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*“The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential...
these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence.”*

~ Confucius

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Abstract

This research aims to find out how the Great North Museum: Hancock's decolonisation process as a municipal museum be possible, properly. Although years have passed over the colonial period, its effects on humanity still live on. As institutions affected by colonisation, museums, have, for a long time, been faced with many decolonisation demands to eradicate the dark mark colonisation left behind. While seeking solutions to those demands, the museums have also been heavily influenced by various events and have gradually begun to integrate the phenomenon of decolonisation into their structure. Brexit, Black Lives Matter, demands of the source communities, and repatriation of objects greatly impact the Great North Museum and their pursuit for decolonising. In this context, the Great North Museum, as a municipal museum, has started to implement plans that offer a more neutral environment and meet the aims of the museum. Although this process is long, delicate, and depends on many different factors, the actions of the Great North Museum demonstrate how proper decolonisation can be possible and set an example to others.

1. CHAPTER: INTRODUCTION

“We’ in the West must bear in mind that the poor countries are poor primarily because we have exploited them through political or economic colonialism.”

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

Since the very beginning of the 20th century, many global incidents have occurred, and many of these have altered people’s mindsets through the years and can be seen even today. One of these, is the end of colonial empires. Although this instance has caused significant changes in world order, its post-effects have continued. Today, the remnant of the colonial idea affects not only political ideas but also institutions. Museums are one of these institutions, and they have been trying to deal with adverse aspects of colonialism for a long time. In this sense, colonial heritage, and the idea of purification from it, called decolonisation, have become more prominent in the last couple of years. In the new world order, museums have started to analyse themselves more thoroughly, and as a result, their roles have begun to change. Especially after the mid-1900s, museums have entered a new era called 'new museology'. According to this, museums have been considered not only the house of objects but also the institutions that actively play a constructive role in societies. However, to accomplish these new roles thoroughly, museums must grasp and apply the different perspectives to their structure.

Colonisation and decolonisation have affected many museums in many ways, today. The scope of this research is to examine decolonisation and the attitudes of museum about it. As decolonisation is a broad and still

flourishing subject, the content of this research is restricted to only the Great North Museum: Hancock (GNM). The GNM is a municipal museum that was established in Newcastle upon Tyne at the end of the 19th century. In this context, the GNM approaches, perspectives about decolonisation and its repatriation policy will be analysed. Furthermore, recent incidents (Brexit, Black Lives Matter) that happened around the world and their impacts on the museums in terms of decolonisation will be investigated. So far, grand, national, and well-funded museums have faced the impacts of decolonisation. The purpose of this research is to analyse the effects of decolonisation in relatively small-scale, municipal museums. In this sense, the research questions are:

- How have policies about repatriation or decolonisation changed over time within The Great North Museum, and how effective they are?
- What are the roles of the recent political incidents on decolonisation of the museum, and what is the perspective of the staff about it?
- Is the Great North Museum approach ethically and politically sufficient given contemporary debates about decolonisation?

The research structure will be as follows. In chapter two, the literature review will give background knowledge for the further steps of the research. In this sense, detailed analysis about the terms of 'colonisation' and 'decolonisation' will accompany museums and their roles, and the universal museum declaration. Chapter three will indicate the methodology of the

research. In this section, the way of gathering data and analysis methods will be given. Also, it will explain the questions of why and how methods were used and their limitations. Chapter four will be the focal point of the research and will analyse the GNM in terms of repatriation, the GNM decolonisation process in the light of the Black Lives Matter movement (the BLM), and Brexit, thoroughly. The aim of this section is to present an answer to the research questions. Finally, chapter five will summarise the overall findings.



2. CHAPTER: LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will be presented under three main headings. The first part will provide a background to the research by examining the roles of museums in the historical process. The second section will examine the concepts of colonisation and decolonisation and will reveal the situation in museums. By doing that, it is aimed to indicate the political factors and their effects upon the interchangeability of museums. Finally, the counterargument of decolonisation, which is the 'universal museum' idea, will be discussed. Repatriation is the most well-known - but the not only - method of decolonisation, and the 'universal museum' idea advocates that objects should not return to the original place. This argument comprehends only 'canonical' museums but forgets the small-scale ones. Moreover, for many, repatriations damage the museums' integrity and decontextualise the museums (Adams, 2019c). Investigating the repatriation-related idea that 'the universal museum' can be useful to indicate its impacts in the small-scale museums. This helps us to demonstrate the fact that to decolonise is not to decontextualise.

2.1. Museums and Their Roles

In the past, museums played a different role in society than they do today and understanding the history behind museums is helpful in comprehending their roles. Throughout history, people have gathered and preserved the objects that have a unique meaning for them. The establishment of today's museum institution is the result of this instinctive thought. As a word, 'museum' comes from 'mouseion' which meant "seat of

the Muses” (Lewis, 2019) in ancient Greek. According to Vergo (1989), the building which was built in the 3rd century BC by Ptolemy I Soter in Alexandria is considered, the first museum. However, Lewis claims that (2019), this structure is an early university prototype rather than a place which preserves objects; because, according to the Latin derivation, 'mouseion' is defined as a place where philosophical discussion is made. According to him “a development toward the idea of the museum certainly occurred early in the 2nd millennium BC at Larsa, in Mesopotamia” (Lewis, 2019, p.3). Although it is unclear which museum prototype came first, the main idea was to share knowledge with many people and provide a place for philosophical discussions. As this idea spread and evolved over time, people from many disciplines were collaborating and creating new techniques to build knowledge and analyse pieces of history that gradually “severed the connection that had previously limited the known past to a remembered past” (Bennett, 2004, p.1). In this sense, museums that were not always a part of our lives were transitioned into a focal point in our lives through new developments.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, the welfare that had emerged with the Renaissance helped to form the prototype of today's museums which were called "Wunderkammern" and "Kunstammern", namely cabinet of curiosities and cabinet of art (Mason, Robinson and Coffield, 2018, p.22). Later, in the 'Enlightenment' era, the objects that filled the cabinet of curiosities have become the servant of the noble tastes in the larger halls. Nevertheless, in this period, some enlightened people – for example, Hans Sloane, Lafont, Diderot,

Voltaire - have thought that these objects should be open to public access in order to accomplish ideas of Enlightenment such as free-thinking, re-searching, questioning the findings. The British Museum, 1753, and the Louvre Museum, 1793, are the result of the efforts of these intellectuals. The collections that certain nobles could access, with the creation of these museums, became the property of the public.

Throughout the 18th and 19th Centuries, these institutions tried to fulfil their aims of research, preservation, and presentations, but at the same time, they acted as political propaganda tools for their nations. As Wallach and Duncan stated, the primary purpose of the museums was ideological (1980, p.50), which was creating a “three-dimensional imperial archive” (Barringer, 1998, p.11). It was not something to be surprised when the conditions of the period were considered because every nation was in competition with others to accelerate their colonial activities. For example, the objects obtained during the Napoleon period, such as old Roman examples, had been brought to museums with the celebrations, and the reaction of the public was enthusiastic (Nochlin, 1972). As Mason (2007) points out, these museums should not only be seen as a result of colonial activities, but the parallel effect of the nationalist movement should be considered in the formation of museums. Bennett, a supporter of this view, believes museums represent more than just an institution where only objects are exhibited, they represent the sublime idea of being a nation (1995). After all, they were a perfect way to create national awareness (Lewis, 2019).

In time, the number of museums increased and spread throughout the world. Following the second world war, keeping up with the changing world order had been necessary for the museums, and a "revolution" (Hudson, 1998, p. 48) started to happen at the 1970s (Walsh, 1992; Hooper-Greenhill, 1994; Simpson, 1996). The roles of the museums have begun to alter and aimed to create a better society. As a result, museums have adopted education (Lewis, 2019) and the medium of communication roles (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994) by emerging new concepts such as ecomuseum and community-based museum. This has led to the birth of the new museology thought founded by Vergo. He describes it as while the museums used to be more 'method' oriented, now the 'purpose' has become more important (Vergo, 1989, p.3). It enabled the museums to communicate more effectively with the communities and increased their interaction with each other. Thus, the museums' education role has become "an establishment for learning and enjoyment" (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994, p.2). The classification of museums indicates diversity depending on their collections (art, history, national history, technology, and science), funding (state, municipal, private), and philosophy (nationalistic, religious, political) (Lewis, 2019). They are not only the place for exhibiting and preserving house of ancient objects but also the place for unheard communities, enjoyment, and social agents (Conn, 2010). They have the ability to develop and inspire society.

All these changes have increased the community's awareness and they use museums as a way of expressing themselves (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994; Simpson, 1996). Also, underrepresented, or colonised communities realised

the value of the objects hosted in the museums and started to act to claim theirs. As a result of their requests, museums counteracted, which will be analysed in further sections.

2.2. Colonisation and Decolonisation

It will be useful to examine both colonisation and decolonisation to understand the interrelated matters that connect them. Colonisation is a concept that dates to ancient Greece and ancient Rome. Today's definition developed from the age of discovery in the 15th century by the Portuguese seafarers that reached the new world outside of Europe (Blakemore, 2019). Colonialism is a form of governance and is often confused with imperialism because both are about politics and economic control. However, the difference between them is that in colonialism, population is transferred from the colonial lands to colonised region, and it creates political connection amongst them; on the other hand, in imperialism, the power dominance is gained through various methods of control, such as sovereignty and settlement (Kohn and Merry, 2017). In terms of museums, the more relevant part of history is the colonial activities of the European countries against the non-western countries in the 19th century. During this period, countries such as England, France, and the Netherlands have colonised many regions from America and Africa. While these states helped to develop the colonised regions' infrastructure, trade or technology, their oppressive practices such as human rights violations were problematic. Also, they were collecting the objects that were considered valuable or cultural and brought them back to the mainland. They believed their nation had "a legal and religious obligation to take over

the land and culture of indigenous peoples" (Blakemore, 2019). From this perspective, it can be assumed that colonisation collaborated and was fed by nationalisation (Carter, 2014).

Colonialism lost its effect with the second world war because the world started to change and two 'anti-colonialist' countries, the USA and the Soviet-Union, had forced colonial countries to reduce their activities, which formed the idea of decolonisation (Gabellini, 2016). In fact, the foundation of decolonisation appeared before that time. In 1930, the German economist Moritz Julius Bonn used the term to describe former colonial territories which had earned their freedom (Heckenberg and O'Dowd, 2020). According to Zihel's description, the decolonisation achieved through "self-determination from colonial rule, using especially Europe's own rights discourses of the post-war period against the legitimacy of Empire" (2015, p.171).

Smith highlights that colonial effects on the museums can be conceptualised under three main headings, which are 'the label', the demonstration of the knowledge; 'the boundary', the classification of the objects; and 'the meta-narrative', the authority or positional superiority of the institution (2005, pp. 424-425). In this sense, decolonisation can be seen through revitalisation efforts of the museums that were affected by colonialist raids. Hatzipanagos indicates that it is the "process that institutions undergo to expand the perspectives they portray beyond those of the dominant cultural group, particularly white colonisers" (2018). Each institution should interrogate, analyse, and identify their colonial structure to expand their ideas

and to ensure that every visitor is greeted in an impartial and inviting way. By doing that, museum decolonisation becomes an activity that is

“radical and potentially all-encompassing. Having the scope to include almost any aspect of museum work, from recruitment to representation, audience engagement to repatriation, acquisition to architecture, design to labelling, conservation to the storage, and so on” (Giblin, Ramos and Grout, 2019, p. 472).

Today, many museums try to decolonise their context by collaborating with source or indigenous communities and this improves the language representation, righteousness, and approachability of their exhibitions. Also, some museums – quite rare - approach the repatriation matter more willingly and sincerely. However, there are still ongoing deficiencies such as workforce diversity or uncertainty about the acquisition of some objects. For example, in England, workforce diversity numbers in the culture sector still illustrate white dominance (Adams, 2019). Museum experts agree that museums do not meet the decolonisation definition because that requires extensive institutional changes to accomplish (Simpson, 2001). It is obvious that some opinions have not changed. As Ariella Aïsha Azoulay indicates, “it is not possible to decolonise the museums without decolonising the world” (Alli, 2020).

2.3. Universal Museum

There is a misunderstanding about repatriation and decolonisation by using the words synonymously. In fact, repatriation is one of the methods to accomplish decolonisation. However, the increasing demand for repatriations

in the early 2000s caused a misunderstanding about these two ideas' collaborations, and museums to try to find new solutions to fight against it. As a result, ten American and eight European museums published a joint manifesto called 'Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums' in 2002. The British Museum did not sign the declaration, though it was published in their press office (Flynn, 2010). According to the declaration, signatories indicate that they are against all kinds of illegal artefact smuggling, but the objects obtained – “whether by gifted, purchased or partage” - in the past should be evaluated by considering the conditions of the period (ICOM, 2004). In this manner, they defend the idea that repatriations would be harmful to the institutions. By using the declaration, signatories aimed to revive the thoughts that emerged with Enlightenment, which were effective in the initial formation of the museums (Barrett, 2015; Flynn, 2010). According to them, these museums have an encyclopaedic value (Cuno, 2008, MacGregor, 2004), and such an encyclopaedia could not be considered the property of only one nation. Researching the objects in museums is also important for the constitution of cultural ties (MacGregor, 2004). In this respect, if museums repatriate the objects, it will severely affect the prosperity of humanity, and this will decontextualise the museums and turn them into a void (Abungu, 2004; Cuno, 2014). However, it should be useful to consider the public perception about museums. According to recent research, the public has considered museums to be a trustworthy institution (Dilenschneider, 2017). While it is possible to use this feature more effectively, creating a 'false' perception of history by denying or rejecting the dark past,

negatively affects the definition of museums. This totally contradicts the idea of new museology.

On the other hand, the manifesto was subjected to harsh criticism by many. Firstly, the way that publishing was problematic. All the museums that signed the declaration were Western, and they had not consulted with other museums (Fiskesjö, 2010). While attributing a new status for themselves, they overlooked other museums that were similar to many of them but did not have the feature of being 'Western' (Abungu, 2004). Another factor is that they never consider the objects obtained by methods such as war loot or theft (Curtis, 2005). They wanted to overcome this situation as stated above, the objects should be evaluated according to the conditions of the period they were in; in other words, ignoring the changing world order. The British Museum former director MacGregor wrote an article to the Guardian, and he mentioned that “these artefacts are now part of another story” (2004). This statement indicates that museums are ignoring the historical facts and the responsibilities of the past. It is as if these objects have chosen to be part of these museums with their own wishes and all the world must accept it. As Lewis stated, the aim was to gain immunity about repatriation (2006), not to revive ‘Enlightenment’ ideas.

The declaration does not offer any solution for small-scale museums. It has been made only regarding prominent, government-funded, and mostly royal backgrounded - the British Museum is not (Flynn, 2010) - museums. This situation shows that the museums that are trying to be neutral are not fair, even among themselves. Unless the museums are open to rooted changes

and innovations, for some, they will still remain as institutions where the incarnation of colonial persecution takes place. In this sense, analysing the decolonisation process of small-scale museum and the struggles that they faced by considering the universal museum declaration would indicate that decolonisation is not only about repatriation but that it is a more elaborated concept.



3. CHAPTER: METHODOLOGY

This chapter illustrates the methodological framework of the research in order to accomplish the research purpose. In this sense, epistemology, data gathering methods, data analysis approaches are investigated, and their strengths, limitations and reasoning for the utilisation are described.

3.1. Epistemology

As this research examines decolonisation and its perception within the museums, it relies on the abundantly qualitative data of a researcher and the employees of the GNM, and the data is shaped based on the experiences and views of individuals. According to the social constructivist view, “groups construct knowledge and thus a culture of shared meaning is created” (O’Reilly and Kiyimba, 2015, p. 18). Furthermore, it focuses on individuals' social and psychological perspectives to construct knowledge (O’Reilly and Lester, 2017). Therefore, social constructivist epistemology is used to find an answer to the question of how the GNM perceives and constructs the decolonisation idea to shape their structure.

3.2. Methods

Decolonisation is a comprehensive concept and analysing it in all the museums in the UK would be almost impossible in the three-month timeframe. Therefore, the research context is narrowed down to one case study, The Great North Museum: Hancock. The term case study is described as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context” (Yin 1994, p. 16). The most significant advantage of using the case study method is that it not only assists in pointing

out the place of decolonisation in the real-life environment, but also helps to clarify complexities in practice. Even though the data gathered in case studies can be used to expand the context and reach a universal conclusion, only analysing one case study would not be adequate to create a generalised assumption about decolonisation (Yin, 1994; Tellis, 1997; Zainal 2007), which is not the aim of this dissertation.

Utilising several methods would be useful to provide a more in-depth and comprehensive perspective (Caillaud and Flick, 2017). The literature review is comprised of subject-related academic resources along with journals (Bryman, 2008, Silverman, 2013). It helps to create the framework for this research and an understanding of its place in the academic sense (Silverman, 2013). Other than the documents that are given above, the organisational documents, such as the venue website, one of their repatriation reports, and policies about decolonisation and repatriation, were gathered for more reliable data.

However, current literature, in other words, secondary data, would not be adequate to create a conceptualised perception about decolonisation and the GNM approaches (Silverman,2013). Since every museum differentiates itself from others in many ways, such as historical background, funding, or objects on display, analysing the impacts of decolonisation requires institution-specific or staff-specific perspectives and their experiences, however, comparing could be beneficial. In this sense, understanding the positions of the museum staff has significant importance. Semi-structured interviews can assist the researcher to understand participants "perception,

feeling, opinions, experiences, understandings, values, beliefs, attitudes, emotions, behaviour, formal and informal roles, and relationships" (Halperin and Heath, 2012, p. 290) Thus, in this research, individual semi-structured interviews will be used in conjunction with current literature. The semi-structured interviews consist of closed- and open-ended questions that were asked to the participants (Given, 2008; Adams, 2015). It is used to get subjective interpretations rather than facts (Warren, 2001); however, of course, in this research, it is possible to get facts about the venue. Participants' interpretations constitute a significant role in the meaning-making process in the analysis chapter of this research (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995). Critical considerations for this research were who the interviewees are and the number of participants (Punch, 2016; Wisker, 2001). In this research, all the participants are actively working in the museum, which makes the interviews elite, or expert interviews (Harrison, 2001). The number of the participants plays a critical role in gathering data; however, COVID-19 had an effect on the number. The most significant advantage of the semi-structured method is that it gives latitude to the researcher to explore participants idea in-depth by allowing to ask unforeseen questions (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Doing individual interviews comforts the participants and makes them subjective about the topic (Punch, 2014; Silverman, 2011). However, interviewing requires skills and experience to reach reliable results.

Considering all these factors, two interviews were conducted with the curatorial team (Dan Gordon, Andrew Parkin) and an interview was conducted with the director of the GNM (Caroline McDonald) in July 2020. Each expert

has been contacted by e-mail, and meetings have been conducted via ‘Zoom’ or ‘Microsoft Teams’ video-conferencing applications, which also allow for facial impression observation (Wisker, 2001). In order to analyse thoroughly and not disrupt the flow of the conversation, each interview was recorded (Bryman, 2008).

3.3. Data Analysis

“Like other qualitative methods, gathering and analysing data are conducted concurrently in descriptive qualitative approaches, thus adding to the depth and quality of data analysis” (Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 401). As stated above, the literature review helped to shape the framework and comprehend the general discussion about decolonisation. It was also useful in finding decolonisation related themes.

The interviews were conducted based on the framework that was transcribed using the website ‘Temi’, results were double-checked, and then mistakes were corrected manually. Decolonisation stems from real-life events, and its impacts are still happening today. Thus, thematic analysis is used because it helps “to identify, analyse and report patterns within a data set” (O’reilly and Kiyimba, 2015, p.75) and facilitates various theme identification and interpretations (Braun and Clarke, 2006). It is also useful in analysing not only interviews but also documents such as policies to gain valuable insights (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). According to Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87), the analysing process should be as indicated:

Familiarising with data	Transcribing, reading, and writing initial ideas.
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Generating initial codes	Identifying interesting features from the data, combined with relevant data.
Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all relevant data for each potential theme.
Reviewing themes	Being sure concordance of potential themes with data.
Defining themes	Analysing the specific theme and investigating it in-depth and explore its characteristics.
Producing the report	Final analysis of selected extracts, relating back to the research question and literature, producing a report of the analysis.

3.4. Ethical Considerations and Limitations

Decolonisation is a sensitive topic for both museums and communities. In this sense, to reduce possible issues, the ethical guideline of the Newcastle University Faculty of Humanities and Social Science was applied (Appendix II). The biggest problem that the research may encounter is the possibility that the GNM may show reluctance to talk about some cases. In order to tackle this situation, it had initially been decided to anonymise certain cases; however, there was no need thanks to their enthusiasm to participate. Each participant in the research was briefed through the information sheet, and their approvals were obtained through the consent form (Appendix III, IV and V).

Interviewing participants had many limitations. In order to avoid the possible bad influence of the language of the questions, they were checked thrice with the help of the research supervisor, Katie Markham. As stated above, interviewing requires skill, the absence of which was felt. Therefore, it has been challenging and some opportunities to benefit from the semi-structured nature of the interviews have been missed. Due to COVID-19, only three interviews were conducted, which was not enough to give a general view of all the employees in the GNM. Meanwhile, to get a broader perspective, an interview was requested from Iain Watson, the director of the Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM). TWAM is an umbrella network of the nine museums and galleries around the Tyne river (Tyne & Wear, 2018). It would have been beneficial to get a different and comprehensive perception and to find the place of the GNM in this sense; unfortunately, he declined the interview request.

As indicated by Yin, to strengthen the case study, research should be fed with documents, archives, interviews, policies, observation, and physical artefacts (2009, p. 98). 2020 is an unprecedented year for all humanity. The COVID-19 pandemic has severely affected the process of this dissertation. However, in this extraordinary situation, accessing and observing the museum venue or libraries were impossible, and that narrowed the research context and its depth. For example, current exhibitions and their interpretations could not be analysed in the sense of decolonisation, which forced the researcher to analyse colonisation effects in the GNM by only considering 'the meta-narrative' (Smith, 2005, pp. 425) On the hand, initially,

expanding the research concept was considered to two municipal museums, which would have allowed for a comparison, thus increasing the reliability of the research; however, again due to COVID-19, museums were required to close, and the researcher was forced to reduce the scope of the research.



4. CHAPTER: DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter analyses the data gathered through the interviews and literature. In this sense, first, the brief historical background of the GNM is given. The main data is divided into three sections, which are, repatriation, the BLM effects on the decolonisation of the GNM, and Brexit.

4.1. General Description of the GNM

The GNM: Hancock was built in 1884 to house the Natural History Society of Northumbria collection and its name comes from one of the supporters, John Hancock (Great North Museum, no date a). Although origins of the GNM dates back to 1884; it can be dated to 1793 if the connection with Lit & Phil is considered and 2009 is accepted as a milestone (Great North Museum, 2020a). In 2009, with the help of Newcastle University's Great North Museum project, which was supported by Newcastle University, Tyne and Wear Museums, Newcastle City Council, the Natural History Society of Northumbria and the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne and many individuals, who gathered £26 million to renovate the venue (Newcastle University, 2008a). At the same time, the collection was expanded with the objects that were brought from the Newcastle University's Museum of Antiquities and the Shefton Museum of Greek and Etruscan Art and Archaeology (Newcastle University, 2008b). The same situation happened at the museum's library and it was enlarged by the Natural History Society of Northumbria (NHSN), Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne (SANT) and the Newcastle University's Cowen Archaeology Library collections (Great North Museum, 2010).

Till 1992, the GNM was operated by Newcastle University for decades, then it started to be “managed by Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums on behalf of Newcastle University” (Great North Museum, no date). TWAM is financially supported by (Tyne & Wear, 2018):

- Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, and Sunderland Councils,
- Newcastle University and
- Arts Council of England

and it aims “to help people determine their place in the world and define their identities, so enhancing their self-respect and their respect for others” (Tyne & Wear, 2019). The GNM mission is to “inspire curiosity, learning and debate through a stimulating, innovative and provocative science and cultural engagement programme with cutting edge university research at its heart” (Great North Museum, no date b). In this sense, the collaboration between them surely strengthens the success of their aims. Today, the museum hosts three permanent exhibitions, which are Fossil Stories, Ancient Egypt, and Living Planet Galleries (Great North Museum, no date d). Moreover, by continuously changing the temporary exhibitions, it aims to flourish its context.

4.2. Repatriation

Repatriation is one of the well-known and political ways of decolonisation. Since the 1970s, with the increasing indigenous communities activity and their self-determination, institutions, such as the British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), and the Louvre Museum, have

started to receive repatriation requests from both the source/indigenous communities and directly from the countries (Dickerson and Ceeney, 2015). Actually, considering the fact that 80% of cultural objects in the global context are not in their original country (Adams, 2019b), this situation is inevitable. Due to many factors such as the changing world order, globalisation, Brexit, etc., museums have had to actively evaluate themselves, and thus developing continuously evolving and living topics. “UNESCO has declared that repatriation is a basic human right, all communities are equal and when any group loses part of its cultural patrimony, all of humankind suffers” (Marstine, 2006, p.16). As a concept, repatriation includes giving back to origin place the objects or most commonly human remains that were gathered from the colonial territories for research, education and enjoyment (Conn, 2010). As can be guessed, the UK and Europe museums are severely struggling with these requests because in the 18th and 19th centuries powerful countries, such as Great Britain and France, were prominent aggressors in colonial activities.

Today, although the majority of the requests are being demanded from grand, well-funded museums, small-scale museums have also been confronted with them. While grand museums have hidden behind the universal museum ‘shield’, small museums are left unprotected and vulnerable to repatriation requests. In this sense, museum policies have become vital in creating the legal basis for repatriation. Even though there has been a high rate of opposition for repatriation in the UK (ICOM, 2018), the GNM has always made human remains and repatriation issues a priority

and it has always been a section in their policies (Caroline, 2020). However, when we look at the Acquisition and Disposal policy, prepared in 2016, only a small paragraph constitutes the entire repatriation policy of the museum. According to the policy, when a request is initiated, the GNM and TWAM will act together, requests will be examined case-by-case (10), in a transparent way (12a), and without considering any financial benefit (12g - o) (Great North Museum, 2016). The object will be researched by considering (DCMS, 2015):

- Acquisition method,
- The cultural and religious value for requesting community and the strength of their relationship,
- Cultural, spiritual, and religious significance,
- The scientific, educational and historical importance,
- The quality of the treatment required.

As these standards have been prepared by the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport, they are implemented across all UK museums. While these considerations look strict, they are also ambiguous in their nature. A good example of this, even if it is not from the GNM, is the famous Parthenon Marbles. The acquisition method of the marbles was questionable, there is an undeniable cultural and historical importance for both the source community and humanity, and a specific museum was built in Greece in order to compensate for all the needs of the objects, but the request was denied. Of course, the British Museum considers itself a 'universal museum' and tries to use this image by claiming that they are serving all humankind. (MacGregor, 2004). However, this attitude, combined with ambiguous policy abuse allows

museums to refuse repatriation requests even if the claims are strong. Although the interviews indicate that the GNM is acting differently in case of repatriation, having a more detailed and sturdy policy can eliminate some prejudices. In this sense, the GNM has seen the shortcomings in the matter and initiated a renovation and development plan in their repatriation policy. To start, they expanded and detailed the context of repatriation in their website (Andrew, 2020), and now they are still working on their brand-new repatriation policy. Another factor that allows this renovation, is that one of the employees earned the Headley Fellowship and travelled to North America to analyse and research the North America collections of the GNM (Caroline, 2020). At the same time, she found a chance to observe the viewpoint of the museums in terms of repatriation and to compare the similarities and differences in policies and approaches (Caroline; Andrew; Dan, 2020). “Museums out there were engaged with kind of first nation communities and indigenous communities” (Caroline, 2020), and by using this solidarity created between museums, it is aimed to reach more effective solutions on repatriation. “What we found when we were doing our own research is that not many museums have a dedicated repatriation policy. So, we may be one of the first in the UK to do that” (Caroline, 2020). One of the questions that should be asked is the place of the privilege that grand museums are seeking for themselves under the universal museum idea, instead of offering a solution in cooperation with other museums or creating a repatriation policy such as the GNM. These museums, which have better financial resources and prestige than many municipal or small-scale museums, ignore the fact that repatriation can recuperate the emotional scar of the source communities

(Jenkins, 2008) and through communication, problems can be solved in a more auspicious way. This is the way to be genuinely 'universal'. The GNM's effort to close this gap should be appreciated and set an example for other museums.

A noteworthy point in GNM's policy is that in addition to the GNM and TWAM's approval, "the Natural History Society of Northumbria, the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne and the University of Newcastle" endorsements must also be obtained in the repatriation process (Great North Museum, 2016, 3.9). "Hancock is the only University museum managed by a local authority in the country, and possibly the world" (Great North Museum, no date b). Though this is a very unique feature, there are many institutions that have control over the management of the museum. Of course, the GNM has more freedom over their collections than the British Museum, but they must maintain a good relationship with stakeholders (Andrew, 2020) since their collections depend on their judgement. Possible disturbances between the governing bodies will surely affect the future of the collections. This situation will not only interfere in the museum's decision-making process but also severely prolong the repatriation process. Therefore, free-will of the GNM in this circumstance will provide significant benefit in practice.

Another important point about repatriation appears in the 'world culture collection' lists. This file contains an objects name, country of origin, cultural group, and acquisition method for ethnographic collection in the GNM storages. An unusual characteristic of the list is the 'unknown' acquisition method of 641 objects in the museum (Great North Museum, no

date c). According to the interviewees, this is a common problem for museums in general, but more so for museums that contain collections from the previous civilisations (Caroline; Dan; Andrew, 2020). Caroline emphasised her great discomfort for keeping these objects. According to her, “unless an item has come to the museum with a very clear equitable relationship, ... I am uncomfortable about cultural objects being in the museum” (Caroline, 2020). While other participants agree with this idea, they also offered another perspective. Dan, who as a natural historian, explained his belief with an example: The animal, which was killed by local communities on the orders of a European aristocrat, who provides all the resources and then carrying back to the UK, should be considered as a story and this story should be treated as a whole (Dan, 2020). In this sense, he continued, “we attempt through curatorship and being good custodians of objects to search and establish what the story of that object might be” (Dan, 2020). Andrew agreed on this point of view and added

“standards of documentation weren't always good (in the past) ... Sometimes we do not know how they were acquired ... If information comes to light (about objects), then we can address those issues when they arise and do something differently. Till then, the museum is as good a place as any to put those objects” (2020).

The discomfort by the presence of these objects in the museum can be felt from the interviewees' opinions. However, when it comes to practicality, unfortunately, this attitude cannot find its counterpart. It seems that the priorities and management of the museum's resource distribution plays an

essential role in the fate of these objects. In order to get research precedence, these objects should get a repatriation request; in other words, the 'squeaky wheel gets the grease'.

“If we do not know how we have received them (objects), if we do not know how they have come into the museum, we have no arguments to retain them. So, therefore, they become slightly less contentious because we do not have an argument to retain them in that broader discussion” (Caroline, 2020).

Caroline's explanation indicates that the museum's attitude towards these artefacts is solely to host them as others agreed. However, even if the current director is completely open-minded about returning these objects, the future ones might not be. According to the interviewees, a detailed analysis should be done to determine the sources of these objects; however, this retrospective research requires extra workforce, budget, and time (Caroline; Andrew, 2020). Moreover, considering that the repatriation requests are handled on a case-by-case basis and researching these objects in this sense is not possible since there is no request, the GNM attitude appears to be endeavouring to keep the objects in their inventory as long as possible. “There will be a statement in the policy that acknowledges that a lot of these objects, we do not know how they have come into the museum” (Caroline, 2020); however, unless these objects are researched thoroughly as soon as possible, the repatriation process of 'unknown' objects always will appear as a problem and give the GNM a bad image.

Although there are situations that might prevent repatriation, the GNM has successfully repatriated a few objects. The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (Te Papa) initiated a project in July 2003, to repatriate objects of Kōiwi Tangata and Toi Moko heritage, which are the skeletal remains of Māori and Moriori tribes as well as mummified Māori tattooed heads (Herewini, 2008). This project successfully collected 69 Kōiwi Tangata, 39 Toi Moko, and 1 Toi Moko Face objects from 26 different institutions around the world. The GNM was one of the institutions that received a request for three Toi Moko objects. After a thorough analysis was completed, only two Toi Moko objects could be repatriated. Though the details of the request could not be obtained at this time, Andrew mentioned the third object, a tattooed Māori head, was not sent because “it looked like a European head with Māori tattoos” (2020). As can be understood from this example, thoroughly analysed repatriation requests also allow the museums to better understand the artefacts they host. Museums can understand the basic knowledge of most objects; however, minor details can sometimes be missed and therefore, the true value of the object may go unnoticed. Repatriation requests force museums to examine the objects more closely and sometimes fill a gap in the museum’s knowledge base and understanding of artefacts that they host. Even though repatriation seems to reduce the number of objects in a museum, and for some 'decontextualises' them, it also helps to fulfil the museum’s core value of providing knowledge.

4.3. Black Lives Matter Effects on Decolonisation

After Trayvon Martin was shot unarmed in Florida in 2012 (Carney, 2016), three activists, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi (Rickford, 2015), launched a hashtag on Twitter, in 2013. The hashtag reached masses in a short time and it became a movement. Activists then established a website and declared their aims for the movement Black Lives Matter (BLM). BLM is a movement that is seeking contemporary human rights and according to their website, it “is working for a world where Black lives are no longer systematically and intentionally targeted for demise” (Black Lives Matter, 2016). The ideas that they defend started to gain significance in every nation, following the murders of Michael Brown in 2014 (Carney, 2016), and George Floyd in 2020 (Dave et al., 2020).

Especially after the protests sparked by Floyd's homicide, such as the destruction of the Bristol slave trader Edward Colston's statue (Olusoga, 2020) and its subsequent replacement with a statue of activist Jen Reid (Bland, 2020), the UK increasingly questioned their colonial past. In this sense, many institutions started to declare their position against racism and injustice (Adams, 2020). As institutions that had been directly affected by colonial history, these protests forced museums to look for ways to emphasise the idea of decolonisation more effectively. As a result, under the guidance of TWAM, the GNM expressed that they “denounce racism in all its form” (Tyne & Wear, 2020). However, it is obvious that the effect of taking an action will be greater than just a showpiece statement. Whence, the GNM added a decolonisation section on their website separate from their repatriation

section. According to website, the World Culture Gallery will be renewed and altered to fit these views before being displayed again (2020). The assistant keeper, in collaboration with Newcastle University, started to review all of the text in order to analyse and change any of them (Great North Museum, 2020b). The University's museum studies Master's course has an interactive curatorial module and the 2019-2020 students gained field experience through the GNM's World Culture Gallery. Thus, the re-creation of the gallery not only provides real experience about working in the culture sector, students also contribute different, fresh, and international perspectives to the museum to better engage with trends and visitors. In this sense, the data that was gathered is useful in forming a new interpretation.

Additionally, the GNM devised a thorough decolonisation action plan (Appendix V) which includes multidisciplinary perspectives to be completed by December 2023. This plan consists of three different stages which are the short-term, mid-term, and long-term actions comprised of relatively smaller changes and funding research, community engagement programs and internal reviews, and adaptation of all permanent displays, respectively. For example, as a short-term action, they will "connect with Newcastle University decolonisation projects and relevant researchers" (Great North Museum, 2020b). Though this has been happening for a long time, the GNM is now focused on bettering engagement and learning about decolonisation. In this sense, Andrew stated that they have participated in symposiums and meetings related to colonisation and decolonisation at the university and collected useful data (2020), but it is obvious that this situation was

interrupted by the Covid-19 outbreak. Other short-term actions that have begun implementation are putting “additional temporary interpretation in galleries” and “programme of temporary displays” (Great North Museum, 2020b). In this context, the most recent exhibition Ancient Iraq: New Discoveries, which was made by collaborating with the British Museum, can be considered quite successful. However, Caroline mentioned that some of the objects offered were hugely contentious, which was unacceptable for the GNM (2020). To remedy the situation, the GNM applied their own ethical and moral judgements, and only accepted objects which were not contentious to build their own exhibition. Furthermore, in order to accomplish decolonised and fair exhibition, they started to collaborate with source communities.

“We have started to do a little bit of work with community groups, (and) had a refugee community group. We were working with who were looking around the exhibition and we put all the exhibition text in Arabic to support that” (Andrew, 2020).

The reciprocal conversation can satisfy both the source community and museum, and it helps to create an effective and more authentic representation. It is the key to decolonisation.

As the deficiency of the community specialist is known, the GNM is planning to recompense this situation through appointing an anticipated community engagement officer, as a mid-term action. However, at this time there is no suitable candidate and the deadline to find one is set for December 2021. Full decolonisation, a long-term action, of both the Living Planet and

Egypt galleries is scheduled for completion in June 2022 and the World Cultures Gallery is scheduled for 2023.

“The big question is understanding that as a small organisation, how you choose to prioritise what you spend your resource on. After the black lives matters movement, (we) did a lot of reflection on our position as a museum and did a lot of reflection on decolonisation. The conclusion (we) came to, ... (is yes) we haven't moved this work on quickly enough. We have not got time, money, or specialisms on staff, but there is work we can do. Why has that work never been brought to the fore? The conclusion (we) reached was that as a workforce, we are a hundred per cent white. Our visitors are predominantly from the Northeast, very few international and again, predominantly white” (Caroline, 2020).

As mentioned in repatriation, the colleague who went to Canada not only played a big role in changing attitudes about repatriation, but also the GNM's decolonisation action plan and these changes began six months ago (Caroline; Andrew, 2020). In addition, the examples in short-term actions prove that the GNM's attitudes about decolonisation did not start with the BLM movement. This pioneering action plan also indicates the GNM's determination and commitment. However, even if it was planned six months ago, making these changes after the BLM movement seems to be a tokenistic response. In this regard, it can be said that the BLM movement re-awakened the decolonisation process from its Covid-19 sarcophagi and provided momentum. Either way, now the GNM needs to focus their decolonisation

process more firmly and should follow their action plan without giving any compromise.

4.4. Brexit

The UK decided to leave the European Union (EU) as a result of the 51.9% majority 'yes' of the referendum held on 23rd June, 2016 (BBC, 2016). With this decision, the UK's official separation process had started, and on 31st January, 2020, the UK officially left the Union, initiating the 11 month transition period to negotiate the nature of the relationship and how trade will be conducted between the UK and EU (Edgington, 2020; Rawlinson et al., 2020). Undoubtedly, an incident with such historical importance affects not only the UK and the EU but the whole globe, as new trade deals and relationships will be formed between the UK and the rest of the world. This section will investigate the increasing nationalistic ideas arising with Brexit, economic impacts of Brexit, and how these discussions affect the GNM.

According to Mirzoeff, Brexit is a sign of new conjuncture 'authoritarian nationalism', and he adds, "what Stuart Hall called 'The Great Moving Right Show' in 1979 has become the 'It's Great To Be White Show' in 2016" (2017, p. 6). Fintan O'Toole agrees on this perspective and says, "when you strip away the rhetoric, Brexit is an English nationalist movement" (2016). This situation actually was manifested in the attitudes of politicians before and during the Brexit process. Former Prime Ministers David Cameron and his successor Theresa May invoke notions of white supremacy and intense nationalism. These impressions come from Cameron's 'swarm' reference for immigrants and May's aim 'to create in Britain really hostile environment for

illegal migration' (Elgot, 2018). For some, these ideas are reflected in and form the true face of Brexit which "is not only an expression of nostalgia for empire, it is also the fruit of empire" (El-Enany, 2020) and "the legitimisation of racism and white supremacy" (Dunin-Wasowicz, 2017). Further research also supports this perception in the public perspective stating that, 43% of the participants consider the British empire was a good thing, while 44% believe that there is nothing to be ashamed of from the British Colonial era, and citizens should be proud (Stone, 2016; Dahlgreen, 2016). In combination with the Brexit result of, 51.9%, it can be said that people's hearts still aspire to be the old 'bright' British Empire and this situation might ignite attitudinal changes against decolonisation.

As mentioned in the literature review, the collaboration between nationalism and colonialism is apparent. Undoubtedly, the dominant nationalist movement in society will have an impact on museums since "the museum[s] ... profoundly shaped the way in which the colonial state imagined its dominion" (Anderson, 2006, pp.163- 164). Even now those changes can be observed from Dan's impressions (2020):

"I think that in the immediate term, my experience of the Brexit campaign has been, on an entirely personal level, quite negative. I feel like many of the debates about immigration became racially charged. My partner, who is Persian, also experienced racist abuse from people in the street during this period".

Race and ethnicity-based mentalities are the biggest obstacles in the decolonisation process, even if the GNM employees do not support those mentalities.

“I worry that societal attitudes might change in a way that makes museums, and the issue of decolonisation, even more relevant as a counter to populist sentiment that reinforces a sense of national identity that is grounded in nativist notions of race and ethnicity, and seeks to present our imperial history in a way that ignores the issues that surround the treatment of indigenous people” (Dan, 2020).

On the other hand, the economic impact is another side effect of Brexit. Total dissolution means that the trading system, all agreements and collaborations between the UK and EU will be terminated, which will severely damage the UK economy. The EU had funded many academic, scientific and social research projects. For example, Creative Europe is the most prominent one for culture and heritage, which gave the UK £40m from this funding between 2014 and 2020 (Adams, 2016). Another source of funding is the European Regional Development Fund (ERFD), which aims to reduce the cultural development disproportion between territories, that was awarded in the same years, and the UK received approximately €11bn (Adams, 2016). For instance, the National Museum of Liverpool is one of the museums that has benefited from this funding; according to Sharon Granville, the executive director, ERFD gave £10m for the development of the museum, and it “unlocked the rest of the £70m funding package” (Adams, 2016) but now they

have lost the chance to use the rest of this money because of Brexit. Even though the GNM did not have an opportunity use these funds, this separation was an absolute indication that they could no longer be utilised in the future. Moreover, "increased costs, transport delays, export licensed requirement, visas for couriers and curators" (Pes, 2019) indicate that financial problems might occur in the museum sector across the UK. As the interviewees indicated, financial deficiency is the most prominent obstacle in front of decolonisation. Another crucial factor is whether the GNM attitude will change or not in terms of decolonisation, due to the effects of Brexit. According to Caroline, "Brexit has had no direct effects on our thinking and actions around decolonisation" (2020). However, she seems worried about a financial deficiency.

"The impact of Brexit will be an indirect financial one. As we receive the bulk of our funding from Newcastle University, our budgets will be influenced by their budget - so any impact Brexit has on student numbers will trickle back to us in terms of our budget settlement within wider university budget planning" (Caroline, 2020).

On the one hand, she indicates Brexit will not change anything, but on the other hand, demonstrates that the wider financial impacts of Brexit might shape the GNM's decolonisation process. A contradictory point of view can reduce the actions of the museum related to decolonisation over time.

Although Brexit has been the subject of controversy for the past few years, the outcome cannot be fully predicted, at the moment, as it is still

relatively new, and the terms are still being negotiated. All these considered, the impacts of Brexit on the culture and art sectors and especially on the GNM, as Andrew indicates are “hard to quantify; these tend to only become apparent after some time” (2020). However, the sparse or severed relations with Europe might be a “risk that UK museums will become marginalised and miss out on a lot of important European initiatives” (Andrew, 2020). For example, similar to the GNM, Dutch museums had started to act after BLM and in order to decolonise their context through a network they had created called, ‘Musea Bekennen Kleur’ (McGriven, 2020). This network aims to organise international symposiums and educational programmes to educate the broader community about decolonisation and its impacts. As Andrew stated, Brexit may limit the UK’s ability to take part in these types of initiatives (2020).

As a municipal museum, one of the purposes of the GNM is to increase the prosperity of the region, shape the way communities see themselves, the area in which they live, and the ‘legitimacy of their ancestry’ (Lewis, 1992; Anderson, 2006, p. 164). Although Caroline stated that nothing has changed about their perspective on decolonisation (2020), the local authority has partial control over the GNM’s management. The referendum results indicate that 49% of Newcastle had supported separation (Marsh, 2019). Also, considering the GVA impact of Brexit on the North East region, an economic downsizing is expected in the 15-year period (North East Brexit Group, 2018). In the future, if the supporter percentage increases or if local authorities believe in the nationalist ideas or if municipal decisions shift from the culture

sector to economy, the decolonisation process of the GNM would either be halted or prolonged. This is because the museum relies mostly on funding from the municipality and the GNM will have to give into the local authorities will, even if they do not agree. This is the negative side-effect of not being autonomous, and why museum management autonomy is of great importance.



5. CHAPTER: CONCLUSION

Though the colonisation era happened a long time ago, the effects are still seen on both colonising and colonised states, and museums are amongst the severely affected institutions. As the GNM is a “University museum managed by a local authority” (Great North Museum, no date b), and its motto is to increase the welfare of the people in its region, making decolonisation of this museum unique, it is evident that the GNM had plans about decolonisation; however, these plans have not been initiated for a long time, due to:

- Lack of funding
- Lack of workforce
- Lack of expertise

Since the decolonisation process is long, laborious, and requires expertise, the inadequacy of these three weaknesses has negatively affected the creation of a successful decolonisation process in the GNM. However, recent events have enabled the museum to take more decisive steps. First of all, one of the recent researches, conducted by a GNM employee and supported by Headley funding, has effectuated a new understanding of repatriation. As a result, the museum decided to refurbish its current superficial repatriation policy. This is an important action because the museum has hundreds of ethnographic materials of ‘unknown’ origins. Although one of the purposes of the museum is being home to materials, detailed research and eradication of obscurity are necessary. According to

interviews, the museum is planning to take action related to these objects and put a statement in their new policy.

Secondly, the BLM heralded a change in all UK museums and further fuelled the decolonisation process. Thus, decolonisation, which has been largely ignored, has started to be discussed actively, and many institutions have issued statements of support for decolonisation. As an action, the GNM decided to enforce a new policy about decolonisation and created an action plan. Even if this seems like a tokenistic response, it is still monumental. It should not be forgotten that this kind of action is rare in UK museums. If this is used in combination with the first step, the decolonisation process will be smoother.

Thirdly, Brexit created a nationalistic environment where the decolonisation process cannot function. Although it has adverse effects, according to interviewees, Brexit has made the museum more robust and aware of how to represent other societies. Nevertheless, the point to note here is whether the municipality or the University will help or hinder the decision-making process of the museum. A reduction or budget cut can interrupt the process and the GNM may not receive a return for their efforts. In addition, any possible conflict in the museum's management between these governing bodies will affect the process.

Ultimately, the GNM is well-aware of their shortcomings and actively tries to compensate for them. Instead of hiding behind the idea of the universal museum, as many great museums do, the GNM deals with the subject in a more professional and considerate way. In this sense, the efforts

towards reducing possible deficiencies and increasing budget will ensure the successful completion of the planned full decolonisation process. In addition, communicating with source/indigenous societies and keeping in mind their sensitivities also makes the decolonisation process impeccable. As a final word, it can be said that the GNM is a good example to other museums in the UK regarding decolonisation.

“It seems impossible until it is done.”

~ Nelson Mandela

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APPENDIX

I. Interview Questions

1. *Around the world, decolonisation is shown an increasing trend. What is the position of the GNM around this discussion?*
2. *I've seen the policies about decolonisation and repatriation, and they seem quite new. Do you think that you have been late to prepare these policies? If it's possible, would you share the previous policies with me?*
3. *As the GNM, have you ever received repatriation request? If so, how was the request handled? Is it possible to share?*
4. *When we look at the acquisition methods of objects in the GNM, donations from museums and private collections constitute a great majority. Other than that, 641 items of which are 'unknown' are displayed in your list. Although the general majority belongs to Africa, it contains objects from Asia and America. What do you think of having these objects in the museum? What are the base criteria for the repatriation of these objects and how are the repatriation requests handled? What factors justify the possession of these objects in the museum?*
5. *The British Museum has been handling decolonisation or repatriation requests for a long time and has been criticized by many. What are the effects of the collaboration with them? Are the challenges that you face as a small-scale museum different to those facing the BM?*
6. *Thanks to the universities it has, Newcastle's international population is high. It is therefore important for the museum to be supported by Newcastle University itself. Are there any visitors that are disturbed by the collections that museum host? If yes, how do you deal with this situation?*

7. *Are there any issues about race and colonisation with BAME community representatives in Newcastle? Can you tell me more about this? What have been the main challenges around doing this work?*
8. *Do you think decolonisation has an effect on the audience?*

9. *How do you imagine the future of the GNM?*



II. Ethics

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

School of Arts and Cultures

Checklist for Undergraduate/Taught Postgraduate Research Projects

(to be completed by the student when initial dissertation/project proposal form indicates potential ethical issues)

Name of Student	Muhammed Topdas
Student Number	190487845
Degree Programme	Art Museum and Gallery Studies
Project Supervisor:	Katie Markham

Project Title: How have policies about repatriation changed over time within the Great North Museum?

Project Description (100 words max)

Museums are considered as a home of objects or a vast encyclopaedia (Conn, 2010). However, the museums, which filled their storages as a result of the colonization movements of the powerful states of the period, were faced with the demands of the repatriation of the objects by the states or nations that gained their independence over time. While some museums compensated these demands positively, some preferred to ignore them. In this research, I will try to analyse the situation in the GNM on this topic and their policies about it.

		YES	NO
1.	Does the project involve human participants?	✓	
2.	Is there any risk of damage to the University's reputation because of the sensitivity of the chosen project?		✓
3.	Does the project involve more than minimal risks to the researcher? http://www.ncl.ac.uk/res/research/ethics_governance/ethics/toolkit/risk/index.htm		✓

If the answer to all THREE of the questions above is NO, then there is no need to proceed any further. The supervisor needs to consider whether the answers are reasonable given the chosen topic.

If the answer to any of the questions above is yes, please answer the remaining questions:

		YES	NO
4.	Is the research going to be conducted in a clinical setting?		✓
5.	Will the study involve:		✓
	Patients or users of the NHS;		✓
	Users in a social care setting (or social care research projects funded by the Department of Health);		✓
	Children;		✓
	Participants who lack the capacity to consent;		✓
	Participants who are in unequal relationships (e.g. participants who are subordinate to the researcher(s) in a context outside the research)?		✓
6.	Does the project require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the subjects (e.g. students at school; members of a self-help group; residents of a nursing home; prisoners)?		✓
7.	Will participants in the study be taking part in a study without their knowledge and consent?		✓
8.	Will the study involve deliberately misleading participants in any way?		✓
9.	Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use; pornography)?		✓
10.	Will participants be offered financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time)?		✓
11.	Will the study involve prolonged and repetitive testing of subjects (e.g. more than 4 hours commitment or attendance on more than two occasions)?		✓
12.	Will the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life, or induce pain or more than mild discomfort?		✓
13.	Are any substances (e.g. food, vitamins) likely to be administered to the participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind, or involve obtaining blood or tissue samples?		✓
14.	Will the study involve the collection or analysis of sensitive data which will be identifiable within the project outputs and could potentially cause harm?		✓
15.	Will the study cause damage to the environment, the landscape or cultural heritage, or involve any other action which might (otherwise) be regarded as dangerous or illegal?		✓

If your answer to any of the questions 4-15 above is YES, then you need to discuss the proposal with your tutor/supervisor, who needs to write a comment in the box below and determine whether any safeguards are needed and whether the proposal needs to be referred to the School's Ethics Co-ordinator.

The nature of the problems raised:

Decolonisation is a sensitive issue for both the museums and so-called source communities. In this context, the biggest problem that the research may encounter is the possibility that the GNM reluctance about to talk about some cases. In order to tackle this situation, the research can

anonymise certain cases. Of course, if the GNM will share, we do not need to apply such an approach.

Should the proposal (*tick as appropriate*)

a)	Go ahead?	
b)	Go ahead subject to certain safeguards specified below?	
c)	Be referred to the School's Ethics Co-ordinator?	

Safeguards required:

Signed (tutor/supervisor):

Date:

This form should now be returned by email to Rebecca Christodoulides
(Rebecca.christodoulides@ncl.ac.uk)

III. Andrew's Consent Form

Consent Form for interview participants.

Title of Study: **Effects of the decolonisation on small-scale museums: A case study of the Great North Museum**

Thank you for your interest in taking part in this research. Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research study. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form.

Please initial box to confirm consent		
1.	I confirm that I have read the information sheet dated [03/07/2020] (version 1) for the above study, I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and I have had any questions answered satisfactorily.	✓
2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, <i>[without my medical care or legal rights being affected]</i> . I understand that if I decide to withdraw, any data that I have provided up to the point of transcription will be included in the final project.	✓
3.	I consent to the processing of my personal information, including name, contact details and role within my organization for the purposes of this research study, as described in the information sheet dated [03/07/2020] (version 1)	✓
4.	I consent to my <i>[unonymised/anonymised/pseudonymised]</i> research data being stored and used by others for future research.	✓
5.	I understand that my research data may be published as a report or in academic publications	✓
6.	(If appropriate) I consent to the retention of my personal information [name, email address, telephone number] for 6 weeks, for the purpose of being re-contacted.	✓
7.	I understand that my research data may be looked at by individuals from	

	Newcastle University, where it is relevant to my taking part in this research.	✓
8.	I consent to being audio recorded and understand that the recordings will initially be stored on Newcastle University's file store service and destroyed immediately after transcription.	✓
9.	I agree to take part in this research project.	✓
<i>Participant</i>		
	Andrew Parkin	06/07/2020
	__A.R.Parkin__	
	<i>Name of participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>
		<i>Date</i>
<i>Researcher</i>		
	Muhammed Topdas	21/08/2020
	MT	
	<i>Name of researcher</i>	<i>Signature</i>
		<i>Date</i>

IV. Caroline's Consent Form



Consent Form for interview participants.

Title of Study: **Effects of the decolonisation on small-scale museums: A case study of the Great North Museum**

Thank you for your interest in taking part in this research. Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research study. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form.

Please initial box to confirm consent																				
1.	I confirm that I have read the information sheet dated [03/07/2020] (version 1) for the above study, I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and I have had any questions answered satisfactorily.	Y																		
2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, <i>[without my medical care or legal rights being affected]</i> . I understand that if I decide to withdraw, any data that I have provided up to the point of transcription will be included in the final project.	Y																		
3.	I consent to the processing of my personal information, including name, contact details and role within my organization for the purposes of this research study, as described in the information sheet dated [03/07/2020] (version 1)	Y																		
4.	I consent to my <i>anonymised</i> research data being stored and used by others for future research.	Y																		
5.	I understand that my research data may be published as a report or in academic publications	Y																		
6.	(If appropriate) I consent to the retention of my personal information [name, email address, telephone number] for 6 weeks, for the purpose of being re-contacted.	Y																		
7.	I understand that my research data may be looked at by individuals from Newcastle University, where it is relevant to my taking part in this research.	Y																		
8.	I consent to being audio recorded and understand that the recordings will initially be stored on Newcastle University's file store service and destroyed immediately after transcription.	Y																		
9.	I agree to take part in this research project.	Y																		
<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td colspan="3"><i>Participant</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Caroline McDonald</td> <td><i>CMcDonald</i></td> <td>8/7/2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Name of participant</i></td> <td><i>Signature</i></td> <td><i>Date</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><i>Researcher</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Muhammed Topdas</td> <td>MT</td> <td><u>17/08/2020</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Name of researcher</i></td> <td><i>Signature</i></td> <td><i>Date</i></td> </tr> </table>			<i>Participant</i>			Caroline McDonald	<i>CMcDonald</i>	8/7/2020	<i>Name of participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Researcher</i>			Muhammed Topdas	MT	<u>17/08/2020</u>	<i>Name of researcher</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
<i>Participant</i>																				
Caroline McDonald	<i>CMcDonald</i>	8/7/2020																		
<i>Name of participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>																		
<i>Researcher</i>																				
Muhammed Topdas	MT	<u>17/08/2020</u>																		
<i>Name of researcher</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>																		

V. Dan's Consent Form

Consent Form for interview participants.

Title of Study: **Effects of the decolonisation on small-scale museums: A case study of the Great North Museum**

Thank you for your interest in taking part in this research. Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research study. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form.

Please initial box to confirm consent		
1.	I confirm that I have read the information sheet dated [03/07/2020] (version 1) for the above study, I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and I have had any questions answered satisfactorily.	DG
2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, <i>[without my medical care or legal rights being affected]</i> . I understand that if I decide to withdraw, any data that I have provided up to the point of transcription will be included in the final project.	DG
3.	I consent to the processing of my personal information, including name, contact details and role within my organization for the purposes of this research study, as described in the information sheet dated [03/07/2020] (version 1)	DG
4.	I consent to my <i>[unonymised/anonymised/pseudonymised]</i> research data being stored and used by others for future research.	DG
5.	I understand that my research data may be published as a report or in academic publications	DG
6.	(If appropriate) I consent to the retention of my personal information [name, email address, telephone number] for 6 weeks, for the purpose of being re-contacted.	DG
7.	I understand that my research data may be looked at by individuals from	

	Newcastle University, where it is relevant to my taking part in this research.	DG
8.	I consent to being audio recorded and understand that the recordings will initially be stored on Newcastle University's file store service and destroyed immediately after transcription.	DG
9.	I agree to take part in this research project.	DG
<i>Participant</i>		
	___Dan Gordon___	_Dan Gordon_
	<i>Name of participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>
		5/8/2020
		<i>Date</i>
<i>Researcher</i>		
	Muhammed Topdas	MT
	<i>Name of researcher</i>	<i>Signature</i>
		17/08/2020
		<i>Date</i>

VI. The Great North Museum Decolonisation Action Plan

What	When	Who	Funding secured?	Achieved?
Short term actions				
Additional temporary interpretation in galleries	By 31 December 2020	Curatorial team	Core budget	
Connect with Newcastle University decolonisation project and relevant researchers	By 31 December 2020	Learning, Engagement & Research Manager	NA	
Connect with Learned societies to review society histories	By December 2020	Leadership	NA	
Programme of temporary displays agreed and carried out	Agreed by 31 December 2020. Delivered through to December 2021	Learning team, curatorial team, Customer Service team, Library, Exhibitions & Events officer, Communications Officer	Core budget	
Targeted social media to highlight this work	By December 2020	Communications officer	NA	
Some adaption to engagement programme and connections to existing community programmes across Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums	By 31 December 2020	Learning team, curatorial team, Customer Service team, Library, Exhibitions & Events officer, Communications Officer	NA	
Initial support and training for Customer Service Staff	By 31 December 2020	Customer Facilities Manager, curatorial team, Learning team	NA	
Networking and knowledge exchange with other organisations	By June 2021	All staff	Not for physical visits	

Some adaption to learning programme	For Spring term 2021	Learning team, curatorial team	NA	
Secure funding and appoint external expert for full organisational review and detailed action plan	By June 2021	Leadership	No	
Secure funding for additional specialist curatorial support	By June 2021	Leadership	No	
Secure funding for documentation post to review and improve collections information	By June 2021	Leadership	No	
Mid-term actions				
Full organisational review completed	By December 2021	Consultant lead	No (see above)	
Action plan agreed, published and implemented	By December 2021	All staff	NA	
Curatorial and documentation recruitment	TBD	Leadership	No	
Anticipated community engagement officer (if in line with review)	TBD	Leadership	No	
Anticipated community engagement programme implemented	TBD	TBD	No	
Adaption to Learning programme	TBD	Learning team, curatorial team	NA	
Adaption to engagement programme	TBD	Learning team, curatorial team, Customer Service team, Library, Exhibitions & Events officer, Communications Officer	NA	
Adaption to exhibitions programme	TBD	Learning team, curatorial team, Customer Service	NA	

		team, Library, Exhibitions & Events officer, Communications Officer		
Training for Customer Service staff	TBD	Customer Facilities Manager	NA	
Long term actions				
Significant adaption of permanent interpretation in Living Planet Gallery	By June 2022	Curatorial team, Exhibitions & Events Officer	No	
Significant adaption of permanent interpretation in Egypt Gallery	By June 2022	Curatorial team, Exhibitions & Events Officer	No	
Full redisplay of World Cultures Gallery	By December 2023	All staff	No	