



REPORT
on the working of the
MUSEUM DEPARTMENT
for the year
1969

MALTA
DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION
1971

Price 1/-

NATIONAL MUSEUM,
Auberge de Provence,
Valletta, Malta.

December 7, 1970.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the Annual
Report on the working of the Museum Department
for the year 1969.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

C.G. Zammit
Director of Museum

The Hon. Minister of Education,
Culture and Tourism.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SECTION

The Curator of Archaeology attended the study session on museography organized by Unesco and the International Council of Museums at the Museum of Ethnography and Institute of Ethnology, Neuchâtel, Switzerland, during the month of November. He had been nominated for this course by the Government and his candidature approved by the Division of Training Abroad, Department for the Advancement of Education of Unesco.

The Draft Programme and Budget of Unesco for 1969-1970 describes the course as an international one aimed at giving specialist post-university training to the scientific staff of museums in the theory and practice of modern museography. The session at Neuchâtel dealt mainly with the following aspects of the subject:

- theory and practice of display in museums
- museum architecture
- bibliography, documentation, computerization
- programming for museum and exhibition work
- typology and use of display materials and furniture
- presentation of museum objects (location, lighting, colours)
- photography, audio-visual aids
- permanent and temporary exhibitions
- printing, labelling, publication
- publicity, contact of museums with visitors and the public in general
- educational services
- insurance and security of museum objects on display, in storage or in transit, and customs formalities
- museums in Belgium, Italy and Switzerland.

In accordance with his terms of reference the Curator of Archaeology will be submitting a report to Unesco on the study session at Neuchâtel by the end of March 1970.

Post of Assistant Curator in the Archaeological Section

A public call for applications to fill this post was published in the Government Gazette of September 30. By the end of the Year both the written examination and the interview had been completed by a Panel of Examiners under the Board of Local Examinations and the results forwarded to the Chairman of the Board and the Registrar of Examinations.

Project for the National Archaeological Museum

Two halls on the second floor of the Auberge d'Italie were handed over in April to the Museum by the Ministry of Justice and Parliamentary Affairs. This space was immediately utilized to install 12 metal units with enough shelving to accommodate the archaeological library, and to make a start on the transfer of books, journals and other records from the National Museum. Negotiations were continued with the same Ministry for the early release of the basement of the Auberge d'Italie which is destined to house the heavier archaeological materials and a section of the restoration laboratory.

The Miss Catharine C. Carpender Bequest for Archaeological Research

In September Miss Catharine C. Carpender of Wilmington, North Carolina, U.S.A., informed the Director that by a legal instrument signed and published at Wilmington on March 14 of the same year, she had bequeathed to the National Museum of Malta the sum of 50,000 dollars to be used for archaeological research.

It will be recalled that this was not the first occasion on which Miss Carpender, a frequent visitor to Malta, had given tangible proof of her interest in the Museum: in 1967 and again in 1968

she had donated useful collections of American-Indian stone artifacts which her late father had brought together from the eastern coastal regions of the United States.

EXCAVATIONS

St. Vennera A Punic tomb situated on a building site due south of the Lux Press was destroyed before the landlord informed the Museum in May (M.R. 5273 7186). When he did, he handed over an oval amphora, damaged but restorable; a good search of the site for vestiges of the tomb and any other of its likely contents proved inconclusive.

Marsa Later the same month rock-cutting for the extension to the Power Station uncovered an empty Roman tomb in the same area where remnants of a Christian catacomb were discovered the previous year (M.R. 5484 7120). Access to the chamber was provided by a shaft, 1.86 x .63 x 1 m. deep, at the north end of which was the slab sealing the doorway. The chamber had a rectangular plan measuring 2.08 x 1.84 m.; the main features inside it were two trenches, .25 m. deep, running nearly the whole length of the side walls, and a shorter but deeper trench in the middle between the others with which it was connected by two holes with an oval section. The workmanship of the original rock cutting for shaft and chamber was of an unusually high standard throughout.

Rabat Dr. Daniel Micallef, B.Pharm., M.D., of Temple House, Tal-Virtu', must be given most of the credit for an outstanding discovery made in the garden of his home in June (M.R. 4580 7048). On suspecting that a cutting in the rock could be the shaft of a rock tomb, Dr. Micallef immediately called in the Curator of Archaeology to investigate. The ensuing excavation brought to light a large rectangular shaft, with steps

cut on the side, and a spacious chamber which, however, had been disturbed previously; even the sealing slab, which was still in situ, had its upper part broken.

By a rare stroke of good luck, whoever robbed the tomb in antiquity missed a polychrome faience balsam flask, 10.8 cm. long and datable to the early Punic period. This interesting object, of great significance for Phoenician industry and commerce in the western Mediterranean, is unique to the collection of the National Museum.

Apart from the faience flask, the debris in the chamber yielded several fragments of pottery, among them those of an oval amphora and a plate which were subsequently restored.

Ghaxaq On the last day of June a mechanical plough broke through the roof of a Punic tomb in a field due east of Santo Cristo Church (M.R. 5655 6803). The small chamber (2.13 x 1.40 m.) was cut to an oval plan in fissured rock (the left-hand jamb of the doorway having in fact been constructed in masonry) and had an irregularly-shaped draining pit across the entrance.

The tomb had originally served to inter two individuals with a deposit consisting of an urn, two jugs, a plate and a lamp, all of which were recovered from the draining pit.

Birkirkara Digging for the foundations of a house in Qormi Road during October was responsible for the accidental discovery of a Roman rock-cut tomb (M.R. 5184 7250). It had a narrow shaft (1.80 x .56 m.) at one end of which was the entrance to a near-rectangular chamber; at its innermost part this was cut to provide a low headrest. Together with the remains of nine adult skeletons, the tomb yielded a lamp, two cups, three plates and five small globular bottles.

Mr. Charles Briffa of Gżira, owner of the site, and Mr. Richard Calleja of Birkirkara are warmly thanked for their wholehearted co-operation.

Rabat Owing to other commitments in Malta and in Gozo, only brief attention could be given to the site of a Roman town-house at Saqqajja (M.R. 4607 7127). More of the red mosaic in Room 1 was uncovered when the large baulk between two of the original trenches was removed; in the process a certain amount of archaeological material was obtained, but practically all of it had no relevance to the site as it came from the thick layer of soil known to have been spread over the locality in the recent past.

The debris resulting from this and earlier excavations was removed in preparation for further investigation of the site.

Tas-Silg and San Pawl Milqi The Italian Archaeological Mission conducted further excavations at these two sites during October/November. Its report on the campaign of 1968 was published about the same time by the "Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche", Rome.

Gozo At intervals throughout the year excavations were carried out in two roofless caves on the north-eastern perimeter of Ghajn Abdul plateau in the limits of Santa Luċija, also known as il-Mixta (M.R. 2889 8976). From another cave nearby, which was destroyed by quarrying for hard stone in 1966, had come a collection of prehistoric pottery datable to the Ghar Dalam phase (c. 3800-3600 B.C.) by its decoration of impressed circles and other motifs.

The preliminary results by the end of the year showed that both caves had been inhabited in the Bronze Age, precisely during the Borg in-Nadur phase

(c. 1450-800 B.C.). Worthy of note among the ceramic material typical of the period was part of the septum of a 'ritual' vessel similar to those from Borg in-Nadur. Higher up the soundings indicated occupation of the site in early medieval and later times, respectively by part of the neck of a buff-ware jug with red decoration of North African (? Berber) inspiration and by bright red-slipped pottery probably made in Malta or Gozo during the 15th-16th centuries. Over most of the site the investigation had still to be carried into deeper levels.

Mr. Liberato Zammit of Xaghra, owner of the quarry, and his son, Mr. Francis Zammit, deserve grateful thanks for their understanding and collaboration at all stages of the work.

At the Citadel, Victoria, labour from the Public Works Department was again engaged in the removal of the superficial disturbed material encumbering areas of demolished buildings in the northern sector of the town.

ACCESSIONS

Ship's sounding lead, bell-shaped, partly hollow with cross-shaped ribs inside, complete with tie-hole; Roman.

(found off Qawra Point and donated by
Kenneth D. Riley, Esq., of St. Paul's Bay).

FINE ART SECTION

During the period under review most of the time and energy was absorbed by the hectic preparation for the 1970 Exhibition of the Council of Europe, which was due to open on 2 April 1970.

Notwithstanding the above, the Department was engaged in various other activities. The most important activities were connected with the restoration works of various paintings coming from different departments and churches belonging to Government, besides other pictures not belonging to Government but earmarked for the Council of Europe Exhibition.

Other paintings however which were not to be shown in the 1970 Exhibition were also restored in the laboratory of the Museum Department. Amongst these were included works from the Magisterial Palace, San Anton Palace, the Auberge d'Aragon and the Customs House.

As regards acquisitions, there have been some by presentation, others by purchase. The Department is ever grateful for donations generously made by public spirited persons. There were several donations during this period.

As for acquisitions by purchase there has been very little worth acquiring by the National Museum on the local market. The Museum however has secured several works by contemporary local artists.

Several exhibitions were held at the Museum. Some of these shows contained works by contemporary local artists, others included various arts and crafts.

PROTECTIVE INVENTORY

Work on the Protective Inventory of Monuments and Sites which is being compiled by officials of the National Museum under the aegis of the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe proceeded at a steady pace during the year under review. The preliminary work which forms the working basis for the compilation of the Inventory, had earlier been completed under the direction of Dr. Ottorino Tognetti of Verona, an expert consultant especially engaged by the Council of Europe to initiate the work. With the assistance of Mr. Mario Buhagiar who since July 1967 has been transferred on secondment to the Museum from the Education Department to work on the compilation of the Inventory, Dr. Tognetti card-indexed all the buildings of the old citadel of Mdina (130 cards) and all the buildings in the historic centre of the village of Hal Safi as well as all other buildings in the village built prior to 1900 (126 cards).

After Dr. Tognetti's departure from the island, Mr. Buhagiar continued working on the compilation on the Inventory. First to be tackled was the card-indexing of the buildings in the old quarter of the village of Tarxien and other buildings of interest in the village (85 cards). The index-cards for this village were later checked by Messrs Ralph White and Thomas Foster, two British residents formerly of the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works, who are currently preparing a report on the preservation of buildings of interest in several Maltese towns and villages for the Museum Department. The buildings in the historic centre of the village of Lija (amounting to 226) were then card-indexed. In the summer of 1969, Mr. Buhagiar with the assistance of Mr. James Evans of Paola a teacher-trainee at St. Michael's College of Education, who had kindly offered his services to the Museum Department during the summer vacation, completed the card-indexing of all buildings in the Gozitan village of St. John (222 cards).

In October 1969 Dr. Tognetti together with an assistant visited Malta for a week to check the work so far completed and offer fresh help and advice on the compilation of the Inventory. With the help of Mr. Buhagiar, the islands of Malta and Gozo were divided into a number of sites (34 for Malta and 14 for Gozo and Comino) conforming to a large extent with the parish boundaries of the islands. All the resultant divisions, which have been given a relative degree of protection, constitute mixed sites containing buildings and areas of archaeological, historical, industrial or natural interest. A report on the work so far completed and the difficulties encountered was, besides, drafted by Dr. Tognetti and Mario Buhagiar and presented to the Tenth Meeting of the Committee of Technical advisors of the Council of Europe which was held in Strasbourg towards the end of October.

The cards are being checked by the Curator of Fine Arts.

APPENDIX I

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

- F.S. Mallia (ed.), Studies in Maltese archaeology and history, I, Malta, March 1969.
- G. Busuttil et al., Missione archeologica italiana a Malta. Rapporto preliminare della campagna 1968, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Roma, 1969.
- H. Scheck, Malta, Steinzeittempel und Hypogeum, München - Grünwald, 1969.
- H. Frost, The Mortar Wreck in Mellieħa Bay - plans and soundings - a report on the 1967 campaign carried out on behalf of the National Museum of Malta, The Gollcher Foundation, Archaeological Series (ed. F.S. Mallia) No. I, Appetron Press Ltd., London, 1969.

APPENDIX II

RESTORATION OF PAINTINGS

National Museum

M. Preti: Drunkenness of Noah.

Neapolitan School XVII century: Heraclitus.

S. Peranda: Ecce Homo.

Anonymous, XVIII century: (i) Bird's eye view of
Valletta and its environs.

(ii) Bird's eye view of
Valletta and its environs.

Ph. Roos: (i) Landscape with animals.

(ii) Landscape with animals.

A. Favray: Blessed Gerard.

School of Favray: Grand Master Pinto.

School of Favray: Grand Master De Rohan.

Anonymous, early XIX century: Portrait of Matteo Bonavia.

F. Grandi: Holy Family.

G. Cali': Landscape.

Magisterial Palace, Valletta

Large lunette representing naval engagement.

After Giulio Romano: Victory of Constantine.

San Anton Palace

Attributed to P. Mignard: Portrait.

A. Favray: L'Isle Adam entering Mdina.

Verdala Palace

M. Preti: Madonna with St. John and St. Anthony the
Abbot.

Anonymous, XVII century: Portrait of a Cardinal.

Auberge d'Aragon

After Preti: St. John clad in the habit of the Order.

St. John's Co-Cathedral

M. Perez: Baptism of Christ.

Sarria Church, Floriana

M. Preti: St. Roch.

M. Preti: Fall of the angels.

Studio of Preti: St. Nicholas.

Customs House

Frieze representing the coat of arms of the Grand Masters.

St. Bartholomew Hospital

R. Buhagiar: St. Joseph.

Maltese school XVIII century: Madonna of the Rosary.

School of the Bassano: Holy Trinity with Saints.

Ricasoli Chapel

Anonymous: Adoration of the Shepherds.

Studio of Preti: St. Nicholas.

Jesuits' Church, Valletta

A. Erardi: Assumption.

Various pictures from the Sacristy.

Tal-Mirakli, Lija

M. Preti: Madonna with Saints.

St. Francis Church, Valletta

M. Preti: Madonna with Grand Master Caraffa.

Parish Church, Vittoriosa

F. Paladini: Three Saints.

Cathedral Museum

M. Minniti: Ecce Homo.

North Italian school XVIII century: Ecce Homo.

Attributed to F. Zahra: Crowning with Thorns.

APPENDIX III

ACCESSIONS

By Presentation

1 cent piece U.S.A. 1852 - H.E. The Governor General.

115 lead musket balls - Mr. K. Patience T.A.S.F. R.A.F.
Luqa.

A number of badges - Charles A. Lusted Esq.

1 penny 1881 Victoria - Anthony Borg

1 farthing 1885 Victoria

A stone model of a Romanesque church designed by
Mr. E. Xuereb A. & C.E. - Mr. E. Xuereb A. & C.E.

Two old spinning wheels - Dr. G. Hyzler M.P.

Two bound volumes containing the daily bulletins of
the last war (the Malta Front) - Mr. Frank De
Domenico.

Bronze bust of Edward VIII - Mr. Henry Simmonds.

Leather saddle cloth - Mr. J.L. Henduse.

A collection of stuffed birds - Mr. De Lucca and
Dr. C. De Lucca.

A cocked hat worn by Mr. Paolo Trapani - Mr. Henry
Trapani.

By transfer

24 majolica plates, 18th century - Argotti Botanic
Gardens.

Sets of Malta Postage stamps (various issues) -
Postmaster General.

By Purchase

Paintings

- Hugo Carbonaro: At the Marsa, oil on canvas -
14 in. x 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
- Paul Carbonaro: At Portonuevo (Marsa), oil on canvas -
23 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. x 35 in.
- Harry Alden: Born equal, oil on wood - 48 in. x 39 in.
- Esprit Barthelet: The first dip, oil on canvas -
51 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. x 41 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.
- Frank Baldacchino: Abstract - 30 in. x 21 in.
Abstract - 12 in. x 9 in.
Abstract - 11 in. x 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.
- E.V. Cremona: Abstract - 44 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. x 36 in.
- J. Borg Xuereb: Side Street Four, No. 16, oil on canvas -
37 in. x 29 in.
- A. Cassar: Harmonies, collage - 25 in. x 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Sculpture

- Anthony Agius: Owl, stone - 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. in height.
- Anthony Agius: Flame of liberty, fibre glass and
cement - 33 in. x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Terracotta

- 1 earthenware hardware jar with two handles -
18.5 cm. high.

Silver

- Two silver spoons - Malta, mid XIX century.
- Two tea spoons - Malta, 1840 and 1851.

Other Objects

- Glass oil lamp XIX century.
- Two bronze petards decorated with the Cross of the
Order 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. high.
- Saw, wooden case and metal saw "cross-cut saw"
(Munxar taż-żewġ).

Kejla two and one nofs sieh.

Postage stamps, Sundry, 6 in number. Postage due
stamps - Malta S.G. no. D. 21 to D. r. 6.

NATURAL HISTORY SECTION

Ghar Dalam Cave

During the period 17th March 1969 - 18th April 1969, palaeontological research work was carried out at Ghar Dalam and other Quaternary sites on the Island by a German team from Senckenberg Museum of Natural History, Frankfurt/Main. This was carried out with permission of the local Ministry of Education and with the co-operation of this section of the Museum Department. The German team consisted of Dr. Siegfried Rietschel, head of the Geology Department of that Institute and leader of the expedition, Dr. Gerhard Storch, a world renowned specialist on Recent and Pleistocene micromammals, Franz Malec, a student from the Palaontologisches Institut der Universitat of Frankfurt and Thomas Keller as preparator. The team was accompanied by the eminent malacologist Dr. Adolf Zilch, who is head of the Department of Zoology and second Director of Senckenberg Museum. Recent and Quaternary land shells were collected by him for further studies.

Natural History Museum

Palaeontology

Collections of local and foreign fossils presently stored in various rooms of the Natural History Museum (Vilhena Palace, Mdina) have been transferred to the storage room of this section. Unpacking and cleaning of the fossils, after thirty years of storage, is in progress.

A study of a new species of echinoid from the Maltese Miocene was carried out by Dr. G. Zammit Maempel, the results of which were published in the journal of the Palaeontological Association for April 1969 under the title of: A new species of Coelopleurus (Echinoidea) from the Miocene of Malta. (Palaeontology, 12(1):42-47, 1 text fig., pl. 6.)

ORNITHOLOGY AND ENTOMOLOGY

The setting up of the ornithological and Entomological material is in progress and numerous specimens have been prepared for exhibition. It is intended to take in hand the study collections at a subsequent stage in the preparation. The specimens and the set-up have been prepared with a view that the resulting exhibits will convey to the public the necessary amount of information about the bird and insect life of the Maltese Islands. Wherever suitable, comparisons with the insect faunas of other countries have been portrayed through the exhibits.

Ornithology

A few specimens belonging to the old collections of birds have been cleaned and remounted for use in the display showcases. One species of a rare bird, a Pterocles, which was being damaged by feather mites, has been thoroughly disinfected and put in a sealed perspex case.

Several local birds belonging to various species were acquired and prepared either for exhibition, or to form a source material for the display galleries, or for the projected dioramas of birds.

In connection with the plans to set up a bird gallery, two show-cases, one depicting the general migration of birds and the other a series of woodland birds, have been finished. The display in these has been planned and carried out in such a way as to convey the maximum information about the exhibits without burdensome details. The cases have been set up with an eye to their aesthetic effects and with their didactic value in mind. The methods employed to obtain these effects are

aimed at instructing the visitor in the simple biological phenomena of birds (such as migration) and in the facts about the individual life of the species (such as habits, nesting, eggs, distribution etc.).

These exhibits have been prepared in such a way that they could be easily transferred to a planned in-built show-case running along the sides of the hall destined to house the bird exhibits.

A few flat skins received in exchange from Leicester Museum have been relaxed and mounted. A small collection of birds' nests and eggs has been purchased from Italy, and these two items will likewise be used for display purposes.

A collection of mounted birds has been donated by Mr. Vincent De Lucca. Many of these specimens will be set up in the display gallery.

Entomology

In this section the material has again been collected and mounted for display. The cases have been set up with the same purpose in mind, namely to convey to the public visual instruction about the life of insects, their association in the general plan of nature communities, and the general biological phenomena they illustrate.

A good number of insects belonging to various orders has been collected during several excursions. The insects collected were set up and mounted and the specimens will serve as source material for the exhibits.

A centre case illustrating the general classification of insects as well as their relationships and evolution was finished.

maltese moths have been prepared. The insects are all identified, labelled and arranged in an attractive manner in the cases.

Several cases illustrating the various stages in the life-history of butterflies and moths, as well as their food-plants (natural plant specimens were pressed and mounted) were prepared. A few other display cases have been arranged to illustrate various biological phenomena such as Flash colouration, Mimicry, Cryptic colouration, Industrial melanism etc. These two sections (together with a few cases on the same subject purchased from England) will be a very useful form of instructing visitors and students in this particular aspect of insect life. The educational value of these exhibits for school-children and the general public cannot be over-emphasized.

Two collections, one of Diptera and one of Coleoptera, were sent to the British Museum for identification. A collection of Hemiptera has been identified by an Italian specialist (L. Tamanini) in the group.

Many exotic butterflies in papers were purchased from England and another small collection, also in papers, has been received from Mr. Kobayashi of Japan. All the insects have been opened up and mounted, labelled, and arranged systematically in display cases. They will form a very beautiful display unit and will no doubt enhance the aesthetic value of the insect collection on display.

Many moths and a few butterflies, all in papers, received from foreign donors were mounted and arranged in store-boxes. Part of this material will join the projected study collections, but the majority will form part of a display of butterflies and moths occurring in the different European

set up only if there is enough material collected to justify such a display.

Representative collections of British butterflies were donated by the British Museum and by Leicester Museum.

Housing the Exhibits

Draft plans for the show-cases and Dioramas destined for the Bird Gallery, as well as those needed for housing the insects display units, were submitted to the Architect in charge.

Publications

The following works on birds and insects of the Maltese Islands were published by the Assistant Curator (Dr. C. De Lucca) during 1969.

A Revised Check-List of the Birds of the Maltese Islands, Hampton, England.

Lepidoptera of the Maltese Islands (Ent. Rec., 81, 137-140).

Bird Migration over the Maltese Islands (Ibis, 111: 322-337).

Emitteri Eterotteri Maltesi (Boll. Soc. Ent. Ital., 99:5 and 6.



COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF VISITORS ADMITTED TO SITES UNDER THE
MUSEUM DEPARTMENT DURING THE CALENDAR YEARS 1968 AND 1969

PLACE	1968		1969	
	On payment	Free	On payment	Free
National Museum	13,654	2,093	17,501	3,873
Palace Armoury	21,048	11,474	23,934	7,350 [*]
Museum of Roman Antiquities	13,970	4,803	13,965	3,830
St. Paul's Catacombs	15,502	1,256	21,257	2,955
Hal Saflieni Hypogeum	16,027	4,849	21,986	4,123
Tarxien Neolithic Temples	9,086	2,565	11,236	2,936
Ghar Dalam Cave and Museum	5,470	2,218	9,200	3,031
Inquisitor's Palace, Vittoriosa	-	1,080	-	1,300
Museum, Gozo	4,149	1,172	6,069	1,080
Ggantija Temples, Gozo	14,397	2,949	22,000	4,578
General Day Tickets	19,093	-	24,718	-
Total	132,396	34,459	171,866	35,056
Total admission fees collected	£9,482. 13s. 6d.		£12,139. 6s. 6d.	

* Inclusive of 4,320 visitors admitted during the
8th September Exhibition.