

‘Archaeological Dialogues’, a new institution

‘Archaeological Dialogues’ is a new institution, a continuous critical and reflective dialogue about antiquities and archaeology in contemporary society. Its basic form will be an annual, open conference/cultural event, a meeting of critique, theory and action open to all archaeologists: students and professors, directors and contract archaeologists, employed and unemployed, irrespective of sub-specializations and chronological, employment, theoretical or other attributions, beyond hierarchies and other barriers.

It is also open to specialists and non-specialists from other fields: anthropologists, historians, sociologists, art historians, museologists, architects, artists and anyone who wishes to contribute to the conversation about the role and significance of antiquities and archaeology today.

The themes of the conferences will take shape each time based on the proposals for workshops, presentations, theatrical events and other activities, within the framework of the above principles of critique, reflexivity and their open and anti-hierarchical character. For example, the conferences may deal with issues such as the following:

- Archaeology and contemporary society
- Social and critical history of archaeology
- Archaeology and ‘development’
- Antiquities, archaeology and identities (ethnic, national, class, gender, local, etc)
- Political economy of archaeology and archaeological practice
- Archaeology and labor relations
- The relationship between archaeology and social anthropology, history, philosophy, other sciences, contemporary art

Format

The meetings will try to go past the traditional conference format. They will emphasize dialogue and not parallel monologues. The talks/announcements will be brief and in addition to the panel sessions there will be round tables, open discussion sessions but also non conventional forms of critical dialogue: installation art, exhibitions, theatrical events, screenings and other forms proposed by the organizers and participants alike. Greek and English will be the languages in use.

Publications

There will be no conference proceedings conventionally understood as such; neither the organizers of the conferences nor the conveners of the individual sessions are obliged to publish

their proceedings. However, if the participants and the organizers think that some sessions are worthy of publication, on their own initiative, they may contact publishers and journals and suggest the publication of the discussions and presentations, something which may take multiple forms: selections of essays, special issues in journals, websites and ebooks, open access videos, etc., provided they acknowledge that the materials were first presented at the ‘Archaeological Dialogues’ meetings. We also examine the possibility of building websites where texts and other materials could be published.

The first ‘Archaeological Dialogues’ will take place in Athens from the 9th to the 11th of January 2015, and the second in Mytilini, Lesvos in 2016.

The inaugural planning meeting for this initiative took place in Athens (at the offices of the Association of Greek Archaeologists ΣΕΑ) in January 19, 2014, in response to Yannis Hamilakis’s invitation, and the following participated:

George Athanasopoulos
Antonis Vasilakis
Despina Catapoti
Stelios Lekakis
Despina Koutsouba
Mimika Kringa
Alexandros Mazarakis Ainian
Yiota Mavrommati
Dimitris Plantzos
Peggy Ringa
Esther Solomon
Eleni Tziraki
Mina Tsimogianni
Evi Tsota
Yannis Hamilakis

The initiative is coordinated by an open steering group that consists of those who responded to the invitation for the inaugural but also the second planning meeting in Athens, in July of 2014 and colleagues not residing in Athens but who had expressed an interest in participating. The responsibility for each annual meeting is taken up by a local organizing committee, in collaboration with the steering group.

Archaeological Dialogues 2015

9-11 January 2015

Alkis Argyriadis Amphitheater, University of Athens Central Building (Propylaia), Athens

Invitation for panel sessions, papers and events

Those interested in participating in the first ‘Archaeological Dialogues’ are invited to send a summary of 300 words for the session, paper or event they wish to propose to Dimitris Plantzos (dkplantzos@yahoo.gr) by the end of September 2014. Those submitting proposals for panel sessions, workshops and events should submit the names of other participants if known. In October will follow a second and final call after the panel sessions, workshops and other events have been confirmed. Finally, in addition to the main building, other spaces nearby will be available for talks, exhibitions and screenings.