



College Year in Athens

6th ANNUAL STUDENT CONFERENCE

Greek heritage unwrapped: approaches to the past in the 21st century

Athens, 8-9 May 2023
Daphne & George Hatsopoulos Hall
CYA

On August 24th, 2022, at the 26th ICOM General Assembly, a new definition for the word 'museum' was approved. Museums have traditionally been considered par excellence depositors and guardians of cultural heritage. The term heritage is frequently used, albeit in an uncritical manner, to describe mostly cultural entities, less often natural ones also. The use of the word 'heritage' today often carries along biases, connotations, and outdated assumptions and presumptions. Aim of the conference is to open wide the cognitive black boxes in which heritage has been wrapped, and examine the various diverse aspects of a multifaceted concept, with spatial emphasis in Greece and its heritage. The ultimate question we are challenged to answer is how can a term invented, established and deeply embedded in the rhetoric of modernism of the late 19th and early 20th centuries still be used in an honest and sustainable way in the 21st century?

Athena Hadji

Conference Committee

Athena Hadji, CYA Art History Professor (Chair)

Kate Donelly, CYA Academic Writing Advisor

Theoni Scourta, CYA V.P. for Academic Affairs

Conference Program & Abstracts

MONDAY 8 MAY

13:15 Welcoming remarks

Theoni Scourta, CYA V.P. Academic Affairs

13:20 Opening Address

Athena Hadji, CYA Art History Professor

13:30 *Greek Public Museum Reform: A New Phase of Cultural Heritage*

Vivienne Colbert, Post-Baccalaureate

14:00 *The Parthenon Marbles and Beyond: Repatriation and its Ramifications*

Michaela Fielder-Jellsey, Post-Baccalaureate

14:30 Coffee Break

14:45 *Erasure of Unification: Analysis of Returned Parthenon Marble Fragments*

John Freeman, Princeton University, Classical Studies

15:15 *Setting the Stage: A Comparison of the Evolution of Heritage in Ancient and Modern Greek Theater*

Mudiwa Mungoshi, Wooster College, Media Studies/Psychology

TUESDAY 9 MAY

- 11:00** *Understanding Heritage through the Lens of Public Archaeology*
Tara Noel, Gettysburg College, Anthropology
- 11:30** *Heritage and Nationalism: The Protection of Greek Heritage Under Law 3028/02*
Caitlin Petersen, Gettysburg College, Anthropology/ History
- 12:00** Lunch Break
- 13:30** *Heritage-building: how Greece's 2015 Citizenship Law reflects evolving conceptions of Greek heritage*
Meredith Neid, Grinnell College, Political Science
- 14:00** *Decolonizing the heritage of the Thessalian Railways*
Dimitra Morosou, University of Thessaly, Anthropology
- 14:30** *Old News": Reconstructing Heritage Through Archive*
Erika Tsioukantana, University of Thessaly, Anthropology
- 15:00** **Concluding remarks**
Athena Hadji, CYA Art History Professor

Vivienne Colbert

Post-Baccalaureate

Greek Public Museum Reform: A New Phase of Cultural Heritage

As national identity and culture take new forms, it is essential to reconsider what each stage of this transformation signifies. The new definition of ‘museum’ put forth by the International Council of Museums in 2022 introduces the next phase of this concept. “A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability.” However, legislation put into effect by the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports in 2023, concerning the legal status of public museums, conflicts with this development. Five major public museums will become ‘legal entities under public law’, autonomizing their financial and managerial aspects, as well as introducing the possibility of politicizing cultural heritage. While the concept of ‘cultural heritage’ has always been connected to both ‘national identity’ and politicization, this legislative change will prompt an increase in international politicization. This will inevitably lead to a shift in the domestic perception of their own ‘national identity’. Using the new reform as a case study, this paper will analyze the potential ramifications of museums becoming legal entities under public law (PLL/NPDD) in relation to the new definition of museum. The focal discussion of this analysis will be the politicization of cultural heritage, specifically the intersection of ancestral heritage, national identity, and international relations.

Michaela Fielder-Jellsey

Post-Baccalaureate

The Parthenon Marbles and Beyond: Repatriation and its Ramifications

With this year's CYA Student Conference focused on the idea of Greek heritage and the role of the museum, there is one topic that stands out amidst the conversation: the on-going debate revolving around the potential repatriation of the long-ago lost Parthenon Marbles from their current residence at the British Museum. These works of art were stolen from the Acropolis by Thomas Bruce, better known as Lord Elgin and someone to whom the marbles did not belong. The aim of this paper is not to analyze the actions of Lord Elgin, as that issue has been thoroughly examined, but rather to discuss the situation of the marbles themselves. This paper intends to investigate and explain the current status of the marbles' return to Greece and the impact of this conversation. Further discussion will focus on the significance of the repatriation of these artworks and the effect the event will have on the modern Greek state. The ramifications of repatriation will also be examined on a more global scale, discussing the ripple effect that may develop for other countries and for the institution of the museum as a whole.

John Freeman

Princeton University, Classical Studies

Erasure of Unification: Analysis of Returned Parthenon Marble Fragments

The Parthenon Marbles are an infamous case of repatriation discourse, but although a great many scholars have written on them, hardly any have analyzed the “success stories,” namely the instances of pieces returning to the Acropolis Museum. There have only been a handful of such returns without loan: the Heidelberg fragment in 2006, the Fagan fragment in 2022, and fragments from the National Archaeological Museum in Athens in 2022. This paper will analyze each instance of return in terms of publicity and display, and in doing so it will illuminate certain trends. In terms of publicity, all the fragments seemed to be utilized for their value to cultural diplomacy, advocating for future returns, even to the point of overshadowing prior instances of return. The discourse of reunification in the publicity is reflected in the display, which incorporates the fragments with minimal signage, if any at all. This paper argues that the emphasis on future return and total incorporation erases the individual history of the fragments as artifacts of return. This erasure poses a danger for future returns, including the Vatican fragments returned in March 2023, and indeed for repatriation discourse as a whole: by forgetting the history of fragments, we also forget the history of colonialism and looting that necessitated their return, thus pulling a veil on a nuanced and problematic past that warrants public awareness.

Mudiwa Mungoshi

Wooster College, Media Studies/Psychology

Setting the Stage: A Comparison of the Evolution of Heritage in Ancient and Modern Greek Theater

In my research, I am interested in establishing an understanding of the key elements of Ancient Greek theater as they tie into Greek heritage. Once that is established, another key part of my study would take the form of a comparative analysis of theater in Ancient Greece and Modern Greece – specifically in the ways that Greek heritage is conveyed in modern Greek theatre. Given the current climate where many young artists are protesting a presidential decree proposed in December of 2022 that will essentially demote performance arts degrees to the equivalent of a high school diploma, I am keen to interview artists with first-hand experience on how they envision the future of Greek theater. In summary, this study will be a comparative analysis of the cultural appreciation and reception of ancient and modern Greek theatre, with a focus on this decree as a case study.

Tara Noel

Gettysburg College, Anthropology

Understanding Heritage through the Lens of Public Archaeology

In a world that is increasingly influenced by visual images and materiality, the discipline of public archaeology can become a foundation from which heritage can be conceptualized and through which the past can be understood. While heritage itself can be largely debated, the legacy of the past depends on its accessibility, the acknowledgment of what inheritance means in a given context, and how history is recognized by a community. Built on this debate, Greece is uniquely positioned as a country with that has an extensive assemblage of the archaeological record, therefore providing contemporary communities with a tangible way to access the past. Through a study of how archaeological sites and materials are made public to contemporary audiences, this paper will explore the emerging field of public archaeology and its legitimacy in Greece with a specific focus on how photographic representations visually construct heritage. These photographic representations will be centered on archaeological photography and how this documentation seeks to capture landscape and materials of significance. Furthermore, this paper will analyze the theory underlying public archaeology, provide an overview of how the archaeological record in Greece is made accessible to the public, and seek to understand how photographic representations become powerful influencers of Greece's imagined ideals as a nation.

Caitlin Petersen

Gettysburg College, Anthropology/History

Heritage and Nationalism: The Protection of Greek Heritage Under Law 3028/02

During my time last summer in the National Park Service as a Cultural Resource Management intern, I learned a lot about what it means to manage and preserve the cultural landscape of sites of historical significance in the United States. For this conference, I will dive into how the Greek Government works in a similar way, in how they choose to present the physical cultural landscape of Greece, linked to heritage both historical and mythological under Law 3028/02 “On the Protection of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage in general” which protects moveable and immovable monuments, artifacts, and intangible heritage. As an outsider looking in, I can examine the popular/national image Greece chooses to publicize its heritage, and as someone less connected, and I can examine how popularity impacts preservation. Through an overview of the national representation, I will present a behind the scenes of cultural landscape preservation in Greece.

Meredith Neid

Grinnell College, Political Science

Heritage-building: how Greece's 2015 Citizenship Law reflects evolving conceptions of Greek heritage

The concept of modern Greek nationality is steeped in Greek heritage. Since the founding of the modern Greek state, having a Greek national identity has meant inheriting and claiming a long-standing Greek culture, language, and history. This heritage-dependent national identity is reflected in Greece's citizenship laws, which, up until this century, granted Greek citizenship *jus sanguinis*, meaning one could only acquire Greek citizenship through having Greek parents. However, geopolitical shifts in the 1990's brought an unprecedented wave of immigrants to Greece, provoking a national reckoning with the definition of Greek citizenship, nationhood, and heritage. In this paper, I will use recent changes in Greek immigration laws to examine the evolving relationship between Greek heritage and nationality. More specifically, I will focus on the language of the 2015 amendment to the Greek Nationality Code, in conjunction with several secondary sources, to demonstrate the delicate intermingling of the past, descent, and inheritance with the present, integration, and culturalization in the definition of Greek citizenship. Through this exploration, I aim to shed light on the complexity of modern Greek heritage, especially as it pertains to nationalism and citizenship, to contextualize and better understand the difficult position of being an immigrant to Greece.

Dimitra Morosou

University of Thessaly, Anthropology

Decolonizing the heritage of the Thessalian Railways

What divides the city of Volos into two parts defined as the Old (Palaia) and New city? Where did you need to know French to work in a small Greek city in the twentieth century? What lies on expropriated land and appears in the paintings of Giorgio de Chirico? These questions all have same answer: the railway. In February 2022, as an undergraduate anthropology student at the University of Thessaly on the course “Colonialism and Cultural Critique,” I was involved in the production of an anti-tour of the modern city of Volos. This public event was part of the initiative *dëcolonize hellás*, which aims to make visible and problematize the place of Greece – and the city – in genealogies of European colonialism. As part of the team working on the history of the railways, we attempted to highlight the dark past of the railway in contrast to the ideal and nostalgia that prevail in the imagination of people in Greece, even though in the early 20th century there was much resistance to its establishment. The railroad was a new technology to Greece at the time and strongly associated with a Europe that considered the East as its opposite. We examined the train as a colonial tool illuminating how capitalist ideas of time, work and modernity, patriarchy and white supremacy were projected in the attempt to literally connect Greece to the West. We noted, for example, the over-representation of ancient and contemporary pasts, as in the statue of the goddess Athena outside Volos train station by an Italian sculptor and an inlaid bust of King George I of Greece. Using interactive performance (including the re-enactment of a worker’s strike in front of the statue and defacement of a street name), we attempted to demonstrate the role of the railway as a capitalist instrument, violating labor rights while also causing, due to the tremendous technological intervention involved, enormous ecological damage. In this presentation, I will reflect on my experience creating this segment of the anti-tour in relation to discourses around the horrific deadly train collision on February 28th.

“Old News”: Reconstructing Heritage Through Archive

How can an early-20th century newspaper about hunting and shooting be reviewed critically in the present? How can this reconstruction apply to a conversation about heritage and decoloniality in a rather small Greek city? And, lastly, what might be achieved by re-making the newspaper “Anti-hunting News” in the form of a fictionalized sequel edition? In February 2022, in Volos, as an undergraduate anthropology student at the University of Thessaly on the course “Colonialism and Cultural Critique,” I was involved in the production of an anti-tour of the modern city of Volos. This public event was part of the initiative *dēkoloníze hellás*, which aimed to make visible and problematize the situation of Greece – and the city – in genealogies of European colonialism. As part of the team working on the theme of hunting, I helped reinvent “Anti-hunting News” a reconstruction of the original newspaper, “Hunting News”. Although I took part in designing the newspaper and wrote some of the articles featured in it, I mostly helped to introduce its editor, a fictional female anthropologist and descendant of a well-known hunter from Volos back in the 1930s. Both the articles and the fabrication of the paper’s editor helped us expose how the discourse and practices discussed in the newspaper contributed to producing colonial, national and ontological narratives. These narratives associated with the construction of the Greek adaptation of the modern western man, appear to be a facet of modern Greek heritage. In a Greek orthodox context, references to an ancient past, patriarchy, and the rituals and (eco) politics of killing an animal are interwoven within the newspaper’s articles. Recreating these articles and the newspaper itself becomes an experience of dealing with a heritage of past Selves as well as the relationships, politics, and identities that come with it in the present.



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