



Amplifying the Voices of Student and Early Career Archaeologists Conference Programme

**27 July 2022
3 - 9pm**





CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Time	Name	Title
15:00	EC-SIG Committee	Conference Introduction
Session 1: Ethical Issues in Archaeology and Heritage		
15:05	Hanna Marie Pageau	Chair's Introduction
15:10	George Veckungs	What Role Can Archaeologists Play in Tackling Heritage Crime?
15:20	Simran Kaur	Good or Bad? The Paradoxical Relationship of Heritage Tourism and Archaeology
15:35	Roisin Mackie	Overlooked but on Display: Disability and human remains in museums
15:50	Jessica Elleray	Archaeological Representation in Simulation Video Games: Ethics and player desensitisation in The Sims 4: Jungle Adventure, and Animal Crossing: New Horizons.
16:05	Speakers and Chair	Panel Q&A
16:15	Break	
Session 2: Standing Buildings and Monuments: Destruction and Conservation		
16:25	Cameron Barnard	Chair's Introduction
16:30	Nidhi Patel	Vasai Fort: Case study of the Fort with respect to the Archaeology/Heritage divide
16:45	Helen Brooke	I Declare War on God!: An investigation into seventeenth century iconoclastic attack on religious images and cathedrals
17:00	Vanshika Poddar	The Shiva Temple of Giraud: Conservation of heritage via corporate social responsibility
17:15	Speakers and Chair	Panel Q&A
17:25	Break	
Session 3: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Archaeology		
17:35	Jessica Elleray	Chair's Introduction
17:40	Hanna Marie Pageau	Archaeology and Me: Finding yourself in the faces of the field
17:55	Hannah Walton	The Understanding and Influence of Mental Health in Antiquity

18:05	Xinyi Xie	Women in Masculine Fieldwork: Gender performance and the archaeological profession
18:20	Speakers and Chair	Panel Q&A
18:30	Break	
Session 4: Archaeological Sciences		
18:40	Vanshika Poddar	Chair's Introduction
18:45	Daniele Clementi	3D Intervisibility of Abandoned Qatari Pearling Villages
18:55	Katrina Rorhus	Qualitative Paleoecology: A look into the Blombos Cave, South Africa; a mammalian assemblage
19:05	Ruoshan Yau	The Analysis of the Qin Dynasty's Ancient Highway, "Zhidaao", through a computational approach
19:20	Cameron Barnard	Ancient DNA: The importance of its use and future of archaeology
19:35	Speakers and Chair	Panel Q&A
19:35	Break	
Session 5: Lucky Dip		
19:45	Rithik Pramod & Jahanvi Sharma	Co-Chair's Introduction
19:50	Hilary Mackay	Single Steps; Big Journey: How to go on your first excavation as a student
20:00	Rithik Pramod	Exploring the socio-cultural aspects of Snake Worship in Kerala
20:15	Jenkins <i>et al</i>	Meteorites and Archaeology: Can we investigate natural phenomena with the eyes of an archaeologist?
20:30	Jasmine Godmon	Auditing an Archaeology Collection: Challenges and aspirations
20:45	Speakers and Chair	Panel Q&A
20:55	EC-SIG Committee	Conference Thanks
21:00	END	



SESSION 1: ETHICAL ISSUES IN ARCHAEOLOGY AND HERITAGE

CHAIR: HANNA MARIE PAGEAU

SESSION ABSTRACTS

3:10PM–3.20PM (10 MINS) | GEORGE VECKUNGS | CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY

WHAT ROLE CAN ARCHAEOLOGISTS PLAY IN TACKLING HERITAGE CRIME?

Every year, 75,000 crimes affecting designated heritage assets are reported, an average of over 200 incidents per day (Historic England, 2012). Worse still, there is a considerable problem of under-reporting of heritage crime across all areas of the UK, with as many as 1 in 3 crimes affecting UK heritage sites going unreported.

In what is undoubtedly an under-acknowledged issue, more awareness needs to be raised about the permanent damage to cultural heritage caused by crimes such as theft, looting and vandalism. Archaeologists are in a perfect position to address both of these issues. Their professional training and passion for cultural heritage allow them to act as a ‘first line of defence’. It can be argued that archaeologists and archaeological contractors have a duty of care to report incidents affecting heritage sites and objects, and it is they who can use their knowledge to liaise with communities and emphasise the importance of preserving our shared cultural heritage.

This short lecture is primarily aimed at early career archaeologists, giving an overview of what ‘heritage crime’ is and who it affects. The issues affecting active archaeological excavations are discussed alongside the ever-growing list of challenges posed to the monitoring and prevention of heritage crime. Archaeologists should be familiar with UK law regarding illicit excavation and treasure and are urged to speak out when they see something that doesn’t look right, both onsite and in their personal lives.

KEYWORDS: TOPICAL, CURRENT/ NEWSWORTHY, TOPICAL, THE WIDER WORLD OF ARCHAEOLOGY, ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE PUBLIC





3:20PM–3:35PM (15 MINS) | SIMRAN KAUR

GOOD OR BAD? THE PARADOXICAL RELATIONSHIP OF HERITAGE TOURISM AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Heritage Tourism has been seen as a catalyst in making archaeology more comprehensible and accessible to the public (Rowan and Baram 2004; Gould and Burtenshaw 2014; Timothy and Tahan 2020; Walker and Carr 2013). It has been called a herald of sustainability and economic development (Garrod and Fyall 2000; Hoffman et al. 2002; Adams 2010). However, heritage tourism exists in a paradoxical relationship with archaeology, subject to suspicion and apprehension by the latter about tourism's supposed destruction of archaeological sites (Porter and Salazar 2005). The relationship is fraught with tensions regarding preservation and conservation, socio-economic development, authenticity, stewardship, and different perceptions of the public (Gillot 2020, 27). The purpose of this paper is to navigate the question of whether heritage tourism is good or bad for archaeology. The paper will look at different theoretical perspectives to contextualise the implications that heritage tourism has for archaeology. It attempts to show how, in some cases, tourism serves as an important tool to save archaeological sites and knowledge, which overrides some of its possible destructive tendencies. This will be done by looking at two case studies from India, that of Shahjahanabad (Old Delhi) and Gurugram (a city in the state of Haryana), wherein the former is an active site of increased touristic activity while the latter can be developed into one. Both examples, though different in terms of their experiences with tourism, highlight issues faced in the preservation of archaeological heritage in a living urban context. Through these case studies, the paper will try to understand how heritage tourism, if managed properly, works as an effective model in the cultural economy setup to conserve heritage as well as provide socio-economic development to the local community in a country like India (Kaminski et al. 2014).

KEYWORDS: HERITAGE MANAGEMENT, TOURISM AND ARCHAEOLOGY.





3:35PM–3:50PM (15 MINS) | ROISIN MACKIE | UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

OVERLOOKED BUT ON DISPLAY: DISABILITY AND HUMAN REMAINS IN MUSEUMS

Human remains, both from archaeological and modern contexts, are still a major part of public museum displays, despite ongoing ethical debate on the practice. However, even within this conversation and critical analysis of how human remains are displayed, disability is often an overlooked area. Skeletal remains in museums are usually displayed in the context of education, but often this display leads to dehumanisation without the consideration of the individual or the story behind the bones. This is particularly an issue when it comes to disabled individuals' stories when impaired bones are on display, with the focus often lying on the 'weird' or 'unusual' on their bones.

This study, which is currently in process as an MSc dissertation, aims to look at several displays in UK museums as case studies to analyse how these skeletal remains are presented to the public and what information about them is communicated. Osteobiographical profiles will be formed for the individuals, and this information will be analysed alongside the publicly communicated information about them, where they are displayed and how, the language used to discuss them, how the remains were received into the collection, and how accessible information about these individuals is. Interviews will also be conducted with the curators of these remains and displays to help gather this information. While this research is ongoing, through the work that has been conducted so far, it is apparent that there is a need for further consideration of disability and impairment in terms of the communication of human skeletal remains to the public, a need to discontinue the practice of their presentation as unusual medical specimens or 'freaks', and more consideration of the individual behind the bones.

KEYWORDS: OSTEOARCHAEOLOGY, MUSEUMS, HUMAN REMAINS, DISABILITIES AND DIVERSITY WITHIN ARCHAEOLOGY.





3:50PM–4:05PM (15 MINS) | JESSICA ELLERAY | OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY NORTH

ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPRESENTATION IN SIMULATION VIDEO GAMES: ETHICS AND PLAYER DESENSITISATION IN THE SIMS 4: JUNGLE ADVENTURE AND ANIMAL CROSSING: NEW HORIZONS.

When invited to list video games which feature archaeology, the mind is often drawn to the Indiana Jones or Tomb Raider franchises, household titles which feature archaeologists as protagonists. Or perhaps Assassin's Creed, which brings ancient landscapes to life and sees players murdering and looting their way from the temples of Ancient Greece to the streets of Victorian-era London. These action/adventure games position players to conduct unethical archaeology and, as evidenced in the archaeogaming literature, concerns are growing regarding the influence this may have on players (Champion, 2004; Mol et al, 2016; Reinhard, 2018).

There is, however, an overall lack of critical consideration of games outside of these genres. This paper addresses this gap by using narrative inquiry methodology to analyse games in the simulation genre and assess the impact on players. Simulation games were chosen because, at the most basic level, they aim to simulate an aspect of real life. Bearing in mind the concerns raised by researchers that realism contributes to misunderstanding, analysing how archaeology is represented in games that profess to replicate real life is pertinent (Boom et al, 2020). Secondly, the use and adaption of simulations is familiar to archaeology, with simulations being made to train young archaeologists (University of St Andrews, n.d.) and to share findings with the public (Haddow 2016, 240-245). The games selected for this research, The Sims 4: Jungle Adventure and Animal Crossing: New Horizons, are both highly popular simulation games in successful franchises that feature archaeology. Findings revealed that an unethical version of archaeology was presented to players in a manner which left them unaware of the game's ethical position and at risk of desensitisation. These observations match wider trends identified in video games by archaeogaming researchers, with the simulation genre standing out for its additionally misleading premise that the simulated worlds mirror real life. The paper concludes by asserting that the messages promoted through such games are potentially harmful to players, the discipline and the archaeological record, making further research essential.

KEYWORDS: DIGITAL ARCHAEOLOGY, OUTSIDE THE FIELD, ARCHAEOGAMING.





SESSION 2: STANDING BUILDINGS AND MONUMENTS: DESTRUCTION AND CONSERVATION

CHAIR: CAMERON BARNARD

SESSION ABSTRACTS

4:30PM–4:45PM (15 MINS) | NIDHI PATEL

VASAI FORT: CASE STUDY OF THE FORT WITH RESPECT TO THE ARCHAEOLOGY/HERITAGE DIVIDE

Vasai is a former colony on India's west coast. The importance of architecture in understanding the area's socio-economic, political, and cultural significance (Hendrix, 2013). The fusion of Portuguese and indigenous architecture resulted in the Indo-Portuguese manifestation, which served as a vital defence system (Joshi et.al, 2016). This European-style defence building is in a state of disrepair, and all that is left now are the ruins. The aim of the article is to examine the current state of the ruins, the causes of their vulnerability, and the poor management of the site as a result of the dispute between the authorities.

The paper also aims to highlight the significance of Vasai Fort and the possibilities of heritage tourism and archaeo-tourism. The site has been visited for the purposes of this paper, but due to dense vegetation making it inaccessible, some of the interior of the Vasai Fort could not be examined, which is a limiting factor. To derive conclusions, primary and secondary sources were used.

KEYWORDS: HERITAGE MANAGEMENT, ARCHITECTURE, TOURISM AND ARCHAEOLOGY, INDIGENOUS ARCHAEOLOGY, COLONIAL HISTORY.





4:45PM–5:00PM (15 MINS) | HELEN BROOKE | DURHAM UNIVERSITY

I DECLARE WAR ON GOD!: AN INVESTIGATION INTO SEVENTEENTH CENTURY
ICONOCLASTIC ATTACK ON RELIGIOUS IMAGES AND CATHEDRALS

The English Civil War (1639 – 1653), otherwise known as The Wars of the Three Kingdoms, saw the participation of Scotland, England and Ireland embroiled in civil war. By August 1642, Civil War broke out. “In the conflict that followed, proportionately more British lives were lost than in the First World War” (Gerrard et al, 2018, pp.5). Not only the lives of those in this country, but religion, parliament and state were affected by the Civil War but, most importantly, cities saw the full force of destruction of sacred religious places like cathedrals which paid the ultimate price – destruction. This is known as iconoclasm (destruction of religious images). The transition from Laudianism to iconoclasm and the relationship between iconoclasm and cathedrals during the English Civil War (1642–1646) has been a subject debated over recent years. Nonetheless, little archaeological investigation into iconoclasm has been undertaken or discussed in any of these debates; this creates the opportunity for further investigation into the effect of iconoclasm.

This paper seeks to understand how Oliver Cromwell and the Council of State attempted to wipe out the religious fabric that went against their views. Not only were these cathedrals destroyed, but they also housed prisoners from Dunbar, as seen in Durham Cathedral, to Salisbury, which housed prisoners from the Anglo-Dutch wars (1652–1654). In 1660 the restoration of the monarchy saw Charles II commission a major rebuilding programme to rebuild Cathedrals after the damage of the Civil War. Much of the restoration can be seen as well as evidence of destruction which my MA Dissertation will investigate.

KEYWORDS: HISTORY, CIVIL WAR, RELIGION AND ARCHAEOLOGY, 16TH CENTURY





5:00PM–5:15PM (15 MINS) | VANSHIKA PODDAR

THE SHIVA TEMPLE OF GIRAUD: CONSERVATION OF HERITAGE VIA CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Ancient structures in India often suffer neglect and deterioration, leading to the grave loss of heritage and local history. The subject of this paper is one such site situated in Giraud, about 18 kilometres from Raipur, the State capital of Chhattisgarh. Although protected under the Directorate of Culture & Archaeology, Government of Chhattisgarh, it faces surface deterioration and structural damage. A major cause of this is its proximity to several steel and iron factories. Soot from these factories settles on the surface and has caused significant damage.

For the purpose of this paper, a conditional assessment of the site was carried out and locals were interviewed to gain an understanding of the significance of the structure for the community. The eighteenth-century temple contains several sculptures and is a site of public veneration and gathering. The paper proposes that one of the factories situated nearby, Godavari Power and ISPAT Ltd., undertake the site as a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project and facilitate its conservation. CSR is a mandated obligation for companies to invest a portion of their profit for the welfare of the community. Therefore, the conservation of this site falls in the ambit of CSR and will contribute immensely to protecting the community's collective history.

KEYWORDS: HERITAGE MANAGEMENT, TOURISM AND ARCHAEOLOGY, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.





SESSION 3: EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN ARCHAEOLOGY

CHAIR: JESSICA ELLERAY

SESSION ABSTRACTS

5:40PM–5:55PM (15 MINS) | HANNA MARIE PAGEAU | CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

ARCHAEOLOGY AND ME: FINDING YOURSELF IN THE FACES OF THE FIELD

Archaeology is often heralded by the ‘big name’ white (often English) archaeologists that represent it in the media; Indiana Jones, Nathan Drake, Laura Croft – but these names, those faces hardly represent the field of archaeology as it is seen (or should be) today. This presentation focuses on highlighting primarily early and mid-career archaeologists from around the globe and the work they do. The work they do not only to promote what drives their own research focuses, but their own communities, who they are in and out of the field, and how their experiences have shaped that research. This presentation is all about bringing to light the work of some amazing early and mid-career archaeologists, especially those who are Black, indigenous, disabled, or otherwise vastly underrepresented and their work – which is essential not only to their communities but to archaeology as a whole. The focus here is twofold. For those wishing to enter the field, to see that there may be a mentor out there who looks like you or experiences the world the way you do. For those already in the field, to highlight the importance of the representation of the living side of communities too often studied almost exclusively by those outside of them.

KEYWORDS: COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY, ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE UNDERREPRESENTED, GLOBAL, INTERNATIONAL, BAME, WOMEN, PERSONAL EXPERIENCE



THE UNDERSTANDING AND INFLUENCE OF MENTAL HEALTH IN ANTIQUITY (PRE-RECORDED)

Archaeology and ancient history are two diverse disciplines that allow intrepid archaeologists to discover data and contextual information about our ancestors' lives. With such a broad group of people, there will be some who experience health issues that affect them daily. Poor mental health is one such health issue. As mental health issues grow more evident in the broader public, inclusive research that relates to and inspires a new generation of archaeologists is becoming increasingly necessary.

This research examines parallels of historical medical cases to modern-day understanding by investigating and analysing ancient literature and documents from Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Because health varies so greatly from person to person, each culture will have experienced mental health and general health in a variety of ways, despite the fact that they all happened around the same period. Some civilisations and cultures may not even identify that a person's abnormal behaviour is due to a medical ailment.

Responding to inquiries such as, "Have we always suffered with our mental health?" and "Is mental health a recent occurrence in history?" this research will provide an insight into the existence and understanding of mental health throughout antiquity, as well as how that has informed our present knowledge.

Looking into the past can provide much-needed context for a deeper understanding and acceptance of ourselves and our psychological health. By pursuing inclusive research, we open the doors of archaeology to a new, varied audience who may generate new ideas and technology to advance our knowledge even further.

KEYWORDS: ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE UNDERREPRESENTED, TOPICAL, OUTSIDE THE FIELD





6:05PM–6:20PM (15 MINS) | XINYI XIE | ARCHAEOLOGY SOUTH-EAST

WOMEN IN MASCULINE FIELDWORK: GENDER PERFORMANCE AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROFESSION

The discipline of archaeology is historically shaped from a male-centric perspective. Feminist research has made efforts to reverse the mainstream male-dominated research traditions in recent decades. Fieldwork is the primary workplace of professional socialisation, defines the core of the disciplinary identity of archaeology, and also plays an important role in defining ‘masculinity’ as the disciplinary culture of archaeology. The gender bias in fieldwork deepens the construction of disciplinary knowledge, identity, and diversity.

This research aims at exploring gender bias in archaeological fieldwork in combination with feminist research, especially Judith Butler’s theory of gender performativity. Firstly, it reviews the relationships between feminism and archaeology and the gender issues in archaeological fieldwork. Then, it analyses statistics of female employment in the UK from 1997–98 to 2020 to show diachronic changes. A survey about work conditions and experience in Canada in 2019 is combined to analyse gendered experience and performance in fieldwork. Finally, it summarises the negative effects of gender imbalance and bias in the archaeological fieldwork and discusses possible improvements from the perspectives of archaeology disciplines and feminist archaeologists.

KEYWORDS: FEMINIST ARCHAEOLOGY, WOMEN, GENDER, COMMERCIAL ARCHAEOLOGY, FIELDWORK.





SESSION 4: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SCIENCES

CHAIR: VANISHIKA PODDAR

SESSION ABSTRACTS

6:45PM–6:55PM (10 MINS) | DANIELE CLEMENTI | UNIVERSITY OF YORK

3D INTERVISIBILITY OF ABANDONED QATARI PEARLING VILLAGES

This poster displays a non-photorealistic rendered 3D environment of the archaeological site of Fuwayrit in Qatar, built with 3Ds MAX software, using data gathered by the Origins of Doha and Qatar Project during previous surveys.

Thanks to analyses undertaken within ArcGIS Pro, it was possible to visualise and interpret features of Fuwayrit's reconstructed environment, such as the intervisibility between the mosque's minaret and the rest of the town.

The archaeological site of Fuwayrit in Qatar, abandoned in the mid-1900s, is an important relic of the urban environment inhabited by pearl fishers and merchants in the Arabian Gulf before the explosion of the oil industry. The intervisibility results portrayed in the poster enrich our knowledge of how settlers of a typical pearling village in Qatar would have visually interacted with their households and public space.

This project further investigates the potential of 3D modelling and 3D GIS in Archaeology and intends to assess the efficiency of the Extended Matrix tool for the optimal recording of archaeological 3D reconstruction processes.

KEYWORDS: TECHNOLOGY AND ARCHAEOLOGY, THE FUTURE, OUTSIDE THE FIELD, DIGITAL ARCHAEOLOGY, NON-EUROCENTRIC, ARCHITECTURE/ HISTORIC BUILDINGS.



QUALITATIVE PALAEOECOLOGY: A LOOK INTO THE BLOMBOS CAVE, SOUTH AFRICA MAMMALIAN ASSEMBLAGE

Palaeoecological reconstruction recreates past environments using both qualitative methods, such as comparing the faunal assemblage of a site to assemblages in modern ecosystems to find the most comparable analogy, and more quantitative methods, such as soil analysis, pollen analysis, or stable isotope analysis. More quantitative methods are more accurate but also require well-preserved material and expensive labwork. Qualitative analyses are more accessible since they require only the material found at the site and a trained person.

This presentation will do a qualitative analysis on the Middle Stone Age M3 layer mammalian assemblage at Blombos Cave, South Africa. This covers the time from 108 ka to 81 ka. Blombos Cave is one of the most prominent archaeological sites in South Africa and was intermittently inhabited throughout the Middle Stone Age. The mammalian assemblage was deposited by both humans and carnivores, which gives unique implications for interpretation of the assemblage and its climatic implications.

The analysis will include examining the large mammal and micromammal assemblages of the cave and comparing their modern analogues' habitats to make conclusions about the environment at the time. It will also take into account common assumptions in the field of palaeoecological reconstruction and how they can (or cannot) be justified.

This analysis finds that while a basic overview of the environment at Blombos Cave can be found through a qualitative analysis, the assumptions inherent in qualitative palaeoecological reconstruction make it difficult to determine anything more specific. This is mostly because the majority of animals in the assemblage were generalisers and did not change significantly throughout the M3 phase of Blombos.

This presentation shows that the combination of qualitative and quantitative analyses is necessary. A qualitative analysis of the M3 mammalian assemblage of Blombos Cave provides a good overview of the climate and makes use of material that would not be eligible for quantitative analyses. Quantitative analyses of the assemblage provide more accurate information but require destruction of material and a bigger budget.

KEYWORDS: NON-EUROCENTRIC, PALAEOECOLOGY, PALAEOLITHIC, AFRICAN ARCHAEOLOGY, HOMINIDS, LABORATORY, ZOOARCHAEOLOGY?



THE ANALYSIS OF THE QIN DYNASTY'S ANCIENT HIGHWAY, "ZHIDAO", THROUGH A COMPUTATIONAL APPROACH

In the recent decade, it has become widespread in the West to employ Geographical Information System (GIS) technologies to investigate phenomena of past human behaviour in archaeological settings. Least cost paths through cost surface analysis have been successful, most often with the objective of predicting or reconstructing the layout of ancient routeways. However, the use of GIS tools in archaeological contexts remained relatively unexplored by Chinese academics, particularly in ancient Chinese road networks.

Since its construction in 212 B.C., Zhidao has been documented throughout history. Nonetheless, the route was only briefly described in these sources. The discussion of the exact location of the road conventionally relied upon these historical records until recent archaeological excavations suggested an alternate route. The road can be separated into three sections: the southern, the central, and the northern. Experts now agree on the southern and northern parts of the route. The controversy continues in the route's centre section, where two sets of proposed routes were suggested: the western route(s) and the eastern route(s).

The paper aims to provide a different insight into the road's current research. It utilises the characteristics of the road to construct hypothetical routes through parameter sweeping of least cost path analysis. It will compare the results of these hypothetical routes with the road's southern section through geospatial statistics to determine which one is the best fit for the data. Once the best fit model is created, it will be used to iterate on the central section of the road to determine which set of proposed routes by previous scholars is the most plausible. The paper will conclude by suggesting an alternate route to shed new light on the current research of Zhidao.

KEYWORDS: DIGITAL ARCHAEOLOGY, CHINESE ARCHAEOLOGY, GEOSPATIAL ARCHAEOLOGY, HISTORY.



ANCIENT DNA: THE IMPORTANCE OF ITS USE AND FUTURE OF ARCHAEOLOGY

While the Oxford English Dictionary first cited the term “archaeologist” in 1824, the actual activities of excavations and studying material cultures have been practised for centuries. As it seems to be human nature to discover and understand our history, technology has advanced with the field to determine more accurate answers and solve broader and deeper questions. Relatively a new technology has been developing over the last four decades to aid in archaeologists’ work: the extraction and synthesis of ancient DNA.

Since its discovery, the field of archaeogenetics has fought to be recognised as a reliable and useful tool for piecing together ancient lives. Despite past controversies, today archaeogenetics is the centre of many conversations about identity, culture, migration, and politics of past societies due to methodological improvements and great feats from the field within the last decade. This short lecture is an introduction to the field and focuses on four key elements: what is ancient DNA; what it can tell us about specimens; modern technology used in the field; and what’s likely to happen in the field of archaeogenetics in the future while looking at two crucial case studies.

Archaeogenetics is no longer an up-and-coming field anymore, but a core aspect of what it means to work in archaeology today. It is important to understand how ancient DNA can impact our analysis of cultures, as well as being a key to an understanding we have never had before.

KEYWORDS: THE FUTURE, ARCHAEOLOGICAL SCIENCE, OUTSIDE THE FIELD, LABORATORY.





SESSION 5: LUCKY DIP

CHAIR: RITHIK PRAMOD AND JAHANVI SHARMA

SESSION ABSTRACTS:

7:50PM–8:00PM (10 MINS) | HILARY MACKAY

SINGLE STEPS; BIG JOURNEY: HOW TO GO ON YOUR FIRST EXCAVATION AS A STUDENT

For many students, a career in archaeology starts with watching Time Team, then a few years studying archaeology in their textbooks, but then one finally steps into a trench in their first archaeological dig. An experience that most students will have is how does one apply for excavations, how does one find one to apply for, and once accepted, how does one get prepared. While lecturers often provide guidance, as do Project Leaders, there are many secrets that can be shared between students. Like with many things, the first time you dig a trench, find an object, and meet your first excavation team is very memorable, but also daunting.

The purpose of this short talk is to present my experiences at my own first excavation project experience with the Bamburgh Research Project and to give advice to other students preparing for their first archaeology experience. Many students are able to join a project in their home country; others have to dig further afield. This can be a long process; one best started a few months before the young archaeologist hopes to start digging. This is one piece of advice I did not find until I started looking. Therefore, this short talk is incredibly useful to beginner archaeologists who may not know what to ask or what to know before they start looking for projects to join.

KEYWORDS: EXCAVATION/ FIELDWORK, AIMED AT STUDENTS, PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.



8:00PM–8:15PM (15 MINS) | RITHIK PRAMOD AND JAHANVI SHARMA | THE MAHARAJA SAYAJIRAO UNIVERSITY OF BARODA

EXPLORING THE SOCIO-CULTURAL ASPECTS OF SNAKE WORSHIP IN KERALA

Indians from Ancient India worshipped forces of nature, animals, trees etc. Snake worship is a part of Hindu religion and plays a very important role in cultural as well as ritual aspects. In Kerala, Animism, Anthropomorphism, Totemism and Nature worship were strong concepts. Amongst these, snake worship is very important to the people. In sacred groves, several families conduct rituals like sarpamthullal, thalichukuda and Pulluva pattu to invoke snake spirits and get their blessings. The tradition of snake worship in Kerala is often traced back to the myth of Parasurama reclaiming Kerala from the sea and has taken a prominent place in various forms of literature, traditional paintings, sculptures, art, folklore, architecture etc. Sarpa kavu play a very important role; according to traditions, it's the local communities' responsibility to protect and safeguard the groves as they are part of their integral life. Many sacred groves are homes to important flora and fauna, which helps in maintaining biodiversity and soil fertility. In this paper, the researchers are going to focus on the development of the snake cult in Kerala, important social and cultural rituals regarding serpent worship, and the conservation and preservation of Sarpa Kavu will be analysed.

KEYWORDS: INTANGIBLE HERITAGE, OUTSIDE THE FIELD, ANTHROPOLOGY, HISTORY



8:15PM–8:30PM (15 MINS) | RHIANNON JENKINS, BETHAN PRICE & NATHANIAL PENDER
| CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

METEORITES AND ARCHAEOLOGY: CAN WE INVESTIGATE NATURAL PHENOMENA WITH THE EYES OF AN ARCHAEOLOGIST?

In 2012 a German art show wanted to ship the El-Chaco meteorite from Argentina for display but was stopped by the Moqoit people and Argentinian scientists who stated the meteorite was “not a cosmic curiosity but a cultural and natural artefact”. If meteorites are indeed cultural artefacts, archaeologists should not be overlooking them or their role in human history. Meteorites have fallen from the sky since the Solar System was born 4.6 billion years ago before humans evolved, and they predate any civilisation. Despite this, archaeology has had little to say on the subject.

When studying the past, we have evidence of meteorites as sacred objects, crafting material, and areas of worship. They appear in the archaeological record has iconography on coins. When meteorites fell, some groups saw them as omens of defeat in battle; others had their conflicts interrupted by them. UNESCO World Heritage and various worldwide laws treat meteorites similarly to artefacts and antiquities.

Our ten-minute presentation will highlight several key case studies involving meteorites in the archaeological record. It will include examples from the famous Tutankhamun dagger and other weapons made for royalty to small pieces of jewellery discovered in the drawers of a Polish museum. These examples will cover important themes in archaeology, such as ethics, repatriation and follow complicated object histories and biographies. Additionally, one of our aims is to highlight why meteorites in archaeology provide a perfect outreach opportunity to give outsiders an insight into both archaeology and the natural sciences.

KEYWORDS: OUTSIDE THE FIELD, LABORATORY, ARCHAEOLOGICAL SCIENCE, ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASTRONOMY





8:30PM–8:45PM (15 MINS) | JASMINE GODMON | CHATHAM HISTORIC DOCKYARD TRUST

AUDITING AN ARCHAEOLOGY COLLECTION: CHALLENGES AND ASPIRATIONS

The Historic Dockyard Chatham cares for over 70,000 objects, ranging from manuscripts and hand tools to artwork and photographs. One of the largest object collections held by the Trust is its Archaeology Collection. Excavations have been held by the Trust ever since its formation in 1984, during which time a rich catalogue of finds has been unearthed. These excavations have been for a wide variety of reasons, most notably commercial developments and community projects. Finds from all projects are held within the museum collection.

Although museums and archaeology may seem a natural fit, there has long been a disconnect between archaeological fieldwork and object collections. In the past, it was not uncommon for finds to be left uncatalogued in museum stores, with institutions reluctant or unable to find funding to employ staff to care for them properly. Museums have also struggled with archaeology in recent years due to funding cuts, lack of specialised staff, and limited space within their stores. Despite work by the Society for Museum Archaeology to create in-depth case studies and guides for auditing and communicating archaeology (Boyle and Rawdon, 2020; Boyle and Butterworth, 2021), there now exists a backlog of archaeological archives within the UK. Research is ongoing to rectify this, most notably the report conducted by Arts Council England and Historic England towards the formation of sustainable archaeological archives (Carroll et al, 2021). There is not yet, however, a universal solution to the problem.

In this short talk, I will explore the various issues museums face when auditing an archaeology collection. How can museums put into place a policy of best practice and preserve their archaeological collections for decades to come? How can both museums and commercial companies work together for public benefit? Using the example set by the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum as a case study, I will set out my approach for auditing, conserving, and storing the collection with a view to digitising it for use by researchers and the wider community.

KEYWORDS: OUTSIDE THE FIELD, ARCHIVES, MUSEUMS, MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGY.

