

International Workshop
Baggage and Belonging: Military Collections and the British Empire

Conveners

Henrietta Lidchi (National Museum of World Cultures, Leiden)

Biography

Prior to working in the Netherlands Henrietta worked at the British Museum and at National Museums Scotland. Her research includes Native American art and material culture looking at collections histories and museum practices of collecting and display, as well as contemporary artistic practices. Since 2017 she has been Principal Investigator on the project *Baggage and Belonging: Military Collections and the British Empire (1750-1900)* at National Museums Scotland (AH/P006752/1). Her publications include: *Surviving Desires: Making and Selling Jewellery in the American Southwest* (British Museum/University of Oklahoma Press); *Visual Currencies* (National Museums Scotland Press); *Imagining the Arctic* (British Museum/University of Washington Press) and the forthcoming book, co-edited with Stuart Allan *Dividing the Spoils: Perspectives on military collections and the British Empire* (Manchester University Press).

Stuart Allan (National Museums Scotland)

Biography

Stuart Allan is Keeper of Scottish History & Archaeology at National Museums Scotland. His specialism is in the material and organisational culture of the British Army, and his research focusses on the Scottish military tradition in its wider cultural contexts. He is author of *Commando Country* (2007), and co-author of *Common Cause: Commonwealth Scots and the Great War* (2014), and *The Thin Red Line: War, Empire and Visions of Scotland* (2004). He is currently co-investigator for the Arts and Humanities Research Council project *Baggage and Belonging: military collections and the British Empire, 1750-1900* (AH/P006752/1).

Nicole Hartwell (National Museums Scotland)

Biography

Nicole Hartwell is Postdoctoral Researcher at National Museums Scotland working on the Arts and Humanities Research Council project *Baggage and Belonging: Military Collections and the British Empire, 1750-1900* (AH/P006752/1). She completed her doctorate at the University of Oxford which examined how non-European military cultures were perceived in Britain during the nineteenth century. Her research interests include the material culture of conflict; the collecting practices of the British armed forces; the development of military museums; and the military, cultural and intellectual history of the British Empire, c. 1750-1900. Her most recent publication is: 'A Repository of Virtue? The United Service Museum, Collecting, and the Professionalization of the British Armed Forces, 1829–1864', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 31:1, March 2019, pp. 77–91. She is also Managing Editor for the *Journal of Military Ethics*.

Abstracts and Speaker Biographies

Keynote

Spoils of War

Edward Spiers (University of Leeds)

Biography

Edward Spiers is an emeritus professor at the University of Leeds. His 19 books include *Haldane: An Army Reformer* (1980), *The Army and Society, 1815-1914* (1980), *Radical General: Sir George de Lacy Evans, 1787-1870* (1983); *The Late Victorian Army, 1868-1902* (1992), *The Victorian Soldier in Africa* (2004), and *The Scottish Soldier and Empire, 1854-1902* (2006). He edited *Sudan: The Reconquest Reappraised* (1998) and co-edited *A Military History of Scotland* (2012), which received the Saltire Prize and Templer Medal. He has also edited *Letters from Ladysmith: Eyewitness Accounts from the South African War* (2010) and *Letters from Kimberley: Eyewitness Accounts from the South African War* (2013), and written *Letters from Mafeking: Eyewitness Accounts from the Longest Siege of the South African War* (2019).

Military and political governance

Changing Expectations: How military ethics training and education have evolved over the last 200 years

David Whetham (Defence Studies Department, King's College London)

Abstract

This paper will look at the way the subject of military ethics has been conceived of, understood, and taught in the British military from the 19th century to today. It will focus on the way expected values and standards of behaviour were understood as implicit rather than explicit for much of this period, and how this has changed more recently in response to the changing character of war, but more importantly, due to the changes in demographics and societal expectations. Professional Military Ethics Education is now taken seriously by military institutions and organisations around the world, and includes both traditional virtues-based approaches combined with judgmental training, as well as development (for some) of ethical reasoning skills and their application to novel situations and environments. The paper will also touch on whether the current balance between training and education in this area is appropriate for the challenges of the 21st century.

Biography

David Whetham is Professor of Ethics and the Military Profession in the Defence Studies Department of King's College London. He is the Director of the King's Centre for Military Ethics and delivers or coordinates the military ethics component of courses for between two and three thousand British and international officers a year at the UK's Joint Services Command and Staff College.

David supports military ethics education in many different countries and has held Visiting Fellowships at the Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership, US Naval Academy Annapolis, the Centre for Defence Leadership and Ethics at the Australian Defence College in Canberra and at the University of Glasgow. He was a Mid Career Fellow at the British Academy in 2017-18 and is currently a Visiting Professorial Fellow at the University of New South Wales. Publications include

Ethics, Law and Military Operations (Palgrave, 2010), *Just Wars and Moral Victories* (Brill, 2009) and with Andrea Ellner & Paul Robinson (Eds), *When Soldiers Say No: Selective Conscientious Objection in the Modern Military* (Ashgate: 2014). David is the Vice President of the European Chapter of the International Society for Military Ethics (Euro ISME).

Looting and the Royal Netherlands East Indies (NEI) Army

Pauljac Verhoeven (Museum Bronbeek)

Abstract

The Royal Netherlands East Indies Army, since the demise of the East India Company in 1795, the army of the Colonial State, was continually active to establish & control the colonial empire of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the East (& West). I investigate the institutional looting of the NEI army. What was looted, what is the legitimization of the colonial state, where did the loot end up. In several cases the colonial state has decided to restitute (part of) the looted objects. I do deal with individual looting by soldiers of the NEI army, plenty of examples are available in several of the colonial collections in the Netherlands & Indonesia. The collecting of objects by the combination of army and civil service in the NEI from an institutional point of view is based on several insights. I will show that some of these insights are illustrated in the 19th century exhibitions of museum Bronbeek. The colonial government and the ministry of colonies in combination with the royal house of Orange worked together to place the looted objects (including human remains) mainly in the NEI itself, the museum of the Bataviaasch Genootschap in Batavia (Museum National), in some cases in several institutions in the Netherlands and abroad. The colonial government considered restitution from an early age, I will point to some of these moments. I will end with the conclusions of the negotiations in 1949 during the Round Table Conference on the handing over of the sovereignty to the newly established United States of Indonesia.

Biography

Pauljac Verhoeven (1964) studied art history & archaeology at the university of Leiden, the Netherlands. From 1991 he works in collection management: first in the national museum of ethnology in Leiden and since 1997 in the Royal Home for Retired Military Personnel & Museum Bronbeek in Arnhem. In 2004 he became director of the museum at Bronbeek. Bronbeek museum is the national museum for the colonial history of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. My main personal interest is the transfer of military technology from West to East and vice versa, within the colonial networks.

I am currently working on a new permanent exhibition. The focus of the research is mainly the actions of the colonial government and the consequences of those actions for society. A special field of interest is the ongoing decolonization of the Netherlands.

Caribbean military history and imperialism: The West India Regiment and the Africa campaigns of the 19th century

Staci-Mari Dehaney (Jamaica Military Museum)

Abstract

*"The colonial, of whatever society, is a product of revolution;
and that revolution takes place in the mind"* - V.S NAIPAUL, 1972

The West India Regiment was raised in the Caribbean in 1795 as a black regiment commanded by British Officers. They were armed with the task of military duty to the British Empire and her

interests and exploits throughout the period of colonial expansionism in the 18th and 19th centuries. The West India Regiment served in every war in West Africa in which the British were engaged. They were in the Ashanti Wars in Ghana in 1823-4 and the later campaigns. In 1825, a recruiting company was formed in Sierra Leone and was stationed at Bunce Island for a time, enlisting local people. Up to twelve West India Regiments existed, some serving in Jamaica. By 1818, after the French revolution, the numbers were reduced to six Regiments. In 1840, the Royal African Corps and three companies of the 1st West India Regiment were amalgamated into one corps and designated the 3rd West India Regiment. By 1888, the regiments were consolidated to form one West India Regiment with two battalions. After World War I, the two battalions were disbanded for economic reasons in 1927.

As British expansionism extended to Africa in the 19th century with the establishment of protectorates, imperial and colonial economic policies were established. These policies meant the establishment of sovereignty over taxes as well as trade and currency. Politically this also meant the restructuring of government within areas that were grounded in tradition and religion. This policy of the 19th century was largely reinforced with the support of the military presence of the West India Regiments and the many campaigns they had to address rebellions and disturbances as they arose.

This presentation will examine the West India Regiment campaigns in the 19th century in Africa, illustrating the role the military played in furthering imperial interests through the destabilization of traditional government in Sierra Leone in the Hut Tax War of 1898 and the various Ashanti Wars. Today these battles exist as Battle Honours of the Regiments immortalized on Regimental Silvers, but these battles were poignant in the concretization of British imperial expansionism and the shaping of new nations in the 19th and later 20th centuries. A discussion of the military's role in colonial expansionism is an opportunity to revisit and reconcile what can be deemed a contested aspect of Caribbean Military history.

Biography

I am a Captain within the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) with responsibility for the management of Military heritage and Director of Military History and Library Services for the Jamaican Military Museum and Library (JMML). The JMML is the charity arm of the JDF and therefore not publicly funded. I am responsible for developing exhibitions and programmes about Jamaica's military history and to encourage and facilitate new research on Jamaican military history and its material culture. As Force Curator, I am the JDF's public liaison on military heritage matters. I have a degree in African History and Political Science, a Masters in Heritage Studies from UWI, an MBA from FIU, Certificate in Paper Conservation from the Malaysian Archives, OXFORD CULTURAL LEADERS Alumni, Oxford University and Chinese Culture and Economy, Nanchang University, China. With over seventeen (17) years in the Museums field, my experience includes, Director for the Museums of History and Ethnography (now National Museums of Jamaica), Institute of Jamaica.

Reneging on the gift: Britain's imperial system of asset stripping

Emma Martin (The University of Manchester)

Abstract

This paper uses the concept of the shadow economy (Fleming, Roman and Farell 2000) and its intersection with archaeological interests in object itineraries (Joyce and Gillespie 2015) to trace a previously unknown imperial system of object disposal. I argue that this system tests current understandings of provenance research and the histories of colonial collecting in the Asian

context. For 150 years, this clandestine operation situated in Calcutta, in the British *tosha-khāna* (a word originating from Persian that translates as Treasure House) was used by British officials to systematically strip diplomatically-exchanged objects of their historical and political meaning. In doing so these gifts were surreptitiously de-valued, de-politicised, de-cultured; they were wiped clean and made ready for new duties in South and East Asian collections.

In tracing out this shadow economy and its network of Chinese military, Tibetan dignitaries, Foreign Office officials, north Indian curio dealers and imperial officers, it is possible to see the highly contested, but previously unknown itineraries of Tibetan and Chinese objects as they move across East and South Asia before being brought to Europe. What I aim to show during the workshop is that this hidden process of circulation and distribution has implications for large numbers of Tibetan and Chinese objects without provenance in Europe's Asian museum collections.

This research draws on an imperial archive passed over by generations of scholars. This archive which contains thousands of inventory lists, correspondence between British administrators and curio dealers, and the records of important diplomatic gift exchanges allows one to think through the systematic silencing of a series of gifts tied to tense political and diplomatic moments between Britain and Tibet in the early decades of the 20th century. These acts of asset stripping are neither as violent nor well known as other episodes of looting and pillaging which both disrupted and destroyed the trajectories of Tibetan objects. However, the case studies offered here attest to extraordinary numbers of objects silently suffering the same dislocations and decontextualization at the hands of the British government during its rule in India.

At a recent conference on art provenance, a member of the audience suggested that this aspect of my research is about 'following the money'. Therefore, for this workshop I want to consider this proposition and think about what it means to follow a culturally-significant object as it is incrementally turned into an asset? Moreover, what do we gain from understanding the financial infrastructures of empire that were specifically designed to silence objects? What is the value of this research when – as I will demonstrate – in many cases it is impossible to see where the object goes to after passing through the *tosha-khāna*? Finally, what questions does this research leave us with if we consider the importance of provenance research in the process of repatriation?

Biography

Emma Martin is Lecturer in Museology at the University of Manchester, Senior Curator Ethnology for National Museums Liverpool, and advisor/curator to the Tibet Museum, Dharamshala India. She has been a curator for more than 20 years and specialises in South Asia, the Himalayas and Tibet. Her research focuses on object-led research, specifically colonial collecting and knowledge production. She has published articles and book chapters on colonial collecting, diplomatic gift exchange and the challenges of representing contemporary Tibet in museums. Her first book, *Beyond the Colonial Collector: Recognising Tibetan Networks of Collecting and Connoisseurship* will be published with Routledge in 2021.

Collecting

Naval collections and maritime collecting: Britain's maritime worlds in the Age of Sail

John McAleer (The University of Southampton)

Abstract

This paper explores the collecting activities of Royal Navy personnel in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Age of Sail. The discussion suggests that, by focusing on the objects collected by the navy and the logistics involved in acquiring them, we can gain greater insight into Britain's relationships with the wider world in the period as well as the role of the Royal Navy in brokering these connections. The paper covers two distinct but related aspects of naval collecting. First, it considers the types of objects and specimens acquired by naval personnel. Second, it explores the practicalities and logistics involved in gathering and transporting this material to 'centres of calculation' in Britain. The discussion concludes by considering the opportunities for potential future research and collaboration in both of these areas.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the Royal Navy's increasingly global reach combined with Enlightenment thinking and scientific imperatives to encourage its officers and sailors to procure a wide variety of objects and specimens. These items range from the spoils of war, acquired as a result of the military operations undertaken by the navy, to objects of esteem presented to naval officers in recognition of their role in protecting Britain's commercial and colonial interests. In the same period, increasingly ambitious voyages of exploration brought naval personnel into contact with peoples and places from which an array of artefacts and artworks were collected, while natural history specimens were also amassed in large quantities. Ultimately, many of these objects and specimens entered museum collections. By considering examples from museums in London, Exeter, Liverpool, and Glasgow, this part of the paper highlights some of these patterns in naval collections. Much work remains to be done to identify specific naval collectors and to understand their motivations for acquiring this material. Likewise, the impact of such collections and their display on audiences remains to be studied in detail.

But as well as illustrating the global reach and nature of the British Empire in this period, and the importance of the Royal Navy in facilitating this, many of these objects and specimens raise intriguing questions about the practicalities of collecting in the period. How was this material transported by ship? Where was it stored on board? How did sailors respond to it? What preservation challenges did collecting and transporting by ship pose? The second part of the paper considers some of the practical issues involved in the maritime collecting activities that brought these objects and specimens to Britain. Historians have long recognised the importance of place and location in understanding collections and collecting. In this context, the naval vessel and the shipboard practicalities of collecting and transporting material offer many avenues for further research and the paper concludes by reiterating some of these.

Biography

John McAleer is an Associate Professor in History at the University of Southampton. His work focuses on the British encounter and engagement with the wider world in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, situating the history of empire in its global and maritime contexts. He is interested in the relationships, interactions and patterns of exchange created by the British Empire, and in assessing the impact of these experiences on both British and colonial societies.

Before joining the Department, he was Curator of Imperial and Maritime History at the National

Maritime Museum, Greenwich. During his time at the museum, he worked on the development and delivery of two gallery projects, focusing on Atlantic and Indian Ocean history respectively. He continues to be interested in the role of material culture and museums in representing the history of empire.

The Royal Navy in Indigenous Australia, 1795-1855: Maritime encounters and British Museum collections

Daniel Simpson (Royal Holloway, University of London):

Abstract

My thesis and postdoctoral research examines the origins, meanings, and legacies of ethnographic and (to a lesser extent) natural history collections acquired by the nineteenth-century Royal Navy, and particularly those found now at the British Museum. Though my focus is upon Australia, I have sought to frame antipodean collecting in terms of a wider and global narrative of naval encounter with indigenous peoples. I am currently completing my first monograph (the title of which I have borrowed for this talk), after which I hope to point my efforts toward the development of a truly global account of the navy's nineteenth-century investigations of then newly-encountered cultures. Of relevance to this workshop, I have recently begun to consider the question of inter-service, or even 'amphibious', collecting; voyages of survey and discovery carried both sailors and soldiers; sailors made inland ventures, and some naval expeditions, such as that of the *Congo* (James Hingston Tuckey, 1816) were dedicated entirely to rivers.

My presentation will give an overview of my research interests, methods, and conclusions; the main things I hope to raise will be my thoughts on the origins of naval collecting, its principal infrastructures, the nature and geography of its encounters, and the legacies of collecting as told from the perspective of extant twenty-first-century museum objects. With respect to the origins of collecting, my research explores subjects including the development of naval instructions, the political and imperial significance of ethnographic knowledge, apparatuses for supporting or encouraging collecting (in particular the provision of 'trade gear'), the stratification of disciplinary hierarchies onboard vessels, the related question of 'amateur' and 'professional' knowledges, and the variously constructive and destructive impact of collecting upon naval discipline.

I am particularly keen on sharing and developing my thoughts on the infrastructural mediums of collecting. In sequence, the institutional spaces commonly navigated by naval specimens were ships, custom houses, service hospitals, and museums. Whereas ships and museums are relatively well-known, much more remains to be said about the opportunities and obstacles posed to historical collections by colonial and metropolitan custom houses; surviving records from these institutions offer an extraordinary, but under-utilised, means of identifying, qualifying, and quantifying historic naval and military collections. Similarly, service hospitals played a significant though since unsung role in storing, researching, and exhibiting colonial specimens; they additionally became key and early sites for investigating the boundaries between medical, ethnographic, and natural historical knowledges.

I will finish the talk by sharing my experience of the British Museum's efforts to explore and shape the interpretation and exhibition of nineteenth-century naval collections today. I will comment on how new and timely efforts to include indigenous perspectives and voices have driven interest in subjects including indigenous agency and the role of colonial intermediaries. I hope also to discuss how this has stimulated localised and microhistorical perspectives, in place of grand

conceptual schemes – in terms of my own research, this has meant assessing incidences of historical collecting in terms of the specific physical and cultural geography of the environments in which it occurred.

Biography

Daniel Simpson is an Honorary Research Associate at Royal Holloway, University of London. He completed his PhD in history, researched in collaboration with Royal Holloway and the British Museum, in 2018, and has since undertaken two postdoctoral fellowships at the National Maritime Museum. His work investigates eighteenth- and nineteenth-century naval ethnographic collecting in Australia and the South Pacific. Recent and forthcoming publications explore the history of naval museums, and the political infrastructure of colonial collecting.

Military collecting in Aceh, colonial Indonesia

Mirjam Shatanawi (University of Amsterdam / Reinwardt Academie)

Abstract

The National Museum of World Cultures (NMVW, the Netherlands) owns one of the largest collections from Indonesia worldwide. The largest part of the collection, which comprises a total of 172,778 objects, was acquired in the colonial era. One of the regions in which collecting concentrated was Aceh, on the northern end of Sumatra, and also the location of the longest colonial war (1873-1914, according to the Dutch; 1873-1942 according to the Acehnese) in Dutch history. Compared to other regions in Indonesia, the Aceh collection stands out because the vast majority of the individuals collecting were members of the Dutch East Indies army (KNIL). This paper explores the question what it means that almost all ethnographic collecting is done by military staff and in the context of conflict and resistance to colonial rule. Using a number of examples from the NMVW collections, this paper will investigate how conflict influenced what was collected in Aceh, and how this in turn influenced colonial perceptions of Aceh. Focusing on different phases of the conflict, I will try to explain the emphasis on certain object types (e.g. manuscripts) when material from Aceh did make its way into museum collections, as well as to account for its absence in other domains.

Biography

Mirjam Shatanawi is lecturer of Heritage Theory at the Reinwardt Academy (Amsterdam University of the Arts) and PhD candidate at the University of Amsterdam. Between 2001 and 2018, she has been associated with the National Museum of World Cultures (the Netherlands) as curator for the Middle Eastern and North African collections. She is the author of *Islam at the Tropicmuseum* (2014). Her current research project is entitled *Framing Indonesian Art: Colonial Discourse and the Question of Islam*, focusing on a group of objects from Indonesia that were collected during the colonial period, as a case study to understand the historical conditions leading to the Western disregard of Indonesian Islamic art and to investigate alternative approaches to the concept of 'Islamic art' in an Indonesian context.

Prefiguring the looting of Benin: Niger Coast Protectorate politics and personalities in the 1890s

Zachary Kingdon (National Museums Liverpool)

Abstract

Popular general assumptions about colonial relations, tend to leave 'all agency at one end', namely, at the European coloniser's end. However, it does not follow that such assumptions have

led to attempts to analyse this agency so that the agency of Europeans in colonial contexts has frequently remained 'undifferentiated, assumed, and unexplored' (Stoler and Cooper 1997). This paper attempts to examine the particular agency of a key European who played a part in the fall of the Benin kingdom and the consequent looting of the City of Benin in the 1890s. While the annexation of the Benin kingdom can be understood as official British policy by the 1890s, the method and timing of the conquest can be seen to have been driven by competitive, dissonant and risk-taking actions of colonial officials in Nigeria, sometimes acting against directions from the foreign office. Much commentary has focused on the immediate setting and events of the British 'punitive expedition' against Benin in February 1897, but little attention has yet been paid to the personality, assumptions and military background of figures like vice consul Henry Gallwey, whose actions in extracting a treaty from the Oba of Benin in 1892 can be seen to have prefigured the conquest and looting of Benin in 1897. This paper will make use of archival material recently donated to the World Museum by the descendant of an heir of Henry Swainson, a one-time associate of Gallwey's in Nigeria. The bronze horseman in the World Museum Liverpool collection, which Oba Ovonramwen gave to Swainson during his 1892 visit to Benin City with Gallwey, as well as other Benin works acquired during that 1892 visit will also be discussed in relation to the paper's main arguments.

Biography

Zachary Kingdon is Curator of the African Collections at National Museums Liverpool and led the development of the Africa displays in the World Cultures Gallery at World Museum Liverpool (opened April 2005). He conducted his doctoral research among Makonde sculptors in Tanzania and holds a Ph.D in Advanced Studies in Non-Western Art from the SRU at UEA. In 2009 he was granted a Leverhulme Research Fellowship to conduct research in West Africa for his latest book: *Ethnographic Collecting and African Agency in Early Colonial West Africa: A Study of Trans-Imperial Cultural Flows* (Bloomsbury Academic 2019).

Afterlives

Beyond Humiliation: Museum ethics for an agonistic age

Chris Wingfield (Sainsbury Research Unit for the Arts of Africa, Oceania & the Americas)

Abstract

Public debate around reparation and repatriation has gained fresh impetus following the publication of the Savoy-Sarr report in late 2018. This paper will consider objects removed from Africa following military conquest, such as those looted from Benin City in 1897, and consider the role that displays of trophies played in the humiliation of defeated enemies.

For many people of African descent today, the ongoing display of these objects in European museums serves to perpetuate a sense of humiliation – something that Ali Mazrui referred to as 'The Cross of Humiliation' in his 1979 Reith lectures on the African Condition. Psychologists tell us that humiliation amounts to the public discrediting of one's claims to status. This can result in anger, shame and a desire for revenge. It is surely no surprise, then, that many historic episodes of humiliation have led to the development of forms of assertive nationalism.

In this paper I want to ask what it would mean for museums to move beyond historic forms of humiliation and their contemporary legacies. However, I also want to ask how museums can participate effectively in forms of public discourse that are frequently characterised by a desire to humiliate others, particularly online.

Biography

Chris Wingfield is Associate Professor in the Arts of Africa at the Sainsbury Research Unit, University of East Anglia. He has previously worked at the Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology, Cambridge and Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery as a curator, and as a researcher at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.

Chatoyer's Sword, Chatoyer's Gorget: Objects of colonial capitulation in the eighteenth-century Caribbean

Desha Osborne (Department of Africana, Puerto Rican/Latinx Studies
Hunter College, City University of New York)

Abstract

The duel between Garifuna Chief Joseph Chatoyer and Scottish soldier Major Alexander Leith in the early morning of 14 March 1795 at the start of the Second Carib War has long been accepted not only as a key moment in St Vincent's colonial history (the British victory directly resulted in St Vincent's permanent and uninterrupted status as colony until 1979), but also the end of the presence of a majority of the island's indigenous people (although a few hundred remained in remote villages). Consequently, the duel has taken on symbolic significance – in his death, Chatoyer represented the end of the possibility of autonomy for black and native people in the Caribbean and the beginning of permanent British control over the whole region – and Leith represented the symbol of loss and the strength of Empire in the telling of colonial history. Key to the establishment of these two soldiers-as-representations is the revoking of the symbolic gifts given to Chatoyer. Following the duel, the popular history explicitly reports that Leith stripped Chatoyer of a silver gorget given to him by the future King William IV; while later histories allude to the reclaiming of a silver mounted hanger and sword given to him by Sir William Young, 2nd Bart, plantation owner, British politician and Governor of Tobago.

Last year, I conducted research in Scotland exploring Alexander Leith's biography that challenges and questions the veracity of the duel. This paper will consider the importance of the sword and gorget – two objects long accepted as central to both Chatoyer's downfall and the telling of St Vincent's colonial history.

Biography

Désa A. Osborne is an adjunct Assistant Professor at Hunter College, CUNY where she teaches literature. She was previously the Library Scholar at the University of Aberdeen. In 2019 Désa was the Daiches-Manning Fellow in 18th-Century Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh's Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities where she began work on her project, 'Historical Imagination and the Colonial Legacy in 18th-century Caribbean and Scotland.' Désa completed her PhD in English at the University of Cambridge; her research was the first study of the poem *Hiroona* by Horatio Huggins. The first critical edition was published in 2016.

Heritage Justice

Charlotte Joy (Goldsmiths, University of London)

Abstract

In this paper I will be presenting the outline of my new short book on heritage justice. The book examines how far past wrongs can be remedied through compensatory mechanisms involving material culture. It goes beyond a critique of global heritage brokers such as UNESCO, the ICC and museums as redundant, Eurocentric and elitist to explore why these institutions have

become the focus for debates about global heritage justice. Three broad modes of compensatory mechanisms are identified: recognition, economic reparation and return. Arguing against Jenkins (2016) that museums should not be the site for difficult conversations about the past, I suggest that it is exactly the space around objects and sites created by museums and global institutions that allows for conversations about future dignity. The challenge for cultural practitioners is to broaden ideas of material identity beyond source communities, private property and economic value to encompass dynamic global shifts in mobility and connectivity.

Biography

Dr Charlotte Joy is a Lecturer in Social Anthropology at Goldsmiths, University of London. Her research focusses on the intersection between materiality and dignity. She did her doctoral fieldwork in Mali and at UNESCO in Paris. Her new research is at the International Criminal Court and in Dakar. She is beginning a new small GCRF project working with Women's Museum in Dakar and the IFAN Museum. She is publishing a short book for CUP entitled 'Heritage Justice'.

Why do museums in the UK continue to struggle with Nazi-era provenance?

Jacques Schuhmacher (Victoria & Albert Museum)

Abstract

For German museums, the Nazis' reign of terror had provided a remarkable opportunity to enrich their collections. In many cases, Gestapo vans simply pulled up to museum gates and unloaded boxes of artworks emblazoned with the legend 'Jewish Property'. Curators diligently recorded the origins of these objects, but after the war often deliberately censored their own records so they could hold onto this loot. This was as predictable as it was cynical, but what is more surprising is that the scale of Nazi looting was so vast that it has left traces even in the museums of countries that had fought to defeat Hitler and his regime.

This paper asks how it was possible that many of Britain's national museums came to acquire pieces that had been extorted or confiscated from Jewish owners – even the V&A, which counted former Monuments Men among its curators after the war, was no exception. This was not – as has sometimes been claimed – because British museums intentionally looked the other way while adding these objects to their catalogues. These institutions were merely continuing the established practice of not probing too deeply into the history of ownership.

This would only change – abruptly – in 1998 with the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets, and this paper investigates why Britain's museums suddenly began to ask donors and dealers for information about who had owned objects between 1933 and 1945 before accepting them into their collections. As Nazi-looted art was discovered in the galleries and storerooms of Britain's cultural institutions, curators began to apply this new level of diligence to the provenance of objects already in their keeping. In contrast to cases involving Colonial-era artefacts, it is possible for national museums in the UK to restitute Nazi-looted art thanks to the 2009 Holocaust Act. But this happened only in a small number of cases and without much fanfare.

Despite this landmark shift in perspective and practice, museums continue to struggle enormously with questions of provenance related to the Nazi period, and this paper will explain why this remains the case. In contrast to many items captured by European objects, one cannot tell from looking at an object whether it was once in a Jewish collection. The provenance information which would provide clarity was either never recorded or deliberately obfuscated before the objects arrived in the UK. For museums, finding such pieces therefore often amounts to looking for needles in a catalogued haystack assembled over the 65 years between 1933 and

1998, a period during which collectors and art dealers similarly gave little consideration to provenance.

Finally, this paper will explore why, in spite of the enormous effort that went into provenance research, British museums have been so reluctant talk to their visitors about this important issue through exhibitions or displays, and highlight the challenges involved in communicating this research.

Biography

Jacques Schuhmacher is the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Provenance and Spoliation Curator at the V&A. Prior to joining the V&A in June 2018, he worked for the Commission for Looted Art in Europe. He holds a PhD in History from the University of Oxford. He is the co-curator of the special provenance display *Concealed Histories: Uncovering the story of Nazi Looting Art* (V&A, 6 December – 10 January 2021).

Reflections

Professor Clare Harris, FBA (University of Oxford and Pitt Rivers Museum)

Biography

Clare Harris is Professor of Visual Anthropology, Curator for Asian Collections at the Pitt Rivers Museum, and a Fellow of Magdalen College at the University of Oxford. She has published widely on art, museums, photography, and the politics of representation in relation to Tibet, the Tibetan diaspora, and the Himalayas. Her award-winning publications include 'In the Image of Tibet' (1999) and 'The Museum on the Roof of the World: Art, Politics and the Representation of Tibet' (2012). Her most recent monograph is 'Photography and Tibet' (2016) and her latest exhibition was 'Performing Tibetan Identities' co-curated for the Pitt Rivers Museum with the Tibetan artist Nyema Droma. Professor Harris has received many grants in support of her research, including from the Leverhulme Trust and the AHRC. In September 2019, she was elected as a Fellow of the British Academy.

Christopher Evans, MCIFA, FSA, FBA (Executive Director, Cambridge Archaeological Unit, University of Cambridge)

Biography

Having worked in British archaeology for over forty years, Evans co-founded the University's Cambridge Archaeological Unit in 1990. He has directed a wide variety of major fieldwork projects, both abroad (Nepal, China & Cape Verde) and in UK, publishing the results of the Haddenham Project in 2006, the South Cambridge/Addenbrooke's Environs (2008), *Fengate Revisited* (2010), the Colne Fen Project's *Process and History* volumes (2013) and *Mucking's Prehistory (Lives in Land, 2016)*. Serving as a Vice-President of the Prehistoric Society (2015-18), he was elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London in 2000 and to British Academy in 2018. A member of editorial board of *The Bulletin of the History of Archaeology*, he has published widely on the subject (including archaeology's connections to the British military) and, together with Tim Murray, edited *Histories of Archaeology: A Reader in the History of Archaeology* for Oxford University Press (2008).