

OPEN CALL FOR PAPERS – ATHENS: 8 – 10 MAY 2024

The Constant Participant: Constructing and Affirming Identity through Material Culture in Ancient Greek Sanctuaries and Modern Museums.

Material culture is a constant participant in the construction and affirmation of individual and collective history and identities through time. It has been utilized both in ancient and modern public settings, where objects may take center stage through intention and/or accumulation. This conference focuses on object agency and their *chaînes opératoires* by following specific groups of objects from their ancient modes of production to practical and performative use in ancient Greek sanctuaries and ritual places, through to their modern presentative state in museum exhibitions. Both sanctuaries and museums represent revered, carefully guarded, civic and political spaces, that are central settings for creation and representation of identity.

The conference focuses on the analyses of the different life stages or life cycles of objects into account in order to study and discuss the perception and agency in the active usage stages of these objects: (1) their *birth* understood as the various stages of production; (2) their *use lives* in their ancient contexts; (3) their death as the point of discard and deposition and, (4) connecting these with the conceptual life stage of their *afterlives* in their modern settings. This approach provides a unique example-driven understanding of material culture agency in public space relating human identity and self-perception. The main research questions are:

1. How and where were sacred objects produced, used, and presented to create, reflect, reshape, and affirm individual and collective identities in the public and political settings of ancient Greek sanctuaries and ritual places?
2. How are those ancient sacred objects presented and used to create, reflect, reshape, and affirm individual and collective identity in the public and political settings of today's national and local museums?
3. How has the revering and manipulation of chosen objects in guarded public settings been used to construct and affirm cultural identities in ancient and modern times?

The chosen timeframe allows for objects found in sacred contexts dating from prehistory until late antiquity.

Organizing committee:

Dr. Sanne Hoffmann, Assistant Director at the Danish Institute at Athens.

Prof. Dr. Ann Brysbaert, Director of Netherlands Institute Athens, Prof. of Ancient Technologies, Materials and Crafts, Leiden University (The Netherlands).

Dr. Petra Pakkanen, Director at the Finnish Institute at Athens.

Venue: The Danish Institute at Athens. Titles and abstracts of up to 300 words for 20-minute talks should be submitted to: sanne.hoffmann@diathens.gr Deadline for abstracts: 1st of November 2023. It is possible to apply for travel and/or accommodation grants. The conference will be published and the deadline for the articles is 1st of December 2024. For more information, see also here:

<https://www.diathens.gr/en/events/konferencer>