

DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION VALUE OF THE MUSEUM OF CRIMINOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS, GREECE

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Abstract. The Museum of Criminology of Athens is a university museum that holds collections of major historical, educational and scientific significance. Its objects and human remains constitute evidence either of criminal and violent actions or important cases of medical and forensic interest. The museum collections have been deliberately assembled by an eminent professor of forensic medicine, Ioannis Georgiadis, and are connected to domains, such as criminology, forensics, toxicology, forensic anthropology and branches of sociology. For this reason, the proper recording and presentation of the history of crime are very important. However, the collector's passion for the formation of collections was not followed by a growing concern for the documentation of information pertaining to objects. Thus, the professors-museum directors who succeeded him could not know the whole story behind a large number of objects and thus, their importance remained undisclosed. Recently, the museum has managed to reestablish a connection between the collection of items and human remains to their historical, socio-political and scientific context by instigating an integrated documentation process.

The submitted paper presents the main results of documentation, focusing, firstly, on the process by which sources are approached and, secondly, on the value of the information recorded about museum objects, human remains and the collector, professor Georgiadis. This process and the information gathered document important historical events of nineteenth and twentieth-century Greek history and undocumented aspects of well-known events. Moreover, usually, the undocumented aspects of history are connected with oral history and can be corroborated only through collection objects and human remains. Finally, this paper describes the benefits of the documentation process for the museum objects and the human remains that can be used for presentation and interpretation.

Keywords: Museum of Criminology, Documentation, Information Gathering, Information Provenance, Human Remains, Crime Collection, Oral History, University Museum

1 Introduction

Establishments collecting objects, such as museums, have the responsibility not only to collect artefacts but also to ensure that information about them is gathered, preserved and increased (Matassa 2011, 67). Moreover, information safety and accessibility depend essentially on the documentation of artefacts.

ICOM International Observatory on Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods mentions in its website that "*cultural objects exist through their accompanying documents*", which certainly explains why documentation is the essence of museum existence. However, an item separated from its information suffers critically with respect to its identity (Matassa 2011, 67). Thus, lack of information results in the decrease of the value of the artefacts, both in cultural and financial terms.

The Museum of Criminology of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens is a small institution, housing objects and human remains of the 20th century. This fact was the starting point for reconsidering collection management and recognizing the necessity to establish a fundamental documentation system.

For many decades, the governing body of the museum believed that collections preserve outstanding historical and scientific values, yet without being able to document their importance through the appropriate recorded information. The objects of the museum are truly important. Nevertheless, how is it possible to manifest their importance, if the accompanying information that would describe adequately their uniqueness or their connection with historical incidents or persons of great influence for the Greek society –which is something the governing body of the museum claimed to be a core feature of the collections– is minimum or does not exist at all? Therefore, collections, objects and human remains, turned worthless, with almost no

evidence of their value. This chaos was caused because, following the death of the founder and collector, professor of forensic medicine Ioannis Georgiadis, the directors who succeeded him laid emphasis on the presentation of the collection rather than its documentation. However, the greatest problem for the Museum of Criminology was that over the past decades, as was the case with many university museums, it experienced lack of awareness of primary information storage and most importantly, lack of understanding of the necessity of documentation.

At the dawn of the 21st century, when other museums in Greece had already attested their enormous progress in documentation, the Museum of Criminology has only just begun to make the necessary changes. Thereafter, members of the governing body of the museum started to compare the progress which other museums had made in documentation and realized the inadequacy of information that characterized the museum collections. This was the first time the Museum of Criminology realized the importance of gathering information as well as the necessity of documentation. Hence, the governing body of the museum acknowledged the tremendous importance of exhibiting well-documented collections, both for collections management and public access.

The problem was to find ways to perform documentation from scratch in a museum that operated and collected objects for almost 80 years. In order to start collecting information and construct the knowledge of the museum objects, the only useful evidence was the oral testimonies conveyed from one museum director to the next and from the handwritten labels that accompanied some exhibits.

Soon afterwards, few fragmented actions were taken towards documentation and various advantages already emerged from those primary satisfactory outcomes (Maravelias et al. 2010; Sakki et al. 2008). Moreover, the necessity for establishing a method of gathering information as well as a functional and reliable documentation system became apparent. This application of methodology for documentation commenced in 2009.

This paper focuses on describing the process of gathering information on the collection of objects and human remains and constructing knowledge about the social, political and scientific context that prevailed during the period in which the items were collected. Eventually, the method followed and the knowledge gained succeeded in establishing the value and the meaning of the objects that were either secreted or were not known at all. That way, the ulterior goal, which was to define the museum identity, was achieved to a significant degree.

2 The Purpose of Information Management and Documentation

In general, the first step in performing information management and documentation is to define the aims and purpose of a museum organization (Orna and Pettitt 1998, 20). However, in the case of the Museum of Criminology, the first step was to acknowledge the necessity of documentation. Therefore, before the gathering of information began and before a documentation system was devised, the museum had to comprehend, on the one hand, why information was needed and, on the other, which kind of information was required.

Different types of information are transformed into different kinds of knowledge and know-how (Orna and Pettitt 1998, 20). Therefore, the quality of information should be adequately determined at the early stages of the process for sustaining a properly constructed methodology.

Based on Orna and Pettitt's (1998, 17) suggestion of setting specific questions for understanding the desirable type of knowledge in a museum, the Museum of Criminology determined that the gathered information should be able to address the following issues:

- What does "information" mean in the museum context?
- What type of knowledge is the museum expected to construct?
- Who will be the users of museum information?
- What do users want/need to do with the provided information?
- How will the information be organized in order to help users?
- Are there any special issues concerning the management of museum information?

Within this framework, the museum encouraged the acquisition and sustenance of the proper knowledge that suited its needs and objectives. As a principle, there should be a common understanding from the outset of the collection process of how the objects should be documented and how information would serve

as a contributing factor. However, the first and foremost purpose of gathering information was to provide an answer to the question: What sort of items comprises the collection of the Museum of Criminology? Answering this question was of major importance for the museum because part of its collection had never been catalogued and part of it was only catalogued in 2008. The catalogued objects were the result of a European funding program which the museum managed to deliver (Sakki et al. 2008). Nevertheless, not all objects were included in this documentation process and therefore the content of the museum collections and archives was not identified in detail.

The knowledge about the collections' peculiarity, richness and significance was orally attested by the governing body of the museum; however, no written records bore witness to these accounts. According to these oral statements, the museum collections consist of educational, scientific and historical objects, most of which came from homicides, suicides and other criminal offences that took place in Greece during the late 19th and the early 20th century (Maravelias et al. 2010; Sakki et al. 2015; Sakki et al. 2018). Besides that, it is regularly stated that the collections not only included objects, but also specimens and human remains, all of which certified notorious, unusual or unpublished incidents of criminological and forensic interest (Maravelias et al. 2010; Sakki et al. 2015; Sakki et al. 2018). Still, it was difficult to determine using written records the extent to which the museum managed to fulfill the aspiration to house collections of exquisite peculiarity, richness and significance.

In addition, information gathering aimed to fulfill the museum management's expectations of exploiting the knowledge of its collections and their importance. Therefore, the process was designed not only to develop knowledge about collections but also to certify the reasons for which the collection is valuable and specify the meanings and values it conveys. It is taken for granted that the museum collections are sources of historical information that demonstrate the authenticity of great historical incidents and highlight unseen aspects of the history of the modern Greek State. However, this fact was expected to be reflected in the values and meanings embodied in the objects and human remains, followed by associated information that had been recorded.

Finally, the process aims to answer one more major question posed at the beginning of our study, namely, why and under which circumstances the museum collector decided to formulate this collection, which nowadays seems remarkably peculiar. The answer to this and to the questions put forward earlier offered a reliable and consistent material basis for the multilevel interpretation of collections in the exhibition area.

According to the above parameters, a wholly customary documentation process was introduced after 2009 and continued for some years, including gathering and digitalization of information about each museum object and human remain. Simultaneously, a rather simple, handy and user-friendly documentation system was designed and put into effect for managing the overall curation and care of collections.

3 Gathering Information about Museum Objects and Human Remains

Information gathering was based on two different study frameworks. The first and most apparent framework entailed the gathering and cataloguing of as much information as possible about the particular objects and human remains that comprise the museum collections. The second framework was more sophisticated and concerned data that helped in reconstructing the sociopolitical and scientific context during the formation of the collection.

The museum's essential obligation was to detect information encapsulated in the collection objects: What are items made of, who made them, how, when, where and for what purpose? Information about the history of the items was also important: Are they related to specific people, events or places? Do they change holders? How, why and when were they collected? Those two sets of information were related to the first study framework. Moreover, information on the meaning and values was of major concern: Why did the collector prefer to gather the specific items, why was he interested in them and why did the museum order or house individual objects or entire collections? This set of information correlated to both study frameworks.

When the whole process began, it was obvious that the museum collections were dedicated to the study of criminology and forensic sciences in Greece, and also to their history throughout the 19th and the 20th century by recording crime evidence and illustrating some of the most notorious crimes that had a profound impact on society. The Museum of Criminology was founded in 1932 (in accordance with the provisions of Law 5343/1932) and consists of collections that present crime and its later history, as a field of educational, scientific

and historical interest directly related to scientific disciplines, such as criminology, forensics, toxicology, forensic anthropology and sociology (Sakki et al. 2015). Moreover, the museum has always been a hub of training, research, culture, study, promotion and scientific advancement, beyond its self-evident educational and pedagogic function (Museum of Criminology 2018). This general information about the museum and its collections formed the basis, which, nevertheless, provided a satisfactory groundwork in order to start searching and gathering more accurate pieces of information. This basis oriented information gathering, for instance, towards the study of collections of science, medicine and universities, as well the characteristics of the collections established in the late 19th or the early 20th century.

Moreover, it should be mentioned that in the case of the second study framework, the interest was centered on the museum collector, the prominent professor of forensic medicine Ioannis Georgiadis (1874-1960), who was an acclaimed person, well recognized in his professional field, and a representative figure of the culture of his epoch. From 1912 and until the end of his life, professor Georgiadis was an avid collector of evidentiary items and managed to house, organize, study and display heterogeneous objects, specimens and human remains, contemporary with his era, with caution and diligence (Sakki et al. 2015). Until today, professor Georgiadis continues to be the principal collector of the museum and the person who built the academic profile of the collections (Sakki et al. 2015). The central question posed at the beginning of our study that guides the second study framework was why and under which circumstances the collector was determined to create this collection –which today seems to us peculiar.

Throughout the entire process, we did our best to accomplish both high quality and a satisfactory quantity of gathered information concerning the objects, human remains and collections of the Museum of Criminology. The information sources were numerous and diverse in origin or content, including data on issues such as:

- Information on the founder of the museum, professor Ioannis Georgiadis, his personal and professional life, his social status, athletic ideals, etc.
- Information on the collections housed in the Museum of Criminology –characteristics, purpose, number of objects, etc.
- Information on the items and human remains housed in the Museum of Criminology –their history, connections to specific persons or incidents, sociopolitical context of their collection, acquisition process, conservation archives, location in storage or exhibition spaces, etc.
- Information on court cases linked to objects and human remains of the museum.
- Information associated with topics of scientific interest, mainly about forensic medicine, toxicology, anthropology, forensic anthropology, criminology and medicine. Also, the data collected on the above sciences included information about the ethical and legal framework, both of today and the past century.

The abovementioned information regarding museum objects and collections, as well the sociopolitical and scientific context of the museum establishment was gathered through primary and secondary research. Throughout this process, the collected information was remarkably substantial in quantity and surprisingly valuable in terms of content, enabling the comprehensive and consistent understanding of the Museum of Criminology. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that the obtained data were unevenly distributed among objects and human remains. Some of them were extensively documented, while others were not, primarily due to their characteristics, their trivial quality, or due to lack of earlier documentation.

Furthermore, it was fascinating to see that objects with no previous record could eventually be very well documented. An illustrating example is a drawing of a suicide scene with no evidence of the year, the location, the cause or the person depicted on it. The only available clue was the forensic-scientist's signature, apparently connected with this violent incident. However, after searching into the archives of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology of the University of Athens, which are directly connected with the Museum of Criminology, the entire narrative that accompanies this exhibit was revealed (fig.1). Similarly, in several other instances, data collected through both study frameworks helped with the recovery of connections between objects and/or human remains that had remained hidden and unknown for years.

3.1 Primary Research

Primary research was conducted based on interviews with people somehow linked to the collections and on the extensive study of the archives of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology of the University of Athens, for cataloguing information associated with the museum objects and human remains. Moreover, many

museum objects and some human remains were accompanied by old handwritten labels that provide brief descriptions or titles. The comparison of those old labels with the information collected from the archives formed part of primary research and proved very productive.

In many cases, primary research, as well as the final documentation record of an object, combined information that was provided from more than one sources. The interviews or the old labels usually afforded a piece of useful information to start with and then thorough investigation took place in the archives of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology for cross-checking of information.

Interviews

The interviews were conducted with scientists and professionals working in a range of different subjects at the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology of the University of Athens, as well as in other museums with collections of similar interest (e.g. university medicine museums, War Museum of Athens). No uniform questionnaire could be designed because each case was unique and the issues ranged depending on the interviewees' interests, knowledge, or connection with the collections. Moreover, the purpose of the interviews was the gathering of every potential oral testimony that could fill in gaps concerning the museum's collections, objects and human remains. The interviewer introduced the context and interviewees were invited to provide any information about the museum.

Furthermore, as the literature suggests, the interviews were carried out in places of the interviewees' preference in order for them to feel more comfortable (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 151).

Of incomparable importance was the interview conducted with the former professor Dimitrios Mourtzinis, who was the oldest forensic scientist alive, member of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology for more than thirty years. This interview took place inside the Museum of Criminology, involved all objects and human remains, one-by-one, and was repeated twice in order to be recorded on tape and video. In this case, the location of the interview was the museum's exhibition area because, as a place where objects and human remains lie, it generated powerful emotional responses, aroused memories and most importantly, it was a place in which the interviewee felt very comfortable. The oral account of professor Mourtzinis was of paramount importance because of the long-term affiliation he maintained with the museum, having collected some of the objects himself, creating labels and taking care of the collections. Furthermore, even though the past generation of curators and directors at the museum failed to preserve written records of their knowledge and achievements, professor Mourtzinis served the Department and the Museum for a long period of time, therefore, he was able to transfer the knowledge of the past to today's generation of curators.

Professor Mourtzinis's most astounding and powerful story that came up during the interview concerned the newborn infants, also known as "babies of the attic", that were abandoned dead by their parents in the in-house attics. This action was a deliberate attempt to eliminate evidence of the infants' existence because they were illegitimate children. This almost unknown aspect of the early 20th century was revealed when numerous old houses of Athens were demolished during the mid-20th century. During that period some mummified babies were discovered in old attics and forensic pathologists were called to collect and study them further.

Originally, there was lack of information about naturally mummified infants, such as the "babies of the attic", and virtually the entire collection of naturally mummified fetuses and infants housed in the museum. Several questions arose concerning this collection of human remains: Were all of them collected for the same reasons? Did all of fetuses and infants manifest issues of forensic importance? Why or how were they naturally mummified? Also, when there was no apparent interest in terms of death, were the fetuses and infants collected in order to prove the mummification process itself? Apparently, some of them suffered from fatal diseases or congenital malformations, forcing them to be born dead or to die a few days after the labour. However, diseases or congenital malformations were not always apparent or the cause for collecting human remains.

The solution to the puzzle with the naturally mummified newborns was reached after professor Mourtzinis revealed the historical incident that correlated with the unquestionably appalling story of the "babies of the attic" and elucidated the overall sociopolitical context within which the entire collection of human remains had been formed.

Of course, the oral testimonies delivered by professor Mourtzinis encompassed a personal aspect and were based on the oral history of the objects transferred to him by the professors of the Department that preceded him. Consequently, our responsibility was to validate the accuracy of the provided information and

confirm the facts (occasionally hidden) by conducting additional research into the archives of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology and the literature and also interviews with selected scientists or experts. This verification of the facts was necessary not only for the “babies of the attic”, but generally for every oral testimony recounted by professor Mourtzinis or any other person interviewed (scientists, professionals, etc.).

In general, oral testimonies provided through interviews served as a starting point. They afforded suitable hints and evidence to retrieve information by conducting a fruitful study essentially of the archives of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, in the relevant literature and in books of forensic medicine. The attempt to obtain facts and strengthen oral testimonies proceeded until they agreed with the written accounts discovered.

Moreover, this part of the study included information acquired from the relatives of professor Georgiadis who provided to the interviewer unknown aspects and details about his personality, helping to draw much more accurate conclusions. Thus, it is important to note that professor Georgiadis' living relatives, when they came into contact with the museum, decided to donate some of his personal belongings, such as photographs of his and books, in order to enrich the museum's collection.

Archive of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology

The Museum of Criminology is entirely associated with the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology of the University of Athens. The Department is among the earliest established sections of the Medical School, a pioneer in forensics in Greece (Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology 2018) in which a truly extensive archive of forensic cases has been investigated from 1913 to this day. These forensic cases come largely from Athens and the neighboring cities, though for several periods of time this university Department carried out forensic investigations across the entire country, being responsible particularly for cases of great historical and political importance.

The archival legacy of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology is remarkably significant because it includes one by one, several thousands of accomplished judicial examinations, both of humans and specimens. Overall, it is suggested that without archives there would not be any real sense of history whether it concerns the last ten, hundred or more years (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 162). In the case of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, the archive maintains a crucial piece of evidence that enables scholars, researchers and historians to analyze, compare and interpret forensic findings regarding deaths in Greece during the 20th century. These archival documents serve as evidence of the Greek history, including numerous executions by the German military during World War II, deaths during the dictatorship, as well as terrorist attacks. For example, the museum possesses a small watch that belonged to an Italian woman who attempted a terrorist attack against the American Embassy at Athens. This handcrafted time bomb watch exploded sooner and killed the woman who was about to launch the attack.

Moreover, the Museum of Criminology exhibits a one-page part of the judicial file referring to Alexander Schinas (1870-1913), whose name is known in Greek history because on the 18th of March 1913 he murdered King George I of Greece, in Thessaloniki. This evidence constitutes part of the museum exhibits because professor Georgiadis participated in the murder investigation and tried to record the anthropometric characteristics of Schinas so as to improve his study on the profile and characteristics of criminals (see the information that follows). In addition, the museum possesses Schinas's portrait photograph, after he was captured and imprisoned in the police department of Thessaloniki. These two historical pieces of evidence are of great importance. On the 6th of May 1918 Schinas committed suicide by falling out of a window of the police department. Moreover, the interrogation file disappeared while being transferred from Thessaloniki to Athens; hence the most valuable information including the details of this crime, what the interrogation process revealed, as well as the killer's motivation, remained unknown. Today, the principal material evidence about the only person in modern Greek history who committed a regicide is housed at the Museum of Criminology, because it forms part of the archival legacy of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology.

This large archive that comprises mostly paper material is preserved in remarkably good condition, almost intact, offering an accurate, uninterpreted and authentic voice of the past. Furthermore, part of the conducted primary research included a comprehensive study and cataloguing of this archival material that is related to specific exhibits of the Museum of Criminology.

Research into archival records began with the objects and the human remains that were marked with a specific accession number (serial number of the Department's protocol). In these cases, the museum exhibits

could undoubtedly be connected with the archival material and, eventually, an amazing integrated story would be linked with each of these exhibits, mostly exploring unusual incidents and events of original names, persons, places, dates, whys and hows. Indeed, an unusual group of objects connected with specific forensic cases were the 15 handmade panels, signed by the forensic pathologist Vasilios Konstantelos, who worked both in the morgue as well as the Department of Forensics and Toxicology next to professor Georgiadis. Konstantelos created those panels by accumulating every bullet removed from victims of murders or suicides, including in his recording the names of the persons who committed suicide or the victims, their age, the date and a serial number of the protocol of the Department of Forensics and Toxicology (fig. 2). This peculiar collection was created for the purposes of scientific evidence and statistics interest, presenting in a specific manner the devotion of both Konstantelos and professor Georgiadis to the science of forensic medicine.

For those objects and human remains not being marked with a serial number of protocols derived from the Department's archive, the effort to document and explore connections with real stories or events, persons and places, became much more difficult. Under these circumstances, the research was based on the information gathered by the interviewees –especially with professor Mourtzinis's interview– and particularly the recorded historical events of specific dates. So, our basic element in order to start searching for connections and creating documentation data was any specific date (day, month, year or years).

Apparently, not all museum objects constitute testimonies of past criminal activity; consequently, we knew from the start that for a great number of items there would not be any correlation with the archive of the Department, at least the archive of forensic cases.

However, the archive included the inventory of the Department of Forensics and Toxicology, in which any kind of purchased property (machinery, equipment, etc.) is illustrated in the form of quantity, financial value, and date of purchase. Research into the inventory revealed that the majority of the guns, which comprise a quite large museum collection (163 items), have been bought by the Department and the governing body of the museum, as well as the entire collection of mushrooms' replicas (90 items) that was also included in the museum's exhibits. No other inventory entry could be related to the museum objects, which is odd, due to the fact that the museum also holds other collections, such as panels including tobacco and cannabis products, bullets, replicas of poppy, etc. All these items are housed in the museum because they present scientific and educational interest in teaching and studying forensic medicine. Undoubtedly, those items are far from being considered testimonies of past criminal activity. Consequently, working towards collection documentation revealed that many objects must have been acquired through donations. However, this is just a suggestion, since no records of such action have been found.

Data collected through old labels

Many museum objects and human remains are accompanied by old handwritten labels that provide brief descriptions or mere titles. These labels are of major importance for gathering information because they present pieces of evidence of the first twenty years of the history of the museum and specify certain aspects of the established sociopolitical and scientific context. The above data combined with further research can provide a precise image of professor Georgiadis and his contemporary way of thinking.

For example, there is the label of the human remains of a baby presented as a “two-headed monster”, a characterization absolutely inappropriate today, yet quite common among the European societies, the medical science society and collectors of that era. This specific newborn baby is a characteristic example of human abnormality, which was an unusual medical or forensic condition and this fact made its preservation important for further research, as well as for educational purposes. However, concurrently, this or other human abnormalities were quite frequent in the sense that during that period there was no prenatal testing and diagnosis. Hence, professors of forensics and/or medicine examined thoroughly the human abnormalities and tried to explain or understand them. Moreover, this newborn baby case has been described extensively in the Department's archive and in the books of forensic medicine written by the Department's professors, which means that there was evidence connecting the specimen to a specific person (fully recorded)! Nevertheless, no effort was made to describe this specimen more appropriately or in a scientific way, like for instance, “case of teratogenicity” which was a term that already existed. This practice suggests indirectly the cruelty that characterized the society of this time period concerning human malformations or abnormalities.

Furthermore, the museum's handwritten labels are important not only for the quantity of the provided information, but also for its quality. They can give us little, but precise information about certain objects and

human remains. Their importance is based on the fact that they act as a starting point for further research or as evidence for reconstructing the sociopolitical and scientific context. Thus, especially the labels of the human remains, usually comprised of two or three words, can introduce us to the way people of the first half of the 20th century thought about the human specimens they collected.

3.2 Secondary Research

Secondary research was accomplished within the framework of a carefully considered methodology including extended bibliographic and internet review about the history of criminology and forensic science, medicine and university museums, human remains collections, as well as crime and criminology collections. This study area was crucial for comprehending the procedure observed as “heritage formation”, very well explained by Howard (2003, 187), who argued: *“How are some things selected, from the vast range of possibilities, to become heritage, to be given that patina of preciousness and self-consciousness, and sometimes the extra commercial value that goes with being heritage?”*. In the case of the Museum of Criminology, the suggested question may be translated into the following: Why do we form collections of criminology and forensic science? Why specific items are chosen instead of others and why is there a large number of human remains collected? These “hows” and “whys” explain the decision procedures which the collector developed, as well as his perspectives in accordance with the sociopolitical and scientific context in which he lived. Therefore, secondary research appeared to be helpful in constructing and understanding the historical context in which the specific museum collection was established.

Moreover, it should be considered that the practice of collecting and displaying objects, instruments and testimonies of scientific and educational interest was quite popular among European academics and scientists of the 20th century or earlier (Sakki et al. 2015). This practice had been developed especially within European universities and had played an important role in evolving both scientific research and educational methods. Similarly, in the newly born Greek State, enlightened members of the first Greek university, the University of Athens, established scientific collections and museums based on European experience. One of these institutions was the Museum of Criminology that exemplified an innovative endeavor on behalf of the Greek society of the early 20th-century.

The context described above was familiar to the collector who created the Museum of Criminology, professor Georgiadis. Professor Georgiadis had not only received European education and training, mainly as a postgraduate student, twice, in Paris (total of 5 years) but also maintained close contact with the progress in sciences in Europe using his professional status, as a university professor. Consequently, the choices he made regarding the museum establishment and the character he imparted to the collections were based on the influence Europe had exerted on him.

At this point, it should be mentioned that the personality of professor Georgiadis was studied in connection with the museum collections. Thus, professor Georgiadis’ biography and personality provided valuable information about the choices he made in putting together the museum collections. Going back, the information gathered about museum objects and human remains revealed aspects of professor Georgiadis’ personality as well as his main scientific interests. For example, professor Georgiadis had a keen interest in collecting knives and guns and therefore, he had established his personal collection, including swords from the Olympic Games of 1896 which he donated to the Museum of Criminology. However, his passion for knives and guns is also well illustrated in the arms collection established within the Museum of Criminology which includes 188 knives and 163 guns. Furthermore, as mentioned above, there was proof that the majority of the collected guns had been purchased by professor Georgiadis on purpose, for the creation of an educational and research museum collection. This great collection was formed based on the different traumas which different guns or knives cause. For instance, traumas caused by double-edged knives are different from those caused by single-edged knives or by curved-blade knives. Thus, this arms collection illustrates professor Georgiadis’ passion for guns and knives as well as for conducting research and teaching in forensics and criminology based on his favorite material. This example clearly shows the connection between the collector’s personality and the museum collection that he established.

Moreover, referring to the collector and the context of his collection, it should be stated that given aspects lead to specific choices. When choices of previous eras are presented today in the form of a museum collection, the accurate understanding of the primary motives of a collector poses a serious challenge, especially when recorded information is missing. To justify a collector’s motives and alternatives, one has to study further

his personality traits and the context within which he put his collections together. The context may consist of the family, a small community or an entire society in a specific time period, the personal and professional status, as well as incidents of political, social or personal impact. After reconstructing the context, a collector's motives can become understandable, and objects, as well as their selection, acquire meaning for a museum.

It is generally accepted that it is particularly helpful to gather information about the context within which a collection is created. It is also undeniable that the more information accompanies museum objects, the more complete a documentation file shall be. Besides, the historical and sociopolitical context strengthens the documentation of objects and emerges as the only effective solution in case of items being marked by limited or no information at all. Therefore, when the context is sufficiently reconstructed, objects that previously remained silent become understandable and meaningful and gain significance.

A typical example of a silent object, which was better construed after research into the literature, is a plaster model of the outer ear and its parts (fig.3). There was no record or label related to it, indicating why a plaster ear may have formed part of a forensic-criminological collection and furthermore, there was not any testimony of any criminal activity that could lead to the examination of the archives of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology of the University of Athens. The first clue came up during the interview with professor Mourtzinis who pointed out that ears are used as a means of identification. Indeed, the study of the literature revealed that the human ear has numerous applications to forensic science and that it is generally considered a valuable feature in forensic identification, for instance, in mass disasters, burns or drowning when the face is severely disfigured (Kasprazak 2001; Purkait 2007; Nixon et al. 2010; Kaushal and Kaushal 2011). During the mid-19th century and afterwards, the ear acquired and retained prominent importance since its shape could establish paternity or indicate the infidelity of a wife (Lugt 2001). However, today, forensics and law only occasionally make use of the ear for the identification of individuals, due to the high accuracy and the advantages of fingerprints and DNA testing (Lugt 2001; Kaushal and Kaushal 2011).

Thus, it becomes well understood from the aforementioned example that studying the literature is a helpful means of improving the knowledge that is linked with the museum objects. Particularly in cases of items with no or only limited recorded information, the use of the literature is very important as regards two aspects. First, because the gathered data does not concern only the exact object under consideration, but also other objects of identical or similar use or characteristics. Secondly, the literature can reveal the historical and sociopolitical context of an objects and that way, adequate information can be provided in order to produce better narratives on the specific objects.

Old Forensic Medicine and Toxicology Books

Secondary research turned out to be extremely interesting, and involved thorough study of books about forensic medicine and toxicology from different periods of the 20th century. Five of these books were written by three professors of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology of the University of Athens: professor Ioannis Georgiades (two-volume book in 1933), professor Konstantinos Iliakis (two-volume book in 1962) and professor Antonios Koutselinis (one-volume book in 2002). All three professors served consecutively as directors of the Museum of Criminology and their books were connected with numerous museum exhibits in different ways. These five books have been digitalized and incorporated into the documentation system so that they can be accessed directly.

Professor Georgiadis and professor Iliakis's forensic books in particular, were important for the documentation process as they extensively present a large number of museum objects and human remains. These four books illustrate thoroughly the research conducted for the improvement of forensic medicine and university teaching methodology, as well as for the implementation of the authors' academic work.

Moreover, it should be mentioned that the forensic books by professor Georgiadis and professor Iliakis include the last example of the human ear (fig.4). None of the professors' books contains information on the specific plaster model of the outer ear which the museum possesses; however, they extensively refer to the way an ear is valuable as an identification feature. In the pointed example, three different sources were employed for collecting suitable information: firstly interviews (especially with professor Mourtzinis), secondly the general literature and thirdly the old forensic books of the Department. Thus, not only in this example, but in most cases of artefactual documentation, information gathering came from two or usually three different sources (both of primary and secondary research).

4 The Case of Human Remains

Among the museum collections, there is one that consists of approximately 190 osteological and anatomical human remains obtained between 1850-1950 from cadavers of crime autopsies carried out at Athens' morgue, housed in the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology of the University of Athens (Sakki et al. 2007; Sakki et al. 2018). This collection includes various human remains, like dry and wet fetuses and organs of normal or congenital malformations, body parts with severe injuries, embalmed heads of notorious Greek outlaws of the early 20th century and dry specimens of tattooed human skins (Maravelias et al. 2010; Sakki et al. 2015). All these specimens were collected as they contributed significantly to academic disciplines (medicine, anthropology, biology and related realms), since undergraduate and postgraduate university' students and scholars used them for educational and research purposes (in anatomy, biology, in several diseases or injuries and their treatment, etc.) (Sakki et al. 2018; Working Group on Human Remains 2003). In the case of the Museum of Criminology, the catalyst for accumulating human specimens was the scientific interest focused on forensics and criminology. For instance, of primary forensic concern was the large number of fatalities among newborns during the early 20th century. For this reason, professor Georgiadis collected diverse fetuses and stillborn infants for studying and incorporating them in his teaching sessions.

Another group of human remains that manifests the research interest of the medical and criminological scientific community of the late 19th and the early 20th century are the 13 embalmed heads of notorious Greek outlaws of that period. These heads were cut off in distinct incidents by gendarmeries and were put on public display for approximately one month in order to set an example of the punishment one would receive. Later, rather than being buried together with the rest of the body, the heads were transferred to the Museum of Criminology, satisfying professor Georgiadis' request for further investigating the identity and characteristics of outlaws. The stories of these outlaws are surprisingly interesting and reveal the sociopolitical context of their epoch, as well as aspects of the Greek modern history that are seldom presented in ethnographic museums. However, this article focuses on the reasons why these outlaws' heads were collected and kept at the museum.

Professor Georgiadis wanted to examine the heads and study face measurements, following the general theory of his time which propounded that criminals are distinguished from non-criminals by multiple physical anomalies. This theory was introduced by the Italian criminologist and physician Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909), founder of the Italian School of Positivist Criminology, who established anthropological criminology claiming that criminality was inherited and that someone "born criminal" could be identified by physical (congenital) defects (Beccalossi 2010). Lombroso established his theory by accumulating numerous skulls and other kinds of human remains, forming his personal collection which nowadays is exhibited in the Museum of Criminal Anthropology: Cesare Lombroso in Torino, Italy (Museo di Antropologia Criminale: Cesare Lombroso 2018). For several years Lombroso's theory had a considerable impact on northern and central Europe and has influenced professor Georgiadis' theory that introduced criminal anthropometry in Greece.

At this point, it should be stressed that human remains were established among scientific collections, because they entailed social approval and importance for specialists, not only in Greece but all over Europe and North America, during the 19th and the first half of the 20th century (Walker 2000; Working Group on Human Remains 2003).

For current documentation purposes, information about human remains was gathered through the literature, in order to review and reconstruct the context in which wet and dry specimens were accumulated in the Museum of Criminology. The literature offered sufficient information about collections of human remains and their history, because of the extensive research interest in this field. Moreover, currently, the literature focuses on subjects linked particularly to acquisition, accessibility, ethics and collection management (Goodnow 2006; Malea, Mertzani, and Panagiaris 2004).

Nonetheless, although the literature generally provided much information about human remains, it was extremely difficult to find information for each museum specimen separately. In most cases there was no protocol accession number linked to the museum specimens; furthermore, names were nowhere mentioned –to whom the specimens belonged– or even the year of death or the year of collection. Usually, there was hardly a small label explaining the specimens in brief, for example: "myocardial infarction" or "lung cancer". This fact unquestionably illustrates the way scientists of the early 20th century –as well the general public– treated human remains, obtained from bodies contemporary with them. Human remains were specimens that helped understand the human body, without being correlated with the person they belonged to. For this reason, information focused

on specific specimens of the museum proved to be extremely difficult, describing mainly their pathology, congenital malformations or violent injuries of organs or of human body parts.

Still, the identity of the embalmed heads that belonged to notorious criminals of the early 20th century was known. For example, among them, was the head of the bandit Fotios Giagoulas (late 19th century-1925) who dishonorably ended his life after a conflict with the Gendarmerie on Sunday the 21st of September 1925, at Cleftovrisi of Mount Olympus (Karamanou and Stefanidou 2014). After a while the head of Giagoulas together with his knife, which he had named “Pardala”, were transferred to the Museum of Criminology where they were housed, having been recognized among the museum community as unique and most valuable holdings (Sakki et al. 2015). Nowadays, there are several documents (books, newspaper articles, internet texts, etc.) that describe the life and story of these outlaws, with the most detailed account being devoted to Giagoulas. Subsequently, the immense quantity of sources providing information about Giagoulas led in the production of a remarkably extended documentation folder. Besides, information about those heads was also included in professor Georgiadis’ book about forensic medicine that described the embalming method and explained his forensic “curiosity” on them.

5 Results and Discussion

Following the process illustrated above, remarkably diverse information was collected. This information recounts peculiar and usually unknown stories, occasionally connected with historical incidents of great importance to the Greek society. Thus, in several cases, information completely disclosed was revealed and affected the meaning or the narrative of objects and human remains. However, not only the accumulation of information was accomplished, but also the entire management of all information, by establishing a modern documentation system.

Information gathering was the first step towards the documentation of the museum collections. That way, various pieces of information associated with museum objects, human remains and collections were entirely digitalized in various forms (pdf, word, excel and picture files) and entered in a documentation system, that was designed to satisfy the museum requirements. In particular, separate documentation files were generated for each one of the museum’s collections and sub-collections including precisely the same format and structure, with similar data fields. In order to establish a documentation system with functional structure, we were based on the International Core Data Standards for Ethnology/ Ethnography developed by the Ethno Group/ CIDOC/ ICOM which we customized according to the needs of the Museum of Criminology.

The information gathered and digitalized was of great importance for the Museum of Criminology, since it improved considerably the knowledge about museum objects, human remains and collections. This constructed knowledge should be maintained and conscientiously handled in order to accomplish aims defined by the museum, such as interpretation in the exhibition area, so as to effectively engage students and the general public with the collections, as well to impose a carefully considered acquisition framework. Besides, the collected data and the acquired knowledge establish a permanent body of study and research material for future generations (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 159, 162), which is expected from university museums and correlates closely with their organizational aims and objectives (de Clercq and Lourenço 2003). Similarly, the scientific and research mission of university collections is of critical importance ensuring that artefacts have not been collected, maintained and managed in an arbitrary or aimless way. Nonetheless, this applies to all museum collections (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 162).

Generally, several more results concerning information gathering and documentation can be referred to because, the entire process is particularly rewarding for the museum, the collections, but also their users. However, there were three results of major interest for the Museum of Criminology. Primarily it was expected to redefine the values and meaning that museum objects and human remains embody. These values and meanings were revealed and studied for the first time and can now be used purposefully for the interpretation of museum objects and human remains presented into the exhibition space or for the implementation of educational programs for university students or the general public. Moreover, the reconstruction of the collector’s personality and the context in which he established his collection is an equally important parameter of documentation for the museum. Also, it should be underlined that for the collector, professor Georgiadis, the collections of the Museum of Criminology were “scientific tools” of research and teaching nature. The third

result, yet of primary importance, was the determination of the museum identity, which is something partially achieved through the documentation process of museum objects. Regarding this subject it can be assumed that after gathering information and proceeding with documentation, the museum contributed to a more meaningful understanding of the history of forensic science and criminology, especially those practiced in Greece, and focused on issues, such as the criminal investigation methodology, the understanding of the human body, the traumas and pathological causes that lead to death, etc.

Furthermore the maintenance of the collection of human remains in particular determines institutional decisions, due to their inevitable involvement with ethical and legal issues. Concerning this, of prominent importance was the identification and understanding of the motives and purpose that led to the collection's establishment. Proper documentation is the only method providing sufficient answers to such questions and is the first and foremost action that should be performed by any museum that houses human remains, regardless of their origin –scientific or other. Therefore, documentation is the only adequate process for a museum to overcome current complex management issues, request for return or accessibility and visitors' ethical aspects.

Another interesting perspective that resulted from gathering information is that the archival material of the Museum of Criminology, created through the followed process, unquestionably illustrates the strong sociohistorical and political correlation between the University of Athens, the Greek society and the state. The University of Athens is the largest state institution of higher education in Greece and the first university in the newly established modern Greek State –inaugurated on the 3rd of May 1837 (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens 2018). Moreover, the significant sociohistorical role of the University, as well as its determination to generate specialized knowledge and culture in Greece is highlighted (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens 2018). Nevertheless, the archival material is owned by the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology and the Museum of Criminology has significantly contributed to connecting the institutional history of the University of Athens with the history of the Greek State and the Greek society. Examples of this statement are the cases of Schinas and the “babies of the attic”.

The museum archival and material legacy is nowadays well defined and can be used for the accomplishment of the goals and aims of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology as well of the University of Athens. The constructed museum archives in particular serve as “the institutional memory” (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 162). Regardless of the changes that may take place in the governing body of the museum, once the institutional memory is composed, it is preserved for as long as the museum maintains a cultural and educational role (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 162). Thus, the museum has the responsibility to ensure that the gathered information and the documentation will be retained and safeguarded for today and future generations (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 162). Besides, the museum's responsibility is to continue gathering information and developing documentation that has already been instigated. Following this practice, the museum archival material continues to constitute an important point of reference about the institutional history and its collections which the museum staff, researchers, scholars and university students can consult.

From what has been presented so far, it becomes apparent that the Museum of Criminology can nowadays understand and use its own collections in many better different ways, thereby providing a user-friendly learning environment in the museum.

6 Conclusions

This paper has described several methodological issues in relation to the process of gathering information about museum objects and human remains housed in the Museum of Criminology. Any problem arisen during the process was confronted and, eventually, the collection of information was successfully completed. Therefore, the museum's material objects that remained silent and unexploited, without being catalogued and without any accompanying written or recorded information, nowadays are well documented.

Currently, the museum is in the process of reaching the current social potential as well as re-establishing itself as a modern university museum with an academic and social profile. Now, more than ever, the museum is ready to respond to the contemporary demands of the scientific and academic community as well as to the expectations of the wider society.

The members of the governing body are in the most privileged position to decide about the appropriate collection and information management and accessibility. Moreover, they understand and accept their

responsibilities –those which the past generations failed to assume– and in addition, are willing to work for the fulfillment of the demands and expectations set forth by the university community and the general public. Documentation is a core responsibility, the importance, the necessity as well as the advantages of which have been fully recognized by the museum.

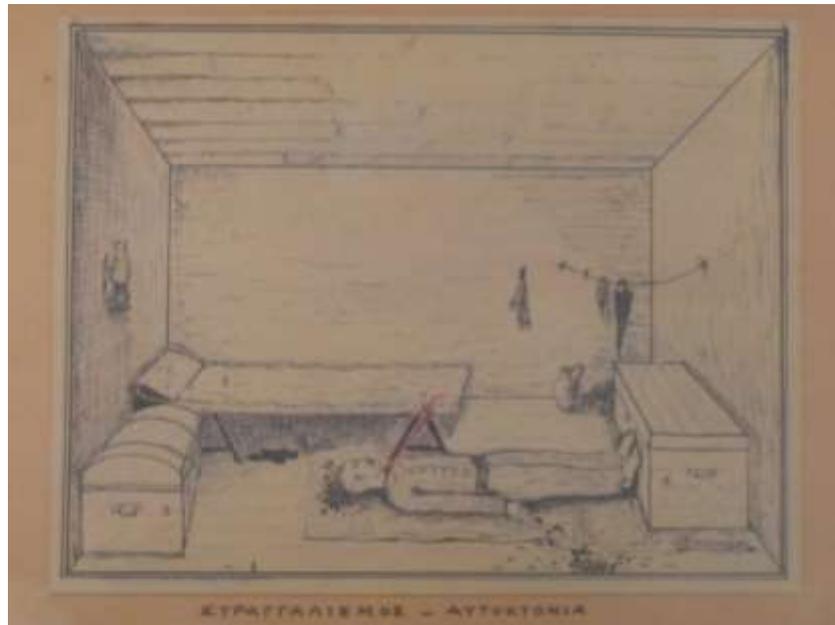


Fig. 1. Drawing of a bedroom autopsy, depicting an unusual suicide entitled "STRANGULATION-SUICIDE" written in Greek.



Fig. 2. Panel presenting eleven damaged bullets, evidence of an equal number of forensic cases, homicides, suicides and accidents that took place in Athens during 1929. This panel was created and signed by Vasilios Konstantelos, a forensic pathologist, who worked in the morgue and the Department of Forensics and Toxicology of the University of Athens.



Fig. 3. Plaster model of the outer ear and its parts created for educational and teaching purposes during the 20th century.

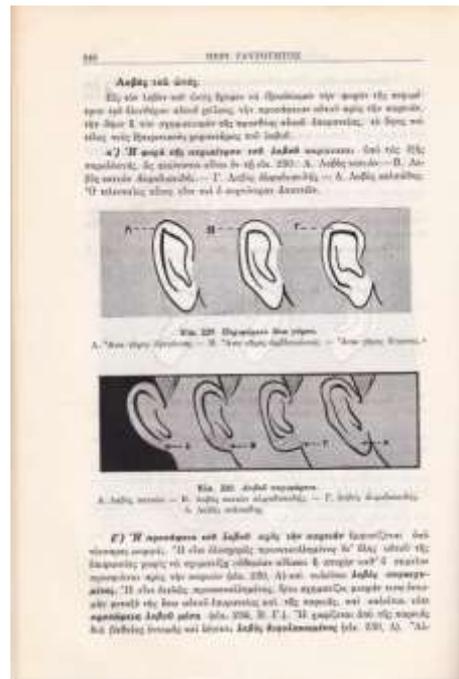


Fig. 4. Page from the forensic medicine book of professor Georgiadis that describes the importance of the outer ear as an identification feature (written in Greek).

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