

ITP 2019 Final Report

**Asuman Alpagut, Museum Researcher and Anthropologist,
Anatolian Civilization Museum**

16 Sept. 2019



Supported by the de Laszlo Foundation

Since 2000, I have been a museum researcher and an anthropologist at the Anatolian Civilizations Museum. In the Museum of the Anatolian Civilizations, the protection of the artefacts that belong to Paleolithic, Neolithic and Chalcolithic Age sections for inventory, security, identification and exhibitions are among my responsibilities. Also, I am responsible for the inventory, security, data and the identification of the collections in storage. This includes the cleaning process and reporting stages as well. In the museum education section, I'm managing both daily and long-term projects which are created by me with the school groups.

I never really thought I would go to the British Museum as an ITP member. Like my colleague Okan Cinemre, who participated in this programme last year, it was like dreaming of being a member of this family. This dream came to life in February 2019 with an e-mail from Claire Messenger (British Museum International Training Programme, Manager).

I would like to express my gratitude to the ITP team, including Claire Messenger, for their great contribution to the realisation of this dream. I would also like to thank the de Laszlo Foundation for supporting me to become a member of this important training programme.

As I mentioned in my blog, me and my ITP colleagues, we were amazed to be in the garden in front of the British Museum on the 8th July. Yes, there was the gorgeous British Museum building where tons of cultural heritage from many places around the world sit together. When I first entered the building, I couldn't hold my head still without looking up at the Great Court in the pure white light. It was amazing.



My first day : “The Big Day” of ITP Program.



Great Court with Bright Light and All Glory.

The Turkish Education Volunteers Foundation, a major supporter of education in my country has the slogan "A child changes, Turkey Develops" which always touched me. As with this slogan, a change that a curator will make in the name of promoting and developing world heritage in his or her museum with the support of the ITP is a huge step. The professional team that we met through the ITP programme gave us important changes in my mind about the lessons we took about museology, the preservation of cultural heritage and presenting this heritage to the visitor in the best way.

I think that museums are one of the important cultural centres where academic knowledge can be transferred to the visitor. If this information sharing method is as effective as it can be then its retention in their memory can be for a long time. For this reason, the interaction of museums with their visitors is one of the most important activities in contemporary museums today. The lessons, activities and museum visits that I took part in during the ITP programme showed the importance and necessity of this idea. I have seen that other museums in the UK, especially the British Museum, have held many interactive and systematic activities to keep them closer to their visitors while maintaining their primary functions - collecting, conservation, communication, research and exhibiting.

The ITP programme prepared by the British Museum provides a great advantage in the museum education programmes I have participated so far. The subjects in the course book prepared for us, experts, activities and excursions were prepared with care. There were no disappointments and everything worked well. Information about the subjects and objectives we would see in the programme was given in the course book, so we had a guide to what we will do in the sessions. Before joining the ITP programme, the courses had been determined according to our personal and professional interests which helped me a lot. I only wish I could have had more experience in the museum education activities prepared for students.

In the Museum there are many sections but the permanent exhibitions, Sutton Hoo and the Al-Bukhary Foundation Gallery of the Islamic World, had recently been renewed. These galleries' interactive approach showed a modern museum concept.

The great interaction with the visitor in the British Museum is not only through permanent exhibitions, but also through temporary exhibitions. Our case study was the *Manga* exhibition. The process of preparation by curators and experts, and the process of sharing details and information, showed us how to prepare an exhibition. And after visiting the *Manga* exhibition, it is a great feeling to find yourself in the shop where many exclusive *Manga* exhibition products are sold.

I used what I had seen and experienced during the session on the *Manga* exhibition at the British Museum when I visited the temporary exhibition of *Food: Bigger than the Plate* in Victoria & Albert Museum. It enabled me to ask the following questions: How to explain the message that is intended to be given to the audience in the best way? In what ways can the story of the objects in the exhibition be told to the visitor and made important? What can

be done for the future importance of agriculture and farms in food production, and most importantly for a sustainable society? How can museums support campaigns and civil society organisations for a more appropriate and sustainable society? In this exhibition I think that many of the important messages are told in a dynamic way through interactive methods. I don't know if my museum administration will give me such an experience, but I don't want to retire without a temporary exhibition of this kind.



Victoria & Albert Museum, Food: Bigger than the Plate Temporary Exhibition

In addition, for its members, the ITP has established a professional network with the expertise of the British Museum. It was a great feeling to meet 23 colleagues from 16 different countries on the ITP. I witnessed different cultures, different museums, and different experiences. It was a complete museum platform. I believe that all the friends I met on this platform added colour to the programme with their own experiences and interests. Our expectations and priorities were not the same as each of us as we came from different museum types and different sections. However, the content of the program, the trainers, events, questions and answers in the sessions created a very impressive and dynamic environment for us. In particular, the opportunities for feedback of theoretical knowledge strengthened the communication with our colleagues. We still continue to be a part of the family today by sharing information on a WhatsApp 2019 network.



ITP Friends

Almost every museum has more artefacts in their storages than their exhibition halls so the physical conditions in the storages should be as good as in the exhibition halls. The Greek and Roman stores we visited, with valuable departmental experts, were very impressive and we saw that the artefacts in the storage are stored, preserved and ready for research. The renovation work has started in the stores in my museum. Cabinets are being re-assessed, in physical, climatic and many other modern methods. I would like to implement the storage works that I saw in the ITP programme in my own storage as well. I will try to do my best and let you know the results.

To be in places where the museum visitors cannot enter, such as the British Museum's stores, is one of the most important things and it was exciting for me, to witness the hidden parts of the 'treasury'.

I think the "Object in Focus" exhibition project was the most impressive part of the ITP programme. Our object was a "Water Vessel ", which was produced by a talented potter from the Zande people. Through this object, I became acquainted with the Zande people and their pottery and for the first time. I prepared an exhibition focusing on a single object. In the object-oriented project, it was necessary not only to display the object, but to associate it with the theme of "journeys". I enjoyed working with my project partner Ye Ye (China) on "The Journey of the Zande Pot." I experienced that the labels, panels, brochures and posters prepared for the exhibition should be prepared in a way that attracts the attention of the visitor. Therefore, I understood that the importance of the exhibited object is as important as the story of the object.

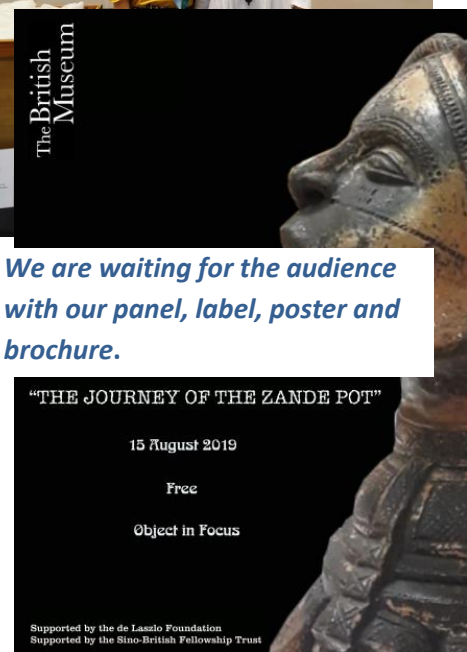


Together with Ye Ye and Helen ANDERSON

I saw that the exhibition should have a story as well as the history, material and provenance of the object and this can affect the visitor. Instead of preparing the



We are waiting for the audience with our panel, label, poster and brochure.



label and panel as a classical curator, I experienced the process of preparing it in a more creative way. I would like to express my love and respect to Maria Esteban Palma and Helen Anderson from the Department of Africa, Oceania and Americas for their support. I would like to thank my colleague Mehtap Türkmen (Turkey) who helped us with her creativity in the preparation of the poster which was highly appreciated in the exhibition. I had nice and unforgettable moments with my friend Ye who was the ITP member who I worked with on this exhibition. We both experienced how to think and work like the curator of the British Museum. The audience interest in the mug, brochure and bookmark I prepared for the exhibition was unforgettable. But most of all I will never forget the most common statement shared with us in this process - "Enjoy it!"



Mug and bookmark for Object in Focus

Poster of "The Journey Of The Zande Pot "

The 10 days I spent at the National Museums Northern Ireland during the ITP programme gave me, importantly, the opportunity to see how an open-air museum works. I would like to thank Louise Smyth and everyone in at NMNI for their hospitality.



Greetings from Belfast in Northern Ireland. A Beautiful Day. Louise Smyth, Me (Asuman Alpagut), Catalina Cavelier (Colombi), Tamara Alateya (Iraq), Sanjeevani Widyaratne (Sri Lanka), Mohamed Mokhtar (Senior Fellow)

I think that the museum offering, in both the permanent and temporary exhibitions at the Ulster Museum in Belfast, was good for me to see the similarities and differences between the exhibition concepts in my museum. Considering the exhibition with a different eye and how it is designed for the visitor were important for me. How a brochure is best designed to help explore the museum; how dynamic ideas can be created for museums through workshops; how to design, plan and manage temporary exhibitions; collection development and lending systems; museum visitor programs; leadership and strategy - this was all shared with us during the ten-day programme.



Ulster American Folk Park. Living Open Air Museum. it's real

Like Riddles? Me (Asuman Alpagut), Sanjeewani Widyaratne (Sri Lanka), Catalina Cavelier (Colombia), Tamara Alateya (Iraq)

I think it is very important for us to show the social and environmental sustainability of our history and culture by doing learning activities especially those like we saw at Ulster Transport Museum & Ulster Folk Museum and Ulster American Folk Park. I can say that the museums highlighted the place and importance of cultural heritage and sustainability and this was demonstrated dynamically by the team of experts at the Ulster Museum.



Me (Asuman Alpagut), Catalina Cavelier (Colombia), Hannah Crowdy (Head of Collections), Colin Catney (Chief Operation Officer), Tamara Alateya (Iraq), Donal McAnallen (Community Engagement Officer), Kathryn Thomson (Chief Executive), Sanjeewani Widyaratne (Sri Lanka),

During the days with the Department of Greece and Rome, Ian Jenkins (Curator), Ross Thomas (Curator) and other experts presented a wide range of projects, including works in the large Greece and Rome gallery, storage, archiving and the preparation of Troy temporary exhibition. "Troy: Myth and Reality", will be exhibited at the British Museum between 21 November 2019 and 8 March 2020. The exhibition will not only welcome visitors with their artefacts but will engage them with Troy's heroes, mythology, reality and design.

Ian Jenkins presented to us the Enlightenment Gallery, Nereid Monument, Mausoleum of Halicarnassus and the Parthenon sculptures and shared with us valuable information and expanded our horizons about the importance of world cultural heritage and preservation. I can say that the British Museum is a souvenir of world culture from the lessons in the Enlightenment gallery, which reflects the process from collecting to the community heritage museum.

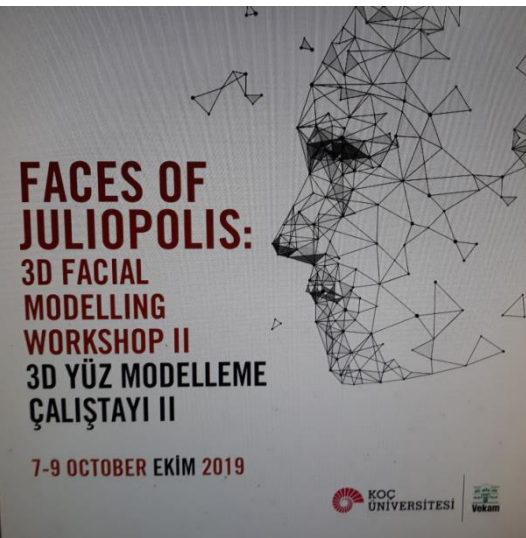
During the ITP programme, we visited the Mary Rose Museum with Ross Thomas from the Greek and Roman Department. I studied this museum as an anthropologist rather than a museum researcher. It was very important that the anthropological data, together with the archaeological objects, completed the whole story of the ship, revealing the importance of anthropological research. Seeing that the anthropological studies of human and animal skeletons coming from archaeological excavations were not only in the academic pages, but also conveying the information they had to the audience in an interactive way gave me new ideas for my own studies. For example, I feel very fortunate to have an opportunity to interactively see a lot of information about where they came from, where they grew up and

what they looked like, with stable isotope and DNA analysis from the teeth of the eight remaining crew members and a dog from the Mary Rose. This is a successful study showing that a sunken ship can be transformed into a living museum using technology. I'm sure I will always remember this museum jealously!

I saw similar anthropological work at the Brighton Museum in the *Elaine Evans Archaeological Gallery*. In this exhibition, by using scientific technology, the lives of seven people buried in the region are brought to life with forensically corrected 3D modelling, revealing the ancestral faces of Britain's oldest inhabitants from the Ice Age to Saxony.

I am working on the project of bioarcheological investigation of human skeletal remains found in the excavations of the Ancient City of Juliopolis, conducted by the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations. The skeletal material derives from salvage excavations begun in 2009 by the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, resulting in the remains of 250–500 individual skeletons from more than 500 graves. In addition to traditional bioarcheological approaches that reveal information about the age, gender, and health of ancient individuals, the project proposes to conduct newer, more cutting-edge scientific analyses that are rarely practiced in this area.

During the *The Faces of Juliopolis*, which will be organized for the second time with the support of Koç University VEKAM on 7-9 October 2019, I think it will be enjoyable to share the visuals and information of face modelling with my colleagues who will participate in the workshop.



Poster of
Faces of

Juliopolis: 3D Facial Modelling Workshop II

The trip to Brighton Museum and Art Gallery & Royal Pavilion, Horniman



Museum & Gardens, the Shard, Stonehenge, Kenwood House & Hampstead Heath, which were included in the ITP programme, gave us the opportunity to see new exhibitions in a variety of museums, houses, sites, attractions, enabling us to have different experiences. Many different types of museum work, such as brochures, museum programmes, different exhibition topics and designs, museum audiences and museum experiences, provided an important part of my intention to participate in the program. When we visited Kenwood House and Hampstead Heath with Ms. Frances Carey, she shared her valuable knowledge and experience about Kenwood House. In the afternoon, she offered her own baked cakes and tea to all ITP participants in her magnificent art-filled home.



Great to see Stonehenge

ITP

2019 team watching London from Shard

When I looked at my phone picture gallery to select the pictures I wanted to use when writing my report, I remembered repeatedly how amazing the places were. One of the most important of these moments for me was the *Phantom of the Opera*. I enjoyed watching the famous opera in London. I would like to thank my sponsor and ITP team for giving us the

opportunity to spend this moment and many other good times together as a group.



It was an Unforgettable Night. After the "Phantom of the Opera". With ITP 2019 team

The first thing I shared with my colleagues after returning to my country was how professionally the programme was prepared. The lessons and experiences I have received are very important for contemporary museology, management, preservation, documentation, research and display of a collection. The reason for the success of the British Museum became more evident in my mind with the knowledge and experience I gained from the programme.

I know that after I left the ITP, I had to work hard to realise what I learned in the museum. But if I get the necessary support, it will be great to work hard, especially to apply what I have learned. First of all, I'm going to start with the aspects of my job. A certain number of trainees come to the museum every year. I usually deal with this. I look forward to sharing the experiences and knowledge I gained from the ITP programme with these friends who will be a new generation in museology. Now I will prepare a more professional internship programme for them. I knew how important and necessary this job was, but thanks to the ITP I have started to think more professionally.

Two weeks after I came back from the ITP programme, I began to examine human skeletons from an important Phrygian tumulus excavation at my museum. We started to get quite exciting information and in this study, I used the Human Osteology book that I received during the ITP programme.

In October I will tell my colleagues in my museum about the experiences, information and visuals I have gained in the ITP programme with a presentation. I'm preparing it now. I hope one day one of them will participate in this programme.

In the paperwork I prepared before joining the ITP programme, as I stated in the expectations section that I was hoping to learn more about the educational activities of the museums, especially the museum education practices with children aged 7 – 11. As it is known, museums are used as learning environments where active learning can be realised and special programmes are prepared for children, young people and families. While the educational function of museums in the past was mostly limited to a natural education process in which visitors received information while visiting museums, it is now seen that museums no longer leave this role to visitors own flow and they even aim to carry out the educational function in a more formal and programmed manner.

I observed the learning activities for children and families as much as I could in the British Museum and other UK museums I visited. I have seen that it is done with great care and to invite visitors from all ages, sexes and nationalities to the museum and to introduce them to the collection with the programmes it prepares. I have accumulated many visuals and knowledge about very creative and effective museum education activities that attract

children, young people and families. The activities for children, especially at the British Museum, the Horniman Museum & Gardens, and Ulster Museum, gave me new and more creative ideas for the education activities that have been presented in my museum since 2003.

Everything we do – and want to do – as a museum employee is to bring our unique world of cultural heritage to the communities, to protect and develop this heritage better, be more attentive and creative, and to pass it on to future generations.

I think the ITP will make a significant contribution to my professional career in the museum. It is an indescribable feeling to be on the ITP network, which is of great importance for me to gain the knowledge and experience necessary to realise some of my projects more creatively and effectively. I would like to send heartfelt thanks to Claire Messenger (Manager, International Education Programme), Mohamed Mokhtar (Senior Fellow 2019) George Peckham (Assistant, International Training Programme) and Emily Shaw (Coordinator, International Training Programme) for their support in this process. I would like to thank all the ITP team and all my colleagues in this program for their experience, friendship and support.

Warm Regards,

Asuman ALPAGUT



*Great finale! Thank You
ITP 2019 Team. I Hope
to meet you again.*