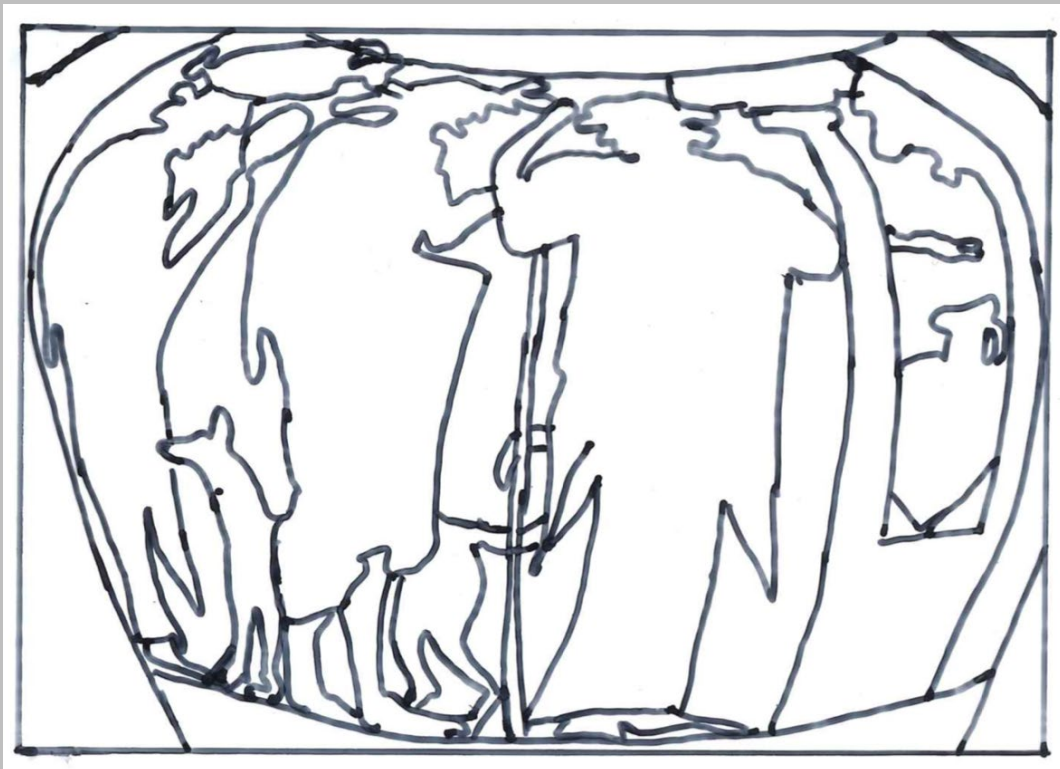




## Nine Steps Back: Images of Athenian Fountainhouses and their Real-Life Counterparts - a Study in Visual Representation

Lecture by Siw Bjørgen (Independent Researcher, M.A. in Archaeology 2022, UiO)



(Skjerm bilde 2024-09-08 kl. 01.58.17)

The lecture will take place on **Thursday, 19 September 2024, at 7:00 p.m. (EEST)** at the Norwegian Institute at Athens, Tsami Karatasou 5, 11742 (the lecture will also be streamed online via Zoom)

Registration is required for both in-person and virtual attendance.

To attend **in-person**, please register at [norwinst@uib.no](mailto:norwinst@uib.no)

To attend **via Zoom**, please register via the following link:

[https://uib.zoom.us/meeting/register/u5clfuuvqzMiG9BLOKqd\\_IsU6tXNtabkKyIG](https://uib.zoom.us/meeting/register/u5clfuuvqzMiG9BLOKqd_IsU6tXNtabkKyIG)



## Abstract

Life imitates art imitates life? Were the images of fountainhouses depicted on Greek vases inspired by their real-life counterparts, which we know existed in the ancient Greek world? Images of fountainhouses in Greek vase paintings enjoyed a brief period of popularity. During this time, depictions ranged from very minimal to highly detailed and included a variety of representations—some featuring humans, gods, animals, and others not. The fountainhouses themselves were portrayed in diverse ways. These images are often linked to the Peisistratid tyranny, yet scholarly attention to the theme has been somewhat limited. More often than not, such images have been used as illustrative examples for other types of research. The emphasis has typically been placed on the most "exquisite" images, neglecting the potential of others that may be deemed less refined. The premise of my thesis was this: I selected a group of images, not based on their perceived exquisiteness, but rather on their depiction of the mundane task of fetching water. I focused on scenes that could be interpreted as everyday situations, excluding those with supernatural elements. Using methodologies from visual analysis, I classified and categorized these images for further study. This approach contrasts with the traditional iconographic method, which heavily relies on literary sources. As an archaeologist, I aimed to explore the visual language of these vase images, if at all possible.

## Biography

Siw Bjørgen (M.A. in Archaeology, University of Oslo) is currently an independent researcher. She has worked as an educational guide at both the Norwegian Maritime Museum (NMM) and the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo. At NMM, she educated visitors about the Bjørvika excavation, the cultural history of Oslo during the Reformation, as well as archaeological artifacts, research, conservation, and preservation. At the Museum of Cultural History, she guided visitors on several topics, including the Norwegian Middle Ages during the Reformation.

Siw participated in fieldwork conducted by the Danish Institute at Athens in 2015 and by the Museum of Cultural History in 2014. She served as editor-in-chief of *Nicolay Arkeologisk Tidsskrift* from 2014 to 2016. In 2016, she published an article on her experience during the archaeological field course for students at the University of Oslo, titled "*Arkeologisk feltkurs våren 2016: mesolitikum i Aust-Agder*" (*Nicolay Arkeologisk Tidsskrift*, ISSN 0332-8937, 129:13-22). In 2016, she was awarded the Travel Stipend from NIA, which allowed her to spend four weeks in Athens in 2017 conducting research that ultimately resulted in her M.A. thesis. Her primary research interests include Greek and Roman antiquity, hydrology, and the Norwegian Middle Ages and Reformation.