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INVITED SPEAKERS

Catherine J. Frieman
John Swogger
Bisserka Gaydarska

PARALLEL SESSIONS

#1 (Un)Intended Consequences
#2 (Un)Changing Tales
#3 Imaginative Inquiries
#4 Noticing Narratives

**Breaking the Mould: Smashing Stereotypes
of Grand Archaeological Narratives**

PROGRAMME BOOK

May 20th, 2022

One-day virtual conference

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NASTA 2022 is generously funded by:

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of archaeology

PREFACE

The second NASTA meeting takes place online on May 20th, 2022. Last year's conference was a major success, and this year should be no different. With three invited speakers and twelve accepted presentations, it promises to be an exciting day!

Although the world is currently opening back up and on-campus teaching, physical workshops and conferences, and on-site work are starting to take place once more, NASTA will remain an online conference *for now*. We wanted to guarantee that the conference could go ahead! It is our hope that the next NASTA conference (which is scheduled to take place in 2024) can be hosted both online and in person.

This year's conference theme is *Breaking the Mould: Smashing Stereotypes of Grand Archaeological Narratives*. After last year's conference was organised with a more general theme in mind, we wanted a stronger focus this year. NASTA 2022 centres around rewriting outdated (grand) archaeological narratives and conveying inclusive and diverse stories, through new perspectives, non-traditional outlets, and bottom-up approaches. We received many outstanding abstracts on our Call for Papers with a wide variety of topics. We were able to divide the topics of the accepted papers into four parallel sessions: *(Un)Intended Consequences*, *(Un)Changing Tales*, *Imaginative Inquiries*, and *Noticing Narratives*. You can find the session schedules on page 5, and the presenter abstracts on pages 9-15.

Our three invited speakers are Catherine J. Frieman, Bisserka Gaydarska, and John Swogger. You can find the speaker abstracts on pages 6-8. NASTA Organising Committee member Brodhie Molloy worked hard on accompanying the abstracts with an abstract "picture book" as part of her investigation of the ways we communicate archaeological stories to non-expert audiences, both within the discipline and to the public. We would like to ask our attendees to please fill in a poll about the project, which can be found on the conference platform on May 20th.

We hope sincerely that you enjoy the conference. With kind regards,

The NASTA Organising Committee

Morgan Schelvis, Iris Korver,

Zoë van Litsenburg, Brodhie Molloy,

Aris Politopoulos, James Symonds.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

- 10:30 - 11:10 'Walk in' time
- 11:10 - 11:15 Welcome Talk
- 11:15 - 12:00 Lecture: **Catherine J. Frieman**
"Make new things but keep the old: a social archaeology of innovation"
- 12:00 - 13:00 Parallel Sessions #1
- 13:00 - 14:00 Lunch Break
- 14:00 - 14:45 Lecture: **Bisserka Gaydarska**
"Interpretations, reconstructions, and popular views of the past: the complexities of gender stereotypes" (working title)
- 14:45 - 15:45 Parallel Sessions #2
- 15:45 - 16:15 Coffee Break
- 16:15 - 17:00 Lecture: **John Swogger**
"Telling a Different Kind of Story: Using comics to talk about local, threatened and indigenous archaeology and cultural heritage."
- 17:00 - 18:00 Closing Time

PARALLEL SESSIONS SCHEDULE

Parallel Sessions #1

#1 (Un)Intended Consequences

12:00 - 12:15 Joel Santos, João Sequeira & André Texugo – *Can poor people be happy? Life and death in a 19th/20th century Lisbon limestone quarry and kiln*

12:15 - 12:30 Leila Papoli-Yazdi – *Wounded by barbed wire: is it possible to get free from boundaries in archaeology?*

12:30 - 12:45 Chiara Giovannetti – *Archaeology's role in the history narration of school textbooks*

12:45 - 13:00 Discussion

#2 (Un)Changing Tales

12:00 - 12:15 Harriet Crisp – *Robinson Crisp: An audiovisual and archiveological interrogation of archaeological knowing*

12:15 - 12:30 Igor Djakovic – *Same stones, new stories: past, present, and future(?) narratives concerning the last Neanderthals in France and northern Spain*

12:30 - 12:45 Brodhie Molloy – *Coins on the couch: Investigating the 'newness' of recent British archaeological television shows*

12:45 - 13:00 Discussion

Parallel Sessions #2

#3 Imaginative Inquiries

14:45 - 15:00 Tatiana Crombeen – *What archaeologists can learn from Vondel: on the narrative versus the contingency of the past*

15:00 - 15:15 Ragnhild Ljosland et al. – *"The Witch Experience" – A co-creative exploration of 17th Century witchcraft trials*

15:15 - 15:30 Peter Stewart – *"This is Not The Year" – The Oracle-Stories of Archaeology*

15:30 - 15:45 Discussion

#4 Noticing Narratives

14:45 - 15:00 Aldo Accinelli – *The 'bad' looter and the 'good' archaeologist: narratives about heritage management in Peru*

15:00 - 15:15 Despoina Sampatakou – *Grave Circle A: talking dead and challenging narratives*

15:15 - 15:30 Foteini Tsigoni – *Re-Imagining Romans: reviewing the reception of Hadrian's Library to understand the virtuality of purified sites*

15:30 - 15:45 Discussion

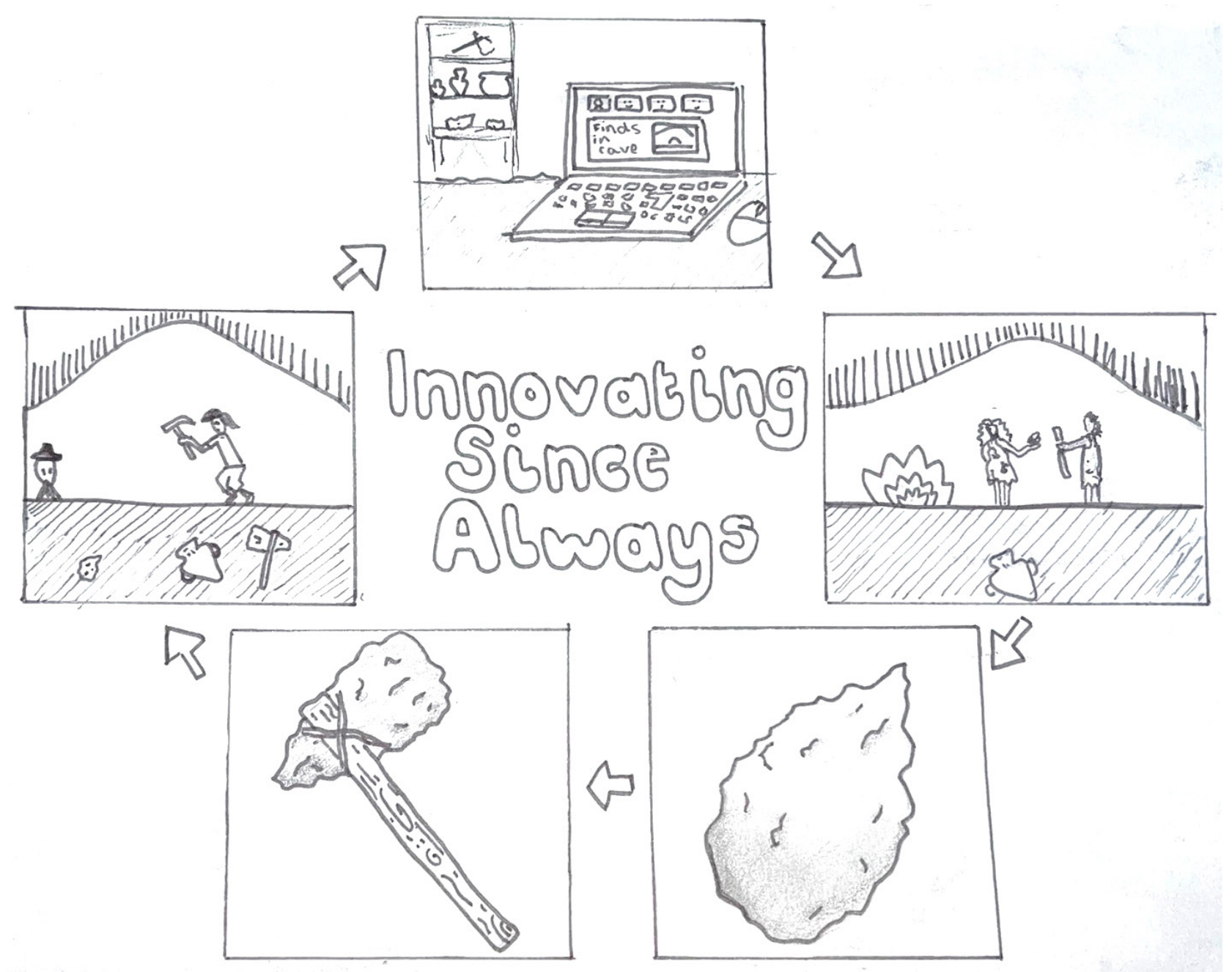
INVITED SPEAKER ABSTRACTS

Catherine J. Frieman *Australian National University*

“Make new things but keep the old: a social archaeology of innovation”

Innovation—at its basic level an anthropocentric process of change over time—looms large in the contemporary world, being bound up in the core economic, social and political relations of the capitalist world. Unsurprisingly, this fascination has inspired research into and critical of innovation and innovative practices across myriad academic fields, archaeology among them. We archaeologists have a longstanding and probably inescapable fascination with the temporality of change. From biblical and evolutionary models to scientific dating methods, change over time has been a continuing focus of our research. Even as archaeological thought has fragmented over the last several decades – with new interpretative approaches emerging almost as fast as new scientific methods – how and why new ideas emerge and spread has remained a central concern of archaeologists around the world. Despite this persistent fascination, I argue that we have rarely engaged with innovation as a social phenomenon—and even more rarely considered the social processes of non-innovation:

conservatism, tradition, and resistance. In this paper, I outline a social archaeology of innovation that sees both innovation and non-innovation as emergent from the complex relationships between people, technologies and the wider world. This model gives us fertile ground to revisit old debates, pose new questions, and side step the old evolutionary approaches in order to envision a more complicated, more human past.



Bisserka Gaydarska *Durham University*

“Interpretations, reconstructions, and popular views of the past: the complexities of gender stereotypes” (working title)

Archaeological interpretations, museum reconstructions and popular views of the past are riddled with gender stereotypes. This is a continuous and common practice, despite years of excellent scholarship challenging such uncritical notions of the past.

This paper will not offer a digest of how to smash gender stereotypes (to borrow a phrase from this year’s conference theme) but will attempt to open a conversation about the complexities of gender identity in the past and the present.

Projecting current debates to the past is as unhelpful as is picturing past identities as simple and fixed. The conversation will include questions about how we acquire knowledge and how we assess data and information, how we gather evidence and what (and whom?) we can trust.

The overarching message of this presentation makes a plea for critical awareness, fair assessment of the evidence and responsibility in the creation of both grand narratives and local storytelling.



PRESENTER ABSTRACTS

#1 (Un)Intended Consequences

12:00 - 12:15 Joel Santos, João Sequeira & André Texugo

“Can poor people be happy? Life and death in a 19th/20th century Lisbon limestone quarry and kiln”

Despite the effort to change, when it comes to industrial places academia still insists on emotionless narratives regarding Industrial Archaeology. Most studies focus on the amount of horsepower produced, the tons of raw material mined or quarried, the melted iron, or manufacturing processes, while others focus on the buildings, their architecture and conservation. Students are wrapped around dialogues of marvellous technological and economic growths, a period of light, and enlightened people. It almost seems that everybody was happy and fostered in a mission for a common cause.

However, seldom investigations talk about the hidden actors that lived and died in those environments. Why don't we talk more about the number of injuries, the number of deaths, and all the misery that people lived in? Who were they? Where and how did they live? Where and how did they die? Can we reach their feelings? Were they moved by this romantic dream of “progress”?

This presentation is not about the production system, it is not about the lime kiln, and it is not about the quarry. The kiln and the quarry are just background settings for the real performers, the ones that worked from sun-up to sundown and as a local Lisbon newspaper so fairly described in 1906 “with a suffocation in their breasts, sweating through every pore, with their throats dry up and their eyes with red streaks”. Were they happy?

12:15 - 12:30 Leila Papoli-Yazdi

“Wounded by barbed wire: is it possible to get free from boundaries in archaeology?”

“This planet is for everyone; borders are for no one. It's all about freedom.” — Benjamin Zephaniah

My skin tone is dark, and black curly hair grows on my head. Although I wear thick eyeglasses, the brownness of my eyes is evident. The broken English I speak is absolute proof for many people I meet at conferences or meetings that I have recently immigrated to Europe. Attending the gatherings, one of the very first reactions of “many” archaeologists is to ask me about the situation of archaeology in “Arabian countries” or the “Middle East.”

“Are there still many excavations conducted in the Middle East?”. My “Sorry, I don’t know exactly because...” response usually makes people upset or confused. They prefer not to continue the conversation and leave the scene.

In my head, though, lives a woman who has fought for years to expand her field of research, especially outside the so-called archaeology of the Near East/Middle East, by getting into more global aspects of the discipline. But even from the eyes of the archaeologists who work in my homeland, working on anything outside the Middle East and further than the “deep past”/“glorious past” is recognized as “betrayal.” At the same time, and in an international context, finding a job, publishing, and being cited become so complicated for the person who tends to break the borders that they may leave the idea of liberation from the stereotypes.

Archaeologists like me suffer from being overlooked. Due to this fact, I intend to open a debate on the stereotypes which limit the research options of archaeologists (of color, different sexual identities, and with disabilities) to topics only relevant to the communities they belonged to in this presentation.

12:30 - 12:45 Chiara Giovannetti

“Archaeology’s role in the history narration of school textbooks”

That archaeology plays a role in the narration of history is widely acknowledged but there is a kind of narration in which this role is still undefined, which is history teaching in school. Every school system across Europe lists history as one of their main subjects, but how does archaeology fit in this scenario? The theme has not been broadly investigated by archaeologists but can be critical, because education itself is a critical factor for the progress of societies.

This study examines how archaeology is narrated and represented in elementary and middle school history textbooks, through a sample of Italian books (dating 1999-2021). Mentions of archaeological research and findings has been researched in every book and each record has been analysed to isolate the reference context. Images of archaeological objects and sites have been preliminarily analysed identifying the main issues.

The results of the research show that, at least in Italy, archaeology is almost completely absent from history textbooks, and that its presence is often limited to “artistic” and “special” findings or auxiliary contents. History narrative is highly affected by the exclusion of the archaeological point of view, because there is so much history that only material record can tell, and this is mostly referable to minorities who produced little or any written sources. Ultimately, it is their point of view that is being kept out of this narrative: archaeological community should be aware and talk about this issue, which concerns its activities and the data its work produced.

#2 (Un)Changing Tales

12:00 - 12:15 Harriet Crisp

“Robinson Crisp: An audiovisual and archiveological interrogation of archaeological knowing”

Fiction, imagination, and fabrication can be employed in creative practice to disrupt and question the traditional narratives and authority at play in the archive and in the disciplines of archaeology and anthropology. Filmmaking offers a useful method of research and film is an engaging research output underused in archaeology. Working with family archival material allows practice away from institutions and the adoption of a subjective rather than an objective approach. Positioning the archaeologist as the subject rather than executor of inquiry subverts long-established frameworks and enacts an archaeology of the archaeologist.

Harriet Crisp will present in full *Robinson Crisp*, a film in which she resituates holiday slides of European archaeological sites, taken by her grandfather, from a domestic to an academic context, through their placement in the imagined archive of the fictitious archaeologist-cum-anthropologist Robinson Crisp. Drawing on case studies of other imagined archives, she will then reflect on the film’s creation and propose this “archiveolog[ical]” (Russell 2018: 1) method of fictionalising archaeologists and archaeology through the medium of film has potential for engaging new audiences and revealing archaeology is always a practice of storytelling.

12:15 - 12:30 Igor Djakovic

“Same stones, new stories: past, present, and future(?) narratives concerning the last Neanderthals in France and northern Spain”

Today, there is only one species of human present on our planet. For the majority of our evolutionary history, however, this was not the case. Around 40 thousand years ago, our closest hominin relatives - *Homo neandertalensis* – disappear entirely from the archaeological and fossil records. The cause(s) of this extinction remains one of the most intensely studied and heavily debated lines of inquiry in all of human origins research. As it currently stands, there is strong evidence suggesting that some groups of western European Neandertals dramatically altered their behaviour immediately preceding their disappearance. To our best chronological resolution, this appears to near-perfectly coincide with the wide-scale ‘colonisation’ of Eurasia by members of our species (*Homo sapiens*). Needless to say, this observation has led to an absolutely enormous amount of discussion, interpretation, and (healthy) debate amongst Palaeolithic archaeologists. As a result, and perhaps unsurprisingly, it therefore serves as a fascinating case study as to how archaeological narratives can vary – at a truly foundational level – despite literally unchanging material evidence. In this talk I explore the past, present and (likely)

future explanatory narratives concerning the transition from Neandertals to Homo sapiens in France and northern Spain. Importantly: I do not intend to provide any satisfying answers. Instead, I hope to highlight some of the inherent and largely unavoidable interpretive dilemmas arising from the construction of grand-scale narratives based on archaeological assemblages from the deep past.

12:30 - 12:45 Brodhie Molloy

“Coins on the couch: Investigating the ‘newness’ of recent British archaeological television shows”

For some, it was the twisting whiskers of Mortimer Wheeler on a crackled television set that drew them in, and for others, it was the idea of Bodrick (Tony Robinson) wandering the British countryside in search of a Roman villa. Regardless of title, archaeological programmes have held an ability to spark the interest of their audiences for as long as television has existed. A form of entertainment and communication, the tv was recognised by the likes of Gordon Childe as a pivotal apparatus in sharing archaeology, and the work of archaeologists, with the public. With public archaeology popularising and expanding as a discourse within the field over the past decade, it remains the case as to whether the public is actually aware of archaeology still.

Touching on almost a century of entertainment, the paper traverses the approaches and challenges of successfully bringing archaeology to the television box, and ultimately into the minds of the public. *Coins on the couch: Investigating the ‘newness’ of recent British archaeological television shows*, will explore how the tradition of archaeology programmes has changed face, shape, and audience on British television. It will conclude with a comment on what opportunities to interact with new audiences the ‘new’ generation of British programmes, namely The Great British Dig, may offer the field; questioning whether these television shows truly break the mould, or are they just sticking with the old?

#3 Imaginative Inquiries

14:45 - 15:00 Tatiana Crombeen

“What archaeologists can learn from Vondel: on the narrative versus the contingency of the past”

What can archaeologists learn from Joost van den Vondel, the 17th-century Dutch poet and playwright?

This essay explores how archaeologists and Vondel share the same interest, namely history. However, while archaeologists consider history as a closed narrative, a teleological sequence of materialized

moments in time of which they occupy the very end, Vondel asks himself and his audience a very different kind of question: is this the only possible course of history? Vondel's tragedies explore the contingency of history, the possibility that history could have developed differently. He explores the openness of history. This is in contrast with the linearity of history as it is presented within the culture-historical paradigm of archaeology and how the past is (functionally) explained within New Archaeology.

This essay questions the teleological narrative of the past as it is presented in archaeology and considers historical contingencies through theoretical work on Vondel's plays. The essay ponders if archaeologists should think more as Vondel did about the past

15:00 - 15:15 Ragnhild Ljosland, Alannah Edwards, Christopher Gee, Francesca Meneghetti, Colin Richards, Emily Robinson, Holly Young

“The Witch Experience’ – A co-creative exploration of 17th Century witchcraft trials”

“The Witch Experience” was a Creative Scotland funded co-creative project engaging with the Early Modern witchcraft trials. In our local Orkney community, at least 72 persons are known to have been accused of witchcraft under the Scottish Witchcraft Act of 1563 (Goodare et al. 2003). In this project, participants engaged personally in an embodied and emotional manner with the 17th century individuals whose voices are captured in court records. In small groups, participants did close readings of historical trial records held in the National Archive. Each selected a person from the record – accused, accuser, or witness – with whom they went on to develop a personal acquaintance in a two-month process which began by entering this person's mindset through creative writing and culminated in becoming that person for a day in a form of ‘time-travel’, i.e. ‘an experience and social practice in the present that evokes a past (or future) reality’ (Holtorf, 2009, p. 31). We used an immersive, embodied, drama-based approach called Nordic Larp, in which the participants took on the character of their chosen historical person and played out a witchcraft trial in a character-driven non-performative 6-hour drama improvisation. The benefits of doing archaeological storytelling in this way are that it draws out the subaltern voices of the accused and those who felt themselves targeted by curses, it allows participants to develop a personal relationship with the part, and it uses emotion rather than cerebral understanding as its main vehicle, thereby allowing a deeper and more memorable engagement.

15:15 - 15:30 Peter Stewart

“This is Not The Year’ – The Oracle-Stories of Archaeology”

This paper discusses the poetics of prophecy and curses in archaeological narratives. During the Covid-19 pandemic, a particular meme format emerged in which ominous images of an alleged archaeological discovery was presented alongside the humorous caption ‘This Is Not The Year.’ I argue

this is part of a longstanding tradition in which archaeology is seriously or ironically connected to prophetic power, especially in times of upheaval. I argue that rather than dismiss such alternative archaeologies as quackery we should consider them in folkloristic, linguistic and literary terms. I use Michael Woods' notion of 'oracle-stories' and the theories of those who study pseudo-psi phenomena to explore a variety of ways in which archaeological discoveries have been shaped into 'prophetic' texts, with a particular emphasis on a 1936 text which allegedly used the pyramids to predict, among other things, a global upheaval in September 2001.

#4 Noticing Narratives

14:45 - 15:00 Aldo Accinelli

"The 'bad' looter and the 'good' archaeologist: narratives about heritage management in Peru"

Ever since the first professional Peruvian archaeologists started working in the early twentieth century, a narrative to differentiate them from any other person that excavated archaeological assemblages was created. Furthermore, this 'other' was labelled a 'looter', portrayed as a person that only wanted to seek treasures and fortune selling artefacts on the black market while destroying the nation's past. On the contrary, the archaeologist would be the safekeeper of the past, the only one capable of analysing or interpreting it, whose job was to protect the ancient remains of the nation from any greedy person that wanted to use them for their own selfish reasons. I will argue that this narrative never considers traditional relations to heritage where ancient objects or ancient human remains have been used for centuries in indigenous religious ceremonies. Additionally, this narrative has shaped laws that criminalize popular relations to heritage because they are seen as 'damaging' to the archaeological assemblages. Finally, I will argue that this narrative has a strong basis on coloniality and modernist thinking that privileges the scientist over the community.

15:00 - 15:15 Despoina Sampatakou

"Grave Circle A: talking dead and challenging narratives"

This presentation discusses different media of archaeological storytelling (a textual story, an interactive Twine game, and a VR immersive experience) regarding communicating archaeological research to the wider public.

The case study is Grave Circle A at Mycenae, a Bronze Age cemetery mostly famous for the so-called 'Agamemnon's mask', a golden death mask covering the face of an individual identified by Schliemann as the famous king and warrior of Homer's epic poem, the Iliad. Schliemann was actively trying to

verify the incidents narrated by Homer, and mostly the Trojan war, so he excavated in various places including Mycenae in 1876, trying to locate Agamemnon's palace.

During these excavations Panagiotis Stamatakis, a Greek archaeologist, was appointed to supervise Schliemann's work. There was a constant conflict between the two men, and Stamatakis' contribution in the excavations has not been discussed, as the publication of the excavation and the finds were made by Schliemann. In fact, his name was hardly mentioned by Schliemann in his reports. Part of my research project is to challenge the colonial narrative developed in the 19th century which also marks the beginning of the establishment of Greek national identity, and discuss more about Stamatakis' immense contribution in Greek archaeology.

15:15 - 15:30 Foteini Tsigoni

"Re-Imagining Romans: reviewing the reception of Hadrian's Library to understand the virtuality of purified sites"

This paper presents the results of an ethnographic survey that investigates contemporary receptions of the archaeological site of Hadrian's Library in Athens. Situated in the centre, this large (1 ha) archaeological area defines the modern cityscape. Based on a survey of 100 respondents, it was investigated how modern Athenians perceive the 2nd c. CE library, thus illuminating modern Greek reception of Roman imperialism in Greece. This case-study explores an understudied aspect of Greek historical reception (the place of 'Rome' in modern Greek identity) and contextualises it in the Greek modernisation processes of the 19th and 20th centuries. A crucial phenomenon is the notion of purification processes in Greek mnemo-politics, i.e. the modern nationalist grand narrative of a cultural bridge between the 'Golden Age' of Perikles to 19th century modern Greece and the elimination of historical elements that do not fit that narrative. This research situates itself in relation to scholarly work on the colonial legacies of Greek archaeology (Hamilakis 2007; Greenberg & Hamilakis 2022; Yalouri 2001) and the recent 'Dëcolouise Hellás' initiative. In line with this, the paper explores how purification processes and education continually shape new forms of nationalist ideology and how this may have informed current receptions of Hadrian's Library. This creates fertile ground for drawing in the Deleuzian notion of 'virtuality' in relation to purified archaeological sites such as the Library of Hadrian, pointing to the ways that imaginations of the library have shaped the site and its reception since its 're-discovery' in the 19th century.

