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ARTEFACTS: FROM OBJECTS TO CONCEPTS AND TO CULTURAL PROPERTY

Maria Kostoglou

SOAS University of London, UK

The study of artefacts is at the core of many disciplines concerned with the study of multiple interactions between people and things. Over the past decades, disciplines as diverse as archaeology, sociology, anthropology, arts and cultures (and histories of) as well as materials science or industrial design, have all been concerned with the lives of objects, their production, use, circulation and meanings amongst people and societies in the past and in the present (and not so much in the future). The first part of this talk will provide a brief overview of the main theoretical and methodological approaches that have been crucial in shaping our disciplinary understanding of artefacts over the past few decades. The second part is exploring answers to two crucial questions. Firstly: does age matter? In other words: are archaeological objects a bit more special? And secondly: who owns or should own artefacts and artefact collections? The third, and final, part of the presentation will look at issues relating to the future of artefact collections.

Recent Publications

1. Time, memory, and innovation in Iron Age craft and production'. In Dimova, B., Gleba, M., Joy, J., Stoddart, S. (eds.) 'Craft and Production in the European Iron Age'. Oxford: Oxbow (forthcoming).
2. 'Iron in Iron Age Greece'. In 'The Cambridge Companion to the Greek Iron Age'. J.Carter and C. Antonaccio (eds). New York: Cambridge University Press (in print).

3. Kostoglou M (2010) Iron, connectivity and local identities in ancient Mediterranean. In P. van Dommelen, and A B Knapp Material Connections in the ancient Mediterranean: Mobility, Materiality and Identity. Pages:170-189.

Biography

Maria Kostoglou holds BA in Archaeology (Aristotle University, Greece), MPhil and PhD. in Mediterranean Archaeology with an expertise in ancient metalwork (University of Glasgow). She worked as curator in national museums and university museums in Britain and abroad. As a lecturer at SOAS she is co-convening the MA in Museums, Heritage and Material Culture Studies, teaches modules on Curating Cultures, Museums and Museology and supervises research students. Previously, she directed the Heritage Studies Programme, taught material culture courses, collections management, and relevant research methods at the University of Manchester; she also developed learning, research, and outreach activities with the humanities collections of the Manchester Museum. She is interested in research and supervision in ancient artefact studies; the materiality of objects and their connections with place and identity (past and present); heritage interpretation (in multi-cultural settings); and developing University Museum collections for higher education learning and research.

mk124@soas.ac.uk