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ABANDONED, DISCARDED, FORGOTTEN: GARBOLOGICAL STUDY OF ÖLAND'S RECREATIONAL BEACHES

***Leila Papoli-Yazdi*[1]**
***Omran Garazhian*[2]**
1) Malmö University, Sweden
2) University of Neyshabou, Iran

Abstract
During the summer of 2022, the authors visited 43 public beaches, ports, and coastal parks on Öland island to investigate the objects left on these spots through a garbological lens. Garbology is a branch of archaeology which applies the field methods of archaeology to investigate and document garbage-making behaviours, landfills, and waste disposal. Archaeological surveys and excavation were the main methods used in Öland's project to study and document abandoned objects.

On a visit to Byxelkrok (northwestern Öland), it was figured out that fixed seaweeds are one of the significant sources which keep the unnatural pieces of waste. In sequences of two weeks, we started to document, weigh, and record every piece of debris absorbed by the seaweeds. The studied seaweeds were five, each in the extension of 9x2 m which were thoroughly cleaned in each round of extraction.

Further investigations proved that the abovementioned seaweeds moved by the wind and tide to a location where they would be fixed. These locations were not further than 30 meters from the waves' line. In the next step, all the extracted objects were classified into various categories: pieces of plastic, industrial plastic, bullets, metal, straws, textiles, pottery shreds, wires, and pieces of fishing nets. The studied objects were landed by waves, moved by the wind, or abandoned by tourists and visitors. From a chronological viewpoint, some of the most decayed objects can be dated back to the 1970s.

In this presentation, the mentioned novel method of extraction of seaweeds will be formulated. The technique is useful for scholars from various fields interested in documenting marine waste.

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