

Open Call

Local archaeologies and their interdisciplinary practices

A Spring School in the framework of the international research program

The Construction of Knowledge in Archaeology and Art History in Southeastern Europe

Getty Foundation and the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia

Host: New Europe College Institute for Advanced Study

Bucharest, 9-15 May 2022

Overview

In Southeastern Europe, where the political interventions and pressures, exerted by political regimes of different ideological strands, have debilitated many disciplines, especially the social sciences and the humanities, state and other financing agencies show an increased concern for scientific knowledge. For a research project to receive financial support, it would seem that the creative potential of single disciplines is not enough: interdisciplinarity is required. Learning from other ways of thinking and doing research has always been very important for the development of the disciplines, since their beginnings. But now we are confronted with something different, which encourages archaeologists to get answers to old unexamined questions from the hard sciences, mostly about the origins and movements of the imaginary groups that give meaning to culture-historical archaeology, thus leaving their discipline unchanged. We plan to explore this situation and the scientific and political underpinnings of the relations between disciplines.

Structure

The Spring School will consist of three days of lectures (9-11 May), one day dedicated to a workshop (12 May), one to a colloquium (13 May) and two days for visiting museums (14-15 May). The *lectures* will offer comprehensive introductions to the current discussion on interdisciplinarity, beyond the limited scope of archaeological research, assessments of its current scientific and political prominence, and analyses of particular sets of disciplinary practices and of their consequences for the discipline. They will examine the relations between the disciplinary methods and the novelties borrowed from other disciplines, focusing on why archaeologists think that only some topics have to gain from interdisciplinary engagements. Among the assumptions that will be discussed are the local character of interdisciplinary engagements, born and developed in specific circumstances that might be crucial in explaining their outcomes, and the role of scientism, understood as uncritical acceptance of the relevance and authority of the hard sciences. The lecturers are Adrian Currie, Senior Lecturer in philosophy at the University of Exeter; Whitney Davis, Professor of History and Theory of Ancient and Modern Art at the University of California, Berkeley; Chris Gosden, Professor of European Archaeology at the University of Oxford; Lisa Nevett, Professor of Classical Archaeology at the University of Michigan; Nona Palinc a and Gheorghe Alexandru Niculescu, senior researchers at the Vasile P arvan Institute of Archaeology, Bucharest.

The *workshop*, titled “What can archaeologists and art historians learn from each other?”, will offer to art historians and archaeologists of different persuasions the opportunity to discuss about research practices, which might be of common interest.

The *colloquium* will be dedicated to how the junior participants have confronted interdisciplinary challenges in their research.

During the last two days of the Spring School, we will have *gallery classes* at the National Museum of Romanian History and at the National Museum of Art of Romania. The visitation of each museum will be

followed by presentations made by curators, centered on their intentions and solutions to what they perceived to be problematic and by discussion.

Who may apply

We invite applications from doctoral archaeology and art-history students, recent PhDs and young faculty members (within eight years from obtaining their degree). Applicants (who must be fluent in English) should submit a personal statement of up to 1000 words detailing their research, as well as their reasons for wishing to attend (we expect their research to be related to the theme of the School); a recent cv; a copy of their most recent degree in archaeology, art history or a related discipline; and an abstract of up to 500 words of the specific paper they wish to present at the colloquium. Applicants must be able to demonstrate an academic and/or professional engagement with archaeology or art history in Southeastern Europe.

Successful applicants will be expected to attend all lectures, workshops, group discussions, gallery classes, and any other School meeting or event, as well as present a 20'-paper of their own at the colloquium. It is hoped that these papers will eventually lead to publishable academic articles or significant portions of the participants' PhD theses.

Who are we

This Spring School is organized in the framework of an international research Program on archaeological theory and practice, [The Construction of Knowledge in Archaeology and Art History in Southeastern Europe](#), funded by the Getty Foundation as part of its Connecting Art Histories Initiative and coordinated and administered by the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia. Our aim is to explore the regional intellectual potential for change in archaeological theory and practice over the course of three years (2021-2023); we envisage the program as an opportunity to discuss the research directions archaeologists active in the region wish to follow, and the implications paradigm shifts might have for the ways the region's past is understood.

The Programme is coordinated by the [Centre for Advanced Study Sofia \(CAS\)](#), in collaboration with Dr Gheorghe Alexandru Niculescu (Vasile Pârvan Institute of Archaeology, Bucharest, <http://www.instarhparvan.ro/>) and Prof. Dimitris Plantzos ([Department of History and Archaeology](#), National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, <http://scholar.uoa.gr/dkplantzos/>) who act as the Programme's co-directors. It is funded by the Getty Foundation, as part of the [Connecting Art Histories Initiative](#).

Funding

The School is fully funded; successful applicants will have their airfare and accommodation covered by the Program, and will receive a per diem of 43 USD.

What to do and when

Prospective applicants should send their queries and application materials to Milena Varzonovtseva: varzonovtseva@cas.bg, by 30 January 2022. Successful applicants will be notified by 20 February 2022.

Prof. Dimitris Plantzos, Athens
Dr Gheorghe Alexandru Niculescu, Bucharest