

Session ID	31
Session Title	Archaeology and Heritage in Populist Nationalist Constructions, Projections, and Justifications of Otherness
Start Time	Mon Dec 16 13:30:00
Room	W3.05 (Level 3)

Populist nationalism divides an inside 'us' from an outside 'them', both vertically, separating 'the people' from 'the elite', and horizontally, marking a dichotomy between a perceived 'native' in-group and 'foreign' others. People, ideas, objects, practices and places from prehistoric and historic times are mobilised as part of simple myths that are aimed at legitimising narratives of national ancestry, development, or destiny (Coakley 2004). Concurrently, archaeological knowledge can be – and has been – deployed to deconstruct projected otherness, sometimes utilising similar schemes of narrative construction. This session invites papers that examine processes of appropriation of the past to generate, express or oppose populist nationalist ideologies. It will highlight the underlying dynamics through which archaeological knowledge enters political discourse, and will particularly reflect on the kinds of past that are drawn upon, and the myths they are moulded into. It is hoped that, by developing a better understanding of how the past, interpreted through archaeological approaches, is utilised politically, we can reflect on how archaeologists contribute or respond to situations where the past is weaponized. The session aims to encourage comparative and interdisciplinary discussion, drawing on case studies that focus on different periods and a range of geographical contexts. Papers concentrating on tangible and intangible heritage, and those addressing how representations of archaeology in pop-culture may contribute to the development of specific political discourses are particularly encouraged.

13:30 Chiara Bonacchi, University of Sterling;  
Barbora Žiačková, University of Oxford; Ole F.  
Nordland, UCL

Intro

13:40 Daniel Robert Hansen, University of Chicago

Archaeology as Dialogue: Hearing the  
many voices of the archaeology of  
ethnicity

Archaeologists have become increasingly attuned to the ways in which the narratives we produce are used by political agents outside of our discipline. The perennial question of collective social 'ethnic' identity in the deep past has become deeply associated with popular nationalist projects, meriting more cautious and nuanced approaches by archaeologists. Paid much less attention, however, are the ways in which archaeology is itself a form of political dialogue, responding to and conditioned by the publics we engage – and who engage us. In order to understand our contributions and relevance to popular ethnonationalist discourse, we must reckon with the fact that archaeologists are not the sole speakers in the stories we tell, even before our narratives become 'appropriated' for nationalist projects. Considering archaeology to be a social practice of the present, I argue that our narratives are licensed, shaped and constrained by discourses, concepts and logics from outside archaeology's disciplinary walls. In other words, the voices of archaeology are much more than just the voices of archaeologists.

In this paper I take a closer look at the archaeology of ethnicity in early medieval Europe by thinking through two frameworks aptly developed outside archaeology – Bakhtin's dialogism and Wittgenstein's language games – in order to better see the many voices involved at every step in the production of archaeological narratives. In doing so, I hope to show that a greater attentiveness to the multivocal nature of archaeology is a necessary first step toward an archaeology for political good.

13:55	Frederika Tevebring, Warburg Institute	The Myth of the Matriarchy: Othering Scholarship	<p>“The Myth of the Matriarchy” examines to the resilience and versatility of the notion of a prehistorical matriarchy. Since it was first introduced by J.J. Bachofen in 1861, the theory that all human cultures have passed through an early stage centered on female values has had an enduring and highly politicized afterlife. Despite the abundance of literature questioning the historicity of a matriarchal era, feminists, Marxists, and fascists alike have held up the matriarchy both as a cultural heritage and as a model for a utopian future. The idea of a prehistorical matriarchy has continued to resurface as a model for political utopian fictions and as a latent assumption that guide the common labelling of prehistorical artefacts as “fertility-” or “mother goddesses.”</p> <p>This paper moves the question away from the matriarchy’s veracity and asks instead how this theory enables, indeed demands, a radical rethinking of the past as heritage and of history as a discipline. By reading early scholarly descriptions of the matriarchy in conversation with later archaeological interpretations and utopian fiction, this paper situates the matriarchal theory as integral to a long-standing debate on how and by whom the past can be understood. This debate gained a particular urgency, I argue, in response to the increased academic specialization characteristic of the second half of the 19th century and reverberates in today’s debates around repatriation of museum objects and the on the deployment of historical parallels in national politics.</p>
14:10	Session organisers	Discussion	
14:15	David Farrell-Banks, Newcastle University	1683 & The Identitarian Movement: Uses of the Siege of Vienna in right wing populist discourse	<p>In September 1683, Habsburg, Holy Roman Empire and Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth forces broke the second Ottoman Siege of Vienna. Traces of these events are scattered across the urban Viennese landscape. At Kahlenberg, on the outskirts of Vienna, memorials commemorate the location at which those forces gathered to break the siege.</p> <p>Each September, the right-wing populist group Identitäre Bewegung Österreich (IBO, Identitarian Movement Austria) hold a commemorative march at Kahlenberg. The march is billed as ‘building a bridge between past and present’ because the events of 1683 are ‘our history, tradition and identity’. For these groups, the events of 1683 mark the point at which the Ottoman – read Muslim – other was repelled from Western Europe, preserving the white, Christian identity of Europe. The recognition of the cultural heritage of Vienna is used by the IBO as a carrier for the communication of a divisive ideology.</p> <p>This use of the cultural memory of 1683 has permeated into the global extreme far-right, with terrorist attacks in Norway and New Zealand referencing the breaking of the Siege of Vienna. This paper looks at the use of the cultural memory of 1683 by right-wing populist groups, whilst questioning the role of museums and heritage sites in the context of this use of the past. The paper calls for a greater recognition of the messiness of the past as a means of countering simplistic, divisive discourses of right-wing populist groups.</p>
14:30	Herdis Hølleland, Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research; Elisabeth Niklasson, Stanford University	Visions of division: far right imageries of Scandinavian pasts and presents	<p>As elsewhere in Europe, a wave of right-wing populism has swept over Scandinavia over the last decades. The Danish Peoples Party, the Sweden Democrats and the Norwegian Progress Party have all had significant electoral successes, leaving their mark on the agendas of national parliaments and political rhetoric in the public space. Leading a politics of division fuelled by fear and nostalgia, they project visions of the nation as a battleground where “natives” fight for the survival of Scandinavian cultures and protect the welfare state against forces of globalization and non-western immigration. In these visions of division, they put traditions, heritage and archaeological sites to work. The Viking Age might seem like the obvious choice, but examining the initiatives more closely we find a rich gallery of historic periods, sites and practices. From Swedish crayfish parties, Norwegian lusekofte to Danish runestones – the populist right in Scandinavia is not picky. Yet they all subscribe to a restorative nostalgia that wishes to return to an unspecified yet glorious point of origin. In this paper we explore how the three parties project visions of division through the imageries and images of the past. Using party programs, parliamentary proposals and campaign material, we show how a past fit to separate “the people” from the “unwanted” is mobilised.</p>
14:45	Session organisers	Discussion	

14:55	Theodor Lothe Bruun, Independent Researcher	The Gustav Vasa statue	<p>The forces that drives todays right wing nationalism is not something new, but rather a continuation of earlier forces. To see the consequences of today's right-wing nationalism, we need to see how a narrowing of ownership to cultural heritage has been done in the past. One example is to study the opposing forces of nationalism and patriotism. Like todays right wing nationalism, the pasts nationalism took ownership over the cultural heritage and tried to define it by its own standard. We can see this in Sweden, at the end of the 19th century and beginning of 20th century. In the Nordic museum in Stockholm, the patriotism of the museum founder, Artur Hazelius, was replaced by the nationalism of later generations. The narrative of the museum changed from Nordic, open and including, to a closed swedish collection for the swedish people. And through that process, created otherness. Though the museum didn't actively try to alienate the other Nordic people; the Swedishness became the dominant factor of the museum. This we can see in the replacement of the statue of Gustav Vasa. From being a statue of an old man, tired of his days, an old father figure, the statue was changed to show a young man, at his strongest and most powerful. From being the grandpa that listen, he became the fighting man, that protects his country from the others.</p>
15:10	Ida Lunde Jørgensen, Copenhagen Business School	Meet the Vikings: blending archaeological artefacts and a designer's visualizations in uncertain times	<p>In 2018, the National Museum of Denmark opened a highly publicized Viking exhibition co-produced by Jim Lyngvild a Danish designer and well-known practitioner of Asa faith, who had previously been a member of the Danish People's Party. The exhibition demonstrated a previously unseen (re)integration of pop-cultural representations of archeology into the Danish national museum setting, dominated by a research-based approach to artefacts and communication.</p> <p>The paper explores the visual and narrative dimension of the exhibition – in relation to the wider institutional context, in which the exhibition was formed. – Viewing the exhibition as a manifestation of the incorporation of a market logic, political populism and entertainment in response to an extremely precarious financial position, an increasingly powerful Peoples Party and a wider movement in the museum sector towards the experience economy, turning national museum visitors, previously viewed as citizens, into cultural consumers.</p> <p>Danish cultural history museums – the very organisations we turn to affirm and understand our national identity are currently seeing a significant increase in visitor numbers coinciding with a strong sense of political uncertainty influenced by a number of crises; waves of migrants and refugees, a volatile US-leadership, BREXIT and uncertainty about the future climate. In this situation, the author finds it relevant to consider what popular semiotic meanings are (re)integrated into the museum, their political use and implications.</p>
15:25	Session organisers	Discussion	
<b>15:30</b>	<b>BREAK</b>	<b>BREAK</b>	<b>BREAK</b>
16:00	Alasdair Chi, Nanyang Technological University	A Critical Examination of Historical Narratives and Founding Myths of Precolonial Singapore or: Will the Real Sang Nila Utama Please Stand Up?	<p>This year, 2019, marked the bicentennial of the establishment of a trading post on Singapore by Stamford Raffles, an agent of the British East India Company. In commemorating this event in the context of this island's history, the government has attracted criticism for supposedly celebrating colonialism, reflecting tensions within the nation's historiography concerning its relationship with its colonial past.</p> <p>The Singapore Bicentennial Office has in turn promoted the importance of archaeology, continuously practiced here since the 1980s, in illuminating this island's distant past. This year's commemorations hence encompass Singapore's history as a port-city beginning from its establishment at the turn of the 14th century by the Srivijayan prince Sang Nila Utama.</p> <p>No local record of this period has survived; archaeologists and historians have had to settle for a scatter of incidental mentions, with the only narratives of notable length being a Yuan Dynasty Chinese merchant's catalogue, a Portuguese colonialist's account of Melaka and its conquest, and the mythopoetic Malay Annals whose translation was published by Raffles in the midst of fierce contention between British and Dutch colonial authorities over the legality of his establishment on Singapore.</p> <p>Basing archaeological interpretations on these texts is problematic due to the political and ideological biases inherent in these chronicles of Singapore and their translations. In outlining the textual history of these records and the motivations behind their penning and distribution, I hope to open this debate concerning the criticality with which we ought to approach these narratives in shaping the future of Singapore's past.</p>

16:15	Emily Hanscam, Durham University	'We didn't start the fire': exploring reactions to heritage at risk	<p>This paper will explore how the past is being utilized politically in the responses to the loss of heritage— namely the burning of the National Museum of Brazil in 2018 and the burning of Notre Dame in 2019. As seen through social media, there was an incredibly emotive response particularly to the later event, and a subsequent outpouring of support (approximately \$1 billion in 48 hours) highlighted the international sense of loss felt because of the fire. In Brazil, on the other hand, many blame the government for the burning of the National Museum, which as Sarah Parcak recently pointed out on twitter<sup>1</sup>, contained the only copies of the official government maps which detailed indigenous land boundaries in the Amazon, a vital resource for our planet which currently faces destruction. Given the current contention between the populist Brazilian government and the international community over the fires in the Amazon, it is crucial that we study the implications of the responses to events like the burning of Notre Dame, the National Museum and indeed the fires in the Amazon. In these cases, which pasts are being appropriated, and for what political ends? Is Notre Dame seen as more of 'world heritage' resource than the National Museum, which given the implications mentioned above, may in fact have been a far more crucial global resource? Is there a fundamentally different response to the destruction of built versus natural heritage? How has the support of and protests against Brazilian populism affected the perception of value associated with the National Museum? Using a range of digital data, this paper will provide a preliminary response for these questions, as a foundation for future studies on the impact of populism on heritage at risk.</p>
16:30	Chiara Bonacchi, University of Sterling; Barbora Žiačková, University of Oxford; Ole F. Nordland, UCL	Discussion	
<b>17:00</b>	<b>END</b>	<b>END</b>	<b>END</b>