

# Introduction to Museology and Preventive Conservation

## PREFACE

Greece is very rich in archaeological treasures and, logically, it would (and should) favour the science of Museology. Nevertheless no serious attention has been given to this field up to present. However, the general progress of the state in the last years revealed the existing gap and the necessity of the use of this science in museums and in sites with remnants of the cultural and natural richness of the country.

Museology is a relatively applied science. Its teaching in Universities was introduced after World War II as a post war consequence, since people searching out their national cultural identities realized how important was the research, conservation and exposition of the remnants of their cultural heritage. Unfortunately, our country did not keep up with international evolution and progress in this field, so university courses were delayed by half a century!

In 1999, the course of Museology was introduced to the recently instituted Department of Mediterranean Studies of the University of the Aegean in Rhodes and was included in the Studies Guide of its Archaeology Section, after a proposal by the co-writer I. Liritzis. Prof. Laia Orphanidis taught Museology for the first time in the academic year 2001-2, thus instituting its systematic teaching in a Greek University. As expected, she was confronted with the serious problem of lack of Greek bibliography on the subject, suitable either for scientific application or for academic teaching.

The present book is then the realization of a coordinated series of acts since 2000, aiming to the creation of a Greek manual, and the result of the 2003 E.U. - founded project ΓΑΙΑ. As far as we know, it is the first Museology book in Greek bibliography.

The book has two parts: *Introduction to Museology* (Part I) gives a general identification of the science and sets the basic cognitive coordinates as well as the problematic on museological issues. It aims to a historical retrospection of museum science, to a general view of concepts and methods of museological research, conservation and exposition, as well as to making the reader aware of the targets, the practical difficulties and the problematic concerning the institution of new museums or the restoration of the existing ones.

The text addresses to scientific as well as to a broader range of readers. We believe that, besides what one may learn about the cultural treasures of one's own or of any country, one must know the ways by which they have been preserved up to now, the reason why some people prefer visits to certain museums, why they have much more contact with exhibits in certain expositions, as well as the existing possibilities for the preservation of objects which will improve the cultural level of future generations.

Pictures of Parts A and B are interlaced with the text and follow it in order to facilitate the reader and the large bibliography aims to help all who wish to deal in extension with more special issues.

*Introduction to Preventive Conservation* (Part II) deals in more detail with the practical methods of conservation of museum exhibits and of excavation material, so it is based on physics and chemistry. It is a study from the view of a physicist / archaeometrician, written in a simple way in order to be understood by University students.

There is an intentional light covering of issues, which we think is necessary for the creation of points of reference and for the linkage of the two parts of the book.

Endnotes in each chapter help the reading flow of the text. Bibliography forms a separate section of each part of the book, complying with the writing concept of each writer.

The present book furnishes an integral picture of Museology, since it covers both theoretical and practical issues while addressing to a large spectrum of readers.

The continuously evolving science of Museology, preventive conservation and restoration of monuments and works of art, along with their cultural administration in Greece, caused the book to be sold out and led to its updated re-edition in 2006, in which has been added an index of scientific terms.

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