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“Museological anxiety”: perspectives and practice on Cape Verde museums

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Geographic and Historical Overview

The Republic of Cape Verde is an archipelago country in the central Atlantic Ocean, located between 600 and 850 km west from the cape verde, in Senegal, the westernmost point in continental Africa. The capital is Cidade da Praia. Cape Verde is an independent country since 1975. Previously was an overseas Portuguese department.

Cape Verde's official language is Portuguese, but the national language is Cape Verdean Creole, very important to the national identity, used colloquially throughout Cape Verde. The ALUPEC alphabet has even been established by law. Recently, is going on a constitutional revision which, also, include Creole as an official language.

The Cape Verde archipelago was uninhabited until the 15th century, when Portuguese explorers discovered and colonized the islands. Thus, establishing the first European settlement in the tropics, in Ribeira Grande de Santiago, the first capital of Cabo Verde until 19th century. Because Cape Verde were located in a strategic location (in halfway between Europe and America) these islands played an important role in the Atlantic slave trade.

Museology in Cape Verde

In 1871, was established in Cape Verde a museum and a public library. Initially, the main goal of the collection had the focus in the Natural History, but was changed by war objects, later, replaced by ethnographic objects from Guinee and Senegal¹. In 1892, its collection was handed over at another institution. This decision was linked with the creation, in 1871, of the Colonial Museum in Lisbon. In the end of the 19th century, was created two school museums in São Nicolau Island and in Santiago Island, with the same purposes².

Throughout the 20th century, several attempts were made to settle a museum in Ribeira Grande de Santiago³, some of them closely connected with the concept of Site Museum, and the Eugénio Tavares House Museum in Brava Island. During the mission of Luís Benavente at Cape Verde, the idea of establishing a museum in Ribeira Grande de Santiago remain as an aim to realize. **(Image I)**

¹ Figueiredo, Jaime de, *A Fundação da Biblioteca Pública da Praia*, p. 13; Antunes, Luís Pequito, “A efêmera existência do Museu de Produtos Naturais da Cidade da Praia, Cabo Verde, 1859-1876”, p. 45.

² Gouveia, Henrique Coutinho, “Museus de Cabo Verde. Continuidade e Inovação”, p. 64; Gouveia, Henrique Coutinho, “Reconversão Museológica de Sítios em Cabo Verde. Estudo de caso – Chão Bom do Tarrafal”, p. 94; Antunes, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

³ Henrique Coutinho Gouveia has developed an interesting research about this heritage site. Recently, a doctoral thesis proposed its museological program, based on a pattern of the site museums.



Image I - Ribeira Grande de Santiago

After the independence, for many years, there were no consistent cultural policies directed towards museums in Cape Verde, because it's government privileged the consolidation of the economic and social areas, despite popular Cape Verdean culture have had a lot of highlights⁴.

Cape Verde did not get any museum, national archive or library from the colonial time. The idea of the national museum was, during a long time, a national aim, until today never done⁵. Regarding for its collection and incorporation policy, it should be noted an orientation for Material Heritage and the

⁴ Gouveia, Henrique Coutinho (2016) "Reconversão Museológica de Sítios em Cabo Verde. Estudo de caso – Chão Bom do Tarrafal", pp. 94-95.

⁵ About this subject, over the years, several researchers have written texts that help us to better understand this project.

absence of topics related to the Intangible Heritage. The doubts about its location, collections, typology and other subjects are evidence of the lack of ideas for this propose.

This situation began to reverse, albeit quite slow: In São Vicente Island, the National Pottery Centre was founded in 1977, the Botanic National Garden Grandvaux Barbosa, in 1988, and the Special Documents Museum⁶, in 1991, both in Santiago Island. About this last example, we must enhance which had, during a long time, financial and technical support of West Africa Museums Programme (WAMP) and in the beginning of 1990's becomes an ICOM member, until 2006. Later in 1997, was created the Ethnographic Museum, also in Santiago Island. But the big boom of Cape Verde museums happened from the beginning of 21th century. In the last years, museums overview of Cape Verde has had a positive evolution, although without the wanted evolution. Nowadays, Cape Verde has more than 30 museums/exhibitions rooms and Interpretive Centres spread across all islands.

Several reasons have contributed to this, which makes the exercise of museum praxis in Cape Verde in an interesting case study, and in which the terminology *museological anxiety* is a perfect synthesis about what we will talk.

Management and typologies

In Cape Verde there are museums with different typologies of management, however, the public museums are predominant, mainly in Santiago Island, where are some of the most important museums of this archipelago country: Archaeologic Museum, Ethnographic Museum and Penal Colony of Chão Bom. This last one can be an excellent site museum if the concepts related with this kind of museums are performed and scientifically validated.

Municipal and private museums already exist in this archipelago, and in some cases, for example Casa da Memória (Memory House) and Museu da Pesca (Fishing Museum), placed in peripheral islands (Fogo and São Nicolau) are good examples of the museological practices.

Disciplinary museums/exhibitions rooms and thematic museums/exhibition rooms are almost in the same number. Their typologies are diversified, but some of them are not represented, or are still in insufficient, just like: Natural History and Exact Science Museums, Site Museums, House Museums and City Museums. The knowledge which we have about this museological panorama, allows us to say that these proposals could be implemented.

A lot of these museums are in buildings with a historical significance, built in the last centuries, as for example, the Special Documents Museum, located in the former custom house in Cidade da Praia, the Ethnographic Museum, in the historical centre (Plateau) also in Cidade da Praia, the Museum of São Filipe and the House of Memory, in Fogo Island, both situated in a traditional house (**Image II**)

⁶ Over the years, José Maria Almeida e Tiago Estrela were the main drivers of this non- three- dimensional objects museum.



Image II - Ethnographic Museum building

Visitors

Since 2018 until the first half of 2022, the public museums were visited by: twenty-two thousand ninety-six visitors (22.096), in 2018; twenty-nine thousand two hundred and sixty-four visitors (29.264), in 2019; seven thousand eight hundred ninety-nine visitors (7.899), in 2020; eight thousand four hundred and sixty-six visitors (8.466), in 2021, and ten thousand eight hundred and fifty-one visitors (10.851) in the first semester of 2022.

The museum with the highest number of visits⁷ is the Penal Colony of Chão Bom and most of the visitors were foreigners, follow by students and native visitors. It should be noted that this museum is located at the farthest town of Santiago Island, but because of its importance to the recent history of Cape Verde and Portugal, between 1936 e 1974, it is a must visit point.

The Ethnographic Museum of Praia and the Museum of the Sea in Mindelo, before the pandemic, also had many visitors. However, the Archaeological Museum of Praia, close to the Ethnographic Museum (10 minutes walking), and also an important museum to display Cape Verde History, it has had few visitors until 2021 but, in the first half of 2020, the number of visitors had almost the same number (one thousand four hundred and seventeen/one thousand four hundred and seventy-two), maybe, because part of the objects of the Archaeological Museum are, since February 2022, in a room exhibition in Ilda Lobo Palace, in the main square of Cidade da Praia.

The same situation happens in São Vicente Island, between Museum of the Sea and Cesária Évora Museum. Both museums are closely, but the number of visitors in the last one it is much lower than the first. It should be noted that Cesária Évora is the best-known singer in this country. Therefore, strategies must be planned to attract visitors to this space. One of the solutions could be a joint ticket for these two museums.

In 2018, 1600 visitors went to visit Sal Museum, in 2019, 1118 visitors, and in the first half of 2022, 425 visitors. If we considered that the Sal Island is the most touristic in this country, it is hard to understand why there is no communication strategy aimed at travel agencies and hotels on the island.

⁷ The analysis of the data provided by the Cape Verde Cultural Heritage Institute (IPC).

In our opinion, the number of visitors is so low in some museums, first, because the foreigner visitors don't have a chance to choose, because this visits already are included in the tourist package, second, because the partnership between the cultural sector and the tourism sector it's almost non-existent, and finally the lack of a cultural marketing strategy.

The *Profile Study and Level of Satisfaction of Visitors in Cape Verde Museums*, developed in 2020, could be an excellent document to do research about the needs and characteristics of these visitors: foreigners, students and natives, each one with your specificities and needs.

Financial Resources

In Cape Verde, museums don't have autonomy on their own annual budgets, which arise depending on the projects. Therefore, its daily management it is even more difficult than in museums that have annual budget. Some of them (Ethnographic Museum) have your budget by the Tourism Fund. The Tourism Operational Plan, announced in 2021, sponsored by the World Bank, and already established by law, it is destined to finance the culture sector, and obviously the museums, could become an important contribution to its better sustainability.

By other side, the profits: fee entrance and store products/merchandising, book editions, also, aren't enough to the daily management. Cape Verde museums can't, for example, to rent museums areas to events, restaurant/lounge, because them aren't able to have that kind of services.

To overcome this situation, Cape Verde museums have an integrated management system, which any museum, if to get more profits, can share the contributions of the others. The legal institutionalization of Cape Verde museums, enable them to have more autonomy and own budgets, and will allow them to get other grants.

In Cape Verde, considering the close relationship that museums have with the local communities, it will be easy to develop projects like Museum Friends Group, very important in Portuguese museums, because with their events and activities gets some profits to help the diary management.

Interpretation/Exhibition and Education

About Interpretation/Exhibition and Education functions we have good examples. The new museography speech in some museums is evidence, for example, in Penal Colony of Chão Bom, in Archaeology Museum, in Special Documents Museum and in Eugénio Tavares House (**IMG III**). On May 22, 2021, a new project for the Norberto Tavares Museum was presented which will be an interesting exhibition idea. But, in most of museums the exhibitions contents must be improved. Sometimes, these areas are just exhibition rooms, with objects arranged without the standards required for museums. In our opinion the digital technologies, used in Penal Colony of Chão Bom, would help to get this aim. In some public museums we can do a virtual tour by some of them. Also, in the institutional site of IPC⁸ and in a Cape Verde Museums site⁹, we have information about the Cape Verde public museums, but about municipal and private museums the information is still unavailable.

⁸ <https://ipc.cv/>

⁹ <https://www.museus.cv/>



Image III Special Documents Museum: exhibition area

By other side, some museums develop temporary and traveling exhibitions to display their collections. In the past, the Ethnographic Museum and the Special Documents Museum had this practice to extend their exhibition offer to different kinds of visitors. In December 2021, Sal Museum, in Sal Island, in partnership with Hilton Hotel, promoted and presented in this hotel, an exhibition *Cape Verde, a multicultural country: objects and stories shared with the world*.

Museums are an interesting vehicle for transmitting content in the context of non-formal education. In Cape Verde, we have some museums which can develop this aim. The scholar visitors, since elementary school until the university, must be invited to visit Cape Verde museums, because some in their exhibitions, the subjects are closely related with the scholar programs. The Archaeology Museum is a good example of this strategy. Also, some events, for example, International Museums Day and Summer Programs, have been good examples for these goals. But, when it isn't possible the students visit these museums, these cultural institutions must prepare traveling exhibitions, with pedagogic bag, to display in the schools. The Heritage Education Office of the IPC can have this purpose.

In some museums the communication strategy, for some reasons, is ineffective. The texts and the supports have been improving but, in other cases, the problem remains, with extended texts, incorrect font size and inadequate supports and not all available in other languages. **(Image IV)**



Image IV - Ethnographic Museum: texts and supports

The accessible museums project will be an interesting propose to make inclusive museums, because, nowadays, a lot of Cape Verde museums, even in the most important of them, as for example the Ethnographic Museum, are inaccessible, both for people with physical limitations and blind.

Despite the promise that it will be done soon, some important documents required to the daily management and activities of the museums – Museum Program, Rules and Procedures for Preventive Conservation, Security Plan and Rules of Incorporation – haven't been edited until nowadays in Cape Verde.

Other museum functions

Until 2021, in Cape Verde did not exist any museum's law. The law published in 2021, preceded by decree law 30/2016, allowed new perspectives for the subject under analysis. This law is mainly based on the Portuguese reality, but also on the Brazilian one. By other side, in some of your articles, this law did not pay attention at the specificities of this archipelago country.

As present in Law 24/IX/21, Cape Verde museums must fulfil the seven museum functions. But, as we explained, in fact, it doesn't always happen. Some of them are only room exhibitions because some of those functions, mainly those with non-direct contact with the visitors are not fulfilled. Therefore, structural and functional problems are evident in many Cape Verde museums. The best museums practices applied in some private museums that we already talked about in this text, could and should be followed in other museums in Cape Verde.

The National Heritage Register Platform produced by IPC, standard as ICOM recommended, was presented in May 21, 2021. It would be an essential tool to the management of the Cape Verde museum's collections, to provide information and also for research work. It will be important to adapt

this system to all museums in Cape Verde, even the municipal and private museums, to can have an integrated registration. Until today not yet available for all museums.

The research it's related with a subject previously approached because, through this process, we get essential information's about the objects, which will be very useful to the study and conservation of them. In this way, the investigations carried out should be published to be known and to have tangible evidence about those works in progress.

About conservation, a lot of museums don't have the ideal conditions to keep safe its collection on exhibition and in storage. The most obvious case of this negligence is the packaging of a baptismal font, dating from the 16th century, on top of a tire, in one of the rooms of the Archaeology Museum. In some cases, there is not storage areas or, in other cases there are shared, for example, the non-exhibition collections of Archaeological and Ethnographic museums are in the same room, some of them, in bad conditioning conditions. (Image V)



Image V: Archaeological Museum: baptismal font

Finally, we must stress the gaps in the security process. Almost Cape Verde museums don't have security video system or human watch. In the past, the former building of Archaeological Museum, located in a central area but not very busy at night, were stolen. Until today, some of the objects of their collection, priceless and very important to Cape Verdean identity and heritage, are vanished.

In our PhD researched, focused in the elaboration of a museum reconversion proposal for the Heritage Site of Ribeira Grande de Santiago, and whose assumptions were based on a pattern of the site museums, we presented all steps for this aim, supported on the basic principles of the museology.

Final considerations

As we said, in Cape Verde, there could be more diversity of museums typologies. In our understanding, this museum policy shows little ambition for innovation and diversification of museums typologies. In this context, we want to highlight the house museums, science and natural history museum, city museums, site museums, Eco museums and interpretative centres. Its implementation would be an added value for the cultural tourism of this African country.

The partnership with WAMP has been beneficial/advantageous to Cape Verde¹. However,⁰ unfortunately, this organization has lost the strength that characterized it in the first years, with losses to the development of museology in the countries of west Africa.

¹ WAMP's mission is to contribute to the development of museums in West Africa by strengthening their capacity, developing a network of museums professionals beyond linguistic and geographical barriers.

It should be thought of, as soon as possible, to be funded the ICOM Cape Verdean Committee. This is the way for the museology in Cape Verde, to take the qualitative leap it needs. Other Portuguese speaking African countries – Angola and Mozambique – already are ICOM members, and with benefits for the subject under analysis.

The museums decentralization must be an aim to get more visibility to the municipal museums. Since 2010, the Cape Verdean Municipalities Association has been trying to achieve this goal, but your ideas do not agree with those of the Cultural Heritage Institute. Also, the Cape Verdean museums network must be more skilful and seek to include as many museums as possible. By other side, the accreditation process will be hard work to be done.

There are also evident gaps in the communication strategy: street's information and in the marketing strategy. The information, on the street, hotels or even at the airport about the city's museums is unusual. For us, it would be profitable a more consistent articulation between the Ministry of Culture and Creative Industries, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Education to, working together, get a solution for this gap. However, there are television, radio programs and newspaper articles that promotes these museums and other heritage sites in Cape Verde.

The scientific publications are other gap, because few publications about Cape Verde museums have been edited. However, The House of the Memory, a private museum, published in 2015 an interesting book about its history, collection and activities. Over time, some Cape Verdean and Portuguese researchers, who in many cases were linked to the development of museology in Cape Verde, published articles about this subject. It's our intention continued published texts about the Cape Verdean museums and provide new ways for research.

The lack of professionals with high skills in Museology and in scientific subjects related, mainly Anthropology, Archaeology, Heritage History and Sociology, is evidence in the Cape Verde museums overview. A lot of them are graduated, but few of them have master degree or PhD in these areas.

In order to fill these gaps, various training actions are carried out by IPC, with the aim of improving the skills of professionals in Cape Verde's museums. But will these trainings, of short duration and spaced in time, be enough for these professionals? Obviously not, and this situation should be considered by the competent authorities. In this context, the universities should play an important role in this aim. Nowadays, the Cape Verde universities have degrees in History and Cultural Heritage Management and in Tourism Management. However, this academic offer is inadequate because, as we said above, the museum professionals need to get more skills. The offer of advanced academics degrees is the straight way to change the present pattern in Cape Verdean museums.

In Cape Verde, the word museum is easy to pronounce, it is beautiful, it gives status and it is politically convenient. As small as an exhibition room, often, it is so called a museum, even if this area is just a show of objects without any scientific support and museology and museography standards.

If this message is socially accepted and all communities wants to have its own museum, this museological anxiety must be braking. Museum's professionals and policy makers must be aware that they should be the ones to change this idea and to explain what Katie Maggs¹ said: museum's are like icebergs, that's why only a small part, the public displays, is visible.

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¹ The Science Museum of London curator.

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Visualization as A New Method in Connection with Archaeological and Historical Methods: A Case Study on İstanbul Archaeological Museums

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Introduction

This paper focuses on the huge graphic panels applied in the renewed exhibition galleries of the Classical Museum of the İstanbul Archaeological Museums. The Classical Museum, in which the artefacts dated to the Ancient Greece and Roman periods are exhibited, had been under the new exhibition between 2011-2019. Huge visual panels related to the gallery's theme and the artefacts are placed in each gallery in the new exhibition. Those visual panels consist of designs created by considering historical accuracy to strengthen the effect of the expression of the galleries. The methods and criteria for creating these graphic panels will be discussed in the following.

The İstanbul Archaeological Museums is a museum complex consisting of three different concepts of museums which are The Ancient Oriental Museum, The Tiled Pavilion and the Classical Museum. The IAM, its previous name was Müzeyi Hümayun (The Imperial Museum) was established in 1869. The first museum building was the Hagia Eirene Church in the garden of the Topkapı Palace. Later, the Tiled Kiosk, which was an Ottoman Palace built in 1472, started to operate as the new museum building in 1880. As a result of Osman Hamdi Bey's discoveries in the Sidon Royal Necropolis in 1887, many sarcophagi and small finds were brought to İstanbul, and a new exhibition area was needed, therefore the Classical Building was built¹ .²

Since the establishment of the İstanbul Archaeological Museums in 1869, it had undergone various renovation processes. The last of the reinforcement, restoration, and reinstallation works of the Classical Museum have been carried out since 2011. The first phase of this process was completed in September 2019, and the second one at the end of 2021. In addition, the third phase works are planned to start soon.

As already known, the history of the Classical Museum goes back to the mid-19th century. For this reason, the Classical Museum is as important historically as the archaeological artefacts exhibited in it. The approach to redesigning the museum was very challenging for us, as we had to strike a balance between the traditional and modern concepts of the display to provide contexts that educate the public without distracting attention from viewing the objects themselves.

The Graphic Panels at the Exhibition Galleries in the Classical Museum of the IAM

The classical museum consists of galleries with a rectangular or square plan, and graphic panels covering almost the whole surface of the walls were placed on the opposite side of the windowed walls of the galleries. The exhibition team decided to pursue a path as follows to create the panels. First, a specific theme was determined for each gallery, emphasizing it with these panels about the objects on display. The panels consisted of the visual composition of the objects exhibited in the galleries or their periods. Historical and archaeological research was carried out in detail to create visual compositions, in addition to the research, numerous/a lot of advice were received from academic staff. While most of the details in the panels were based on academic research, we preferred to use our imagination slightly. The panels were made by Spanish painter Javier Hermida using academic data provided by the exhibition team.

Themes

We tried to choose a fiction with different concepts for each gallery according to the artefact without determining very precise criteria for what kind of compositions will be in the panels. For instance, in the archaic gallery, we preferred the Sacred Way and the Temple of Apollo in Didyma as the visual

¹ Asal 2021, 6-9.

compositions to combine the oracle priest statues, exhibited in the gallery, from the environment of the temple. As for the gallery of the Hellenistic period, we tried to combine Hellenistic artefacts with one of the most important historical events of the Hellenistic period by preferring the general template of the Alexander Mosaic from Pompeii. Similar kind of ideas can be exemplified for each gallery in the Classical Museum.

I would like to focus on the graphic panels in two galleries of the Sidon Royal Necropolis at the Classical Museum¹. The excavation of the Sidon Royal Necropolis Sidon, carried out by Osman Hamdi Bey in 1887, is one of the most important discoveries of our archaeological history. As a result of the excavation of the Sidon Royal Necropolis, eleven highly decorated and painted sarcophagi were unearthed, but there were not adequate galleries for these sarcophagi to be exhibited in the museum in Istanbul. For this reason, the Classical Museum building was designed by the architect Alexander Vallaury and built with the efforts of Osman Hamdi Bey and the essential support of Sultan Abdülhamid Han II in 1891. Therefore, the excavation of the Sidon Royal Necropolis is undoubtedly considered one of the most striking discoveries in our archaeology and museum history.

It was very important for us to decide what kind of images we would have used in the galleries of the Sidon Royal Necropolis. Because the images had to be in harmony with the magnificent sarcophagi displayed in the galleries. At this point, we decided to visualize the hypogea where the sarcophagi were located and the discovery and excavation stories behind artefacts. Naturally, it was very tough to portray these ideas because we had almost no data other than Osman Hamdi Bey's publications.¹ In addition to images and information provided by Osman Hamdi Bey, I visited the excavation site, which is in Lebanon today, with colleagues from the exhibition team, to obtain some observations about the environment of the hypogea.¹ With the necessary data obtained, we tried to create the panels with archaeological, historical and museological methods. As a result, six graphic panels were created showing how these sarcophagi were found, how they were discovered, how they were removed from the hypogea and how they were transported to Istanbul.

The graphic panels on the first gallery of the Sidon Royal Necropolis show the Sarcophagus of Alexander the Great's location at the exact point in the underground chamber with the true scale (panel 1, fig.1); extracting of sarcophagi throughout the tunnel from the hypogea to the surface (panel 2, fig.2); loading of the sarcophagus to the raft (panel 3, fig.3). As to the panels on the second gallery, they show respectively, the location of the Satrap (panel 4, fig.4), Lycian and Mourning Women sarcophagi (panel 5, fig.5) and the discovery of the Tabnit sarcophagus (panel 6, fig.6).



Fig.1 The location of Alexander the Great Sarcophagus in the underground chamber (The Istanbul Archaeological Museums Archive).

¹ The First gallery was designed for the story of the Sarcophagus of Alexander the Great and the second one was for the hypogea and the discovery of King Tabnit Sarcophagus. All panels are numbered from 1 to 6.

¹ For the sources of the discovery of the Sidon Royal Necropolis cf. Hamdy-Bey 1887a, Hamdy-Bey 1887b, O.Hamdy Bey-T.Reinach 1892.

¹ Some notes for this visit are published in Büyükgençoğlu-Kahraman-Son 2021, 549-551.



Fig.2 The extracting of Alexander the Great Sarcophagus the Great through the hypogeum.



Fig.3 The loading of the Alexander the Great Sarcophagus to the raft (The Istanbul Archaeological Museums Archive).



Fig.4 The location of the Satrap Sarcophagus in the underground chamber (The Istanbul Archaeological Museums Archive).



Fig. 5 location of the Lycian and Mourning Women Sarcophagi in the underground chamber (The Istanbul Archaeological Museums Archive).



Fig. 6 Discovery of the Tabnit Sarcophagus (The Istanbul Archaeological Museums Archive).

While panels 1,2,4,5 and 6 were created based on Osman Hamdi Bey's description and drawings. In some parts, we tried not to neglect the periodical research in order to describe the concepts defined by Osman Hamdi Bey. An example of this is the research to determine how the magnesium lamp was in the 19th century, which we no longer use today. the story of panel 3 is different. This scene was photographed and published by Osman Hamdi Bey. We reinterpreted this document by adding Osman Hamdi Bey and his colleague to this scene and adapting some details such as the steamboat and the flag on the top of the raft.

Conclusion

The main purpose of preferring these huge graphic panels was to tell the visitor the stories about the foundation of the museum and the behind the archaeological objects. We created this by integrating it with fiction based on the objects and themes in each gallery of the museum. This was beyond fiction, based on historical and archaeological accuracy substantially. This was very important in that it should be compatible with the understanding of modern museology and beyond "Cabinet of Curiosity".

In this way, we had a chance to emphasize "the story behind the artefact and discovery" and convey the message to visitors about the display and artefacts precisely by visual communication. This also provides opportunities for visitors' self-education and self-evaluation. The transferable knowledge about the artefacts and the museum are offered in a more interactive, attractive and entertaining atmosphere.

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The Archive of the İstanbul Archaeological Museums.

Sites by Your Side: Community Empowerment and the Practice of Public Archaeology

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Abstract

This paper presents a case study of effecting promotion by bringing together public archaeology and new museology. The aim is to bridge the gap between the museum and the community and reexamine the reasons why archaeological exhibitions are often de-contextualized.

Breaking with conventions of museum exhibitions, a dedicated team under the direction of National Museum of Prehistory transformed the megaliths in eastern Taiwan into grand outdoor exhibits, enabling visitors / “museum” goers observing the historical site in situ to appreciate the underlying context and acquire a fuller understanding of the site and its value. Through collaborations between the museum, local youth association and elementary school, the goals of preserving cultural assets and conducting archaeological research were realized, with the public gaining awareness along the way. At the same time, the museum gained insight into the perspectives of the community through its oral history.

Through community empowerment, the museum builds community outreach and achieves effective promotion. In turn, it gains insight into the community’s diverse ideas and viewpoints, which serve to deconstruct the museum and induce diversity in ways of thinking.

Keywords: Community Empowerment, Public Archaeology, New Museology, Megaliths, Eastern Taiwan

I. INTRODUCTION

While the term “New Museology” is still under much discussion, the concepts it proposes have already made an impact on the museum- community relationship, deconstructing the museum and redefining its role while highlighting the importance of the local and the community.

The power of the museum comes from not only the museum itself—local voices within the community are indispensable. Through promotion, sharing and discussion, the public can learn about cultural preservation and in time internalize the concept. Gradually, this empowerment will give rise to an enhanced sense of identification with one’s own community, enabling locals to become active participants in the local museum’s activities. The processes of collaboration and sharing in the course of community empowerment can also lead to more diverse ways of thinking and make promotion more efficient.

Combining the concepts of public archaeology and new museology, the National Museum of Prehistory (NMP) undertook a project under the “Read Taiwan” scheme organized by Taiwan’s Ministry of Culture to present a “Reading Route”—the exploration of an archaeological site in situ with emphasis on community participation, diverse approaches, authentic situations, and personal experience. One of the aims of the project is to break the conventional frame of museum exhibitions, allowing the exhibit area to expand into the modern landscape and become more accessible to the public. At the same time, the archaeological site becomes an exhibition in a broader sense—the observation of the site in situ can better establish and present its context, enabling participants to see the bigger picture.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to adapt the outreach program for the community, the ideas of new museology and public archaeology were incorporated into the activities planned. The development of both schools began around the 1970s and 1980s. With debates and introspection came pivotal development of these fields, both of which are essentially rethinking and critiquing the museum’s relationship with the public and the society, and addressing the tradition of academic endorsement and open public participation.

i. Concept and Development of Public Archaeology

At the very beginning, the meaning of “public archaeology” is mainly the archaeological activities conducted by archaeologists with the support of the public. The concept of cultural resource management, advocated by Charles McGimsey in his homonymous book,¹ refers to this form of public participation.

The term has since expanded along with the development of various fields. In addition to the concept of public support or funding, it has come to be relevant in such fields as public outreach, community archaeology, cultural tourism, law, economy, and archaeological politics. It shows that the public issues pertaining to archaeology are diverse and vary region by region, and that public archaeology is a discipline that examines the relationship between archaeology and the public, and seeks to enhance and improve it.¹

Matsuda and Okamura identified four approaches to public archaeology: educational, public relations, critical, and multi-vocal.¹ The first two tend to be practice-oriented, while critical and multi-vocal approaches are mainly theoretical. Public archaeology nowadays follows these approaches to critique and review archaeological research, and promote the specialized knowledge of the field so that the concepts and discoveries of archaeology can take root and become widespread, enabling the public to learn about archaeological sites and appreciate the importance of preserving cultural assets.

ii. Concept and Development of New Museology

The concept, function and meaning of museums are constantly and dynamically adjusted along with the development of society and technology. Traditionally, museums are considered places of cultural authority that inherit colonial overtones, and therefore criticized for being out of touch with contemporary society and even regarded as a waste.¹ Duncan Cameron first questioned the role of the museum and advocated that museums should serve as both “temple” and “forum”,² allowing for dialogue and discussion besides being a place of authority and specialty. Later, more suggestions and discussions emerged, and pointed out that museums should provide a multiplicity of experiences in addition to conveying knowledge, and should also rethink the balance between “collection” and “audience”, and between “research” and “promotion”.² This prompted museums to focus more on outreach programs and the interaction with and experience of the audience, in addition to the work of research and collection. Gradually, the functions of the museum expanded and became closer to the public and society in general.

The main concepts of these two schools aims to be close to the public and their daily life, to interpret academic knowledge into more familiar and understandable language to public, and to achieve more benefits of outreach education through public interaction. In recent years, practice of public archaeology in Taiwan has become more diverse, such as a more open presentation of archaeological work and

¹ McGimsey, Charles Robert. *Public Archeology*. 1st ed. Seminar Press, 1972.

¹ Okamura, Katsuyuki, and Akira Matsuda, eds. *New Perspectives in Global Public Archaeology*. 1st ed. New York, US: Springer, 2011.

¹ Okamura and Matsuda, *New Perspectives in Global Public Archaeology*, 6.

¹ Hudson, Kenneth. *Museums for the 1980s: A Survey of World Trends*. London, UK: Macmillan & UNESCO, 1977, 15.

² Harrison, Julia D. “Ideas of Museums in the 1990s.” *Museum Management and Curatorship* 13, no. 2 (1993): 160–176.

² Cameron, Duncan F. “The Museum, a Temple or the Forum.” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 14, no. 1 (1971): 11–24.

² Hudson, *Museums for the 1980s: A Survey of World Trends*.

² Hudson, Kenneth. *Museums of Influence*. 1st ed. Cambridge University Press, 1987.

² Weil, Stephen E. “Rethinking the Museum: An Emerging New Paradigm.” *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Paradigm Shift*, edited by Gail Anderson. AltaMira Press, 2004, 74–79. Reprinted, paper original published in 1990.

field,² ² planning workshops for local communities and engaging them in site supervision and revitalization,² ² etc.; the concept of new museology is also similar, looking forward to extending the space and functions of museums in different ways, not limited to exhibitions, but making daily life a part of museums. The project introducing in this paper is planned based on the concepts of these two schools.

III. BACKGROUND

i. The National Museum of Prehistory (NMP)

Located in Taitung, the NMP is Taiwan's first national-level archaeological museum. Its construction began in the 1980s. At the time, during the construction of Taitung New Railway Station of the South Link Line, a rich amount of archaeological remains of the Peinan Archaeological Site was excavated, which then led to over ten years' rescue excavation efforts. Unearthed were more than 2,000 slate coffins and tens of thousands of archaeological remains, which cover the largest excavation area in Taiwan's history of archaeology. The area was later designated as the National Archaeological Site because it not only contains precious and significant remains, but serves as the representative site of the middle and the late Neolithic period in Taiwan.² ⁹

The important discovery prompted the government to set up museums to preserve and collect these artifacts and promote them to the public's benefit. Officially opened in 2002 after nearly ten years of hard work and preparation, the NMP includes the main museum and two branches: the Peinan Site Park in Taitung and the Museum of Archaeology, Tainan Branch of NMP. The museum's collections and work of research, exhibition and outreach are mainly in the field of archaeology, but they also expand into various disciplines such as ethnology, natural history, geology and environmental education.

ii. The Megalithic Sites in Eastern Taiwan

In Taitung, where the NMP main museum and the Peinan Site Park are located, the earliest evidence so far of human activity on the island of Taiwan was discovered in the Palsientung archaeological site, dated back to 30,000 B.P. Later on, a variety of archaeological cultures and human activities from the Neolithic Age to the historical period was also discovered in Taitung.

The island of Taiwan has been in constant communication with the outside world since prehistoric times. People who traded with locals or even migrated here have enriched the cultural scene of the island. The outlying small islands are also dotted with many archaeological sites, which are readily accessible nowadays.

The megaliths, which are objects made of large stones, are distributed in the eastern part of Taiwan, and spread across Hualien and throughout Taitung County. The archaeological period in which they are situated is primarily the late Neolithic period, about 3,200-2,200 B.P. Even so, the cultural behavior of people in these eras has persisted to this day, as evidenced by the culture of contemporary indigenous peoples. The styles of the megaliths vary, such as sarcophagi, stone columns, stone walls, monoliths, human-shaped stone statues, and stone wheels. Many of them are suggested to be related to architectural structures, and some may have been used in ceremonial activities.

² Chiang, Chih-hua. "An Archaeology Project in the Park." GUAVANTHROPOLOGY.TW, July 9, 2018. <https://guavanthropology.tw/article/6669>. (In Chinese)

² Chiang, Chih-hua. "Archaeology Notes for Shuiyuan Campus." GUAVANTHROPOLOGY.TW, June 21, 2021. <https://guavanthropology.tw/article/6876>. (In Chinese)

² Chiang, Chih-hua. "Archaeology Camp of Wansan Site." GUAVANTHROPOLOGY.TW, September 24, 2012. <https://guavanthropology.tw/article/3326>. (In Chinese)

² Chiang, Chih-hua. "The Possibility of Archaeological Sites." GUAVANTHROPOLOGY.TW, September 21, 2020. <https://guavanthropology.tw/article/6837>. (In Chinese)

² National Museum of Prehistory (NMP). "About Us: Main Site", electronic document from Web site of NMP. Retrieved June 25, 2022. https://www.nmp.gov.tw/en/content_144.html. (In Chinese)

iii. Project “Read Taiwan”

Headed by the Ministry of Culture, the project combines “text” with “route” to help participants experience and appreciate the history and culture of Taiwan. The NMP devised plans of archaeological “routes”, based on the books recently published by the NMP, including *Hello, Megaliths!*, a guidebook,³ *Vali*, a fantasy novel,³ and *Jué: Separated Twins*, a comic.³ The contents² of these publications are mainly about the archaeological cultures or remains of the megaliths.

- A. *Hello, Megaliths!*: The guidebook introduces the rarely known megaliths in eastern Taiwan, including at least 40 archaeological sites and more than 500 megalithic remains discovered in Hualien and Taitung. This book takes a closer look at the important megaliths along the Hualien-Taitung Coastal Highway (Provincial Highway 11) and offers an introduction of unique attractions and cultural customs.
- B. *Vali*: The novel in the fantasy genre is based on the idea of Taiwan’s national treasure “Zoo-anthropomorphic jade earring”, and the large amount of archaeological data unearthed at the Peinan site. It tells the story of a boy named “Vali” who survived a storm and grew up in a foreign land. On the basis of archaeological data, the author wrote imaginative stories of goddesses, ancestral spirits and warriors, transforming the jade artifacts traded and used during the prehistory period of Taiwan into weapons against the dreadful “walking mummy”. The fantastic rendering of the life of prehistoric people 3,000 years ago is extraordinarily vivid.
- C. *Jué: Separated Twins*: Based on Taiwan’s national treasure “Zoo-anthropomorphic jade earring” and the Peinan site, the comic employs a flowing style of painting to tell stories of a tribe situated along the Peinan River 3,000 years ago. The story begins with an ancient legend of a twin, one of whom will bring bad luck. The author then goes on to tell a profound and moving story of the twin daughters of the tribe’s chieftain and how the “Zoo-anthropomorphic jade earring”—an archaeological artifact—was broken and then repaired.



Figure 1. Publications of the NMP, including *Hello, Megaliths!*, *Vali*, and *Jué: Separated Twins* (courtesy of the NMP).

This year’s project focuses on Chenggong Township, where the megaliths are the highlight of discussion among the NMP’s staff, the local youth association and elementary school teachers. The process aims to introduce teachers to basic concepts of archaeology so that they can apply them in their curriculum. Another goal is to encourage the youth association to assist in the preservation of cultural assets through social action. It is hoped that the megaliths in eastern Taiwan serve as a starting point, prompting teachers to look at other “routes” near them for their curriculum planning.

³ Yeh, Chanġ-Keng, ed. *Hello, Megaliths!* 1st ed. Taitung, Taiwan: National Museum of Prehistory, 2018. (In Chinese)

³ Kuzuha (Kè-Yeh). *Vali*. 1st ed. Taipei, Taiwan: Gaea Books Co., Ltd., 2020. (In Chinese)

³ Tseng, Yaġ-Ching. *Jué: Separated Twins*. 1st ed. Taipei, Taiwan: Gaea Books Co., Ltd., 2021. (In Chinese)

IV. PLANNING AND EXECUTION

Two simple goals were set when we devised activities for participants. The first is to arouse their interest in archaeology; the second is to heighten their awareness of and keep them curious about their surroundings after participation.

The main axis of the planned activities is to focus on the community in Chenggong Township and the local archaeological sites, and through lecture sharing, comprehensive discussion, and site tour discuss the megaliths, and share the research of archaeology.

For the lectures, the researchers of the NMP discussed two topics: “Archaeology and Megalithic Research in Taiwan” and “The Curating Work of a Special Exhibition of Megaliths”. The former started from the basic concepts of archaeology, went through the development and research history of Taiwan prehistory, and further introduced the representative megalithic sites in eastern Taiwan. The latter led the participants to learn and think about “Big Idea” and its application for setting goals and planning a refined and attractive exhibition, and introduced a case of “Hello, Megaliths! Traveling with an Archaeologist” special exhibition, an extension of Hello, Megaliths! guidebook, focused on 10 archaeological sites in 6 townships through the application of “Big Idea”, setting goals such as “travel” and “accessibility” to create exploration routes of megaliths along the Hualien-Taitung Coastal Highway (Provincial Highway 11). In addition to the lectures by the researchers, Mr. Chen Yao-Feng was also invited to share the records of oral history and local, cultural and historical investigations.³

After the lecture, the participants were divided into small groups, joined by the staff of the NMP—not leading the discussion, but posing questions, such as “How to incorporate archaeology concepts into teaching?” and “How to lead students in learning about sites nearby?” Participants shared ideas of organizing a featured curriculum of archaeology, introducing children to archaeological sites, and creating a teaching kit to inspire interests.



Figure 2. Lecture on Taiwan archaeology and introduction to megaliths by Yao Shu-Yu (photo by Wang Chung-Chun).



Figure 3. Discussion of how to promote archaeology and archaeological sites to children (photo by Wang Chung-Chun).

Finally, the participants were given a tour of the archaeological sites nearby, namely the stone coffins at He-Ping and Pai-Shou-Lien site. We demonstrated the replicas made by 3D printing before visiting the sites, in order to explain the meaning and usage of the artifacts.

At the sites, we explained details of the stone coffin and shared the history of its discovery and research. We also showed the 3D modeling, the archaeological works of survey and surface collection, and also highlighted the importance of preserving cultural heritage. The demonstration of 3D modeling was to explain the use of technology to preserve the archaeological remains. The collection of pottery sherds from the surface was to explain that archaeological sites may just be around the corner.

³ Wang, Chung-Chun. “Read Taiwan: Discover the Megaliths in Chenggong Township.” *Discovery*, newsletter of NMP, no.470, July 1, 2022.
https://beta.nmp.gov.tw/enews/no470/page_01.html. (In Chinese)



Figure 4. Visiting the stone coffin at He-Ping archaeological site (photo by Sun Wen-Hsiang).



Figure 5. Demonstrating the process of 3D scanning (Figure by Shen Chieh-Hsiu).

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The disconnection and alienation between the museum and the public is an often noted phenomenon. Visiting the museum is not a daily routine, but usually regarded as the accumulation and display of cultural capital. The decontextualization of archaeological exhibition is often noted, as once the cultural remains are excavated and moved away from their buried location, they are removed from their surroundings and context. When presented in an exhibition, the remains or artifacts have to go through the process of reinterpretation and recontextualization.³ Such are some limitations of museums.

However, the extent of what the museum can accomplish should not be limited by its position of the supposed leader and promoter—it can enlist the assistance of the local community, whose voices are valid and essential. Through outreach, talks, and discussions, the concept of cultural preservation can be implemented and internalized in the mind of the public, which can further transform the community into a local extension of the museum. Also, the process of collaboration and sharing in community empowerment can also lead to diverse ways of thinking, thereby improving the efficiency of promotion.

The “Read Taiwan” project has shown that museum education should gradually shift from passive to active. In addition to having visitors participate in activities held in the museum, organizers should actively approach communities or schools and observe the history, characteristics, or environment of such locations, and create appropriate educational programs for them.

Through the promotion of “local-based” project, the community can familiarize themselves with its history and environment and come to identify with or participate in the work of cultural preservation and maintenance. The museum can also build connections with the community, providing customized educational programs for locals in addition to offering traditional museum exhibitions. The community can tap into this collaborative relationship to make community development plans, stimulate its growth and boost the vitality of local culture.

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³ Wong, Horl-Fung. “Recontextualizing Archaeological Relics in Museum Exhibitions: Case Study of the Museum of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica.” *Museology Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (2021): 117–131.

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Beyond Conimbriga: the challenges of integrating an archaeological museum and its community

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The relationship between an archaeological museum and its surrounding communities can be either a source of friction or a productive tool to enhance local development and to strengthen the ties between local inhabitants, their territory and their cultural and natural heritage. The purpose of this article is to present the Monographic Museum of Conimbriga - National Museum (MMC-MN), an archaeological museum located in the central region of Portugal, and its relation to the community of Condeixa-a-Velha during the 100+ years of excavation of the area.



Image 1: The walls of Conimbriga,

Before entering into the discussion of the problems and potentials of the presence of an archaeological museum in an inhabited territory, it is necessary to present the main features of the archaeological site of Conimbriga. The Roman town of Conimbriga was founded in the 1st century BC, in the site of a preexistent indigenous settlement, inhabited since the Chalcolithic period. Once a prosperous town, with all the attributes of a Roman *civitas* such as the Forum, temples dedicated to the imperial cult, public *thermae* and amphitheater, Coninbriga went into decline in the latter days of the Roman Empire. The instability of the 3rd century AD led to the construction of a new city wall and the reduction of about half of the urban area. The site was all but completely abandoned after Germanic and Islamic invasions. Its inhabitants, deprived from a reliable source of water due to the destruction of the Roman aqueduct, were forced to move to a nearby hill. This new settlement, now called Condeixa-a-Velha, was built with the spoliated stones from the older, abandoned Roman buildings.



Image 2: Conimbriga site in the 1930s.

Over the centuries, the site of Conimbriga became a farming area, dotted with olive trees and plots of land dedicated to the cultivation of vegetables and wheat. The memory of the Roman city was lost, and the place was referred to by the Condeixa-a-Velha inhabitants as the *Almedina*, or “the city”, as named by the Arab conquerors after the 8th century. Continuous agricultural work in the area resulted in occasional discoveries of coins, pottery shards and small objects. During the 16th century, more significant Roman artifacts were discovered in the remaining ruins, but systematic excavations only started in the end of the 19th century, and have been carried on ever since. However, only 20% of its total area has been excavated, so far. With the discovery of important archaeological remains, the Portuguese government decided to expropriate the olive groves and agricultural fields, in order to conduct excavations on the site. At the same time, the millstone quarries that existed inside the limits of the archaeological site were also closed.

The Monographic Museum of Conimbriga (MMC-MN) was opened in 1962 and became a Portuguese National Museum in 2017. It is in charge of the archaeological research on the Roman ruins and the preservation of the vestiges and artifacts from the site. Its designation as a “monographic” museum expresses the fact that its exclusive focus is the study of Conimbriga, besides being responsible for the archaeological site and the exhibition halls. It is one of the most visited museums in Portugal, with over 108 thousand visitors in 2018, attracted by the best preserved Roman ruins in Portugal and its largest collection of *in situ* Roman mosaics.

Archaeological works and the creation of the MMC-MN posed significant challenges for the relationship between the museum and the nearby community of Condeixa-a-Velha, which has been troubled since the beginning of the excavations, over a century ago. As the agricultural fields and millstone quarries were expropriated and transformed by the archaeological excavations, the local population lost a significant part of their traditional activities and sources of income, thus forever altering their way of life. Although Condeixa-

a-Velha inhabitants were often hired to work in the archaeological excavations, this was a poor substitute for the suppressed economic activities.



Image 3: Local inhabitants working in Conimbriga excavations in the 1930s.

This situation, as expected, created a great deal of dissension between the museum and its nearby community, to the point that the local inhabitants tend to see the archaeological site as more of a problem than a valuable heritage resource that could benefit the local development. They also feel excluded from the revenues generated by the flow of visitors attracted by the museum and the ruins, that doesn't bring benefits to the community, and do not see themselves represented in museum displays and activities, despite their involvement since the first archaeological excavations. As a result, their vast historical and cultural heritage is not considered by the community as something important for its identity or for its economy.

In order to reduce these tensions and to bridge the gap between museum and community, some possible actions could be taken. Some of these actions should be directed towards the local community, so as to help increase its sense of identity, with an active engagement of its members. One of the proposed actions could be the creation of temporary or long-term expositions in MMC-MN, displaying the traditional ways of life of Condeixa-a-Velha and the role performed by its inhabitants in the first excavations. Also, a program aimed at collecting and disseminating the oral history of the community, based on the life stories of their elderly members, could also help in the preservation of local culture and the strengthening of its identity. Furthermore, the implementation of heritage education programs and cultural events focused on the community could result in a better perception of the importance of the archaeological site as part of their cultural history and their shared past as descendants from the inhabitants of Conimbriga. This action would also benefit the preservation of archaeological vestiges, specially those located outside the limits of the museum area.



Image 4: The entrance to the Conimbriga amphitheater.

Another set of actions would be geared towards the visitors, and include the creation of pedestrian circuits connecting the museum to heritage sites in the community, so that visitors could experience the territory as a whole, and not just the archaeological field and the exhibition halls. The musealization of existing vestiges in the surrounding territory, such as the Conímbriga amphitheater and the Alcabideque spring that supplied the Roman city with water, would also help to integrate the community into the museum. Such vestiges are, for the most part, virtually unknown to visitors and even to local inhabitants. Extending the actions of the MMC-MN to its surrounding territory would be highly beneficial to both the museum and the community.



Image 5: Alcabideque spring and waterworks.

In conclusion, the role of the MMC-MN goes beyond the excavation of the archaeological site and the conservation of its vestiges. The connection between the museum and its neighboring community should be a main factor in the planning of museum activities, with the inclusion of the local public being regarded with the same importance as the consideration of the interests and needs of the visitors. The implementation of actions to bring closer the museum and community would reduce the current tensions and help turn the historical and cultural heritage of the area into a vector of local, sustainable development.

Keywords: Archaeology. Museology. Musealization of Archaeology. Conimbriga. Relationship museum-community.

Session 3: The Dispersed Ancient And Modern African Collection & The Global Community.

- **Norhan Salem & Heba Metwally**, *“The Repatriation of Egyptian Heritage, Obstacles and Challenges”*.
- **Richard Vokes & Candace Richards**, *“Africa in Australia – Egypt”*.

The Repatriation of Egyptian Heritage, Obstacles and Challenges.

Norhan Hassan Salem (*), Heba Khairy Metwaly (*)

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Abstract

The illicit traffic of the Egyptian artefacts for centuries has negatively affected the original identity of the Egyptian collections globally and nationally. The majority of Egyptian collections, which are displayed or kept in museums around the world, have been looted from their authentic contexts and provenances, whether this happened by legal or illegal methods.

Moreover, the legality of the Egyptian collections acquired by those museums with the deliberate absence of most of their basic information has been affected. Therefore, the dominant approach became the divestiture of the artefacts out of their dating, provenance, and date of acquisition, which led to losing the concept of the artefact itself.

Accordingly, the Egyptian law for the protection of Antiquities has been changed several times since its adaption. This paper aims to study the Egyptian government's hard efforts and missions toward the repatriation of Egyptian artefacts to its home and context.

Key Words

Illicit Traffic for Egyptian Heritage, Heritage Looting, Heritage Repatriation, Temporary Exhibitions, The Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

Introduction

After the universal turnout and the significant interest in Egyptology and excavations in Egypt, it became necessary to conceive a law to protect Egyptian antiquities and control their circulation and ownership. The first version of the law for the protection of Egyptian antiquities has produced during the reign of Mohammad Ali Pasha in 1835⁽³⁾. However, that law went through many modifications until it reached its current version in Law No.3 of 2010 and its last amendment in Law No.91 of 2018.

Moreover, the legality of Egyptian collections - acquired by those museums and sale galleries - with the deliberate absence of most of their basic information has been affected⁽³⁾. The Egyptian government works hard to repatriate the Egyptian artefacts to their original place and re-contextualise their national identity.

This paper utilises a collected data set of official reports, the museum's archives and datasheets at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, in addition to national reports documents.

National Circumstances and Timeframe

Since the revolution of 25th January 2011 and its following events, Egypt has witnessed much civil disturbance, which was accompanied by the loss of some cultural properties. The Egyptian heritage sites were vulnerable to being looted as a result of the lack of security and police forces⁽³⁾, which have led to the appearance of more organised ways and groups of looting and stealing many sites and some museums. On the other side,

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(3) Ikram, S., (USA 2011), P.142.

(3) Hanna, M., (Paris 2015), p.55.

(3) Ikram, S., & Hanna, M., (Cairo 2013), P.35.

the high demand for Egyptian antiquities at the international black market has a serious impact on looting and illicit trafficking activities inside Egypt.

Egypt has suffered from attacks against museums such as the Egyptian Museum in Cairo in 2011 and Mallawi Museum in 2013 and different archaeological sites such as Middle Egypt and West Luxor during the last 11 years ⁽³⁾. The illicit trafficking of cultural properties became a global challenge, especially in times of crisis. To this end, the Egyptian government made great efforts to face this global challenge to ensure the preservation and protection of its heritage assets.

There is no doubt that the looting and theft of Egyptian archaeological sites represent a traditional continuity of antiquities theft which had been created by colonial powers centuries ago. The colonial hunters of Egyptian antiquities played an important inherited role within the insatiable search and antiquities trade in Egypt.

The Lack of security, unemployment that reached 12.7 % in 2012, depressed economy, in addition to wealth-mania are considered the main factors affecting the spread of looting of archaeological sites after the January revolutions ⁽³⁾. ⁹

The Egyptian Laws on the Protection of Egyptian Antiquities

The enactment of a law to protect Egyptian antiquities was not spur of the moment; it was drafted and approved as a result of years of looting of Egyptian antiquities, perhaps that began with the attack of the French campaign on Egypt in the year 1789-1801 ⁽⁴⁾, and was followed by years in which the rulers of Egypt gave thousands of Egyptian antiquities to western countries as an expression of friendship and loyalty to those countries. Perhaps the most famous of these donations is the period of Muhammad Ali Pasha's rule, during which he gifted and donated countless antiquities from 1805 to 1849 ⁽⁴⁾, as he - himself - was the first to enact legislation to criminalise the circulation of antiquities in 1835 ⁽⁴⁾. After him, his grandson; Khedive Tawfiq issued the decree where the excavated antiquities had been divided between Egypt and the foreign missions excavating in Egypt in 1891, that happened after Egyptian antiquities were complete public property and fully owned by only Egypt during the era of both Khedive Said and Ismail ⁽⁴⁾. ⁰

In 1912, Law No.14 was issued, which stipulated the partage and possibility of dividing the discovered antiquities between Egypt and the excavator. The division had to be headed by the Egyptian Antiquities Authority to confirm that the rare and valuable artefacts are not permitted to be divided with the excavator under any circumstances, in addition to allowing the trade of antiquities according to some put regulations ⁽⁴⁾. ³

In 1951, King Farouk issued Law No. 215, according to which the illegal trade in antiquities was abolished and the legal trade in antiquities was permitted. This is in addition to allowing the export of antiquities abroad with the approval of the Egyptian government, which approved the complete export of the Egyptian heritage properties of artefacts, tombs and entire temples - perhaps the most famous of which is the Temple of Dendur which is currently on display in the Metropolitan Museum in the United States of America - but it negatively affected and encouraged more thefts and smuggling because it allowed the foreign archaeological missions to obtain 100% of their discoveries in some cases. Unfortunately, this law continued to be implemented until the era of President Gamal Abdel Nasser ⁽⁴⁾, and during his reign in 1952, the Ministry of Public Education issued the Law ⁴

⁽³⁾ Ikram, S., (Online 2013), p.370.

⁽³⁾ Tassie, G. J.,⁹De Trafford, A., van Wetering, J., (Online 2015), p.15.

⁽⁴⁾ Ali, A., (Cairo 2016), p13.

⁽⁴⁾ Fagan, B., (Cairo 2003), p.54.

⁽⁴⁾ Ali, A., (Cairo 2016), p.247.

⁽⁴⁾ Shaqour, E.,³(Cairo 2021), p.805.

⁽⁴⁾ Shaqour, E.,³(Cairo 2021), p.806.

⁽⁴⁾ Shaqour, E.,³(Cairo 2021), p.806.

No.10613 to regulate the trade of antiquities with the acceptance of Egyptian antiquities authority after selecting, registering and choosing the appropriate place of sale ⁽⁴⁾ .

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In the same year, Law No.10614 was issued, which regulates the travel of Egyptian antiquities with all their specifications and qualities abroad in possession of the applicant with the reasons for travelling, under the authority of the four museums concerned with the matter (The Egyptian Museum in Cairo, Greco-Roman Museum, the Islamic Museum, and the Coptic Museum) to arrange and issue the needed license to transfer the antiquities ⁽⁴⁾ .

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Hefnawy Ismail El-Shaer whose shop had been located in Downtown Cairo is one of the first Egyptian dealers of antiquities and the most famous ones, who had a governmental permission No.1 on the 23rd December 1963 to trade in duplicated identical monuments ⁽⁴⁾ .

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H. Ismail Elshaer in his shop, <https://www.rosaelyoussef.com>, on 21.07.2022, at 10:15 pm.

In 1974, the Minister of Culture issued Law No.330 to regulate trading in antiquities under the supervision of Egyptian antiquities authority, after determining the categories of artefacts that the vendor wants to trade in and picking the appropriate shop of trade, according to a set of conditions ⁽⁴⁾ .

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The year that symbolises the fundamental endeavors towards protecting and preserving Egyptian heritage properties is 1983, Where the Minister of Culture issued significant law No.14 which stipulated the precluding individuals from antiquities trade whatever its provenance. Then in the same year, Law No.117 was issued, which prohibited entirely the exporting of Egyptian antiquities. But this law was legally full of loopholes that allowed possession and did not totally criminalise purchasing and trading operations due to the lack of clarity on the penalty. Moreover, the continued possibility of some foreign archaeological missions to obtain some duplicated discovered artefacts ⁽⁵⁾ .

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In 2010, Law No.3 had been issued in 52 Article, and its conclusion stipulates that Egyptian antiquities are not authorised to leave the country permanently, whether for possession or trade and are not circulated inside the country, with the imposition of fines and penalties periods for those who violate. In addition to not allowing foreign archaeological missions to obtain any discovered artefacts. Moreover, the building or the object whose age is estimated to be more than a hundred years and holds aesthetic, historical, or scientific value becomes antiquity and is addressed by this law ⁽⁵⁾ . Then Law

⁽⁴⁾ Armanyous, F., F., (Cairo 1982), pp.59, 60.

⁽⁴⁾ Armanyous, F., F., (Cairo 1982), pp.61, 62.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://www.rosaelyoussef.com/739559/%D8%B5%D9%88%D8%B1-%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%84-%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A2%D8%AB%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%B5%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AA> , on 21.07.2022, at 10:15 pm.

⁽⁴⁾ Armanyous, F., F., (Cairo 1982), pp.79: 81.

⁽⁵⁾ Shaqour, E., (Cairo 2021), pp.806, 807.

⁽⁵⁾ Supreme Council of Antiquities, (Cairo 2010).

No.91 of 2018 was issued and considered an addition and emendation of Low.3 of 2010, which allowed the establishment of an official committee for travelling/ loan exhibitions for the organised travel and return of Egyptian antiquities. It gives the Ministry of Defense the last word in deciding on the work of foreign excavation missions ⁽⁵⁾. ²

National efforts

The Egyptian state is making sumptuous efforts to repatriate smuggled and looted antiquities proposed for sale in auctions or displayed in international museums. There are some methods and phases followed by the Repatriation Administration of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to repatriate antiquities: foremost among which is to communicate with auction halls through embassies located abroad to ensure that they are not addressed by one of the antiquities laws that require their return with the existence of the official paper proving the entry of these artefacts - whether legally or illegally - to send them, or to resort to the judiciary in some cases, but, it takes a long time through the international courts. Consequently, the Egyptian state sometimes resorts to international courts if the other party is not cooperative.

The other method is linked to international conventions, and Egypt has a long history of using this method. Through international conventions; Egypt was able to recover a large number of antiquities from countries such as the United States of America, France, Italy, Austria, and Switzerland.

In 2018, the Department of Repatriated Antiquities at the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities restored 118 seized Egyptian pieces out of 23700 artefacts dated back to different eras and civilisations packed in parcels in Naples, Italy. The seized artefacts are not looted from museums as they do not have accession records or inventory numbers, thus, they were stolen from archaeological sites. Egyptian actor Raouf Boutros Ghaly, the brother of former Egyptian minister of finance: Youssef Botros Ghaly was one of the suspects in this smuggling issue.

Another famous repatriation issue is related to the Metropolitan Museum. During the MET Gala 2018: the famous photo of an American celebrity beside the completely gilded and unique coffin of the Egyptian priest "Nedjemankh" was the reason which enabled the Egyptian state to announce internationally that the golden coffin of "Nedjemankh" was stolen during the disorder events of the 25th January revolution in 2011. Due to the good relationships and cooperation between the two countries, Egypt was able to repatriate it in 2019 and is currently displayed and is currently considered one of the most precious masterpieces in the National Museum of Egyptian Civilisation ⁽⁵⁾. ³



Egypt's Former Tourism and Antiquities Minister Khaled El-Enany (3rd-R) and Chargé d'Affaires at the US Embassy in Cairo Thomas Goldberger (2nd-R) look at the Golden Coffin of Nedjemankh, on display at the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Cairo on October 1, 2019, following its repatriation from the US. (AFP), www.arabnews.com, on 21.07.2022 at 05:10 pm.

⁽⁵⁾ Duqeil, H, (Istanbul 2019), pp.5, 6

⁽⁵⁾ <https://egyptindependent.com/kim-kardashian-photo-helps-reveal-mysterious-theft-of-pharaonic-sarcophagus/>, on 20.05.2022, at 08:09 pm.

In May 2022, The American authorities confiscated five Egyptian artefacts displayed in the Metropolitan Museum, which were confirmed to have been sold to the museum by Crostophere Cunicky – a famous dealer who had sold the golden coffin of "Nedjemankh" previously - after being illegally looted by a German Lebanese dealer called Robin Dib who denies all the accusations against him.

Both dealers used to sell looted antiquities from the Middle Egypt sites during the occurrences of the 25th January revolution and transform their documents and date of guardianship to be able to sell legally. Former Louvre director Jean-Luc Martinez who finished his tenure at the museum in 2021 is involved in this famous issue. The five objects are estimated to be valued at more than three million euros and have been confiscated from the museum by the New York District Attorney's Office. The most highlighted artefact among the five pieces is a mummy portrait of a woman wearing a blue mantle dating back to the era of Emperor Nero ⁽⁵⁾. Some artefacts of this issue returned to Egypt last September, while the other pieces will be back in the upcoming months.



The seized mummy portrait courtesy of the District Attorney's Office New York, former inventory Number: 2013.438 Metropolitan Museum, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/591557?sortBy=Relevance&ft=mummy+portrait&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=18>, on 14.02.2018, at 06:19 pm.

In June 2022, the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities reviewed and discussed the latest issue of the Louvre Museum after France officially announced that in 2020 the French authorities accused a former director of the Louvre Museum of complicity in the illegal purchasing and acquisition process of several Egyptian artefacts and monuments accessioned in the collection management of the museum during the mess of the 25th January 2011 revolution according to a French judicial source who they confirmed that all the artefacts that would be proven to have been illegally smuggled in that period, and are regulated by one of the laws of preservation, circulation, and possession of antiquities, they definitely would be back to Egypt ⁽⁵⁾.

Preservation of Repatriated Heritage

The Egyptian Museum in Cairo usually receives repatriated antiquities from abroad and seized ones to be kept and stored in the museum storages as a preparation process for exhibiting the most precious artefacts through newly organised and consistent temporary exhibitions after documenting them. These temporary exhibitions are strived to ensure access to those treasures by the museum's visitors and the local community. To this end, the concerned curators and registrars review the official reports of the repatriated artefacts. Then, they organise regular committees for documenting and accessioning them

(5) https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2022/06/01/egyptian-antiquities-connected-to-international-trafficking-ring-seized-at-metropolitan-museum-in-new-york/?fbclid=IwAR0x2pE2wP7BLb8AFAYRgaOTOCc3f9VBMhB1wXj3GIWdBvx_IR5KUSo6aA, on 21.07.2022, at 09:36 pm.

(5) <https://english.ahram.org.eg/News/467460.aspx?fbclid=IwAR0C5G2dSckioEkAoxUBGuUXzdNhyjM0mgoPOfIS99uaENkqzVaDSiUJkvM>, on 21.07.2022, at 04:56 pm.

to be added to the collection management circulation. Curators are keen to conduct a complete condition report with a detailed description of each artefact. After careful reviews and studies, it is given a JE number and registered in the Journal d'Entree Register Book, as well as inputting the object record into the database.

Temporary Exhibitions of Repatriated and Seized Artefacts at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo

The Egyptian ministry of antiquities is eager to preserve and display the repatriated artefacts and use them as an integral tool to raise awareness about this repatriated heritage. It also aims to re-contextualise the lost identity of these repatriated artefacts inside and outside Egypt. After the revolution, the Egyptian museum in Cairo developed a fine number of temporary exhibitions to display the repatriated and seized artefacts to the public.

"Damaged and restored" was the title of the first temporary exhibition after the January revolution, it had been held from September to December 2013. The exhibition displayed approximately 31 artefacts that had been looted during the vandalism in the museum on Friday 28th January 2011. One year after in 2014; the museum displayed 144 artefacts returned from Australia, Belgium, and Germany, in addition to different seized artefacts that were stolen from the Egyptian Museum itself and other sites during the events of the January revolution, the exhibition entitled: "Repatriated Objects" and took place from May to December.

In 2016, the Egyptian museum held two temporary exhibitions, the first exhibition entitled "Repatriated Objects", from January to April, displayed 36 repatriated artefacts returned from Germany, the UK, the USA, Denmark, France, Austria, South Africa, and Belgium during 2014 and 2015. And from October to December another exhibition was held entitled "Seized Antiquities at Egyptian Ports (1986: 2016)", displaying 74 seized artefacts from Egyptian Ports over 30 years.

In November 2017, an exhibition entitled: "Repatriated artefacts from Sharjah, United Arab Emirates" declared 400 objects. A year later, another exhibition held to display 47 repatriated objects seized in that famous issue of parcels in Naples, Italy in 2018, the exhibition entitled: "Returned Objects from Italy", and stayed from July to August. The last exhibition of this category until the moment was designed in 2020 and exhibited 71 seized antiquities from the Egyptian Ports entitled: "Egyptian Ports (1986: 2020)" and endured from November to December.

In addition to the Egyptian museum's authority in the discretion of these treasures, the Museum is always keen to provide the newly opened museums with repatriated artefacts to be added to their permanent collection to be accessible to the public, in particular, the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization and the Grand Egyptian Museum.

Recommendations

In June 2022, Italy announced that the 260 artefacts were repatriated by Manhattan authorities in the USA. The repatriated artefacts are worth about ten million dollars, and they could fill a new museum with its galleries. The Museum of Rescued Art had been established in Rome in the same year inside the complex of the National Roman Museum⁽⁵⁾. Egypt has the potential to follow Italy's experience in creating a new museum to preserve, display and highlight the repatriated antiquities. This could enhance the importance and value of repatriated Egyptian artefacts, in addition, to connecting the citizens with their cultural roots, especially with the current global interest in establishing new museums.

(5) https://www.artnews.com/art-news/news/italy-museum-of-rescued-art-repatriation-manhattan-da-1234632272/?fbclid=IwAR08Rx31vY7oehNzd2FCI9oPTt2EVLsftPTzKGmKBOIn4IFgQLwJ6gZxK_I, on 20.07.2022, at 08:23 pm.

Developing and delivering new temporary exhibitions that focus on interpreting the repatriation stories and the governmental efforts to highlight their impacts on linking this rescued heritage to the Egyptian communities. These exhibitions would assist in raising awareness of the significance of these treasures and how the Egyptian state adhered to the protection and preservation of its antiquities.

Devising a new concept of a museum display for "The repatriated loan Exhibition" in the Egyptian regional museums to ensure the accessibility of these treasures to large-scale of Egyptian communities not only in the capital: Cairo.

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