

Grambye, V.H. (2020). *Antikvaren som samler i det tidlig moderne museumslandskab*. Institut for Historie: Syddansk Universitet. In Danish.

#### Abstract

Little is known about the early modern culture of collecting in Denmark besides the collection of Ole Worm and the Royal Kunstkammer in Copenhagen. Inspired by international studies this dissertation investigates the museological practices of antiquarian collectors between 1650-1750 with the aim of reinterpreting and reinstating the antiquarian as an important scholarly figure in the development of the study of the material culture of the past and for the understanding of museum-making in early modern Denmark. Through an examination of the communities of collecting, the knowledge production and the mediation techniques concerning antiquities the dissertation shows, that the wide held image of the antiquarian in Danish historiography as an odd loner and unscientific amateur must be dismissed. On the contrary the dissertation argues, that the antiquarians should instead be understood as learned practitioners of an eclectic antiquarian tradition, which operated within and created sociocultural communities of collecting, where the study and mediation of material antiquities also were key elements in their pursuit for the enlightenment and experience of the past. From small local environments to the transnational Republic of Letters the antiquarians collected, communicated, exchanged and discussed material antiquities, whose meaning they tried to grasp through different interpretation strategies and convey to each other by sensorial methods. Empirical observation and literary culture were closely intertwined and the material antiquities played an integral part alongside literary evidence in the attempts of the antiquarians at understanding the 'Third Antiquity' of the North. The antiquarian activity between 1650-1750 signalizes the beginnings of a museological specialization and the dissertation finally emphasizes the antiquarian collectors as a missing link and prism for understanding the early modern culture of collecting and the formation of the 'modern' museums in Denmark. Thereby also concluding that empirical studies of early modern collecting and the continuities and discontinuities of museological practices are more crucial for understanding museum developments from the early modern to the modern period, than relying on the ruptures of classical epistemic thought, which in many ways are still dominant today.