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ARTICLE

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT OF THE PREHISTORIC ART MUSEUM OF MAÇÃO, PORTUGAL

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### ABSTRACT

The current article aims to explore the management of archaeological resources in the valleys of Tejo and Ocreza rivers, Portugal, based on research, communication, and education experiences developed at Tejo Valley Prehistoric and Sacred Art Museum, Mação County, Portugal. The article gives temporal emphasis on recent years, in the 21st century, when the museum was given this name and fully restructured. First, it addresses the strategies and theoretical guidelines adopted to run the museum. Subsequently, it describes research, post-graduate studies, communication, and other educational experiences. Finally, it performs an overall assessment and suggests future paths for the management of heritage assets, mainly in museological institutions.

**Keywords:** heritage management; museum; Prehistoric Archaeology.

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## GESTÃO DO PATRIMÔNIO ARQUEOLÓGICO DO MUSEU DE ARTE PRÉ-HISTÓRICA DE MAÇÃO, PORTUGAL

### RESUMO

O artigo explora a gestão dos recursos arqueológicos dos vales dos rios Tejo e Ocreza, em Portugal, a partir das experiências de investigação, comunicação e educação desenvolvidas no Museu de Arte Pré-Histórica e do Sagrado do Vale do Tejo, localizado em Mação, Portugal, com ênfase temporal em anos mais recentes, já no século XXI, quando o museu recebeu esse nome e foi bastante reestruturado. Em um primeiro momento, reflete-se sobre as estratégias e guias teóricos utilizados na operação do museu, para, em seguida, adentrar-se na descrição de experiências de pesquisa, pós-graduação, comunicação e educação. Por fim, se faz um balanço geral, seguido de propostas de caminhos futuros para a gestão de bens patrimoniais, cujo centro é a instituição museológica.

**Palavras-chave:** gestão do patrimônio; museu; Arqueologia Pré-histórica.

## GESTIÓN DEL PATRIMONIO ARQUEOLÓGICO DEL MUSEO DE ARTE PREHISTÓRICO DE MAÇÃO, PORTUGAL

### RESUMEN

El artículo explora la gestión de los recursos arqueológicos en los valles de los ríos Tajo y Ocreza, en Portugal, a partir de experiencias de investigación, comunicación y educación desarrolladas en el Museo de Arte Prehistórico y Sacro del Valle del Tajo, ubicado en Mação, Portugal. El artículo hace con un énfasis temporal en los últimos años, en el siglo XXI, cuando el museo recibió este nombre y fue reestructurado por completo. En primer lugar, se reflexiona sobre las estrategias y lineamientos teóricos utilizados en el funcionamiento del museo, para luego describir las experiencias de investigación, estudios de posgrado, comunicación y educación. Finalmente, se hace una valoración general, seguida de propuestas de caminos futuros para la gestión de los bienes patrimoniales, cuyo centro es la institución museológica.

**Palabras clave:** gestión del patrimonio; Museo; Arqueología Prehistórica.

## THE MUSEOLOGICAL STRATEGY

The renovation project of Dr João Calado Rodrigues Museum in Mação County (Figure 1), Portugal, started in 2001. It was triggered by the rediscovery of rock engravings in Ocreza Valley in the previous year, during archaeological works aimed at monitoring the construction of current road A23, which was called IP6, at that time. The matter faced at that time lied on the purpose to be given to the Museum, which had a small, although important, collection and was located in a county presenting low demographic density, increasing aging population and scarce public means of transportation. From the very beginning, the project was guided by eight strategic and theoretical considerations, as described below.

First, museums cannot be mere deposits of pieces; moreover, activities such as conservation, or even research, cannot exhaust the essence of their functions. Thus, knowledge socialization (rather than the mere “cultural animation”), which can only be achieved by integrating individuals to research processes, must be the core of museum’s concerns. Possamai (2011, p. 66, *our translation*) has addressed the reasons why individuals donate things (but not anything) to museums:

Just as they no longer fit in the wardrobe, closet or at home, objects that are no longer used in individuals’ everyday life seem to have a single end, namely: disappearance. This is one of the main concerns raised by donors about objects donated to museums; that they would end up “being discarded”, “going to the garbage”. However, if they were donated to museums, they would be “kept”. Museums are delegated the function of “keeping”, they are the depository place of all those trinkets that no longer fit in the wardrobe, at home and, consequently, in the lives of individuals, social groups or institutions.

Second, there is no knowledge socialization without its production, although both knowledge socialization and production are different operations. Part of the knowledge socialization process comprises explaining this very same distinction by emphasizing the methodological rigor and persistence associated with research, in order to value it. Thus, from the very beginning, the renovation project was structured based on two major aspects, namely: research and the other museology components. Therefore, rigorous knowledge production can never be mistaken for “relative” and open production, or, in other words, for “careless” production. This does not contradict, of course, the approach to co-construction and co-sharing of information, encompassing not only scientific knowledge but, also, other understandings based on intellectual experience and tradition. However, knowledge co-construction process may only be achieved if academic expertise is not dissolved and limited through anti-scientific relativism. Part of the strategy in Mação has been, from the first moment, to discuss how academic and technical expertise relate to each other, which is a major conquest of humanity, while also considering that strategic decisions in the polis, including on the scale of investment in museums or other heritage assets, should remain in the shared power of the whole society.

In fact, museums are “another space”, another dimension that changes the meaning of everyday life for those who visit it (if the visit is indeed useful) and that, through this process, transforms visitors themselves. This double transformation and “displacement” process is as profound as the rational experience – which starts with visitors’ decision to visit museums – when it is associated with sensory and emotional experiences.

However – and this is the fourth theoretical consideration –, transformation can only start from a basis, from an invariant. Thus, museums would have to identify the “maximum common denominator” between their users and the available collections - i.e.,

a dimension capable of providing museum users with the feeling of “comfort and recognition”, so it could be used as a basis to trigger restlessness and doubt in order to generate new knowledge. Based on this concern, once significant nuclei of the Museum’s collection (from the Paleolithic to the present day – Figure 2) were identified, the origins of agriculture were defined as thematic axis, not only because of the relevant collections in this field – which comprise the rock art complex of Tejo<sup>1</sup> Basin – but also because the “rural world” remains a very strong identity reference, both at regional and national level.

**Figure 1** – Building of the Prehistoric Art Museum of Mação.  
Source: Photo of the authors (2008).



**Figure 2** – Display area of the museum. Source: Photo of the authors (2008).



<sup>1</sup> For a consistent analysis of the rock art in Tejo Valley, see the Introduction and chapter 1, “Estratigrafia, Contexto, Estilo e Cronologia do Complexo Rupestre do Vale do Tejo” (Stratigraphy, Context, Style and Chronology of Tejo Valley Rock Complex) in the book by Sara Garcês (2017-2018) about the reasons for deer presence in the local Rock Art on canvas.

Fifth, museums must be an “\_a\_” (*Ágora*)<sup>2</sup>, a space for visiting, reflecting and looking ahead, for building citizenship, rather than just for contemplating and consuming. The implementation of the museum in Mação, with a large square, has favored this approach, that is the reason why the museum was structured for local residents, in the first place, as *their* museum, or their “*ágora*”. A broad debate about the museum’s future was opened in 2002 and it counted on the participation of 10% of the county’s residents (more than 50% of the county’s population); this process assured the first strong relationship between the museum and the local population. This relationship was meant to be profound, but clear, to enable identifying different opinions – whenever necessary – and building a mutual trust relationship that has been reinforced since 2003. Such a relationship was also reinforced by the experience lived with the major wildfires that reached the county that year and that affected areas where the museum team worked in. That was a foundational traumatic act of the new museum stage<sup>3</sup>.

Sixth, the museum operates displacements in space (local/global) and time (instant/flow). This function has been exercised since the beginning of the project by scales of debate and museography. An international scientific commission comprising a dozen specialists from different countries was formed at the same time the debates with the population had started; it was done to deepen and validate the museological project. At the same time, collaboration protocols were established with universities, as well as with research and heritage centers in Portugal (such as the Portuguese Museum Network or the Science and Technology Foundation network) and in several other countries. On the temporal sphere, the first “new” exhibition, held before the Museum was subjected to requalification works, has brought together paleosol molds from the Portuguese (Santa Cita) and Italian (Isernia la Pineta, Grotta Fumane and Riparo Tagliente) Pleistocene, which enabled visitors to have a multisensory experience (sight, touch) and to understand that apparent moments are often palimpsests of flows. This didactic was enabled by a visit-orientation strategy adopted since the beginning of the process, namely: all visits are guided by museum collaborators (not by guides, but by technicians and researchers) to provide visitors with an in-depth cognitive relationship experience (OOSTERBEEK, 2019).

However (seventh consideration), the museum should be more than a space for debate, it should contribute to insert Mação and the region in the globalization dynamics. From 2004 on, turning Mação County (Figure 3) into a cosmopolitan center has become a strategic goal accomplished through the collaboration of institutions such as the Polytechnic Institute of Tomar, the Universities of Coimbra and Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro, and several other European universities. Mação County’s daily life has changed due to the implementation of classes from different Master’s and Doctorate programs. These classes were held in the county due to the structuring of laboratories and of a library specialized in archaeology, rock art and territorial management, which has more than 100,000 references, nowadays. The county has welcomed new residents (reaching up to approximately 5% of the local population) who came from more than 40 countries in all five continents. They were highly qualified and represented a cultural diversity that changed from “unfamiliar” to “familiar”, between 2005 and 2008.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek *ágora* was a public place where several activities were carried out, with emphasis on times when individuals gathered to discuss about the great philosophical themes of humanity. According to Ferrara (2007), the agora has surpassed the geometric and physical spheres of the Greek square, since it became a symbol of Europe’s political and social centrality, and expanded to other domains and geographical regions (as in the exemplary case of overseas expansions).

<sup>3</sup> Major wildfires that affected the central region of Portugal in 2016, 2017 and 2019. For some reports of residents affected by this calamity, see Carvalho (2018).



Nowadays, Mação is consolidating itself as a relevant node in several sectors other than just archaeology or museology, at international level.

Finally, the full insertion of both the Museum and Mação in the globalization dynamics means a global approach by the museum to its territory. On the one hand, it implied the definition of a more monographic designation for the Museum (by assuring differentiation in the global framework, based on the heritage and research reality), as well as the identification of “totalizing” strategic pillars capable of following the set of social dynamics. The museum was renamed as Tejo Valley Prehistoric and Sacred Art Museum and made its collections available for studies about the relationship of different past societies (including the 20th and 21st centuries) with symbolic and sacred themes. In media terms, the Museum is essentially publicized as MAP - Museu de Arte Pré-Histórica de Mação (Prehistoric Art Museum of Mação), since much of the research and exhibitions carried out in it refer to the Holocene rock art and its settlement contexts. The museum renaming process did not imply abandoning its previous designation (it remains Dr João Calado Rodrigues Museum of Mação), but a change in its communication plan. Parallel to that, three strategic pillars were defined, namely: quality (despite the very limited financial resources, museum’s projects and activities are always carried out with great concern for quality, which must be independently and externally audited to help socially spreading a total quality culture); qualification (hosting classes of master’s and doctorate courses from IPT (Instituto Politécnico de Tomar - Polytechnic Institute of Tomar) and several universities; it also organized training actions for all other levels, based on a professionalization and lifelong teaching logic, whose materiality and contingency didactics is a guiding thread (which extends in the Memory Spaces created by the Museum); and territory (underlining the territorial base of human behavior and inserting heritage management into territorial management, which, in its turn, has a global scale, nowadays). Based on this logic, the decision was made in 2010 to create Instituto Terra e Memória (Land and Memory Institute – Figure 4), which is an international research center whose associates comprise entities from Portugal, Spain, Brazil and China. The aforementioned Institute develops archaeology, as well as territorial and heritage management projects in several countries, whose physical space is very close to that of the museum’s building. As an example of the harmony between the museum and the ITM, several experimental archaeology activities inspired by the archaeological pieces deposited in the museum are carried out in the Institute’s facilities. Many of them take place in the presence of the same public that visits the museum’s exhibitions. Thus, it is possible seeing a complementary relationship between research and communication spaces:

Having researchers in the didactic team helps to avoid the simplistic presentation of the main museum themes and enables their permanent update paced by advancements in the research projects and activities performed by the Laboratories of Instituto Terra e Memória. In fact, the growing activity of resident researchers is what guarantees the sustainable growth of educational activities. (CURA *et al.*, 2011, p. 602-603, *our translation*).

**Figure 3** – The center of the Mação County. Source: Photo of the authors (2008).



**Figure 4** – The building of the Instituto Terra and Memória. Source: Photo of the authors (2018).



## THE MUSEUM'S PROGRAM

The Museum's program comprises several dimensions (study and conservation of sites, organization of Archeological Park of Ocreza River<sup>4</sup>, postgraduate courses in collaboration with higher education, experimental archaeology, Neolithic yard, memory spaces, innovative museographic solutions, international network, interfaces with arts and architecture, and cultural tourism) within a global and integrated territory management framework (cultural integration of economic, social and environmental dimensions).

The rock art complex of Tejo basin is certainly one of the most important heritage collections available in Portuguese territory, although it is mostly submerged nowadays. According to Garcês (2017-2018), this set of archaeological sites comprises twelve large

<sup>4</sup> Ocreza River is 64 kilometers long and flows into Tejo River. Its valley hosts thousands of prehistoric and historic sites. More than two thousand rock engravings were recorded, either in context or in separate, in the Pracana dam construction site, alone (ARQUITECTOS, 2008).

rock art areas<sup>5</sup> and approximately seven thousand engravings. Based on the museological perspective, the rock art interest lies not only on its heritage and historical dimensions but also on the fact that it enables operating a transformation of meaning that starts in the past (perspectives based on which rock sets are discussed and interpreted), crosses the broad lines of theoretical-epistemological cleavage (form/function, aesthetics/communication, materiality/symbolism) and extends into the future (collection resignification in its landscape and prospective framework).

Therefore, the Prehistoric Art Museum of Mação is a museum where citizens see lesser art (to be approached through magnificent photographs by Mariano Piçarra and high-resolution 3D casts, by Pedro Serra) than “other things”. On the one hand, this occurs because the aim is to enable museum users to understand that rock art was made to signify the landscape and that it can only be fully addressed in that context. On the other hand, it emphasizes that art is only part of a complex system of significations and materialities, whose meaning must be addressed in the settlement dynamics understanding context.

Between 2005 and 2014, Museum users who visited the main exhibition building found a dominant title “A scratch in the landscape - A landscape at risk”, as well as three exhibitions that were cognitive and sensory declinations of a single idea: in the aftermath of great climate-environmental changes, some human groups have chosen to abandon economic hunting and harvesting models to adopt an economy increasingly based on domestication (of plants, animals and people); this process was long and took place in an independent way, in different places worldwide. Alto Ribatejo, in the Western Iberian Peninsula, was the stage for two different, although converging, strategies that belong to this process. Thus, archaeological remains (mainly art) may look like a mere scratch in the landscape that requires some effort to be seen; but, in fact, they are testimonies of landscapes at risk of disruption, as well as of human dynamics adopted in these contexts, both in the past and in the present. That is the reason why, when visitors arrive in the middle of the visiting route, they find the sentence “Between what has never been and what never will be”.

In that first cycle of ten years, the first exhibition to be seen by users was digital and consisted in manipulating image packages selected to convey certain concepts, based on the association/transformation of ideas (the PACAD <sup>6</sup> interactive digital program developed through the partnership between the company Benefits & Profits and the European Prehistory Research Center of Alto Ribatejo) that were structured into three groups of two notional pairs. The first group has emphasized the rupture introduced by production economy (Hunters/Gatherers and Agriculture/Metallurgy pairs). The second one has operated in relationships between materiality and signification (Archaeology/Landscape and Rock Art/Contemporary Art pairs). Finally, the third group has emphasized the important role played by human agency in building the past and the future (History/Identities and Technology/Innovation pairs). The PACAD exhibition included images of research projects developed in several countries by Museum and Instituto Terra e Memória collaborators. It allowed visitors to access these images, be it through the aforementioned dichotomous/complementary pairs or through a map guiding them to other “PACAD rooms” - which were networked to the museum - in Portugal and Brazil. The fundamental concepts of the museum were visually built,

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<sup>5</sup> They are: Erges River Valley, Ponsul River, Cachão de São Simão, Alagadouro, Lomba da Barca, Cachão do Algarve, Ficalho, Fratel, Ribeira de Nisa Foz, Chão da Velha, Gardete and Ocreza River Valley (GARCÊS, 2017-2018, p. 15.)

<sup>6</sup> Cura and Oosterbeek (2017, p. 55, *our translation*) have explained that “The PACAD digital museographic program, developed in partnership with the company Benefits & Profits, is nowadays a network undergoing structuring process and introduces a new museological concept linked to social intervention”.



without subtitles or oral explanations (although they did not exclude the debate), thus enabling the first detachment: the concept is forged based on the false proximity enabled by the overvaluation of the usually dominant sense used to build theoretical knowledge (the vision). Therefore, by associating images with the act of selecting them, users got to know the notional groups and their concepts, as well as how to integrate themselves to the guiding thread of museum experience. Yi-Fu Tuan has pointed out that, of all senses, vision is the one we mostly use to perceive the world around us. During humanity's evolutionary process, vision became increasingly sharp and enabled unique perceptual features in all living beings, such as the possibility of seeing the world in a polychromatic way (except for color blind individuals). However, it is worth emphasizing that even vision is conditioned by experience. Accordingly, museums have the function of teaching the human eye to perceive cultural heritage elements (TUAN, 2012).

The second exhibition, held on the same floor, was tactile. It sequentially grouped replicas of artifacts that illustrated the daily lives of the living, the main rock art motifs and the funerary collections of the first agropastoral societies living in the region. Immersed in darkness, museum users were invited to visit the Neolithization process without resorting to vision and without previous explanation: they had to put together meanings (of objects) based on touch and on their previous framework of cultural information. When it comes to tactile perceptions in “discoveries” about the environment surrounding us, Tuan (2012, p. 18-19, *our translation*) have highlighted that:

Tact, the haptic sense, in fact, provides human beings with a great deal of information about the world. It does not take any special skill for individuals to feel the difference between a piece of smooth glass and another one with 1/6,400cm-deep slots. Even when individuals have their eyes blindfolded and their ears covered to remove auditory cues, they can tell the difference among plastic, metal, paper, or wood by gently tapping the surface of the material with a fingernail. Practice improves sensitivity. [...] The fundamental nature of the sense of touch is highlighted when we realize that blind individuals can still act in the world in a quite efficient way; however, they may not survive without the sense of touch.

This is how the second detachment operated: the darkness in the room was an allegory that highlighted the intangibility of the past, whereas the overvaluation of touch showed the likelihood of conceptual rationalization and reconstruction. Although the exhibition was prepared for individuals with visual and/or motor disability, it also provided a “temporary blindness” experience to normovisual visitors.

The third exhibition took up the structure of the three tactile exhibition spaces (domestic, funerary and rock art spaces), framed through a long-time cycle (approximately three thousand years, over which the territory was progressively domesticated), although with a “traditional” exhibition (artifacts in showcases – Figure 6). Tables identifying the artifacts were minimal (they aimed at helping users memorizing the name of objects, through their repetition: ax, slate plate, blade, among others) and texts were short and metaphorical (English versions being conceptual, rather than literal, translations). Again, the aim was to invite users to question and debate; part of such an aim was achieved through the exhibition of objects (mainly of lithic artifacts) without drawings or texts to explain their specific functions. This exhibition was older than the tactile one, which later became the first to be visited; interestingly, visitors stopped asking how the artifacts were handled after the tactile experience became their “entry” to the Museum discourse, which allowed them to understand this process in a direct way. The opening to the library's reading room was, and still is, an important aspect of the main exhibition room. This option aimed at emphasizing that the interpretive discourse of the exhibitions, however flexible it may seem, is based on research, as well as that

publications are the corollary and one of the core activities in science (users can use the library to deepen their knowledge).

Since 2015, the main exhibition has changed, even if keeping part of its collections. Replacing the initial discussion on human adaptation to climate and environmental changes, the current exhibition focuses on gesture, and the relation between communication and creativity. It is structured into three parts: the gestures that transform landscapes (deforestation, construction, dwelling, burying), the gestures that transform raw materials (physical changes as in lithic industries and basketry; chemical changes as with pottery; recycling transformations, as with metallurgy), and the gestures to communicate (through word or art). This new exhibition (Figure 5) is, through a different approach, still the same call for the users to discuss and reflect upon the multilayered meanings encapsulated in any human agency.

**Figure 5** – New exhibition on the museum. Source: Photo of the authors (2019).



The museum extends into the research center building (*Instituto Terra e Memória*), where knowledge socialization services are operated. The projects for the study and conservation of archaeological sites (including the ones that are open to the public nowadays, such as the Archaeological Park of Ocreza, Anta of the mouth of Frio River (Figure 7), Anta of Lajinha, Castro of S. Miguel da Amêndoa, as well as ongoing research sites - such as Lagoa do Bando or Castelo Velho da Zimbreira) - are coordinated from a set of specialized laboratories (technology and lithic typology, rock art, ceramics, zooarchaeology - which complete each other due to laboratory resources from IPT and CIAAR - Alto Ribatejo Interpretation Center) that intersect in two main research lines, namely: Cultures and Territories; and Environments and Human Behavior.

Museum users are invited to visit the laboratories and may incorporate research teams, within the framework of training programs. The integrated project of experimental archaeology, which brings together different specialties (lithic, organic, ceramics, metals) and is at the heart of the training activities held by knowledge socialization services (favoring arts and sciences teaching through technology), stands out. It was in this field that a Neolithic yard was structured and opened to the public in 2014 (Figure 8).

**Figure 6** – Roman stele on display at the museum. Source: Photo of the authors (2008).



**Figure 7** – Archaeological site Anta of the Mouth of Frio River. Source: Photo of the authors (2008).



**Figure 8** – Experimental archaeology class at the Neolithic yard. Source: Photo of the authors (2008).



As previously mentioned, the museum provides classes of doctoral and master's courses in prehistoric archaeology, rock art, historical archaeology, quaternary studies, applied photography, among others. The presence of dozens of master's and doctoral students, and some post-doctoral students, is the backbone of the Museum and the ITM; it works as the *continuum* between research and knowledge socialization. Annual rock art seminars (started in Tomar in 1988 and held in Mação since 2005), intensive postgraduate courses in Cultural Heritage Management (European Commission Gold award) or in integrated territory management, and conference cycles (such as the “Entre Hefesto e Prometeu” (Between Hephaestus and Prometheus) cycle, which took place in 2012/2013) complete this dimension, which is consolidated in dozens of annual international publications and in some series of local publications, namely: the monographic series *Arkeos* and *Area Dmeniu* (edited by CEIPHAR), Quaternary and Prehistory *Cahiers* (edited by the Museum and Mação County) and *Techne* (edited by ITM, in its 2nd series).

This *continuum* was later reinforced by interfaces with arts and architecture. The Museum has coordinated several European and Ibero-American projects in this field, such as the current project called Gestart, which starts from the assumption that the meaning of things, although immaterial, depends on objects and, even more, on the creation of new objects, as well as on creativity, aesthetics and gestures. Through 5 European scenarios (polarized in the Middle Tejo in Mação, Vila Nova da Barquinha and Abrantes counties), approximately 30 artists and archaeologists, as well as 100,000 citizens, were an active part of a project focused on gestures: not only of artists, but of all, because artistic gestures gain meaning in the diversity of gestures of all individuals.

It is also worth emphasizing the “Andakatu” project, named after a prehistoric character (represented by researcher Pedro Cura) who would have lived in Ocreza River Valley. Based on scenographic activities with fictional and performative background, Andakatu mainly develops practical essays on rock paintings, lithic and ceramic utensils’ manufacturing, bonfires, clothing, among other experiments with children, in order to produce pedagogical immersion, as opposed to “cold” and static museum objects (CURA *et al.*, 2008). Currently, a social-archaeological park of Andakatu is being structured, bridging the gap between ancient and contemporary technologies and modes of production. As with other initiatives of the Museum, the aim is to relate, through experimentation/gesture/tangibility, the knowledge on the past with the concerns and challenges of the present.

Thus, visual arts, plastic arts and cultural heritage are the basic references of several activities counting on the participation of artists, archaeologists and citizens in fields such as ceramics, design, literature, photography or stone technology. Since 2014, the project has been bringing together the knowledge of creators (artists and artisans) and specialists (archaeologists and art historians) to consolidate the cultural landscapes where citizens of the involved counties live in.

This framework of activities extends to the entire territory; it starts from memory spaces, which are places where populations gather objects that carry memories of their past, and where such memories are socialized. Occasionally, such spaces can become the poles of the museum (such as the Museum building dedicated to riverine fishing and farming communities, which is undergoing in Ortiga parish), although they are mainly featured by the collective management undertaken by the population, as well as by the option of valuing materialities (objects) as foci of memories and immaterial culture. This network of memory spaces, which has expanded to Brazil since 2011, is a strong territorial cohesion component capable of articulating the training, culture and economy



fields, into a global and integrated territory management perspective, which is herein understood as follows:

The reference framework of what we advocate for and call integrated cultural management of territories is based on four fundamental components: the education and training of human capital oriented towards the integrated management of territory (IMT), the construction of a socio-cultural territorial matrix to enable the involvement of the population as a whole (resource centers, memory spaces, consortium projects), institutional dialogue and communication (knowledge socialization), all relying on, and converging towards, the structuring of resilient governance dynamics (OOSTERBEEK, 2018, p. 57, *our translation*).

## FUTURE PATHS

Learning history is of no use in predicting the future, but it is essential to help understanding each present moment generated by it. Portugal is a small territory with scarce mineral resources, overall poor soil (although with exceptions, much of them lie in areas that are nowadays urban) and a very irregular terrain that hinders mobility.

Cultural Heritage construction is a two-stage process: product of academia and scientific rigor, it is also the consecration of social dynamics. That is the reason why Cultural Heritage refers to appropriation rather than to knowledge, and that it is also the reason why the academic teaching of Cultural Heritage that does not take into consideration the economy is foolish.

Heritage travels two axes. One is that of social rights to different, and even contradictory, appropriations; it is rooted in socio-cultural dynamics. The other one is the place of narratives in the scope of “hard” and natural sciences. The confusion between economic/financial growth factors (Gross Domestic Product and consumer culture) and wealth growth factors (ownership and tangible knowledge “applied” in the positivist conception) is an example of tensions emerging from this process.

In fact, only a global and integrated strategy can allow effective interventions in the heritage sphere. That is the reason why when governments legislate for conservative heritage protection, it is largely ignored by society. If one remains aware that cultural heritage has a double root, the path to be taken, more than the judicial one, lies on strengthening the institutional weight of informal associations of citizen groups, as well as on inserting heritage management in global strategies focused on territorial management and governance.

Everyone’s attention in a cycle of global systemic crisis tends to focus on only one of its vectors: now the financial, now the social, now the environmental, sometimes the economic, rarely the cultural... And this attention shifts from one to another as individuals get disappointed and realize that there are no sectoral solutions.

Integrated Territory Management overcomes sterile debates about the options between growth and development, and it builds a discussion framework wherein the didactics of dilemmas is the core element to help improve individuals’ critical skills so they can make decisions about our collective future. Territory, more than the environment or culture, is the core word in this process; the competition between territories and their likely certification will certainly be the reality in an uncertain and insecure future. Carbone *et al.* (2012) have suggested a future path, whose approach focuses on the management of cultural territories and on their certification, based on the Socratic philosophical reflection the authors call “Paideia”: among the aims of such an approach, one finds investigating and analyzing indicators capable of measuring economic, social and cultural indicators of cultural value fields in order to plan the management of cultural heritage assets in an orderly manner and, among other purposes,



to enable the economic return of different communities through sustainable tourism exploitation. Such management necessarily requires assessing the impacts caused by tourism. As we know, there are positive and negative points in the economic and tourist exploitation of cultural goods. However, the well-planned management of heritage assets is expected to provide ideal conditions for economic gains, since such exploitation is often the only source of income for many individuals and communities. Oosterbeek (2005, p. 40, *our translation*) has pointed out that:

If mass tourism has the potential to harm heritage because it rapidly exceeds its carrying capacity, it is no less true that, when it comes to the tourist industry, tourists and archaeologists are essentially on the same side: both seek memories and their conservation, both refuse massification and value specificities. Based on this perspective, we are obviously talking about genuine tourists, rather than about hikers, since real tourists account for 10% to 20% of the total number of travelers nowadays.

Thus, engaged societies benefit from the valorization of their identity and history, along with the economic return that is one of the main concerns of the population and management entities. In addition, the community of heritage scholars has the preservation of, and access to, their objects of study guaranteed, with special emphasis on archaeologists, who can use their sources par excellence, namely: the material culture, which can, at the very least, be saved from destruction.

Hence, culture must leave the ghetto it was placed into decades ago, which implies focusing on traditional *foci* (arts and heritage), although associating them with the economy and social dynamics. Society must find the balance between its needs and the resources it already has and can generate. It cannot do it by simply importing models, because, nowadays, the economy has global nature, and each region or country can only assert itself through differentiation and specialty ... And this differentiation is cultural.

Culture is the specific way of meeting the needs of each people. Economy, society, environment and cultures intersect, and merge, in the territory. Territory and culture are the keywords for sustainable growth. Isolated culture is a non-sustainable curiosity. Isolated territory is a formless and undifferentiated mass. The Tejo Valley Prehistoric and Sacred Art Museum falls within this paradigm, as highlighted at Rio + 20 summit, in June 2012<sup>7</sup>.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

We herein presented, in a retrospective way, some reasoning about the management of the cultural heritage of Mação County, central region of Portugal, whose agglutinating entity lies on the archaeological Museum based in this village. Far from exhausting the subject, we emphasized some activities led by the aforementioned museum, whose attention focuses on the study, protection, preservation and communication of archaeological goods from sites located in the valleys of Tejo and Ocreza rivers. For those who may be interested in the historical path of the Museum, from its foundation to the

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<sup>7</sup> Guimarães and Fontoura (2012) analyze the results (mostly frustrated) of the Rio + 20 Conference held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, two decades after the great conference known as Rio 92. According to the aforementioned authors, the following segments were present at the event: "In addition to the participation of State heads and representatives (more than 190 countries sent, mostly, second-level representatives to Rio and absences such as the Chancellor of Germany and the President of the United States, among many others, was notorious), the following entities participated in parallel events: global civil society (mainly composed of Non-Governmental Organizations - NGOs, cooperatives, indigenous communities, maroon communities, religious groups and other social movements); scientists from different fields; think tanks, epistemic communities, politicians and private sector representatives" (GUIMARÃES; FONTOURA, 2012, p. 25, *our translation*).

present day, we recommend the text by Cura and Oosterbeek (2017), who see the Museum as a historical object and, consequently, describe its chronology, from its foundation to almost 80 years ago.

Integration; this is the word/concept that drives all the research, management and cultural heritage education activities in the Prehistoric and Sacred Art Museum of Mação, which gathers, in a single place, different local resident, tourist and researcher communities, despite the overall diverse interests of each segment. For now, the main challenge lies on promoting local cultural specificities, without losing sight of the global relationships that are nowadays consolidated both in the Museum and in Instituto Terra e Memória.

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