 'other' and the Christian European self as too simplistic. It argues that collections of global dress fostered cultural comparison between Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Beyond the curiosity for 'outlandish' things as collection impetus, the dissertation explores how collectors *Fabricated Geographies* through the sensual engagement with materials and their appropriation to create novel ways of thinking about the world.

Keywords: dress, textiles, cabinet of curiosities, knowledge production, geography, worldmaking

Ruth Egger's research project

Introduction and questions

Garments and textiles represent a distinct collection category in European cabinets of curiosities between the mid-16th and mid-18th centuries. In his *Inscriptiones* (1565), the oldest surviving museological tract, Samuel Quiccheberg advised collectors to acquire 'Foreign clothes, for example Indian, Arabic, Turkish and rarer ones, but also others made from parrot feathers, braidwork or some wondrous fabric or from fur sewn together in various ways.'¹ The study analyses how European collectors *Fabricated Geographies* by linking material, literal and visual cultures. My main research question and two subsets of questions include the following:

- Why European collectors were interested in acquiring dress and how did they utilize the objects to reflect upon and shape their perceptions of the world?
 - Are there differences in classification strategies and interests between princely and scholarly collectors? Did collecting strategies change over time and what role did the 'scientific revolution(s)' play in this process?
 - What is the relationship between the observable materiality of the object and contemporary texts and imagery? Did collectors use objects to confirm pre-conditioned ideas or could an engagement with the materials shift their narratives? How did collectors reflect on the provenance of artefacts, and can we deduce changing discourses about geographies from inventories?

Methodology

To answer these questions, a close analysis of artefacts from different continents and inventories from the Holy Roman Empire, Scandinavia, Italy and the United Kingdom are contrasted with other forms of knowledge production including travelogues, maps and costume books. As demonstrated by scholars like Giorgio Riello and Susanna Burghartz, early modern Europeans uniquely utilized written and visual accounts of global dress to define their own and other people's places in the world.² Apart from travelogues or costume books, cabinets of curiosities were sites of European 'worldmaking'. Practices of cataloguing, ordering and displaying objects are understood as a form of knowledge production.³ The dissertation follows and object-

¹ Samuel Quiccheberg, *The First Treatise on Museums: Samuel Quiccheberg's Inscriptiones, 1565*, trans. and ed. Mark A Meadow and Bruce Robertson (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2013), 69.

² Susanna Burghartz, „The Fabric of Early Globalization: Skin, Fur and Cloth in de Bry's Travel Accounts, 1590-1630," in *Dressing Global Bodies: The Political Power of Dress in World History*, ed. Beverly Lemire and Giorgio Riello (London: Routledge, 2019), 15-40. Giorgio Riello, "The World in a Book: The Creation of the Global in Sixteenth-Century European Costume Books," *Past and Present* (2019) Supplement 14: 281-317

³ See also: Daniela Bleichmar, "The Production of Imprecision: Reframing Non-European Objects in Early Modern European Collections," in *Making Worlds: Global Invention in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Bronwen Wilson und Angela Vanhaelen (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2022), 169-200. Daniela Bleichmar, "Seeing the World in a Room: Looking at Exotica in Early Modern Collections," in *Collecting Across Cultures: Material Exchanges in the Early Modern Atlantic World*, ed. Daniela Bleichmar and Peter C. Mancall (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 15-30.

centred approach asking about the materiality of the artefacts, their production, consumptions and afterlives.⁴ As suggested by Bernd Roeck, objects are interpreted as ‘memory boxes’ which gain their meaning through their environment and change their function through displacement.⁵ Similar to Dominik Collet, I will look at specific object types and their referencing in travelogues and imagery in contrast to their reception in the *Kunstammer*.⁶ The study discusses how an engagement with materials and display practices reflected European discourses about the world and its peoples while simultaneously creating novel visions.

Conducted work and challenges

For my research I firstly scanned secondary literature and contemporary inventories identifying collections holding clothing such as:

- Holy Roman Empire: princely collections of the Habsburgs, Munich, Stuttgart, Kassel and Gottorp; Christoph Weickmann (Ulm), Laurentius Hoffmann (Halle), Francke Foundations (Halle)
- Scandinavia: Royal Danish *Kunstammer*, Ole Worm (Copenhagen), Skokloster Castle
- Italy: Medici collections, Athanasius Kircher (Rome), Manfredo Settala (Milan), Ferdinando Cospi (Bologna)
- United Kingdom: John Tradescant (London), Walter Cope (London)

Second, I drafted an Excel-spreadsheet listing entries for dress and textiles in the respective inventories. Third, I associated the inventory entries with extant objects. Forth, I consulted contemporary travelogues, images and court pageants to establish how they portray similar items. Currently, I contact curators to see artefacts and look through archival documents.

Major challenges are managing the quantity of sources and gaining access to objects for material analysis. While I initially kept the scope of the study relatively open, I now have to decide on key narratives, objects and collections. Another issue is the balancing between European colonial discourses and indigenous making and functions of items. My first impulse was to tell stories about objects from their production in their respective communities, to trade routes and their presentation in the *Kunstammer*.⁷ Since I realized that my sources lack detailed information on the items’ provenances and narrate stories of European reception, I decided to focus on practices of European knowledge production. A main concern is gaining access to museum artefacts. Since I am studying artefacts from various museums and world regions, establishing contacts with curators is time-consuming. Without an initial training as anthropologist, I find it challenging to navigate larger discussions about colonial heritage and post-colonial theory.

Preliminary results

My research of artefacts, inventories and contemporary literature has shown that the collector’s fascination with ‘foreign clothes’ went beyond the construction of a homogenous non-European ‘other’. Dress and textiles reflected a curiosity for items in-between man-made artefacts and natural things. Inventories reveal associations of artefacts with human ingenuity, the environment, diplomacy, religion, and rulership among other themes. As Daniela Bleichmar pointed out, geographical markers were instable.⁸ While princely collectors around 1600 often used undifferentiated terms like ‘Indian’, scholarly catalogues utilized specific denominations such as ‘Congolese’ or ‘Greenlandic’ since the mid-17th century. This indicates the development of more differentiated understandings of geography. Although ‘exotic’ garments were a focus of many collectors, several cabinets displayed European clothing next to non-European items thus facilitating more comprehensive cultural comparisons.

⁴ Vicky Coltman, „Material Culture and the History of Art(efacts),“ in *Writing Material Culture History*, ed. Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello (London: Bloomsbury, 2015): 17-32. Compare also: E. McClung Fleming, „Artifact Study: A Proposed Model,“ *Winterthur Portfolio* 9 (1974): 153-173.

⁵ Bernd Roeck, „Introduction,“ in *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe: Forging European Identities, 1400-1700*, ed. Herman Roodenburg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 13-16.

⁶ Dominik Collet, „*Fructus AHOVAI dictae mirabilis* – Wissensproduktion in der Kunstammer am Beispiel der brasilianischen Ahovai-Nuss,“ in *Wissensfelder der Neuzeit: Entstehung und Aufbau der europäischen Informationskultur*, ed. Wolfgang Weber (Augsburg: Institut für Europäische Kulturgeschichte, 2002), 157-180.

⁷ This approach has been taken by Mariana Françoso and Amy Buono for Brazilian featherwork: Mariana Françoso, „Beyond the Kunstammer: Brazilian Featherwork in Early Modern Europe,“ in *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World*, ed. Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello (London: Routledge, 2016), 105-127. Amy Buono, Feathered Identities and Plumed Performances:

Tupinambá Interculture in Early Modern Brazil and Europe (PhD dissertation, University of California, 2007).

⁸ Bleichmar, „Production of Imprecision,“ 169-200.

Dominik Collet argued that inventories copied descriptions from travelogues.⁹ Creating a more nuanced understanding of knowledge production in the *Kunstkammer*, the study discusses how collectors referenced travel literature whereas their sensory engagement with materials, the shape and display of items shifted narratives. Palm fibre fabrics from West Central Africa, for example, were described in travelogues as clothing fabrics for semi-civilised societies. In the cabinet, the appreciation for sophisticated weaving techniques and denominations of objects as cloth for interior decoration led to a disassociation with garments and the recognition of a common human ingenuity. Appraisals of the neat preparation and sewing of Greenlandic sealskin similarly questioned discourses about savagery. However, an emphasis on animal materials and displays of wooden mannequins representing Greenlanders dressed in sealskin and sitting in kayaks envisioned links to the non-human world and survival strategies in the Arctic.

Overall, dress and textiles in the *Kunstkammer* reflect convergences between specific materials, world regions and their inhabitants. Collectors shaped their interpretations through balancing contemporary literature and the materiality of the objects. Discourses shifted over time reflecting purposes of collections assembled for status representation or scientific engagement with natural history.

3. Sofia Papaspyrou, NKUA, Athens

Footsteps of Paul in Greece: A Cultural Route Re-Visited

Bio

Sofia Papaspyrou is an archaeologist-museologist and a PhD candidate at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. Her research focuses on the impressions and experiences of travellers following the cultural route of the Footsteps of Apostle Paul in Greece, within the fields of museology, tourism, and contemporary pilgrimage.

Abstract

The "Footsteps of St. Paul" Cultural Route in Greece follows the Apostle's Second Missionary Journey, marking the introduction of Christianity to Europe. Unlike traditional pilgrimage routes, its sites are primarily of archaeological rather than purely religious significance, presenting unique challenges in interpretation. Despite its historical and cultural value, the route is often presented as a series of disconnected locations, making it difficult for visitors to experience as a cohesive journey. This study explores how travellers engage with the route and how museums, archaeological sites, and tourism professionals can enhance its accessibility and authenticity.

Using a mixed-methods approach, the research included a literature review, fieldwork, and a visitor survey. Central to the study was *Diavas eis Makedonian*, an experimental walking tour where nine volunteers walked 215 kilometers from Kavala to Thessaloniki, documenting their experiences. Key findings highlight the potential of slow travel and thematic interpretation in fostering a deeper connection with the route. Addressing infrastructure gaps and integrating museological strategies can help establish the "Footsteps of Paul" as a meaningful pilgrimage, benefiting both travellers and local communities.

Keywords: Footsteps of Paul in Greece, Walking Via Egnatia, Cultural Routes, Religious tourism, Contemporary pilgrimage

Sofia Papaspyrou's research project

Footsteps of Paul in Greece: A Cultural Route Re-Visited

In my PhD, I'm researching the experiences of travellers and visitors who follow the Cultural Route called the "Footsteps of St. Paul" in Greece. Through my research, I hope to gain a deeper understanding of the route itself, the monuments and destinations comprising it, as well as the people who are choosing to follow it and the professionals helping them to do so. Ultimately, I aim to propose ideas and means of improving several aspects of this very important Cultural Route.

Research Context

⁹ Collet, *Welt in der Stube*, 332-348.

The "Footsteps of St. Paul" Cultural Route in Greece traces the journey of Apostle Paul, who travelled through several Greek cities for the first time during his Second Missionary Journey in the 1st century CE. This route holds significant historical and cultural value, representing the first introduction of Christianity to Europe. The route itself is a really interesting case, since the monuments and sites of the trail are of primary archaeological importance, rather than exclusively religious. In other words, contrary to a traditional religious site in Greece, many places that Paul visited have mainly an archaeological and cultural importance, while their religious value is only a very specific aspect of their history.

For the past ten years, I have worked as a professional tour guide leading groups and individuals along this route. Through this decade, I have observed that the tourism industry often presents the route as a series of isolated locations rather than a cohesive journey, resulting in a fragmented narrative. This fragmentation makes it difficult for visitors to follow the route independently and creates challenges for guides in conveying its historical and spiritual significance. Given these issues, it is essential to explore how visitors experience this route, how professionals—such as guides and museum staff—interpret and present its history, and what strategies can be implemented to enhance its accessibility, engagement, and impact.

Research Question

How do travellers experience the "Footsteps of Paul" route in Greece, and how can their journey be improved to foster a more meaningful, cohesive, and immersive pilgrimage experience? How can museums, archaeological sites and tourism professionals contribute to a deeper understanding of the route?

Research Methodology

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, including a literature review, field research at key locations along the route, and a visitor survey assessing perceptions, expectations, and experiences. A central part of the research was an experimental walking tour of a focus group. This initiative, called *Diavas eis Makedonian* (Come over to Macedonia) in Greek, aimed to explore the potential of slow travel and museological interpretation in enhancing the authenticity of a pilgrimage experience.¹⁰ Participants documented their experience through daily journals, which were collected at the end of each day. In addition to this, every night the focus group held a common session to reflect upon their shared experience. The data of these discussions were collected through participant observation. Finally, when all the qualitative data was collected, it was systematically analyzed via Atlas.ti software to identify key themes and insights.

Conducted Research Work

Diavas eis Makedonian project focused on slow tourism and the authenticity of a walking-pilgrimage experience, offering an alternative to the mass consumption of tourist destinations. In October 2021, a group of nine volunteers walked from Kavala to Thessaloniki, covering a total of 215 kilometers in eight days. The route followed –when possible– Via Engatia, the ancient Roman road that Paul and his companions probably used when travelling in northern Greece. Additional stops included important sites such as Philippi, Amphipolis and Apollonia.

The primary aim of the group was to trace and document the route, while exploring ways to improve the experience for future visitors. Apart from walking to our next destination, each day included personal reflection and a group discourse session, visits to local sites and museums along the way, and meetings with people from various local organizations and borough representatives. Engagement with communities along the route was a key element of the initiative, which was successfully achieved thanks to the invaluable collaboration of local organizations.

Furthermore, throughout these eight days, the participants documented their experiences by keeping a personal diary, which could take various forms: a drawing, a free-writing prose text, a poem, a song, a photo with a caption, or even a post or a story

¹⁰ The name of the project derives from the book of Acts in the New Testament (Acts 16:9), where Paul travels on European soil for the first time after a vision he saw of a man pleading him to come over to Macedonia, which was a Roman province at the time.

on social media. In this context, each day had a different theme, related to the segment of the route travelled at the given time. These themes were explored through historical discussions, personal reflection, group conversations, or specific exercises. During the final group debriefing, all participants unanimously agreed that the themes helped them, giving the journey structure and a deeper spiritual meaning.

Key Challenges and Difficulties

A key challenge when studying the "Footsteps of Paul" is the interdisciplinary approach required to fully understand all aspects of the route. More specifically, a comprehensive analysis necessitates expertise across several fields, including history, archaeology, museology, cultural and heritage studies, pilgrimage and religious tourism, and biblical studies. Additionally, one of the main difficulties for implementing the project *Diavas eis Makedonian* in particular, was the logistical challenges, such as infrastructure gaps, limited accessibility and lack of safe paths for people wanting to follow the route on foot.

Preliminary Results and Arguments

The "Footsteps of Paul" in Greece requires greater attention and further study to unlock its full potential as a significant cultural and religious route. Investing in infrastructure and developing resources for walking tourism could benefit the local communities in several ways. The increasing demand for authentic experiences in religious and cultural tourism calls us to re-imagine the route featuring both its archaeological and religious identity. Integrating museological approaches, such as immersive exhibitions, digital storytelling, and guided interpretation, could make the route more engaging for visitors.

In summary, while the route exists in a theoretical sense, practical improvements are necessary to ensure that independent travellers can navigate it safely and easily. The findings from *Diavas eis Makedonian* experiment highlight the value of both academic and business investment. Following the route on foot is truly a unique experience, that combines walking through areas of rich historical significance and natural beauty, while offering the opportunity of personal and spiritual exploration.

4. Vlad Ciur, UB, Bucharest

European Cultural Heritage: Ancient Roman Lighting Equipment in the Northern Dobrudja (1st-7th centuries AD)

Bio

My name is Vlad Ioan Ciur, I am 24 years old and currently I am working as a junior archaeologist at the History and Archaeology Museum in Tulcea, Romania. I am also a PhD student at the University of Bucharest. My area of research is based on Early and Late Roman archaeology in the modern-day region of Dobrudja.

Abstract

The material culture of ancient societies represents a direct connection to a distant past, inspiring admiration and curiosity in visitors when carefully exhibited in a museum, but also offering very important information for the researchers in their quest of reconstructing the manifestations of prehistorical and historical communities. My PhD thesis is constructed around a specific category of the archaeological record, i.e. the lighting equipment, mainly the pottery lamps dated in the 1st to the 7th century AD.

This chronological period coincides with the Roman occupation of Dobrudja, in the South-East of the present-day Romania. The effects of the romanization of this region are now visible and studied through multidisciplinary research, and the artifacts discovered during the archaeological excavations are often displayed in museums, in order to promote the local cultural heritage. Such is the case of lamps, a unique category of the archaeological record, being highly appreciated by the public in museums for their variety in shape and decoration, while also being of great interest for archaeologists due to the precious information that can be extracted by studying these

instruments. Relevant aspects regarding ancient trade, cultural particularities and many other topics can be explored through this particular field of research.

Keywords: Roman lamps, Roman archaeology, Iconography, Roman *limes*, Ancient trade routes.

Vlad Ciur's research project

PhD thesis summary

Numerous works were published in recent years regarding ancient Roman lamps, mainly in the form of catalogues in which discoveries from a particular site or area are described and often integrated in a larger discussion about social, cultural and economical aspects. My PhD thesis follows a similar route, focusing on the lamps belonging to the collection of the Museum of History and Archaeology from Tulcea, in Romania.

The main questions that my research ought to answer to are the following:

- Where the majority of imports into the region comes from?
- Which influences prevails in the local iconographic repertoire?
- What kind of patterns can we acknowledge in the discoveries from different archaeological contexts?
- How the local production began in the region?
- In which way did the army influence the imports and the local production?
- What role did the lamps play in the funerary rituals in ancient Dobruđja?

Regarding the methodology, a first step will be composing an extensive catalogue of the specimens, estimated to around 400 pieces, some of them yet to be published. Alongside this catalogue I will be referring to the several archaeological contexts of the discovered material and its relation with other findings. The information acquired through the catalogue and the archaeological contexts will be presented in chapters dedicated to the imports, to the local production, the iconography and to statistical data.

At this moment, my research resulted in two published papers in which I have discussed some aspects of the circulation of stamped lamps (*firmalampen*) produced in Northern Italy during the first three centuries AD in Dobruđja, and a catalogue of eleven lamps recently discovered at *Aegyssus* (modern-day Tulcea), followed by a series of economic and cultural considerations. The information obtained through this paper will be encompassed in my thesis and it will be further detailed.

The main difficulties of my approach are the lack of details about the archaeological context for some of the findings and the lack of more consistent fundings for a greater number of future excavations. However, despite these challenges, the resources that I currently have access to are sufficient for a well-structured overview of the topics listed above. In this early stage of my research, I have managed to include around 80 lamps in the catalogue, both published and unpublished specimens, and to find relevant analogies for them in order to construct my arguments. The published pieces were revised where necessary.

The goal of my thesis is to improve our current understanding of the Roman lamps both as a functional tool and as a cultural and economic indicator. The lack of a general published work for this region, the importance of new discoveries for this particular field and the erroneous conclusions published in the past were key factors in choosing this topic for my PhD thesis. At the same time, taken into consideration the location of this territory at the edge of the Empire, the eventual results of my research will also benefit to other in-depth provincial studies.

Thus, the Roman lamps are not only a useful study case for the scientists, but they are also a valuable piece of the ancient heritage puzzle, a *window* through time in which everyone can take a short glance at a distant memory, brought out to the light by the archaeologists and carefully displayed by the curators.

□ Route 2

1. Chryssa Bourbou, NKUA, Athens

Museum and climate crisis. Impacts and changes to the climate and the contemporary museums

Bio

Chryssa Bourbou has a PhD in Bioarchaeology and a MAS in Cultural Heritage and Museology. She is currently working on her second PhD about the role of museum in climate crisis, and leading at the same time the Sustainability and Climate Action Working Group of NEMO. Her main professional activities as a curator at the Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania (Hellenic Ministry of Culture) include the bioarchaeological study of archaeological populations, the curation of temporary exhibitions and cultural activities for public outreach.

Abstract

The 21st century is witnessing the lasting impacts of human activity on the atmosphere, terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems of the planet. Climate crisis is undoubtedly one of the most important challenges of humanity and a known phenomenon for decades. However, raising public awareness on the subject is a complex and delicate procedure. Museums, as a modern type *agora*, are ideal places for engaging the public in the difficult discussion of climate crisis. At the same time, they are themselves unsustainable consumers, rarely calculating their environmental impact. Are museums aware of their potential to play a leading role in dealing with the climate crisis? Why museums should take a stand on the matter and develop a new ethical museum ecology? In this presentation, we will briefly present some preliminary results, based on the two-year research conducted for the PhD thesis that investigates the role of contemporary museums in tackling the climate crisis.

Keywords: Climate crisis, environmental sustainability, barriers, levers

Chryssa Bourbou's research project

Research question

The role of European museums –independently of size and type– under the pressing reality of climate crisis, and how they can contribute to an environmentally sustainable future.

Aims

- discuss the framework of climate crisis and the environmental dimensions of sustainability in the cultural and in specific the museum sector,
- analyze the reasons why museums should take a stance in the climate crisis and identify barriers that inhibit their sustainable transformation,
- present environmentally sustainable practices that are currently implemented by European museums, with reference to worldwide examples as appropriate. Such an analysis includes both internal and external dimensions of the museum ('Inside-Outside Model', which refers to the internal organization/operation and the programming, respectively). Regarding the Outside Model, a special focus is given to exhibitions, as one of the most important public-facing activities of the museum.
- record the current state of play in Greek museums, using as a case study the Archaeological Museum of Chania (Crete, Greece),

→ report on levers that can enhance the sustainable transformation of museums as role models for raising awareness on climate crisis and sustainable consumers.

Methodology

Methodology includes the review of the available academic literature, websites of museums, and semi-constructed interviews with key cultural and museum professionals. Two types of interviews were performed: a) exploratory interviews with experts of cultural associations and/or networks focusing on sustainability, and b) best-practice interviews with representatives of European museums. Best-practice interviews were selected based on the combination of specific criteria, recommendations from exploratory interviews, and examples in the bibliography.

Challenges

We highlight that accepting to participate in an interview was a challenging procedure— especially Greek museums were reluctant to participate. An additional challenge is that data (academic literature, surveys, etc.) on museums and environmental sustainability are continuously and rapidly emerging, and thus need regular updating.

Progress (themes investigated so far):

→ the climate crisis as a complex phenomenon and the role of culture as the fourth pillar of sustainability: how Agenda 2030 and the 17 SDGs relate to museum work, global and national initiatives (e.g. the role of ICOM), why museums should take a stance for climate crisis, which barriers inhibit their sustainable transformation, and which levers can optimize it.

→ specific examples to support the analysis of sustainable practices in different action fields and according to the 'Inside-Outside Model'. In addition to those examples, two practical guides, building on the experiences and insights from these examples, were produced, aiming to provide inspiration on actions that can be taken to reduce the environmental impact of museums in general and in specific of temporary exhibitions.

→ the 'pros' and 'cons' for the case study museum.

Preliminary results

→ there is a positive dynamic and a serious movement in the museum sector towards climate action. Yet, museums have not fully grasped their relevance to climate crisis and most importantly, why they are unique places to promote public awareness on the issue.

→ while several (and growing) evidence of sustainable performance exists, museums do not seem to move fast enough in order to meet the climate crisis challenge. Staying on the positive side, though, the size of the museum is irrelevant to sustainable development, and practically any museum can start building at its own pace an environmental strategy.

→ museums still need to overcome significant barriers associated with practical and idiosyncratic reasons. For example, the majority of the interviewees pointed to the lack of funds, time, framework and expertise as the fundamental barriers inhibiting the implementation of sustainable measures.

→ there are important levers to which museums can invest in order to accelerate the pace. We highlight the following:

- sustainability is a team sport, but the role of museum Directors and Boards in outlining a sustainable strategy is fundamental,
- the presence of a sustainable officer/team acts as a catalyst for initiating and monitoring the sustainability performance,
- the need for targeted funds for introducing sustainable practices,
- the development of a sector-specific framework that also empowers museum, professionals through continuous training to be engaged with climate action,
- the obligation of museums to be transparent and report on their sustainability policies,
- the benefits of networking for museums to share common problems and successful practices.

2. Hsiao-Chiang (Hope) Wang, UoG, Glasgow

Co-creating the Values of World Heritage Sites with Refugees: a world view perspective

Bio

Hsiao-Chiang (Hope) is a UNESCO RIELA Scholarship holder. Her doctoral research focuses on leveraging UNESCO designations as sites of restorative integration. She holds an MSc in Museum Studies from the University of Glasgow, where she conducted the decolonising museum websites project with the Hunterian Museum. Currently, she serves as a PhD tutor in the EDUMaH programme and works with the Hunterian visitor experience team.

Her research interests include heritage interpretation, critical heritage studies, peacebuilding, creative methods and refugee integration

Abstract

This research explores the co-creation of values at World Heritage Sites (WHSs). It builds a conceptual framework grounded in value co-creation theory and employs Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodologies. The study initiates educational interventions based on World View Theory across three Scottish WHSs: the Antonine Wall, the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh, and New Lanark. This interdisciplinary research draws on critical heritage discourse, refugee studies, heritage interpretation, and value theory.

The study formulates a WHS value co-creation framework, co-creates heritage interpretations, explores effective and ethical approaches to heritage education, and highlights the potential of WHSs in refugee integration and peacebuilding.

Keywords: Value co-creation, World Heritage, Heritage interpretation, Heritage Education, Refugee integration, Participatory Action Research

Hope Wang's research project

Research Question

1. What are the values of WHSs?

To critique authorised heritage interpretation through the lens of critical heritage studies and co-create the values of WHSs with refugees.

2. How to co-create the values of WHSs with refugees?

To identify factors of value co-destruction and co-creation, examine the Worldview-Oriented Heritage Education framework, and establish principles for engaging refugees in heritage interpretation

3. Why are WHSs meaningful places for refugee integration?

To generate co-created values and participants' responses, fostering a mutually beneficial relationship.

Methodology

1. Transformative research paradigm

- **Ontology:** Reality is socially constructed but shaped by power dynamics, social structures, and historical contexts.
- **Epistemology:** Knowledge is inherently linked to power.
- **Axiology:** The research is driven by values of equity, social justice, and human rights, aiming to use heritage for transformative integration and peacebuilding.

2. Participatory Action Research (PAR)

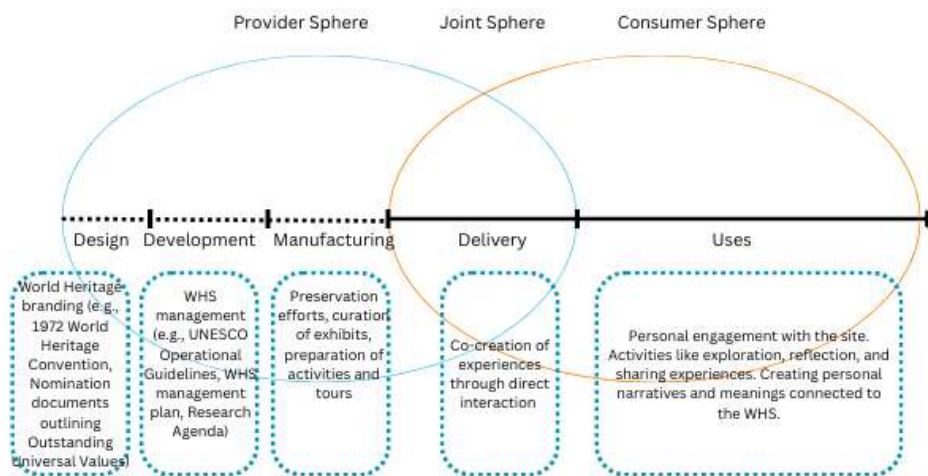
The process is divided into four phases:

- **Phase 1: Strategic Planning:** Identify gaps in heritage education at WHSs, build partnerships with heritage sectors and refugee groups, and design context-specific interventions.
- **Phase 2: Taking Actions:** Conduct workshops to engage participants as active contributors, guided by New Scots principles, and collect data through observation and interviews.

- **Phase 3: Analysis and Evaluation:** Analyse data to refine qualitative insights and build a transferable model for broader social impact.
- **Phase 4: Review, Reflections, and Remodel Plan:** Review findings to improve co-creation methods and heritage education models, focusing on ethical considerations and participant benefit.

3. Theory

Service Logic (SL) offers a useful lens for understanding how organisations can actively engage in and support users' value-creation processes (Grönroos & Gummerus, 2014).



Conducted Research Work

Six workshops were conducted across three WHSs: the Antonine Wall, the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh, and New Lanark. Creative methods such as storytelling, photovoice, readers theatre, and heritage elicitation were employed.

WHSs served as:

- Connecting points for emotional engagement and empathy.
- Shared spheres for memorisation, debate, and interpretation.
- Spiritual sites fostering imagination and hope.

Key Challenges and Difficulties

1. **Nature of Participants:** Participants, with refugee or asylum seeker backgrounds, come from diverse cultures, speak different languages, and may have experienced cultural capital deprivation and trauma. Ensuring ethical processes and effective communication is challenging but essential for shaping inclusive heritage education research.
2. **Messiness of Data:** While creative methods and PAR are effective, data management is more complex than traditional methods. Data is categorised case by case and organised thematically, but analysing non-verbal data (e.g., photos, drawings) and emotional attributes remains a challenge.
3. **Scope and Size:** As with many qualitative studies, concerns arise about whether this small-scale project can provide a solid foundation for theory-building.

Preliminary Results

1. **Heritage Interpretation:** Co-created values of WHSs are summarised as counterparts to Outstanding Universal Values (OUV).

2. Heritage Education: Each action is evaluated to identify effective heritage education approaches.
3. Refugee Integration: Observations reveal participants sharing worldviews and fostering mutual understanding, indicating WHSs as shared spaces for refugee integration.

Main Arguments

1. Shared Values vs. Outstanding Universal Values: The study synthesises interpretations of WHSs to demonstrate a more inclusive heritage interpretation.
2. WHS Value Co-Creation Theory: It identifies factors causing value co-destruction and opportunities for fostering value co-creation.
3. Worldview-Oriented Heritage Education Framework: This framework highlights the role of WHSs in refugee integration and peacebuilding.
4. WHSs for Refugee Integration and Peacebuilding: WHSs serve as powerful shared spaces for refugee integration, fostering inclusive environments where individuals can exercise cultural rights and accumulate cultural capital, even after experiencing deprivation. By integrating refugees' worldviews into WHS interpretations, heritage sites diversify their narratives and contribute to peacebuilding and social cohesion.

This research underscores the transformative potential of WHSs in fostering inclusive, equitable, and restorative spaces for refugee integration, while advancing critical heritage discourse and multicultural education.

3. Luisa Vögele, UT, Tübingen

The Kunstkammer of the Dukes and Duchesses of Württemberg as a Figure of Aesthetic Reflection: Attributions of Value and Processes of Canonization

Bio

Luisa Vögele studied Cultural and Historical Anthropology in Regensburg (GER), Karlstad (SWE) Tübingen (GER). During her master's programme, she worked as a student assistant and gave tutorials. In 2023 she finished her master's degree and started working as a research associate and PhD candidate at the CRC 1391 'Different aesthetics'.

Abstract

The *Kunstkammer* (Cabinet of Curiosities) of the Dukes and Duchesses of Württemberg in Stuttgart (Germany) unites a wide variety of objects from different contexts, aiming to collect the *macrocosmos in microcosmo*. Despite its start as a private collection, it must be regarded as an institutionalised entity, which served just as much as a representation of the Duchy as of the Duke himself. Originating in the late 16th century, the collection's legacy persists to the present day – as regional cultural inheritance in the Württemberg State Museum.

I examine the collecting, organising and cataloguing practices of various actors – as plural authors of the collection – at the point of transition from the 18th to the 19th century. Intending to break up the male dominated narrative of a euro-centric collection, I especially focus on female actors in the collection, as well as the object group of the so called 'Exotica'. Following the heuristic concept of 'figures of aesthetic reflection' of the CRC 1391 "Different Aesthetics" I ask: How do practices of organisation, order and arrangement create various aesthetics in the Stuttgart *Kunstkammer*?

Keywords: Kunstkammer; cabinet of curiosities; cultural heritage; aesthetics; aristocratic collecting

Luisa Vögele's research project

The *Kunstkammer* (Cabinet of Curiosities) of the Dukes and Duchesses of Württemberg in Stuttgart (Germany) unites a wide variety of objects from different contexts, striving to collect the *macrocosmos in microcosmo*. Even though it started as a private collection, it must be regarded as an institutionalised entity, which served just as much as representation of the Duchy

as of the Duke himself. Originating in the late 16th century, the collection's legacy persists to the present day – as regional cultural inheritance in the Württemberg State Museum.

In my thesis I inquire which value attributions to the collection's objects and – based on this – which processes of canonisation of art and cultural assets can be identified. My focus lies on the transition to the 19th century, when Wilhelm I., who had been king of Württemberg since 1816, handed over the *Kunstammer* to the state. I examine the collecting, organising and cataloguing practices of various actors – as plural authors of the collection – at the point of transition from the 18th to the 19th century. Intending to break up the male dominated narrative of a euro-centric collection, I especially focus on female actors in the collection, as well as the object group of the so called 'exotics'. To pursue my interest, I ask the following research question: How do practices of organisation, order and arrangement create various aesthetics in the Stuttgart *Kunstammer*?

I employ the methodical approach of historical cultural analysis. As such I focus on historical actors in the *Kunstammer* – namely the dukes and duchesses, the curators, visitors, and donors. Moreover, as my dissertation project is part of the CRC 1391 'Different Aesthetics' I follow its heuristic concept of 'figures of aesthetic reflection' based on a praxeological model of processes of exchange and transformation.

My main sources are three *Kunstammer* inventories from 1785, 1792, and the mid-19th century. The latter had already been transcribed by the Württemberg State Museum, the other two I transcribed myself. I have used MaxQDA to code these inventories. In one file I cross-referenced objects to be able to find one object through different times or inventories. In another file I have assigned keywords to detect value attributions and weightings, but also the origins and display locations of the individual objects. Furthermore, I have looked at various other sources – such as letters, testaments, diaries, or government directives, as well as printed travelogues.

One challenge I've met was the limited source material on female actors in the *Kunstammer*. While I know that the duchesses and queens did play a role in the collection from hints or remarks, I often only find the information I'm looking for in a somewhat roundabout way. However, I also struggle with the sheer amount of source material regarding the *Kunstammer* collection. There are more than 120 inventories or inventory fragments, most of which have not been transcribed yet. I have tried to meet this challenge by focusing on a limited time period. Yet, quite often I wish I was able to systematically compare my findings with entries in earlier inventories.

Nonetheless the source material provides some interesting findings. For one, we can see an aesthetic of genius. The 1792 inventory includes a preamble concerning alleged works of Albrecht Dürer. The author – presumably a curator – declares his admiration for the artist and defends flaws in the Dürer objects in the *Kunstammer* collection. Yet, in the subsequent inventory the objects are listed as 'formerly attributed to Dürer' and identified as copies or misattributions. The new entries also cite an article by art editor Carl Grüneisen, who analyses the alleged Dürer objects. This is evidence for the intake of extern expertise in the *Kunstammer*, which by then had been opened for public visitors. This example mirrors a development, wherein modern ideas of an aesthetic of genius gain importance as well as a scientific examination of the collection does. By setting different focal points in their inventories, the curators attribute value to one or the other approach.

Another finding concerns the so called 'Exotica'. These ethnographic objects which originated in different areas of the world (America, Africa and Asia) are mostly subsumed within the term 'indian'. While these objects were already listed under this term in the early 17th century, the 'Exotica' become a fixed category in the late 18th century and are transferred to a specialised ethnographic institution (the later Linden-Museum) in the 19th century. I argue that this practice of organisation creates a view of these objects as foreign, or different from European objects. While collecting these objects reflects the collectors' interests in the unknown, the entries often misattribute their origins and meanings. So, rather than demonstrating similarities of different societies, they create an image of the 'wonderful' – in the sense of the un-normal.

While I have only been able to give two brief examples, I would like to draw attention to the broader contexts that – I would argue – become visible in the *Kunstammer*: what is perceived as 'aesthetic' slightly shifts to a perspective centred around the artist. The *Kunstammer*, though conceptualised as a private collection, always followed outer logics and societal rules. The establishment of 'modern' specialised museums therefore leaves its marks on the cabinet. Bit by bit the collection becomes separated and administered by specialists. The incorporation into the state administration in 1817 is just one indicator for the process of formalising the collection. It is yet for me to find out if this process also marks a shift in the perception of collection objects as pieces of art rather than practical or decorative objects.

4. Julie Pezzali, SUR, Rome

Italian Museography and Art Criticism in '900

Bio

Julie Pezzali is a Ph.D. student in art history at Sapienza Università di Roma. She is currently studying, under the supervision of Professors Irene Baldriga and Valter Curzi, twentieth-century museology, focusing on events that took place in Italy between the years of Fascism – characterised by a cultural and museum policy both conservative and propagandist – and the Post-War period, when the newly established democratic and liberal Republic faced the challenge of reconstructing historic buildings, home to museums, which had been damaged by bombs.

Abstract

My research, covering the 30s and 50s, focuses on a specific geographical area: Central and Northern Italy. This context, where some of the most significant museographic innovations took place at the turn of the Second World War, is essential to understand the complexity of the subject, both quantitatively (on the 180 reorganisations carried out across the country, about half involved institutions in Northern and Central Italy) and qualitatively, due to the diversification of forms and models applied on the reorganisation of the museum collections (modernism, conservatism, 'modernised restoration').

Keywords: Museography, Museology, Restoration, Second World War, Fascism, Italy

Julie Pezzali's research project

My research, covering the 30s and 50s, focuses on a specific geographical area: Central and Northern Italy. This context, where some of the most significant museographic innovations took place at the turn of the Second World War, is essential to understand the complexity of the subject, both quantitatively (on the 180 reorganisations carried out across the country, about half involved institutions in Northern and Central Italy) and qualitatively, due to the diversification of forms and models applied on the reorganisation of the museum collections (modernism, conservatism, 'modernised restoration').

The written documents and photographs conserved in National Archives make it possible to reconstruct the complex history of this period, one that marked the most significant contribution of Italy to international museography. This contribution was made possible not only thanks to an enlightened ministerial policy able to mobilise the best architects, but also to the efforts of the Superintendencies. In the absence of clear guidelines and in a challenging financial context, the Superintendencies took on the responsibility for decisions in the fields of restoration and museum reorganisation.

A critical analysis of the sources reveals the unwavering commitment of all the officials involved. Having taken office shortly before the outbreak of war, they found themselves entrusted with the protection of a threatened heritage. A closer look at the careers of these young art historians reveals the cultural background in which they operated. As they had been trained by the same mentors (Adolfo and Lionello Venturi), they were convinced that museology was the best way of conducting art historical research and that a better museographic design could present the artworks in a better light, serving both as a receptive and a driving force for the advancement of studies.

They regarded the museum as a dynamic space capable of developing and changing, keeping pace with the evolution of art history and promoting schools and artists. In line with the choices they adopted for the presentation of artworks, they carried a rigorous selection based on quality and historical relevance and promote a policy of targeted acquisitions.

My research focuses on the work of Guglielmo Pacchioni (1883-1969), the Superintendent and art historian who was a major but yet still little-known figure in the administration of Italian Fine Arts. Between the 1930s and 1950s, he was responsible for the architectural restoration, museological and museographic reorganisation of some of the most important museums in Italy,

including the Galleria Sabauda in Turin, the Pinacoteca di Brera and the Museo Poldi Pezzoli in Milan, and the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence. He was strongly influenced by the ideals of Henri Focillon and published a lengthily article in *Mouseion* in 1934. Although the Fascist regime prevented him from taking part in the Madrid Conference, due to suspicions of anti-Fascism, he nonetheless managed to be included in the Conference proceedings, where his project of reorganization of the Turin museum was widely recognised by the international museography elite. During the War, he was tasked with organising the recovery plan for the rich museum heritage of Lombardy, while continuing to publish essays on museography and museology, on the educational function of museums and their relationship with the public. At the end of his career, in the 1950s, in recognition of his outstanding career in national museums, he was appointed the representative of the Italian Ministry to ICOM.

My research is not limited to a reflection on Italian museums but it is also enriched by an in-depth analysis of the complex relationships between Italian museum institutions and the international background. Particular attention is paid to the study of some key steps such as the 1934 Madrid Conference, which helps to understand the relationship between Italy and the Office International des Musées and, after the War, the 1953 ICOM Conference, which was held in Genoa, Milan and Bergamo.

□ Route 3

1. Yi Chen (Amy), UoG, Glasgow

Exploring the impact of cultural identity of Third Culture Kid (TCK) and Cross Culture Kid (CCK) on museum education narratives

Bio

First year PhD student in education from University of Glasgow. My research interest is museum education and inclusive museum, focusing on multiculturalism and racial equality. I used to work with the National Trust of Scotland (NTS) on research into racial equality education in historic houses and provided policy briefings for the NTS.

Abstract

Globalization has brought about a reconfiguration of cultural diversity (Colomer, 2017: 923), people living among multiple cultures/societies may experience psychological and sociocultural crises, including conflicts of cultural identity (Szabo & Ward, 2015: 13). As groups with complex and interwoven culture identities, belonging and special cultural needs (Colomer, 2017: 913), Third Culture Kid (TCK) and Cross Culture Kid (CCK) has come into the public eye and attracted attention in the fields of education and mental health (Moore and Barker, 2012, p.553). Although some scholars have published relevant studies on how cultural heritage faces the transformation of cultural identity brought about by globalization (Colomer, 2020), research on the effect of cultural identity in specifically on museum education seems to be a vacuum. Thus, this research assesses how museums respond to changes in the expression of culture, identity and belonging in the context of globalization by exploring TCK and CCK's respond in museums. This research plan to explore how the sociocultural factors that constitute identity can be used to reconfigure museum narratives to accommodate changing cultural diversity, and how the practitioners of museum education can better respect and include the multicultural culture identities of museum visitors and how to reflect them in the design of museum curriculum.

Keywords: Museum Education, Inclusive Museum, Cultural Identity, Multiculturalism, Third Culture Kid (TCK), Cross Culture Kid (CCK)

Amy Chen's research project

Research Question

This research aims to delving into the influence of cultural identity of Third Cultural Kid (TCK) and Cross-Cultural Kid (CCK) on understanding museum narrative. Third Culture Kid (TCK) is “a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents’ culture” (Pollock et al. 2010), and Cross-Cultural Kid (CCK) is a person “who is living/has lived in – or meaningfully interacted with – two or more cultural environments for a significant period of time during the first eighteen years of life” (Van Reken, 2011, p.33). This research focuses on whether the national culture of TCK and CCK will influence the cultural identity of these subjects and affect their understanding of museum narrative. This research focuses on the reaction and reflection of museum’s narrative, especially the narrative related with their nationality country cultures, explores how the sociocultural factors that constitute identity can be used to reconfigure museum narratives to accommodate changing cultural diversity

Research Methodology Followed

This research will use quantitative research methods and interpretivism paradigms to study the complexity of the relationship structure of people's life experiences. Qualitative methods of narrative interviews were used to gain a nuanced understanding of the differences in identity and belonging among adult TCKs and CCKs. To embody an understanding of different social structures in the study, the research will use interpretive research methods to place issues of the political and economic nature of social justice or education in a social context (West, 2018: 2-4; Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020: 39). The data sources for this research are primary data collected from narrative interviews and secondary literature data from academic journals. To collect first-hand data, researcher plan to conduct the walking interviews in the Burrell Collection in Glasgow. Interviews are conducted in a participant-led manner, triggering random interview questions by "bumping into" exhibits on a scheduled route.

Key challenges and difficulties faced

Faced with the fact that there are many people who are not the traditional definition of the TCK but can resonate with the TCK, Van Reken (2011, p.33) developed the CCK model based on the TCK model and gave a definition of CCK. However, CCK includes not only TCK, but also many other types of childhood cross-cultural experiences, both national and international, such as children from intersex/multicultural and intersex/multiracial families, and educational CCK, among others (de Waal et al., 2020, p.178). Therefore, when further narrowing the scope of the target population and determining the research object, the influence of other factors that cross-affect individual cultural identity and "cross-cultural experience" on the data must be paid attention to.

Preliminary results and main arguments

The diversity and inclusion of museums is reflected in the process of negotiating the shape and content of museum exhibits with different social groups (Maleuvre, 2012, p. 112). The cultural identity and belonging of third culture children and cross-cultural children are influenced by their early cross-cultural life experiences and the culture from their families. Cross-cultural experiences help TCK and CCK develop positive diversity beliefs (Moore and Barker, 2012, pp.554-555). By exploring the target group's respond of their "home" culture represented in museums, we can better assess how museums respond to changes in the expression of culture, identity and belonging in the context of globalization. Moreover, McCarthy (2016, p.32) regards museum research and practice as a means of cross-cultural adjustment that can effectively change society. And this research also plans to provide an evaluative model as a result for developing more inclusive cultural discussions in museum. And the purpose is to explore how the practitioners of museum education can better respect and include the multicultural culture identities of museum visitors and how to reflect them in the design of museum curriculum.

2. Lana Balorda, UT, Tübingen

A Way of Life: Sarajevo's streets as spaces of connection and interdependence

Bio

Lana Balorda obtained her MA in Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Tübingen in 2022. As a doctoral candidate and research assistant employed in the SFB 1070 “ResourceCultures” project, Lana is furthering her research on commemorative practices in Sarajevo with a particular focus on place-making in the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Abstract

Caught between the frontline of the siege and “Sniper’s Alley”, the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina sheltered staff and heritage in the capital Sarajevo during the 1992-95 war. In the aftermath, the curators laboured to collect, preserve, and present everyday life under the siege in the first exhibition of its kind. Entitled *Opkoljeno Sarajevo* or Besieged Sarajevo, the exhibition, which was initially installed in 2003 has been continually transforming since.

Sarajevo’s memoryscape is dominated by ruptures caused by various conflicts that have taken place here over the last two centuries, and the past presented in the History Museum remains contested. Moreover, the museum itself is nurtured in a disputed space that since the conflict in the 1990s continues to be an object of debate as government officials fail to resolve its legal status.

The focus of this paper is the most recent extension of the Besieged Sarajevo exhibition, *Put života* or the Way of Life, which diverts attention away from the hostile line of division that was the Sniper’s Alley, to the lifeline that ran parallel, providing shared spaces of shelter and sustenance. These lines and narratives run in parallel but also in opposition to one another, the Way of Life emphasizing connection, interdependence, and survival.

Keywords: museums, affect, Sarajevo, contested past, place, commemoration

Lana Balorda’s research project

Research question

How is the contested past presented in a ‘national’ museum abandoned by the politically fragmented state?

Research methodology

The unofficial meanings that places of memory contain for groups and individuals are rarely recorded in city plans and publicity articles. It is for this reason that Karen Till (2012) advocates for a methodology that is attuned to the affective connections that people have to place, such as ethnographic, phenomenological, or psychoanalytic approaches, since through them the researcher may encounter alternative meanings that exceed the authorised representations of the past. Relying on predominantly qualitative methods, social and cultural anthropology is well positioned to answer Till’s call.

Conducted research work

I encountered most of the material that I based my analysis on through participant observation. It can be quite difficult to achieve a balance of observing and participating and often this term seems to an unachievable oxymoron that brings up crucial ethical questions. On a more concrete level, over a period of ten months, I conducted the majority of my research through participant observation, which involved translation of texts for the museum’s scientific journal, catalogues, and captions for exhibitions, assisting in the curation of exhibitions, workshops and guided tours for young visitors, and interviews with curators and artists who exhibited at the museum.

Key challenges

Given that my research is of a sensitive nature, working with traces of atrocities and genocide from the Second World War and 1992-1995 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, I needed to develop ethical and reflexive approaches. Moreover, researching as a distanced insider, having been born in Sarajevo but spending the majority of my life outside of the city and country of my

birth, I have had to develop an understanding of my own assumptions and recognise when I was projecting my own perspectives onto the people I was studying with. Rather than trying work against my own subjective involvement, I found being sensitive to affect in the research setting epistemologically productive. Now that I am at the stage of writing an ethnography that encompasses the experiences and encounters that I have had, I am trying to develop a writing style that describes my subjective involvement in the research process but without “naval gazing”. I believe that for my writing to be scientifically rigorous, I need to be transparent about my positionality. Moreover, I would like to be able to reproduce or represent silences in a manner that is ethical, meaningful, and respectful of my coresearchers.

Preliminary results

In shifting the focus from the infamous “Sniper’s Alley,” which is relatively well documented, to the seemingly uneventful and almost mundane everyday life on the other side, the Way of Life exhibition does not overlook the hostilities endured during the siege. The documents attest to the difficulties that residents endured, however, though narrating their vulnerability these records also bear witness to the keenly felt interdependence.

As I talked to the lead curators Amra Čusto and Elma Hašimbegović, one sentiment that sometimes crept up was that even back then, things were in a better state than now. People were quick to explain that they did not mean the war itself, but rather used this expression as a criticism of the current state. Through this focus on the “behind the scenes” of Sniper’s Alley, the often humdrum activities of everyday life became apparent and from this flowed nostalgia for the daily organisation and industry of the socialist past. As various scholars of the Western Balkans have noted, rather than being fixated on the past, discourse on Yugo-nostalgia is a means of envisioning a different future (Monika Palmberger 2008).

Arguments

Since attempts to fragment Bosnia and Herzegovina on an administrative and ideological level continue, the past remains contested and therefore this so called state museum cannot speak of a singular national past. The curators turn instead to individual memory, rather than trying to evoke a past on a national level.

The Way of Life, then, not only serves to show the vulnerability, resilience, and interdependence of the residents but also criticises the neoliberal ethnonationalist present. The creation of the Way of Life exhibition is a commemorative process that spreads another layer of meaning across the city, connecting various points into a network necessary for survival. A place-making practice that through highlighting the precarity of life, accentuates the need for solidarity.

3. Karin Tetteris, SU, Stockholm

Displaying colours – Early modern heritagization of military flags in the Great Armoury of Sweden

Bio

I have worked as a museum professional for twenty years in Stockholm, mainly with textile collections at the Royal Armoury and the Army museum. I did my bachelor's degree in Art History and my Master's in Heritage studies before doing a doctorate in Art History. My research interests include Early Modern collections, festivals and material culture in general.

Abstract

Military flags were a part of Early Modern visual culture, ubiquitous in public spaces. My thesis aims to initiate a new line of inquiry examining them as important agents in political, social, and cultural performances such as military rituals and triumphal displays. It aims, furthermore, to contribute to the history of Swedish museums in general and arsenals and armouries as Early Modern museums. It investigates the practices of using, capturing, and preserving flags as war trophies by which The Great Armoury in Stockholm emerged as a museum in the seventeenth century. Focus is on analysing assemblages of practices, spaces, objects, and humans in which the agency of the flags was created and performed. Thus, my study is positioned at the intersection of heritage studies and art anthropology.

My thesis contributes primarily to two areas of research: the visual and material culture of war, and Early Modern museums. Flags are objects produced for warfare and collections of captured flags are also products of war. Investigating the history of such collections is imperative for understanding their political and social implications, then and now. A historical perspective can therefore shed light onto the deep roots of the close and complicated relationship between war and heritage.

Keywords: Early Modern museum practices, depiction, cataloguing, display, rituals

Karin Tetteris's research project

Research questions

The overarching question concerns the agency of the materiality of flags understood as the relational interaction between flags and humans. How were flags used for producing, enacting, and transforming cultural meanings and how, in turn, did flags become constituents of these meanings? The question “how” serves to focus the embodied practices performed in these processes. To answer the overarching questions, further questions are asked. How did the material properties of flags affect their agency? What was the role of flags in military ceremonies? How were captured flags made trophies? How were captured flags heritagised?

Methodology

The study is structured as an object biography following Igor Kopytoff's proposed method. It is further influenced by Sandra H. Dudley's model for a “displacement trajectory” of objects displaced by war. The research relies on a wide array of materials such as visual sources, archival sources, contemporary military treatises, memoirs and news reports. Moreover, the preserved flags are analysed.

Conducted research

My research has included archival research in Denmark and Sweden, examination of preserved flags in the museum collection of Armémuseum, and analysis of archival and printed material. The thesis is now completed and will be defended on April 11.

Challenges

A major challenge has been the time-consuming archival research which has entailed many hours of searching for things that weren't there in the end. Another difficulty has been that many relevant sources have been written in Early Modern German, which I didn't know very well in the beginning and have had to study.

Results

My study shows that the agency that flags acquired by the materials they were made from, the military rituals they participated in and the contemporary military texts codifying their use, was the reason why they were considered important war trophies. The strong symbolic powers they possessed become visible in the various acts of control imposed on the flags by the Swedish victors, including rituals of submission, public displays, and heritagisation. While forcibly pushed into the liminal state of being museum objects, I argue that the captured flags retained agency to impact the curatorial practices in the Great Armoury such as cataloguing, depicting, preserving, and displaying them. The study furthermore identifies a key moment in history when the use of the collection of trophies takes on a nationalistic character. I propose that when the collection of trophies was transferred to the Royal Burial church, Riddarholmskyrkan, in 1817, it transformed the church into a “temple of the nation” and created a space for a new type of patriotic ceremonies.

Arguments:

The premise of my study is that research on Early Modern museums has for a long time privileged the *kunst- und wunderkammern*. As arsenals and armouries were representative spaces where the displays were arranged and ordered for creating and preserving dynastic *memoria* they prefigure the modern historical museums in the sense that they created narratives of the nation's history seen through the martial feats of the kings. They were important sites for the evolution of curatorial practices. The Great Armoury in Stockholm was during the 17th century transformed from a storage of weapons into a memorial display. I argue that this transformation was to a large extent due to the extensive influx of flags captured as war trophies that needed to be preserved as tokens of victory. I suggest that the materiality of flags was agential in enacting and materialising Early Modern concepts of honour and reputation as codified in military practice, and that the ritually created “sacredness” of flags conditioned their preservation. I furthermore claim that the curatorial practices of the armoury should be considered as heritage practices and that they offer important insight into the continuity of such practices till today.

The research on looted art as constituents of many modern museum collections has not previously considered Early Modern military collections. The preservation of captured flags was a widespread practice in Europe and its relevance in the creation of museum displays is largely under researched. The Swedish trophy collection is one of the oldest and largest in Europe and my investigation into its creation and practices offers insight for further research on similar collections internationally.

4. Maria Krini, NKUA, Athens

Mosaic floors: Issues on their restoration and exhibition in museums

Bio

Maria Krini is a Conservator of Cultural Heritage (MSc-NTUA), employed at the Hellenic Ministry of Culture. She holds an MSc in Museum Studies (Leicester University) and she is a PhD candidate in Museology (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens). Her research interests focus on conservation theory and ethics and collections' exhibition.

Abstract

The reintegration of missing parts in cultural heritage artefacts has always been a critical debate for conservators, raising dilemmas on the methods and the materials to be used, but above all on the ethical aspects of the interventions, balancing between the authenticity and the aesthetics.

This research focuses on the restoration of ancient mosaics and the way they are presented in museum exhibitions. A thorough examination of the techniques and the materials used for the conservation of mosaics that are exhibited in archaeological museums in Greece is conducted and it delivers a variety of examples on restoration methods and exhibition solutions. The philosophy of the interventions as well and the decision-making process are sought, through archival and literature research, a survey for professionals and selected interviews with key stakeholders and experts. The final scope is to investigate how mosaics' restoration mediates with their interpretation by the museum visitors.

Keywords: Mosaics, conservation-restoration, decision-making, museum exhibition, interpretation.

Maria Krini's research project

Conservation, in the broader sense of conservation-restoration-preservation, nowadays is considered of major significance for the interpretation and the enhancement of cultural heritage. The scope of this research is to assess restoration methods in relation to museum visitors' experience: how the museum public perceives an artefact that has been restored and how a fragmented one; and whether the choice of restoration and exhibition methods interferes with museum visitors' experience and/or it promote the object's messages and values.

Mosaic floors, exhibited in a museum environment out of their excavation context, hold a dual identity, that of an architectural element and that of a piece of art. A comparative study of conservation, restoration and exhibition solutions of mosaic floors

in Greek museums is carried out in order to identify and map patterns and trends of mosaic conservation and to trace the influences of conservation theories at an operational level.

The research methodology is structured in four axes: on site survey and systematic documentation; literature review and archival research at the Historical Archive of Antiquities and Restoration, and at the Archive of the Directorate of Conservation of Ancient and Modern Monuments-Hellenic Ministry of Culture and selected personal archives of conservation professionals; museum professionals' survey and selected interviews; and finally, a visitors' survey yet to be designed and performed.

The first challenge for this research was to select and to limit the case studies. The selection was based on the abundance of examples in a museum, on conservation literature and on the originality of the interventions. Furthermore, it had to cover every geographical region in Greece. Each case is described and illustrated, along with data on exhibition type and information available for the visitors. Museums from other European countries were also included to enable a comparative study. The choice of cases in Italy was obvious, because of the richness of this type of material culture and because of their long tradition in conservation. Two UK museums, in London, having interest in mosaic exhibition were also selected. So far the documentation includes 35 museums in Greece, 10 in Italy and 2 in the UK. Examples from North Africa, Middle East and the Balkans are also used, as well as selected cases from other European countries. Data collection requests onsite examination of museum exhibitions and involves a lot of travelling. In fact, four museums from the case studies in Greece are yet to be examined.

Furthermore, a survey among conservation professionals, based on questionnaires and interviews, is conducted in order to identify the decision-making process, the involved stakeholders and the criteria for choosing techniques and materials. Professional experience and training background are taken into account, as well as influences from theoretical texts and charters. The results include the types of interventions that seem to prevail nowadays and those that are totally rejected. The interviews with professionals resulted challenging though; being part of the same professional environment was proved rather to complicate than to facilitate the process, although access and permissions were easier to obtain.

The preliminary results of the doctoral research so far include the historical evolution of conservation and restoration of mosaics in Greece and of the contribution of conservators, technicians and artists for the enhancement of cultural heritage in museum exhibitions. An illustrated inventory of the methods used for lacunae reintegration is also produced, which could be used as a base towards a methodology of lacunae reintegration on mosaics. Factors that influence the decision making processes has been examined, as well as administrative procedures and official approvals that have to be followed before interventions. Moreover, it became evident that regulations and theoretical approaches are not consequently clear when it comes to their implementation. Finally, despite the fact that, in recent times, interventions with plain "neutral-coloured" mortar are favoured, conservators and curators have never quit trying to treat losses in a way to promote better legibility and appreciation of the mosaics, respecting its historic, aesthetic and natural values.

The final and most critical research phase will focus on the assessment of restoration and exhibition methods in relation with museum visitor experience, by designing the tools for the visitors' study in order to examine how restoration methods mediates with the interpretation of mosaics.

In conclusion, this research wishes to contribute to a further debate for a systematic approach to restoration in cultural heritage and to stand as base for a study on how restoration influence interpretation

□ Route 4

1. Evangelia Christodoulidou, NKUA, Athens

The Pedagogy of Archaeology in Cyprus. From the school to the excavation field

Bio

I am a PhD candidate at the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Athens and the title of my thesis is 'From School, to Museum and Excavation: The Pedagogy of Archaeology in the Primary and Secondary Education of Cyprus'. I hold an MA in Mediterranean Archaeology from the University of Cyprus and a BA in History and Archaeology from the University of Athens. I have participated in several archaeological excavations in Cyprus and Greece and various international conferences, seminars and workshops. My research interests include Public Archaeology, Archaeology and Education, Museum Studies and History Teaching.

Abstract

The teaching of Archaeology in typical learning environments like schools can result to multiple benefits for the students. The investigation of the subject in the case of the public schools of Cyprus is a multidimensional research effort that resulted to interesting outcomes. The primary objective of my research is to establish the current state of Archaeology through the utilized teaching material of History. The second objective is to propose and implement creative Archaeology lessons for the classroom that are aligned with the typical learning framework. The main goal is to highlight that the archaeological evidence is a valuable source for understanding the importance of cultural heritage and develop citizenship by strengthening cultural values to students.

Keywords: Classroom Archaeology, Curriculum, Content Analysis, Sand-Box Dig

Evangelia Christodoulidou's research project

Research Question

What is the role of Archaeology and the archaeologist in the typical education of Cyprus and what specialized actions can be designed so the pedagogical benefits of teaching Archaeology can be useful for students?

Research Methodology

My research is based on four thematic pillars.

Upon the first research phase, specific subjects from different scientific fields like Public Archaeology, Learning Theories, History Teaching and Museum Education were studied in order to create a conceptual framework that can explain and support the transformation of Archaeology into a creative educational tool.

In the second phase, an extensive content analysis was designed and implemented in all History school curricula and text books of Primary and Secondary Education (32 text units in total) in order to record all the references related to Archaeology, the archaeologist, the archaeological excavation, the different kind of archaeological findings, the living conditions of mankind in terms of material culture and religion and the role of museums and archaeological sites.

In the third phase, questionnaires were handed out and interviews were conducted with History teachers/professors, educators assigned to the Ministry of Education, archaeologists and museum teachers (20 experts in total). The purpose was to record their opinion on how Archaeology is utilized in schools and what more it could be done.

In the fourth phase, 3 Archaeology courses were designed and implemented for the school classroom (54 students in total). The aim of these lessons was the children to meet Archaeology through a different History lesson.

Conducted Research Work

For the purposes of the CIVIS-MUF meeting, I will focus on the second and fourth phase that were the most decisive for the research.

The content analysis that was carried out in all History school curricula and text books has recorded hundreds of references. The dense concentration of references related to material culture in the classes where Classical and Hellenistic Art are taught.

In the contrary, in the classes where Modern History is taught the bulk of the references is limited to the narration of historical facts and dates. References related to Archaeology and to the archaeologist are zero to minimum in almost all school grades. Where these are found, their integration in the educational material is rather problematic because the children do not understand in a satisfactory manner how Archaeology works as a science and what it offers.

All research stages indicated that the design and establishment of an Archaeology school lesson should be based in the school curricula and text books as content but reinforced with relevant archaeological evidence and information. So, structured Archaeology lessons that are in line with the typical history education were introduced. The lessons had a tripartite structure. First, the children get to know basic definitions about Archaeology and the profession of the archaeologist. Second, they take part in a small-scale excavation in a sand-box. Third, the children attend to a visual Archaeology course that is dedicated to a specific teaching module based on the curricula but enriched with relevant archaeological data.

The reactions of the students during the lesson and their answers to the questionnaires that were handed to them in the end gave special meaning to the study. Most of the students showed interest in the archaeology lesson, believed that it was very useful and wished to take part in similar sessions in the future. All children found the excavation part very interesting. While they were excavating, they admitted that they were very careful to follow the stratigraphy. Few children in each class were standing during the procedure and expressed that they wanted to taste the sand and that they found procedure relaxing. Most of the students declared that the History lesson became much more interesting. All archaeology lessons ended up with the same way; I was overwhelmed with questions regarding the archaeologist and the archaeological fieldwork something that underlined the students' concentration of interest and cross checked what is missing from the teaching material.

Key Challenges and Difficulties

During its preparation, the thesis faced several challenges. Convergences between different scientific fields had to be made so that Archaeology could be reconstructed and integrated into the History lesson and school classroom. Concurrently, a time-consuming and voluminous content analysis was designed and completed on heterogeneous textual genres that were produced under different conditions and serving different educational standards. The research had to deal also with the corona virus pandemic as many objectives and timetables were adjusted in several cases because of the restrictions.

Preliminary Results and Arguments

Archaeology can and should be introduced to schools in organized and productive way for the students and the educational system. The schools should be taken into account as inclusive social groups that take an active part in any activity that sets the students at the heart of the knowledge production. Archaeology through the values of Public Archaeology should be transformed to an educational tool that promotes social values. As a result of the research a new pedagogical framework based on certain principles and practices that can support school Archaeology is being introduced. The educational system of Cyprus with its advantages and disadvantages can accommodate a broader pilot program in this direction. In this way the benefits of the implementation of a different pedagogical learning framework will be recorded and the students will enjoy a divergent and more enjoyable History lesson.

2. Mara-Floriana Buliga, UB, Bucharest

Female identities in the Middle and Late Bronze Age between the Southern Carpathians and the Balkans - Studying some museum collections

Bio

Mara Buliga is a curator and archaeologist at Oltenia Museum Craiova, Romania. At the moment she is doing a doctoral research program at the University of Bucharest, with the title "Female identities in the Middle and Late Bronze Age between the Southern Carpathians and the Balkans". Her PhD supervisor is Dr. Sorin-Cristian Ailincăi.

Abstract

This research explores the construction and expression of female identities in the Middle and Late Bronze Age (c. 2000-1200 BC) between the Southern Carpathians and the Balkans. By integrating gender archaeology, identity theory, and material culture studies, the project analyzes personal ornaments, mortuary practices, and figurative representations to illuminate the complex dynamics of feminine identity. Utilizing museum collections, such as those at the Oltenia Museum but not only, the study examines anthropomorphic figurines and other artifacts to understand how female forms were represented and perceived. The research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of female roles and status in prehistoric societies, contributing to the development of new methodologies in gender archaeology and promoting interdisciplinary collaboration.

Keywords: Middle and Late Bronze Age, gender archaeology, identity, anthropomorphic figurines, personal adornments.

Mara-Floriana Buliga's research project

This paper explores the construction and expression of female identities in the Middle and Late Bronze Age (c. 2000-1200 BC) in the region between the Southern Carpathians and the Balkans. While previous research has often focused on typological and chronological classifications of Bronze Age artifacts, this study adopts a gender archaeology perspective to understand the social and cultural significance of personal ornaments, mortuary practices, and figurative art in shaping identities.

Research question

The central research question guiding my doctoral project is: How can the analysis of personal ornaments, mortuary practices, and anthropomorphic figurines investigate the construction and expression of identities in the Middle and Late Bronze Age between the Southern Carpathians and the Balkans?

Research methodology

The methodology is multidisciplinary, integrating theoretical perspectives from gender archaeology, identity studies, and mortuary archaeology with a detailed material culture analysis. A comprehensive review of the existing literature on Bronze Age societies, coupled with an assessment of theoretical paradigms related to social identity and gendered expressions in prehistoric contexts, forms the framework for this study.

A significant component of this research is creating a detailed catalog of personal ornaments from necropolises in the studied region. This catalog includes information on the artifact type, material, context of discovery, and any associated skeletal remains. Existing anthropological data (age, health, traces of activity) from skeletal remains found in relation with the artifacts are being integrated into the analysis to identify correlations between personal adornment and biological characteristics.

The distribution and frequency of personal ornaments within burial contexts are analyzed to identify patterns related to funerary rites and social differentiation.

Additionally, microscopic analysis of wear patterns on selected artifacts will provide insights into how these items were worn and used, bringing more information on the relationship between the body and material culture. The analysis further extends to figurative representations, seeking to discern how depictions of female forms reflect cultural conceptions of femininity and social identity. Comparative studies of artifact assemblages across various cultural groups within the study region facilitate the identification of regional variations in gendered expressions and the broader socio-cultural implications of these material manifestations.

To contextualize these findings within a broader chronological and cultural framework, the study analyses the archaeological cultures present in the region, establishing a timeline that enables cross-cultural comparisons. The theoretical positioning of this research aligns with established concepts in gender archaeology, emphasizing the constructed nature of identity and the dynamic role of material culture in shaping and reflecting social norms. The development of a comprehensive database of

personal ornaments and figurative representations—featuring high-resolution images, detailed descriptions, and contextual data—constitutes an essential aspect of the research process.

Conducted research work

The research work conducted thus far has focused on theoretical positioning for integrating the research within the theoretical framework of gender archaeology and on concepts of identity, social constructions, and material culture studies. Also, sources identification has been conducted so far, by locating and accessing relevant publications, articles, and museum collections for detailed study.

Key challenges and difficulties faced

- **Data accessibility:** Access to well-documented artifact collections can be limited, requiring extensive travel and negotiation with various institutions.
- **Inconsistent documentation:** Some excavation records are incomplete or lack detailed information on the context of artifact discoveries, making interpretation difficult.
- **Preservation issues:** Some artifacts may be poorly preserved, hindering traseological analysis and other forms of scientific examination.

Expected outcomes and significance

This study contributes to a broader understanding of the complexities of gender and identity in prehistory and highlights the necessity of adopting an interdisciplinary and theoretically informed approach to the study of material culture. By analyzing personal ornaments, mortuary practices, and figurative representations through a gendered lens, this research aims to uncover the diverse ways in which female identities were constructed, expressed, and negotiated in the Bronze Age societies of the Southern Carpathians and the Balkans.

3. Anna Leshchenko, UT, Tübingen

ICOM and the global debate on the museum's identity

Bio

Anna Leshchenko is a research associate at the Ludwig-Uhland Institute, University of Tübingen, exploring recent controversies within ICOM surrounding museum redefinition and ethics. As vice-chair of ICOFOM, associate editor of *Curator: The Museum Journal*, and advocate for museum-university collaborations through the CIVIS Alliance, she actively engages in contemporary museological debates and international cooperation.

Abstract

In 2019, a contentious debate about redefining the term "museum" was ignited after a failed attempt to adopt a new "museum" definition in Kyoto during the General Conference of ICOM, revealing internal tensions and global cultural divides. By 2022, ICOM reached a definition that many ICOM members labeled as a "compromise" while simultaneously revising its Code of Ethics (2022–present), marking another crucial shift. My research examines these intertwined processes, analyzing how debates about identity and ethics reflect broader institutional, cultural, and geopolitical tensions within ICOM. Using semi-structured interviews with active ICOM members, complemented by analyses of archival records and public statements, the project looks into how these discussions showcase governance practices, organizational politics, and ICOM's international role. Preliminary findings suggest significant friction between European and non-European members, emerging from colonial/postcolonial tensions, differing professional paradigms, and geopolitical dynamics. Additionally, governance structures within ICOM, such as the non-transparent processes by which influential Standing committees are formed, indicate underlying power dynamics. I argue that the debates around museum definitions and ethics are symptomatic of broader institutional challenges, reflecting deeper cultural and professional cleavages in the museum sector globally.

Keywords: museum definition, ICOM, governance, global museology, decolonial museology, institutional power dynamics, Critical Discourse Analysis

Anna Leshchenko's research project

Research questions:

- How do the debates on the museum definition and the Code of Ethics for museums reflect ICOM's internal processes, governance, and global organizational role?
- How is the identity of museums discussed and framed by ICOM?

Research Methodology:

The study employs qualitative methods, primarily semi-structured interviews (18 conducted, 30 planned) with active ICOM members globally, and an analysis of archival materials from ICOM, including public statements and institutional reports. I apply Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as my primary theoretical framework to critically examine institutional communication, power structures, and the cultural contexts shaping discourses within ICOM.

Conducted research work:

I have completed 18 interviews with participants representing diverse geographic and institutional backgrounds within ICOM. Additionally, I conducted participant observation at ICOM's annual meeting in Marseille (June 2024), providing firsthand insights into organizational culture, interpersonal dynamics, and language use (predominantly English, "winning" over French). My research also extensively reviews archival records and official communications published on ICOM's official website.

Key Challenges and Difficulties:

- The sensitive nature of interviews, as participants frequently express strong emotions and tensions, and sometimes concerns about confidentiality.
- Ethical concerns regarding informed consent, participant confidentiality, and avoiding potential reputational harm.

Preliminary Results:

The preliminary findings suggest significant tensions between European and non-European (particularly Latin American) museum professionals. These debates reflect deeper issues such as colonial legacies, cultural and professional divisions, and differing conceptions of museum purpose (object-oriented versus community-oriented museology). Internal governance processes at ICOM appear insufficiently transparent, particularly regarding membership in influential Standing committees, which impacts the inclusivity and legitimacy of the decision-making processes.

Arguments:

- I argue that the current internal debates within ICOM mirror broader geopolitical, colonial, and postcolonial tensions globally.
- Proposals from influential European national committees to alter voting structures reveal underlying power disparities conflicting with ICOM's publicly liberal and inclusive agenda.
- The lack of transparency in selecting Standing committee members underscores systemic governance challenges.

4. Erik Solfeldt, SU, Stockholm

The Archaeology of Vega Expedition: Excavations along the North Siberian coast, 1878 – 1879

Bio

Erik Solfeldt is a PhD candidate at the Department of Archaeology and Classical Studies at Stockholm University. Combining archaeology and museum ethnography, he specialises in the study of animism(s) and material culture among past and present hunter-gatherers and hunter-herders of northwestern Eurasia.

Abstract

This PhD dissertation explores animism(s) and material culture among hunter-gatherer and hunter-herder communities in northwestern Eurasia, challenging Western-centric archaeological perspectives through ethnoarchaeological analysis. Utilizing ethnographic analogies within a contemporary, decolonial framework informed by the ontological turn and new animism, the research critically re-examines archaeological interpretations of prehistoric practices. Diverse ethnographic sources—including human-fire relations, material spirits, shamanic burials, and human-animal interactions—are juxtaposed against archaeological findings dating from approximately 40,000 to 4,000 BCE. Preliminary findings highlight the necessity of viewing material artefacts as inherently animate beings, advocating for museum representations rooted in immanent rather than transcendental approaches.

Keywords: Museum ethnography, visual ethnography, animism, Siberia

Erik Solfeldt's research project

Material Spirits

Ethnoarchaeological Studies in Animism(s) and Material Culture Among Hunter-Gatherers and Hunter-Herders of Northwestern Eurasia

The overarching aim of the dissertation is to examine the relation between animism(s) and material culture among animist hunter-gatherers and hunter-herders in northwestern Eurasia. By drawing on ethnographic and ethnohistorical materials from c. 1600 CE to the present, this study seeks to identify recurring patterns in the ethnographic materials, which will be used to critically re-examine and deconstruct prevailing Western-centric archaeological interpretations and theories of prehistoric hunter-gatherers.

Methods and materials

My PhD project will result in a compilation thesis which will consist of five papers and an introduction which ties the paper and the results together (“kappa” in Swedish). The method, material and aim of the papers vary, but they are all in line with the overarching aim of the thesis.

The main method I use is ethnographic analogies with an ethnoarchaeological approach. It is a comparative method where ethnographic materials are studied with the aim of interpreting archaeological materials. The ethnoarchaeological approach, in its original form, is an approach where a hypothesis is formulated based on the archaeological material studied and then tested within contemporary ethnographic studies. Such an “old school” ethnoarchaeology has been critiqued for being both colonial and racist as it often results in that the contemporary people within the ethnographic studies are viewed as having a Stone Age way of living – less evolved than the modern Western human from an unilinear evolutionary perspective (Wylie, 1985; Hodder, 2012, p. 20; Lane, 2014).

Based on the so-called ontological turn in anthropology (Holbraad and Pedersen, 2017), in which ‘new animism’ (Harvey, 2017) has a central place, the use of ethnographic analogies and ethnoarchaeology change from being this colonial subfield to a decolonial approach. In short, it can be said that the ethnographic studies are now used to deconstruct and rethink Western preconceptions of animist hunter-gatherers and hunter-herders and to understand/learn about their relation to material culture rather than to explain their failed perception of reality based on only Western philosophical premises (Bird-David, 1999).

The archaeological and ethnographical materials used vary within the five papers. An emphasis is put on the study of the ethnographic materials, such as human-fire relations (interviews and historical materials), “idols”/material spirits (artefacts studies and historical materials), shaman and animist burials dated to early 1900s (archaeological reports and historical materials), and human-animal relations (artefacts studies and historical materials), which are used to deconstruction and rethinking relatable archaeological materials, use as ‘portable art’, , i.e. figurines and decorated objects dating to c. 40 000 – 4 000 BCE., (and partly ‘rock art’), traces of fires, prehistoric shaman burials dating to 40 000 – 4 000 BCE, and traces of prehistoric hunter-gatherer human-animal relations.

Conducted research

Currently, I have published one paper, ‘Rethinking representation and animation. A visual ethnoarchaeology of material spirits in northwestern Siberia’ (2024), together with Nenets (Indigenous Siberian) co-researcher/collaborator Anna Naglaya, and three papers are now under peer review, one to be published during this spring. I am working on the fifth paper and the “kappa”, and now, aiming to have a finished fifth manuscript by summer 2025, and I will finish the “kappa” in spring 2026.

As a side project, which is an outcome of these papers in the dissertations, I have come to work with artefacts from both the Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld’s collection and his son Erland Nordenskiöld’s collection. Whereas the dissertation project is focusing on archaeological and anthropological theory, this side project, or rather two side projects (two papers), is more in line with museum collection studies and museum ethnography. This I thought would be more suitable for the workshop, so the suggested presentation: ‘The archaeology of the Vega expedition. Excavations along the north Siberian coast, 1878 – 1879’, is about the ‘archaeological’ excavations conducted by Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld and the members of the ship Vega, which were set to find the Northeast Passage (and conduct various research along the way) in 1878.

Key challenges and difficulties faced

A key challenge for my work in general is that this new form of theoretical and ethical ethnoarchaeology has not yet gained ground outside of South America. This results in peers sometimes having preconceptions of ethnoarchaeology, and before knowing my theoretical and methodological stance, they think I reproducing this old school ethnoarchaeology. Most European non-anthropological trained archaeologists are not updated on how the subfield has developed in the Americas, especially in South America (see González-Ruibal, Hernando and Politis, 2011).

As for the side projects, and what I will talk about in the presentation, the difficulties have mainly been about museum regulations and technical issues, such as it took a very long time to get it approved to sample some of the artefacts from the collection for ¹⁴C-dating. Furthermore, it has been some technical problems which have delayed the dating.

Preliminary results and main arguments

Overarching theoretical preliminary results for both the dissertation project and the side project are that the animation (li-fiving/subjectification) of the artefacts should not be understood as a representation of some form of immaterialities beyond the material itself – the artefact is the spirit or ancestor. The analysis of them, and presentation of them in museum context, must be based on immanentism and transcendentalism. A transcendental perspective would be to reproduce a form of epistemic colonialism, whereas the immanent perspective would be a try towards a more decolonial approach.

As for the more scientific results regarding the Nordenskiöld’s Vega collection, Dr Markus Fjällström and PhD student Marcus Frid and I have concluded so far that the unknown archaeological material is traces of Siberian Paleo-Inuits that lived along the coast before the Chuckchi people arrived to the area. These Siberian Paleo-Inuits, potentially belong to the so-called “Bering Sea Culture”, were Sea mammal and wild reindeer hunters, which both the osteological analysis and the ¹³C-analysis have shown so far. We are still waiting for a result from the ¹⁴C-analysis.

From an Indigenous Chuckchi perspective, which can be concluded from ethnohistorical sources, the Paleo-Inuits are the same people as the Onkilon – a mythological people present within the Chuckchi mythology and the oral histories about when they arrived in this land.

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