



3RD SEMINAR: Thursday June 6, 2024 | 18.30-20.30

Roundtable Discussion: “Stories of overlooked heritage in the making of small states”

Anne-Helen Mydland | Professor, The Art Academy – Department of Contemporary Art, University of Bergen

Delia Tzortzaki | Adviser and the Legal Representative, Norwegian Institute at Athens

Discussant

Kallirroë Linardou | Assistant Professor in Byzantine and Medieval Art, Department of Art Theory & History, Athens School of Fine Arts | Member of the Executive Administrative Board, RCH

Abstract

While research on geopolitics focuses on the making of small peripheral states in connection with larger nations and scheme of events, inquiry on the concept of small states can also take the opposite route. It can namely turn inwards, by clinging onto to the insignificant, the micro-context, the ignored, the “brushed aside”, such as overlooked industrial cultural heritage -once the source of pride and income for various social groups in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Family stories and memories reveal smaller or larger sections of the dense historical narratives that connect the personal to the bigger picture of the state and its socioeconomic and political presence. Those sections, as fragmented as they might be, are worth exploring. Smallness thus refers to scale, significance, visibility, locality and takes “intimacy” as its methodological tool.

Delia Tzortzaki shifts the attention to fairly unknown textile factories and their more personal stories and engages in field (archival, in situ and ethnographic) research of selected places in Greece (Pireus and Volos) while suggesting collaborative work with Norwegian counterparts exploring similar fields of textile / industrial heritage studies. Anne Helen Mydland looks at smallness from an artistic research perspective. Through the lense of Rhopography (Bryson, 1990) she examines the overlooked stories, histories and social narratives of 'smallness' with emphasis on ceramics. Mydland's artistic research is questioning the object's role, status and value. Methodically juxtaposing the objects' private and public history, different hierarchies of value and class become visible. In her extensive collaborative artistic work at the Spode Factory in Stock on Trent (UK), Mydland sets out to feel and express the empty shell of the factory, this post-industrial “landscape of absence” by turning the gaze towards the “obsolete” and its potentiality for the future. In the final part, the presentation will focus on issues of methodology and structure regarding the NORMED project *Small States in the Making. The Nordic and Mediterranean Regions*.

Speakers' CVs

Anne-Helen Mydland is a professor in Fine Art with specialization in Ceramics and Clay. After her studies at the University of Bergen (archaeology and art history) and at Bergen National Academy of Art (Ceramics), she established her career as an artist, curator, educator and researcher. She has a longstanding engagement with artistic research both nationally and internationally. As a researcher Mydland was the initiator and leader of the artistic research project 'Topographies of the Obsolete 2013-2017 (financed by NARP) and part of the EU/Erasmus funded 'Advancing Supervision for Doctorates in the Arts' heading the WP on Ethics. She has been Vice-dean of Research, Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design, UiB (2018-2022) establishing the UiBs ph.d program in Artistic Research, and part of the National Artistic Research Schools board. She instigated and led the first work on establishing national research ethical guidelines for Artistic Research in Norway. She has held several positions as research and ph.d leader at the Art Academy (KMD/KHiB). Mydland is a member of ELIAs Working Group for Artistic Research.

Delia Tzortzaki is Adviser and Researcher at the Norwegian Institute at Athens / University of Bergen, and since 2021 she is also the Legal Representative and Head of the Institute. Delia holds a Ph.D. in Museology (Roskilde University, Denmark, 2007), an MA in Gallery Studies (University of Essex, UK, 1992) and a BA in Archaeology-History of Art (National and Kapodistrian University, Greece, 1989). Since 1992, Delia has been holding scientific and administrative posts in museums and cultural bodies (Yannis Tsarouhis Foundation, the Cycladic and Ancient Art Museum, The Foundation of the Hellenic World, the Hellenic Ministry of Culture, the Norwegian Institute at Athens), while lecturing in museology and curation studies in the Greek academia and higher educational institutions (The Athens College/Lifelong Learning Programmes, Panteion University, National and Kapodistrian University, The Athens School of Fine Arts).

From 1998 to 2004, Delia was a research collaborator at Roskilde University (Department of Communication) in Denmark. She has curated several exhibitions and published in English and Greek. Her main research interests focus on the evolution of the museum phenomenon, the epistemology of digital heritage and novel curation practices including the reuse of deadstock fabrics within sustainable heritage and circular economy. Delia is the main editor of the collective volume *The Theory of Museology. Main Schools of Thought 1960-2000* (ISBN 2021) published in the series *Papers and Monographs from the Norwegian Institute at Athens*.

