

The Construction of Knowledge in Archaeology and Art History in Southeastern Europe: A Research Programme (2019-2023) hosted by the Centre for Advanced Study, Sofia (Bulgaria) and funded by the Getty Foundation as part of the Connecting Art Histories Initiative

SPRING SCHOOL 2021

“The Impact of the Political on Archaeological Research”

LECTURES

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PARTICIPANTS AND ABSTRACTS

Bettina Arnold / University of Wisconsin Milwaukee (USA)

1) The Relationship between Archaeology and Politics: Still Faustian but not much of a Bargain

A paradigm shift has been occurring in the symbiotic relationship between archaeology and politics that developed in the 19th century, when the rising tide of nationalism and the development of archaeology as a profession in Europe combined in a mutually enabling synergy. In the twenty-first century archaeology still has its uses as political capital but the cooption of the past is less likely to be by the nation state, which has instead been divesting itself of responsibility for cultural patrimony by privatizing the excavation, preservation and management of archaeological sites. Identity politics are increasingly made up of supra-national (such as the EU) and intra-national (such as indigenous or minority groups) stakeholders and the resulting tensions and fracture lines are changing the field of archaeology across theoretical, methodological and institutional boundaries. While financial support of

archaeological research by governments continues to shrink, cooption of archaeological data by special interest groups is growing and archaeologists appear to be unaware of the shifting political ground and its implications for the future of their profession. This presentation will identify the primary stakeholders involved in this paradigm shift and will provide some examples of how the field of archaeology will be impacted if the current trend of divestment and cooption continues.

2) The Warrior that Wasn't: the Interplay between Politics and the Archaeology of Gender

The intersection between gender politics and nationalism in the interpretation of the prehistoric past in west-central Europe is a complex topic that includes the way the roles of men and women are perceived in contemporary society - as complementary or hierarchical, as supporting or competing entities. The history of the discovery and interpretation of two high status elite burials dating to the Iron Age in Burgundy, France, will be used to illustrate the intersection between gender inequality, status and power, and nationalism. The first of these burials was discovered in the 1950s at the site of Vix/Mont Lassois while the second was excavated in 2014 at the site of Lavau, about 72 km away. In both cases the biological sex and gender performance of the individuals buried in these exceptionally richly outfitted graves have been interpreted through the lens of contemporary gender politics, reducing what was clearly a very nuanced relationship between power, status and gender roles to a binary categorization that emphasizes the association between masculinity and violence.

Bettina Arnold (barnold@uwm.edu) is a professor at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, Anthropology. She has a PhD in Anthropology from Harvard University and BA in Archaeology from Yale University. Prof. Arnold's area of expertise is the pre-Roman European Iron Age, but in the course of her career she has participated in archaeological projects ranging from the Middle Bronze Age through the early medieval period in Western Europe. Since 1999 she has co-directed a research project in southwest-Germany focused on the burial record of the early Iron Age Heuneburg hillfort and its environs. Finds from those excavations were featured in *Die Welt der Kelten: Zentren der Macht - Kostbarkeiten der Kunst*, a major exhibition in Stuttgart in 2012-2013. Her work has been directed toward the following research topics: the archaeological interpretation and analysis of complex societies, particularly as reflected in mortuary contexts; material culture as a symbolic system and a means of communicating social relationships; the archaeological interpretation of prehistoric gender configurations in burial contexts; and the socio-political history of archaeology and museum collecting, especially their involvement in identity construction in 19th and 20th century nationalist and ethnic movements in Europe and the United States. She published a ground-breaking article on the use and abuse of archaeology for political purposes in Nazi Germany in *Antiquity* in 1990 that has

been reprinted repeatedly. In addition to being the founding Editor of the on-line peer-reviewed journal *e-Keltoi*, she is a member of numerous editorial boards, including the History of Archaeology series for Oxford University Press and the History of Archaeology Commission of the UISPP.

Gheorghe Alexandru-Niculescu / “Vasile Pârvan” Institute of Archaeology, (Romania)

The politics we are trained to ignore

The current discussion about the relations between archaeological research and the political field is shaped by imagining sharp distinctions, which place the scientific outside the political, and focus either on preserving disciplinary autonomy or on the political roles archaeology might have. Using historical information and knowledge about how archaeologists do research in Romania, and employing insights offered by Max Weber and more recent sociologists of scientific knowledge, the lecture will explore the many ways in which the political is present in the conduct and results of our research, insisting less on the explicit subordination to politically formulated goals and more on what is not so obvious. Among the topics that will be discussed are the ideology of the discipline and its role in a political system that claims epistemic superiority using, among other means, a privileged relation with scientific knowledge, strategies and tactics of epistemic injustice, the compared distribution of epistemic virtues and vices, the resonance of identity politics, and the political content of some of our most important procedures and concepts.

Gheorghe Alexandru Niculescu (alec.niculescu@yahoo.com) is a senior researcher at the Vasile Pârvan Institute of Archaeology; educated at the University of Bucharest (1974-1978), Ph.D. in history (2000), archaeological training and research at the aforementioned institute (since 1985); teaches archaeological theory at the University of Bucharest; published research on ancient ethnic phenomena and on the impact of nationalism on archaeological research; published research on the politics of cultural heritage in Romania and its impact on the conservation and visibility of the artifacts; currently working on the global asymmetries of archaeological research and on the properties of typological thinking and its flattening consequences on the perception of the artifacts (preliminary findings presented at conferences held in 2016 and 2017).

Dimitris Tziovas / University of Birmingham (UK)

1) The rediscoveries of Greece: From the ancient ruins to the ruins of crisis

Greece has been rediscovered by the West in different periods and various ways in the past. We can talk about a 'rediscovery' of Greece during the crisis in the sense of the world media spotlight being turned on the country in an attempt to understand what had gone wrong, reassess its economy and its European aspirations or revisit the symbolic role it had in the world due to its classical heritage. This lecture explores how the image of Greece has been constructed in the period of the crisis by placing it in the wider historical context of successive rediscoveries of the country over the centuries. The first rediscovery of Greece relied more on an imaginary and idealistic approach, the second on a historical one promoting the ideal of continuity, while the third tended to be more pragmatic and material, praising the landscape and light of Greece and constructing the Zorba stereotype. These approaches will be disentangled in order to understand how the crisis reactivated both the idealistic and critical attitudes to Greece and offered a mixture of idealism, stereotypes and exoticism.

2) The Parthenon and the Politics of Heritage: From Eternal Glory to Critical History

The Parthenon of the twenty-first century is as much the construct of the archaeologist as it is of Pericles and his builders. The stripping of later accretions from the Acropolis had the opposite effect of what was intended. In their attempt to re-establish direct contact with the Classical past by removing the Christian and Muslim additions that cluttered the Parthenon, the Classicizers succeeded in destroying the very features that embodied the historical continuity of the building's use as pagan sanctuary, church and mosque. The stripping of the Parthenon is symbolic of the effacement of Greece's medieval and post-medieval history and culture. In this way the Parthenon, like Greek language, culture and identity, has come to be seen by Greeks in a-historical way as something eternal and unchanging.

Dimitris Tziovas (d.p.tziovas@bham.ac.uk) is Professor of Modern Greek Studies and was Director of the Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman and Modern Greek Studies at the University of Birmingham (UK) (2000-2003). He served as Secretary of the European Association of Modern Greek Studies and has taught as a visiting Professor at a number of European and American universities. He is the General Editor of a translation series of Modern Greek literature and member of the Editorial Board of the Journal of Modern Greek Studies (U.S.A 1992-2007), Reviews Editor of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies (1995-2005) and member of its Editorial Board (1995- 2009, 2019-), Member of the Editorial Board of the journal Gramma published by the University of Thessaloniki (2003-), Ergon: Greek/American Arts and Letters (2017-) and member of the advisory board of the Journal of Greek Media and Culture (2014-). He is also member of the British School at Athens Studentships and Post-Doctoral Fellowship Subcommittee (2018-). His books include *The Other Self*:

Selfhood and Society in Modern Greek Fiction (Lexington 2003; translated into Greek 2007) and the edited volumes Greek Modernism and Beyond (Rowman & Littlefield 1997), Greece and the Balkans: Identities, Perceptions and Cultural Encounters since the Enlightenment (Ashgate 2003), Greek Diaspora and Migration since 1700 (Ashgate 2009), Re-Imagining the Past: Antiquity and Modern Greek Culture (OUP 2014) Greece in Crisis: Culture and the Politics of Austerity (I.B. Tauris 2017) (this volume was the outcome of a two-year research project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)). He is currently working on a two-year research project funded by the Leverhulme Trust (2018-2020).

Susanne Grunwald / Independent researcher (Germany)

History of archaeology as entangled history. The reorganization of the German Pre- and Protohistorical archaeology after 1945

The paper of Arnold and Hassmann is the starting point for my presentation of what we know now about denazification of the German Pre- and Protohistorical archaeology and its reconstruction after the end of the National Socialism and the World War II. Today we can describe how and why a design of research from the 1920s became influential for the reorganization of archaeology in both parts of Germany and why observers from inside and from outside welcomed this development. So, the German Pre- and Protohistorical archaeology will be hopefully a lesson about mechanisms and strategies for establish and develop archaeological institutions and topics from an imperial national state over a republic and the Nazi dictatorship to a second republic and a communist dictatorship.

Susanne Grunwald (mrs.susanne.grunwald@gmail.com) studied History and Pre- and Protohistory in Jena and Leipzig and finished her PhD in 2012 with an analysis of the history of the hillfort research in Saxony/Germany between 1900 and 1961. Supported by Excellence Cluster TOPOI she started in 2012 with research about archaeological mapping and organized with TOPOI the workshop „Mapping Ancient Identities. Cartographical Constructions of Identities in Classical Studies”(2014). Since a fellowship of the RGK of the DAI (2017) and her participation in the project „Fragments, Ruins and Space" at the DAI/Excellence Cluster TOPOI (2018) her current research focuses on German „Kunstschutz" during First World War in the Near East and at the Balkans, on the reorganization of Archaeology in Germany after 1945 and on cartography in Cold War Germany. Susanne works with different partners on a self-employed base in Berlin.

Dimitris Plantzos / National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece)

1) Archaeopolitics I: the everyday archaeologies of trauma

If "the past is a foreign country", then Greece's classical past could be described - and it has been - as an ideal, as well as idyllic land, colonized by the West. This paper employs post-colonial theory combined with discussions of trauma as a historical agent in order to investigate ways in which contemporary Greek museums and archaeological sites strive to attract the colonial gaze by reclaiming ownership of the nation's (neo)-classical past; at the same time, however, this exercise may be seen as an effort to alleviate the pains of modernity as experienced by a people who has never overcome the trauma of its separation from its famed antiquity. As a result, Greek archaeological spaces - both museums and sites - can be described as "sites of trauma", as the placescapes where the un-lived experiences of an imagined past become revived. A number of examples are discussed, including the Benaki and Acropolis Museums, as well as several clusters of antiquities preserved "in situ", mostly within the urban grid or incorporated in buildings and other structures, such as Athenian metro stations. Such cases of incidental archaeology, the paper contends, are devised in order to suture, in the psychoanalytical sense of the term, Greek national imaginary onto the very sites where the nation experienced the trauma of its separation from its past.

2) Archaeopolitics II: the second life of statues

As archaeological finds go, statues tend to be rather scarce; it is not very often that you meet an archaeologist who has actually found one, let alone in a state of even relative completeness. On the other hand, statues and statuary tend to be strongly associated with the idea of archaeological searching and finding, as well as common perceptions of what one finds in a museum - especially one specializing in classical antiquity. Gradually, and ever so spectacularly, statues in the modern world have come to symbolize antiquity itself, and the ideas randomly associated with it - from intellectualism and democracy to beauty, sportsmanship and sensuality. In this paper, I will be discussing ways in which ancient statues tend to become entangled into contemporary political agendas. My examples will be drawn from a number of Mediterranean countries and several historical occurrences from the 20th and the 21st century.

Dimitris Plantzos, (dkplantzos@yahoo.gr), is a classical archaeologist, educated at Athens (BA, 1982-1987) and Oxford (MPhil, 1988-1990; DPhil, 1990-1993). He is the author of various papers and books on Greek art and archaeology, archaeological theory and classical reception. His Greek-language textbook on Greek Art and Archaeology, first published in 2011 by Kapon Editions, was published in 2016 in English by Lockwood Press in Atlanta, Georgia. He was also co-editor of the volume *A Singular Antiquity. Archaeology and Hellenic Identity in 20th century Greece*

(published in Athens in 2008) and the Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Greek Art (2012; paperback edition 2018). His latest books are *The Recent Future*, a study of archaeological biopolitics in contemporary Greece (2016, Nefeli Editions), and a study of ancient Greek painting in 2018, also published on both sides of the Atlantic. He is co-director of the Argos Orestikon Excavation Project; he teaches classical archaeology and reception at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.