Reaching for Atlantis. The cultural biographies of objects under the Swedish Empire and beyond

Initiative: Freigeist-Fellowships

Bewilligung: 03.07.2017

Laufzeit: 5 Jahre

Projekt-Website: www.reachingforatlantis.de

This project explores the histories of objects with which scholars constructed a glorious picture of Sweden's early history during the period of empire (c. 1650-1720). At this time, hundreds of artefacts were (re)interpreted to buttress a narrative that identified Sweden as the cradle of European civilization; as the legendary Atlantis described in classical texts. Drawing on an international academic network, this project will unravel the multi-layered histories of a selection of artefacts, to write both a history of the objects themselves and construct a larger history from them. By examining how previous interpretations changed as political contexts shifted and how the parameters of academic disciplines were formed and transformed through collecting, we will ask what role these objects played in the intellectual nexus within and without royal circles. Conventional publication will be complemented by an online platform (reachingforatlantis.de) that will illustrate the history of such objects in different contexts. This platform will eventually provide the basis for a conceptually innovative, cutting-edge visualisation to allow a wider audience to explore these objects' 'cultural biographies', and thus engage with the factors that informed their interpretations across centuries.

Projektbeteiligte

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