



Terminological Conflation in Archaeological Site Institutions: Delineating Boundaries through Interviews with Heritage Experts in Europe, China, and Israel

Chen Zhang

To cite this article: Chen Zhang (2024) Terminological Conflation in Archaeological Site Institutions: Delineating Boundaries through Interviews with Heritage Experts in Europe, China, and Israel, Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites, 26:1, 81-102, DOI: [10.1080/13505033.2024.2414526](https://doi.org/10.1080/13505033.2024.2414526)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13505033.2024.2414526>



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



Published online: 13 Nov 2024.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 500



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)




Citing articles: 1 View citing articles [↗](#)



OPEN ACCESS



Terminological Conflation in Archaeological Site Institutions: Delineating Boundaries through Interviews with Heritage Experts in Europe, China, and Israel

Chen Zhang 

School of Architecture, The University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK

ABSTRACT

As a fundamental component of cultural heritage, archaeological sites are protected and interpreted by diverse related institutions. However, the conceptual boundaries of these institutions are increasingly becoming blurred, resulting in theoretical ambiguities and a conflation of terminologies. This trend presents a risk of misinterpretation or misuse of terms, as evidenced in certain academic papers and institutional namings. A review of prevalent concepts across diverse geographical contexts of these institutions, coupled with the proposal of clearer theoretical definitions, may offer novel and valuable insights into their theoretical boundaries and enhance academic and public comprehension of the exact roles and functions of heritage institutions. This study – integrating an interdisciplinary literature review and field case studies with 16 semi-structured in-depth interviews with heritage experts in Europe, China, and Israel – aims to address current misconceptions and overlaps in the definitions of these institutions, analyse their scope variance across cultural regions, and advocate for diverse and open definitions.

KEYWORDS

Archaeological sites; institutions; terminological conflation; definitions; delimitations

Archaeological heritage encompasses tangible remnants of human existence, including sites of diverse human activities, abandoned structures, underground and underwater remains, and associated portable cultural artefacts (ICOMOS 1990; Egloff 2019, 2). Its values, such as aesthetic value, economic value, and social value (ICOMOS 1979; Caple 2009, 25; Pye 2010, 57), ought to be studied and interpreted by researchers for the benefit of both present and future generations (ICAHM 1996). As an essential component of archaeological heritage, archaeological sites also contain these significant values and are worth conserving and interpreting. Therefore, this century has witnessed a proliferation of varied institutions associated with archaeological sites, such as Archaeological Site Museums, Archaeological Open-Air Museums, and Archaeological Interpretation Centres. Each entity uniquely contributes to the preservation and interpretation of these sites, operating at distinct levels. However, the boundaries between these institutions have become increasingly blurred due to the evolving concepts of archaeology, conservation, and architecture, often leading to confusion over names in theory and practice (Papaioannou 2022, 176; Paardekooper 2020; Xu 2018).

CONTACT Chen Zhang  czhang120@sheffield.ac.uk; zhangchen2020uk@163.com

© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

This phenomenon underscores the necessity for a clearer theoretical definition and delineation of these institutions. Furthermore, precisely defining terminology is crucial for the effective conservation, management, education, and the cultivation of cultural understanding and global archaeology within heritage contexts. Such discussions have the potential to prevent jurisdictional conflicts and the mismanagement of responsibilities and resources within archaeological institutions. The use of clear and accurate terminology could facilitate professional communication, engage the public, contribute to the promotion of heritage sites, improve comprehension of heritage conservation efforts, and increase support from the public and communities. The methods comprise an interdisciplinary literature review on the definition and scopes of these institutions, field case studies, and 16 semi-structured interviews with scholars based in Europe, China, and Israel who are engaged in practice or theoretical research in archaeology, museology, and architecture. The interviews ranged between one to five hours in duration. The synthesis of these methods enables a more rigorous and timely exploration of the concept underlying these institutions. Inevitably, the outcomes of this delineation might be somewhat controversial and certain definitions could be revised or refuted by future research. This diversity is encouraging, as a plurality of definitions benefits readers in freely selecting and acquiring knowledge.

Clarification on the Identity of Institutions Associated with Archaeological Sites

Archaeological Site

Before exploring the various institutions associated with archaeological sites, it is essential to initially establish a precise definition of a 'site'. Subsequently, the definition of an 'archaeological site' can be refined, serving as the cornerstone of this study.

Existing studies offer various definitions of 'sites'. For example, 'Site is works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological points of view' (Room 1972) and 'Sites are non-mobile cultural carriers left behind by humans and nature' (Li 2014, 72). These definitions explicitly encompass natural and human-generated categories, with the potential addition of joint sites, as seen in UNESCO's classification system of heritage. Archaeological sites unequivocally fall within the category of human-generated sites. Then, there are also many definitions of archaeological sites in existing research, for example, 'An archaeological site is any locality where the material remains of ancient human activity are found' (The Canadian Encyclopedia 2007); 'An archaeological site is the remains of human activity such as buildings of socio-economic and cultural value left by previous generations (Xuecai 2001, 45)'; and 'An archaeological site is a place where human activity occurred, resulting in remains or traces which are or may be recorded by archaeological methods' (Paardekooper, personal interview with Chen Zhang, February 23, 2023, 289). Drawing upon existing definitions, as well as findings of field research and interviews, archaeological sites are defined in this research as the cumulative and dynamic record of human activities across specific geographical, climatic, and natural settings over time and space, comprising artefacts, architectural elements, organic materials, and environmental remnants.

Archaeological Site Museum

The definition of archaeological site museums is both extensive and varied. Distinguishing them from open-air museums, living history museums, or visitor centres is a challenge (Papaioannou 2022, 176). Therefore, similar to the process of defining an archaeological site, the definition of a site museum requires clarification prior to articulating the concept of an archaeological site museum. There are some typical definitions of site museums in existing studies. For example, Moolman (1996, 394) states, 'A site museum must be, at least, both a significant site and a genuine museum to preserve and interpret cultural, historical, and natural elements in situ', or Papaioannou (2022, 176) offers a more recent definition: 'A site museum is a museum firmly connected with (and usually placed within or in the vicinity of) an archaeological or historical site, an area of natural importance, a monument and/or an area of archaeological/historical discoveries and interest'. These definitions collectively highlight that the most crucial characteristic of a site museum is its close association with a site, particularly in terms of geographical location, conservation, and interpretation.

Moreover, the categorisation of site museums varies widely across different cultures and geographical contexts. Moolman (1996) proposes dividing site museums into three categories: visual, non-visual, and conceptual. Visual site museums have visible remains, whereas non-visual site museums contain physical elements that are not visible. Consequently, most archaeological site museums fall into the visual category, possessing visible remains, while a minority, like those encompassing underwater archaeological sites, belong to the non-visual category due to their lack of visibility. Wenli, Yongqi, and Shuping (1999, 42) categorise site museums into four types: historical, natural, scientific, and other, with archaeological site museums fitting into the historical category. Furthermore, a notable classification by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) delineates site museums into four types: *ecological site museums*, situated in unaltered natural environments, same as natural site museums; *ethnological site museums*, representing a nation's residence and displaying its customs and lifestyles; *historical event site museums*, associated with significant historical events, often located at war fortresses, public buildings, private residences, etc.; and *archaeological site museums*, constructed on or near archaeological sites (see also Shafernich 1993; Stancheva and Fülep 1982). This classification system explicitly identifies the attribution of archaeological site museums.

In terms of archaeological site museums, many definitions exist, among which several are more widely recognised. Küseh (1989, 183), for example, claims that, 'An archaeological site museum preserves and interprets the remains of archaeological phenomena on a site where they have been preserved in situ; this museum provides research, documentation, conservation, and interpretive functions'. Paardekooper (2013, 289) offers a perspective stating, 'An archaeological site museum is a museum, dedicated to presenting a specific archaeological site or its broader story; This museum houses the archaeological site it refers to within its territory and is therefore fixed in location'.

Archaeological site museums can be categorised into various types, such as prehistoric, anthropogenic, ancient burial, religious, city, and technological site types (Longbin 2009, 128–130). Archaeological site museums may have evolved from archaeological shelters initially established to protect archaeological sites and artefacts during excavation. Such museums have several characteristics in comparison to other historical museums or related institutions. One key characteristic is that the collections and exhibits of these

museums contain two primary categories: firstly, regular movable items such as production tools, household utensils, and human and animal bone specimens; secondly, special immovable elements like the site itself, encompassing both preserved and unexcavated areas (Shan 2011, 8; Xiayong 2009, 30) (see [Figures 1 and 2](#)). A second characteristic is the relatively fixed geographic location of these museums, typically situated on or near the site (R. Symmons, personal interview with Chen Zhang, March 3, 2023). Thirdly, from a visitor's perspective, archaeological site museums offer a unique sense of 'presence' on the site, attributed to their authentic presentation of the archaeological site post-excavation, a feature absent in reconstruction-type museums and institutions (Yang 2023, personal interview; D. Xu, personal interview with Chen Zhang, November 27, 2023). In conclusion, the important feature of archaeological site museums is that their essential functions, including conservation, display, and research, centre on the archaeological site itself and its unearthed objects.

Recently, several museums have been constructed on or adjacent to archaeological sites. Instead of focusing exclusively on the preservation and interpretation of archaeological sites, these museums have expanded their scope to include the relationship between the site and the surrounding community and even the city. A typical example is the Novium Museum in the UK, situated on a Roman site, which dedicates its first floor to interpreting the site and its associated artefacts. However, as one ascends the floors, the interpretive perspective broadens to encompass the community and the city. Scholars hold divergent views on whether this type of museum qualifies as an archaeological site museum. Shen (personal interview with Chen Zhang, May 26, 2023) and Yang (2023, personal interview), for example, argue that the essence of an archaeological site museum lies in reflecting the site's history and significance, but the aforementioned museum extends well beyond the scope of a typical archaeological site museum. Conversely, scholars like L. Guo (personal interview with Chen Zhang, July 13, 2023), Gan (personal interview, with Chen Zhang, July 14 2023), and Yang (personal interview with Chen Zhang, July 12, 2023) suggest that such museums may represent the future of archaeological site museums. This perspective meets Banerjee and Kumar's (2015, 18) proposition that archaeological site museums serve as mirrors to their sites and surroundings, reflecting aspects of the past.



Figures 1 and 2. Immovable archaeological sites and movable artefacts are the collections and exhibits of an archaeological site museum, at the Protection Hall of Burial Pits of the Hanyangling Museum, China (photos by the author).

These debates highlight a phenomenon from one perspective: the lack of a clear consensus on the definition of an archaeological site museum so far (Xu 2018, 5). One possible reason is the highly specialised and lengthy nature of the term, resulting in its less frequent use outside academic circles compared to within them (Yang 2023, personal interview; C. Peterman-Lifchitz, personal interview with Chen Zhang, March 17, 2023). The second reason is due to variations in site characteristics, conservation philosophies, cultural contexts, and archaeological scopes across different countries and cultural regions (J. Hale, personal interview with Chen Zhang, March 23, 2023; Yang 2023, personal interview; G. Papaioannou, personal interview with Chen Zhang, March 7, 2023). A third factor is the overlapping powers and responsibilities of international organisations (Yang 2023, personal interview; Paardekooper 2023; Yang 2023, personal interview). Archaeological site museums deal with heritage conservation, typically under the purview of ICOMOS, but museum operation aspects, are more relevant to ICOM's domain. Consequently, finding a universally satisfying definition of an archaeological site museum at this stage is challenging. Fourthly, the segregation among various specialisations plays a role; archaeological site museums require interdisciplinary collaboration across fields like archaeology, museums, history, architecture, etc., leading to diverse viewpoints from scholars of different disciplines on the definition of these museums (K. Liu, personal interview with Chen Zhang, May 25, 2023; Yang 2023, personal interview). These factors contribute to the absence of a clear consensus regarding the definition and scope of archaeological site museums.

Moreover, many institutions that perfectly meet the previously mentioned definitions are not labelled as archaeological site museums. One reason involves the naming system: 'archaeological', deemed too specialised and 'intimidating', is often omitted in these museums' names to enhance public dissemination and accessibility (M. Parker Pearson, personal interview with Chen Zhang, February 24, 2023; D. Xu, personal interview with Chen Zhang, January 6, 2024). Examples include Fishbourne Roman Palace and Chedworth Roman Villa. Alternatively, the more accessible term 'museum' is added, as seen in names like Banpo Museum or Sanxingdui Museum, combining the archaeological site name with 'museum' (K. Liu, personal interview with Chen Zhang, May 25, 2023). The preference for retaining only the site name might stem from the principle of 'authentic preservation', despite the presence of some preservation and interpretation constructions on these archaeological sites. Alternatively, this could be influenced by the shortcomings of international institutions, as Xu (2018, 6) argues 'Many of the ICOMOS Charters' principles perfectly meet the concepts of site museums; nevertheless, they do not integrate such concepts into the form of the museum'. Secondly, the tendency to not label institutions as 'archaeological site museums' also relates to the cultural context of each country and region. Albag (personal interview with Chen Zhang, March 24, 2023), for example, notes that in Israel, this may stem from the complex ownership of archaeological sites. Within the Chinese context, the terms 'archaeological site museum' and 'site museum' are frequently interchanged in everyday language and public perception, whereas 'archaeological site museum' is predominantly used in the cultural heritage system's official documents (Yang 2023, personal interview). The architectural design approval process in China is another illustration. Gan argues that due to the complex approval process and rigorous security and functional standards for 'museums', alternative names such as 'site exhibition halls' or 'protection buildings' are sometimes used to

facilitate faster approval. This trend has also been observed in the author's personal architectural design practice.

In conclusion, much work remains in defining and delineating the scope of archaeological site museums. This study incorporates Paardekooper's (personal interview with Chen Zhang, February 23, 2023) concept of dissecting the term into 'archaeological site' and 'museum'. It integrates the concept of archaeological sites, as discussed previously, with the authoritative and modern ICOM definition of a museum. This integration is then summarised based on existing definitions of archaeological site museums, to provide a more comprehensive and inclusive definition: An archaeological site museum is a multifunctional, non-profit, permanent institution, closely integrated with or situated near one or more archaeological sites, established after thoughtful and scientific archaeological excavation and conservation, to benefit the society, including diverse visitors, local stakeholders. The museum undertakes a broad spectrum of activities, including research, collection, conservation, interpretation, and exhibition, primarily centred on the archaeological site and its artefacts, which may extend beyond the site itself. The fundamental purpose of the archaeological site museum is on conveying the narrative and significance of the archaeological site. A distinctive characteristic is its dedication to authentically presenting the archaeological site and systematically displaying the results of archaeological research.

In situ Museum/On-Site Museum

When examining solely the semantics of 'in situ museum' and 'on-site museum', it becomes apparent that these terms potentially cover broader concepts than 'site museum', and consequently, they encompass a wider scope than 'archaeological site museum'. The key distinction is in the definition of the term 'site'. In the context of site museums, 'site' typically pertains to historical or natural remnants, whereas 'on-site museum' or 'in situ museum' can encompass a broader range of connotations, including remain, place, field, etc. This view is recognised by Fangyin (2014) and Yuyue (2016). However, these three terms are occasionally used interchangeably in literature and practice. For instance, Fouseki (2015, 34) believes that an 'in situ museum' is a museum that preserves, enhances, and presents to the public archaeological remains preserved in situ, including immovable architectural remains and movable artefacts, replicas, or originals. Such museums may take the form of underground, semi-subterranean, or above-ground structures, showcasing exclusively architectural remnants preserved in situ, or a combination of immovable architectural remains with movable replicas or authentic artefacts. The scope of 'in situ museum' in this definition is nearly the same as 'site museum'. However, these two diverse assertions require more substantiation through more extensive research and practical evidence on 'in situ museums' and 'on-site museums'.

Archaeological Site Protection Building/Archaeological Shelter

Archaeological site protection buildings are conceptually close to archaeological shelters, albeit typically larger and more complex in building form. Archaeological shelters are often used as a means to reduce the active decay of remains in open archaeological sites; in the most extreme case, this measure is related to the safety and predictability of the museum

environment (Demas 2002, 26). Commonly, these constructions serve the purposes of site protection and monitoring during and after archaeological excavations and then play a pivotal role in the development of archaeological site museums or parks. Unlike other site-related institutions, such as archaeological site museums, heritage centres, or visitor centres, the significant characteristic of archaeological site protection buildings and archaeological shelters lies in their fundamental function – preserving the archaeological site and its surroundings. Consequently, these structures prioritise environmental and conservation efficacy, underpinned by rigorous research and, to a lesser degree, aesthetic factors (Curteis 2018, 47–49). Generally, these structures are constructed using one of three approaches: the first involves a short-term design employing simple materials to provide temporary site coverage; the second adopts a historical approach using local or site-similar materials for site protection; and the third utilises modern materials with a lightweight, detachable structure, resembling an ‘umbrella’, to safeguard the site (Pesaresi and Stewart 2018, 59; see Figure 3). ‘The design of an archaeological site shelter should be perceived as an enduring, adaptable, and iterative protective process’ (82).

Ancient Architecture Museums

The term ‘ancient architecture museum’ (古建筑博物馆 Gujianzhu Bowuguan) is relatively prevalent in Chinese discourse. The relationship between these museums and archaeological site museums has been discussed within Chinese academic circles. Established literature predominantly advocates classifying ancient architecture museums as a distinct branch parallel to archaeological site museums, both falling within the category of site museums. This view may have its origins in UNESCO’s site classification, which delineates three site types: cultural, natural, and mixed. Cultural heritage sites encompass historic buildings, town sites, significant archaeological sites, archaeological sites, and works of monumental sculpture or painting (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2024). Within this framework, ancient buildings and archaeological sites are subsumed under the category of cultural heritage sites. This perspective finds validation in multiple Chinese



Figure 3. A typical archaeological site shelter, at Tongguan Kiln site Park, China (photo by the author, 2023).

studies (S. Longwei, personal interview with Chen Zhang, March 23, 2023; Yongqi, Shuping, and Wenli 1996; Xiao 1989). Furthermore, the Code for Design of Museum Buildings (2015, 3.1.4), issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of China in 2015, underscores that ancient architecture museums and archaeological site museums both fall within the purview of site museums, as viewed from another perspective. Some archaeological sites can, to a certain degree, be considered as ‘remnant’ buildings or complexes (Unknown Author 1992, 45). So, in the context of Chinese heritage, it is plausible to classify ancient architecture museums as site museums, parallel to archaeological site museums. Nevertheless, the assertion requires further empirical validation and case studies in diverse cultural contexts.

Archaeological Heritage Museum

The concept of archaeological heritage museums is broader and occasionally conflated with the concept of archaeological site museums in some Chinese literature, in which the term ‘Site Museum’ (遗址博物馆 Yizhibowuguan) is often translated as ‘Heritage Museum’ (such as Nan 2004). However, the distinction between the hinges on the term ‘Heritage’. ICOMOS provided a concise definition in 1990: ‘The archaeological heritage comprises all vestiges of human existence and consists of places relating to all manifestations of human activity, abandoned structures, and remains of all kinds (including subterranean and underwater sites), together with all the portable cultural material associated with them’ (ICOMOS 2021). This definition unequivocally illustrates that archaeological heritage includes archaeological sites, various types of remains like ancient architecture, and movable cultural relics. Consequently, an archaeological heritage museum encompasses a wider range than an archaeological site museum, for example ‘An (archaeological heritage) museum houses exhibits describing the culture and history of a particular place and its inhabitants’ (Collins 2023). This characterisation implies that archaeological heritage museums could serve as a comprehensive and superior category within the museum classification system. Given that this category has the potential to include a vast array of thematic history museums, it suggests that the scope of archaeological heritage museums should be broader compared to that of site museums.

Archaeological Open-Air Museum

Recently, the archaeological open-air museum has become prevalent. This museum type shares several similarities with archaeological site museums, complicating their differentiation. The issue of overlapping concepts can be attributed to the initial institutional categorisation by the International Council of Museums (ICOM). According to Paardekooper (2013, 29), ‘In 1993, archaeological open-air museums were grouped with site museums in the International Committee of Museums and Collections of Archaeology and History (ICMAH) in a workgroup “Site Museums and Museums of Archaeological Reconstruction”, which were abandoned in some years’. Furthermore, their brief history in practice and research, coupled with their limited numbers, exacerbates the challenge of delineating clear boundaries between this museum type and others. Fortunately, significant contributions have been made to address this dilemma. A noteworthy contribution is from Roeland Paardekooper, one of the founders and the director of the International

Association of Archaeological Open-Air Museums (EXARC). He provides a precise definition of the archaeological open-air museum,

An archaeological open-air museum is a non-profit permanent institution with outdoor true to scale architectural reconstructions primarily based on archaeological sources. It holds collections of intangible heritage resources and provides an interpretation of how people lived and acted in the past; this is accomplished according to sound scientific methods for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment of its visitors. (23; EXARC 2021)

This definition articulates the characteristics, functions, and purposes of archaeological open-air museums, and crucially, it highlights the primary distinction from archaeological site museums: their divergent methods of history presentation. Typically, archaeological open-air museums reconstruct full-scale buildings outdoors, based on the original site or historical data, whereas archaeological site museums primarily concentrate on preserving and interpreting the original site. This differentiation was corroborated by , personal interview). The second difference lies in the divergent focus of displays, influenced by the museum's geographic location. Paardekooper (2014) suggests that archaeological open-air site museums might not be situated on or near the original site, often resulting in fewer displayed archaeological artefacts. Conversely, a defining characteristic of archaeological site museums is their establishment on or around the original site, coupled with the display of the site and its archaeological artefacts (Li 2014, 73). The third difference lies in the broader application of experimental archaeology in current archaeological open-air museums, a practice not commonly seen in site museums. As Paardekooper elaborated in his interview (2023), a fifth distinction arises from the diverse origins of the two museum types, leading to variations in their foundations and narratives. Archaeological site museums are typically constructed after the extensive excavation and research of archaeological sites. Decision-making and funding for these activities and subsequent museum construction typically originate from official sources, thus influencing the decisions and exhibition content of archaeological site museums. In contrast, archaeological open-air museums often emerge from grassroots movements. For instance, they might begin as a community's historical display activities, which, if well-received, prompt the local community to further develop these activities and the land for tourism. Consequently, the decision-making and exhibition narratives in these museums often reflect the perspectives of the local community. In addition, two other minor distinctions are identified during the field research. Many exhibitions of archaeological site museums are conducted both indoors and outdoors, whereas archaeological open-air museums mainly have only outdoor exhibitions. Further, the typical visitor demographic of archaeological site museums aligns with that of traditional history museums, while archaeological open-air museums primarily draw families with children. In summary, the distinctions in historical presentation methods, display focus, experimental archaeology application, origins, foundational principles, and narrative types are pivotal in differentiating these two museum varieties.

These two museum types exhibit distinct characteristics, with each possessing its own strengths and weaknesses. A comparative table summarising their strengths and weaknesses across various aspects is presented below (Table 1).

It is worth noting that one of the strengths of archaeological open-air museums, i.e. strong interpretation and interaction nature, but it can also be seen as an inherent weakness from another perspective. As Crane (2006, 103) puts that, 'when individuals re-experience memory,

Table 1. Advantages and disadvantages of two types of museums, ‘archaeological open-air museum’ and ‘archaeological site museum’ (based on Paardekooper 2020; and interviews with paardekooper and Peterman-Lifchitz).

| Museums Aspects | Archaeological Open-Air Museum | Archaeological Site Museum |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Authenticity of Experience | Reconstructions may not always accurately represent the past, as they can lack an objective presentation of facts (Paardekooper 2020). | Visitors can sense the original appearance of historical sites, yet some site features may be challenging for visitors to recognise and comprehend (Paardekooper, personal interview). |
| Coverage of Periods and Events | Often concentrates on specific buildings or historical periods (Paardekooper, personal interview; 2020); | Encompasses a range of periods and events (Paardekooper, personal interview) |
| Interpretation and Guidance | Provides a variety of interpretative approaches, such as costumed guides and demonstrations (Paardekooper, personal interview) | Provides in-depth explanations and guides that narrate the story of the site (Paardekooper, personal interview) |
| Visitor Experience | Provides a sense of historical participation and fun, especially for specific groups like teenagers (Peterman-Lifchitz, personal interview) | Understanding the site’s significance may be challenging due to limited interaction and participation (Peterman-Lifchitz, personal interview) |
| Impact on Original Site | Reconstructions can be dismantled without harm to the original site (Paardekooper, personal interview) | Preserves the site’s original state, yet conservation issues may constrain the visitor experience. |

it can never be a pure and perfect recreation of the past’. Within museums, any historical artefact or narrative undergoes multi-layered interpretation by various stakeholders, including archaeologists, curators, tour guides, and tourists, potentially leading to the erosion or distortion of its original information (Zhang and Light 2023). Yang 2023, personal interview) further explains that some archaeological open-air museums could evolve into a form of entertainment resembling Disneyland, where visitors may perceive a sense of theatricality and unreality. Although this issue can be partly alleviated through meticulous academic research and precise architectural reconstruction, combined with varied and open interpretations, it remains a challenge to fully address in museums characterised by plentiful interpretations yet lacking substantial historical evidence.

Furthermore, it is essential to acknowledge that the categorisation, functions, and objectives of archaeological open-air museums vary across different cultures and regions. For example, Geering (2019, 161) observed that the open-air museum concept in the Soviet Union closely resembled the site museum model prevalent in English-speaking countries. This type of open-air museum, as characterised by ‘Promotion of the Role of Museums in the Communist Education of the Workers’ in 1964, was anchored in socialist ideology, fulfilling both recreational and educational roles within a broader ideological project. Another example is that ‘In the British Isles, archaeological open-air museums are rarely characterised as museums, but rather as centres, heritage visitor centres, farms, parks or villages’ (Paardekooper 2013, 54). Consequently, although Paardekooper’s definition provides a clear interpretation of archaeological open-air museums, it is important to acknowledge and accept the diverse definitions that exist in various cultural contexts.

Archaeological Visitor Centre

A visitor centre, as defined by Shaozhe (2014, 13), is a specialised facility at a tourist attraction, primarily offering services like information, consultation, display, interpretation, education,

and rest. In recent years, many visitor centres, such as Stonehenge Visitor Centre, Whitby Abbey Visitor Centre, etc., have been built near heritage sites worldwide. These centres are generally characterised by expanded floor areas and increasingly complex building functions (Figures 4 and 5). It appears that many newly established visitor centres fulfil numerous traditional museum functions, albeit with a more commercial and service-oriented approach. This has somewhat led to a blurring of the concepts of these facilities and archaeological heritage centres, archaeological heritage museums, and archaeological site museums. Therefore, a clear definition of the visitor centre is necessary. The interviews revealed significant differences in how scholars of various specialisations perceive this institution. The following table presents these views and their rationale, addressing whether visitor centres should be classified as museum institutions (Table 2).

The above table demonstrates a consensus among museologists and archaeologists that visitor centres should not be classified as museums, a sentiment echoed by most museum practitioners and curators. In contrast, architectural scholars expressed a differing opinion in interviews. This divergence of opinions is likely attributable to the unique perspectives inherent to each respective field. Professionals in heritage conservation and museums typically focus on museums' roles in education, academic research, and collection display, whereas architectural scholars often prioritise architectural functionality. Given the limited scope of the interview sample, a comprehensive summary of the diverse professional perspectives on the attributes of visitor centres is not feasible. Nevertheless, it is evident that despite the growing trend of constructing multi-functional visitor centres, a large number of scholars continue to differentiate them from museums, particularly due to their unique commercial nature and organisational structure.

Archaeological Interpretation Centre/Archaeological Heritage Centre

The boundaries between these two types of centres are often blurred and they are frequently used interchangeably in both research and practice. It is possible to consider them as essentially the same type of institution. Before defining such institutions, the broader concept of heritage centres needs to be clarified: 'Heritage centres usually develop from places containing historic buildings and natural or man-made features, sometimes with varying degrees of restoration; such centres can recreate and present to visitors the original appearance and historical context of the place' (Vergo 1997, 62). In



Figures 4 and 5. Exhibition space inside the Stonehenge visitor centre (photos by the author, 2019).

Table 2. Various views on the attribution of visitor centres.

| Professions | Sources | Views | Reasons |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Museologist & Archaeologist | Paardekooper, personal interview | Visitor centres cannot be classified as museums. | Although visitor centres may technically fulfil certain museum expectations and share some of their functions, their primary focus is on visitor service and commercial activities. Museums, in contrast, have a more comprehensive mission that extends beyond mere commercial interests. |
| Museologist & Archaeologist | Papaioannou, personal interview | Visitor centres cannot be classified as museums | The fundamental purpose of visitor centres differs significantly from that of museums. Visitor centres prioritise leisure and commercial aspects over providing comprehensive archaeological displays. |
| Archaeologist | Peterman-Lifchitz, personal interview | Visitor centres cannot be classified as museums. | Often, visitor centres lack the necessary space to meet all the expectations and requirements typical of a museum. |
| Archaeologist | Yang, personal interview | Visitor centres can be classified as museums. | In Europe, many visitor centres are constructed post-research of heritage sites, potentially assuming some roles traditionally held by museums. |
| Archaeologist | Parker Pearson, personal interview | Visitor centres cannot be classified as museums. | Visitor centres typically lack ownership of exhibits and collections, thus limiting their capacity to fully curate these items. The primary focus of visitor centres is on commercial activities, as opposed to the presentation of archaeological information. Visitor centres are often deficient in the necessary infrastructure and resources that museums possess, particularly in terms of curating and storing collections adequately. |
| Museum practitioner | Chen, personal interview | Uncertain | While the interviewee did not provide a definitive statement, he noted that visitor centres often appear as integral parts of archaeological or heritage parks. |
| Museum practitioner & Museologist | Guo, personal interview | Visitor centres cannot be classified as museums. | A visitor centre may function as a department or a component within an archaeological site museum or an archaeological site park. Visitor centres typically serve a singular function and lack the comprehensive range of functions embodied by a complete museum. |
| Museum practitioner | Shen, personal interview | Visitor centres cannot be classified as museums. | Museums within the archaeological category are typically non-profit, permanent institutions, in contrast to visitor centres, which may operate for profit. |
| Museum Curator | Symmons, personal interview | Visitor centres can be classified as museums, although there are some differences. | The focus of visitor centres and museums in the archaeology category is on the provision of heritage-related interpretation. Due to the influence of commercialisation, many museums are now adopting approaches as commercial as those of visitor centres. |

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued).

| Professions | Sources | Views | Reasons |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|
| Architect | Gan, personal interview | Visitor centres can be classified as museums. | Despite having a different focus from museums in the archaeological category, visitor centres still align with the broader concept of a museum. The controversy surrounding the classification of visitor centres stems from varying theoretical perspectives across disciplines. |
| Architect | Hale, personal interview | Uncertain | Differences in cultural backgrounds can lead to varied interpretations of the same terminology in different countries. In the UK, the concept of a visitor centre is likely used more frequently than in other regions. |
| Architect & Conservator | Xu, personal interview | Visitor centres can be classified as museums. | An archaeological visitor centre is often an integral component of an archaeological site museum. |

(source: interviews with Roeland Paardekooper, Georgios Papaioannou, Peterman-Lifchitz, Fan Yang, Parker Pearson, Bo Chen, Luo Guo, Weilong Shen, symmons, Lichao Gan, Jonathan Hale, and Dongming Xu).

practice, ‘heritage centres’ are often used to describe areas encompassing a broader geographical scope, like natural or historical heritage parks. The primary distinction between a heritage centre and an archaeological heritage centre or archaeological interpretive centre is that the former also includes interpretation of natural or industrial heritage, exemplified by places like the Autrey Mill Nature Preserve & Heritage Centre. Consequently, the scope of heritage centres is broader than that of archaeological heritage centres or archaeological interpretive centres.

The archaeological interpretation centre represents a new type of institution, positioned between visitor centres and archaeological or heritage museums. Its primary role is to disseminate knowledge about cultural heritage, typically situated near cultural or historical sites. As noted by Tugas, Tresserras, and Mellin (2016, 31), interpretative centres differ from traditional museums in that they do not focus on the collection, preservation, and study of objects. Rather, their aim is to enhance visitors’ appreciation and interaction with natural and cultural heritage, often featuring amenities like tourist information, cafes, and restaurants. This concept, that archaeological heritage centres and interpretation centres are distinct from museums, is also supported by Michael Parker Pearson, a prominent archaeologist known for his extensive research on Stonehenge. In his interview, using the JORVIK Viking Centre as an example (Figures 6 and 7), Parker Pearson, argues that archaeological heritage centres commonly do not fully curate a collection and fulfil the research function, which museums are supposed to do.

Conversely, Rob Symmons, the curator of Fishbourne Roman Palace in England, holds a differing viewpoint. Yang (2023, personal interview) argues that both archaeological heritage centres and museums are dedicated to interpreting heritage, and he notes that modern museums have increasingly embraced commercial development as well. This demonstrates the wide spectrum of opinions among scholars regarding these types of centres. What can be recognised, however, is that archaeological heritage centres and interpretive centres can be regarded as a concept that lies somewhere between archaeological heritage museums and archaeological heritage visitor centres, distinguished by



Figures 6 and 7. JORVIK Viking Centre restores scenes of Viking life (photos by the author, 2019).

their heightened emphasis on displaying and interpreting sites and cultural relics, which exceeds that of visitor centres, but the lack of the comprehensive scientific research and collection endeavours typical of conventional museums.

Archaeological Museum

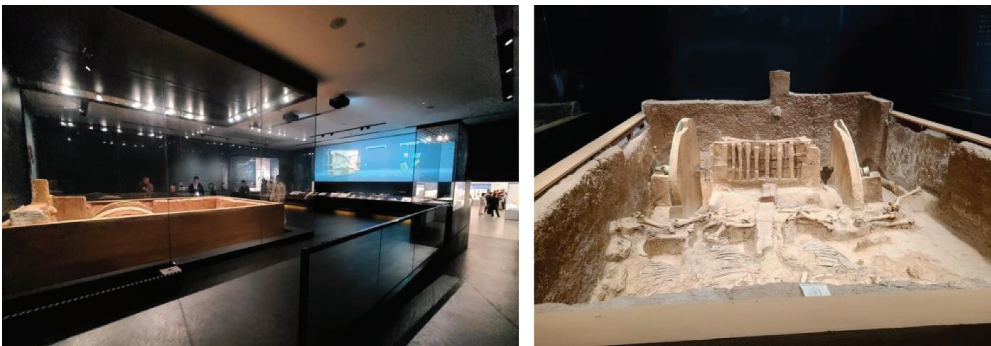
Archaeological museums are a relatively familiar type of museum. Worldwide, a large number of archaeological museums have been constructed, including the Archaeological Museum of Athens and the Archaeological Museum of Xi'an. Many definitions of these museums have also been emerged recently in the theoretical domain. For instance, Lining (2018, 100–101) thinks that archaeological museums are museums with archaeological characteristics, tasked with collecting, displaying, and studying the material heritage of human beings and their environments that archaeology is concerned with, and these museums primarily focus on utilising archaeological theories to collect, exhibit, and disseminate information, among other functions.

Escribano-Miralles, Miralles-Martinez, and Serrano-Pastor (2020) proposed that the archaeological museum is a building where objects of archaeological historical, and scientific interest are kept, in which knowledge is created that is transmitted to society, through formal, non-formal and informal education. Guo and Zhang (2023) contend that archaeological museums, grounded in archaeological theory and methodology, are committed to preserving and studying the results of archaeological excavations, and additionally, they play a pivotal role in disseminating and presenting these results to the public, thus serving as an extension of the archaeological mission. According to the definition provided by Encyclopedia Britannica (2023a), 'Archaeological museums are found in areas of rich antiquity or on-site museums. Evidently, the scope of these museums extends beyond that of the on-site museum. The archaeology museum is concerned mainly with historical evidence recovered from the ground and, in many cases, provides information on a period for which the written record can make little or no contribution'.

From a collection perspective, archaeological museums primarily feature artefacts with explicit excavation details, derived from extensive archaeological excavations across various sites and cultures. Additionally, they encompass relocated, restored, or digitised site-type collections. For instance, the Shaanxi Archaeological Museum in China has relocated the entire Western Zhou carriage and horse pits to its exhibition halls (Figures 8 and 9), and house items pertinent to archaeological work, including equipment, records, personal or team items, oral historical materials, and video materials (Yifu and Jing 2022, 21).

In terms of exhibitions, archaeological museums typically showcase excavation findings from various periods and regions, along with their cultural contexts and geographic environments. These museums often incorporate stratigraphic and typological knowledge from archaeological research into their exhibitions. These can either chronologically outline the evolution of a particular category of cultural relics or display a diverse array of relics in different periods based on their coexisting relationships. A key aspect of their exhibition strategy involves presenting the evolution of a specific type of cultural relic in groups or sets, primarily through dense displays. These exhibitions emphasise the history of archaeological disciplines, as well as the theoretical frameworks and methodologies of archaeology employed in the region (Guo and Zhang 2023, 3; Yifu and Jing 2022, 23). For instance, the Shaanxi Archaeological Museum in China systematically illustrates the progression of Xi'an and even Chinese archaeological disciplines in its exhibitions, employing a mix of documentary and visual materials alongside archaeological artefacts. These displays are augmented with profiles of archaeologists, highlighting their academic contributions and achievements (Figures 10 and 11). The Chinese Archaeological Museum, on the other hand, adopts a 'warehouse display' concept, exhibiting a high-density array of artefacts, both ordinary and dilapidated, in a singular space.

In terms of education and services, the distinctions between archaeological museums and other museum types may not be pronounced, while archaeological museums often appeal more to visitors with a profound interest in history and archaeology. The field study revealed that visitors to archaeological museums are generally younger compared to those at historical museums, while the proportion of family-type visitors is comparatively lower.



Figures 8 and 9. Western Zhou Carriage and Horse Pits in the Shaanxi Archaeological Museum (photos by the author, 2023).



Figures 10 and 11. Shaanxi archaeological museum showcases the work of archaeologists (photos by the author, 2023).

Over the past five years, archaeological museums have emerged as a ‘buzzword’ in Chinese practice, and many archaeological museums have been constructed, including the Luoyang Archaeological Museum and the Shanxi Archaeological Museum (opened in 2020), the Shaanxi Archaeological Museum (opened in 2022), and the Chinese Archaeological Museum (opened in 2023). The proliferation of archaeological museums in China may be attributed not only to advancements in archaeology, urban development, and heightened cultural preservation awareness but also to the evolving separation between archaeological work and museums (Yang 2023, personal interview; Guo and Zhang 2023, 7–9). Traditionally, archaeologists have been tasked with excavating and conducting preliminary studies of artefacts, with museums later displaying them. However, in recent years, various reasons have led to some archaeological institutions’ reluctance to transfer artefacts to museums immediately after research, resulting in these artefacts being stored in team warehouses, which are almost inaccessible to the public. To address this issue, some archaeological institutions have established their museums, allowing them to directly display artefacts to the public and get additional benefits.

Furthermore, there is ongoing debate among Chinese academics regarding the categorisation of archaeological museums and archaeological site museums. Some scholars advocate for a clear distinction between these two museum types, for example, Guo and Zhang (2023, 4–7) argue that archaeological site museums, established on archaeological sites and dedicated to preserving, collecting, and exhibiting information about specific sites, should be distinct from archaeological museums, which are founded on archaeological excavations and emphasise the integrity of regional archaeological narratives. Ji and Jiayu (2010, 486) and Yang 2023, personal interview) share this perspective. Yongqi, Shuping and Wenli (1996) adds that archaeological museums are organised by state-owned entities qualified in archaeological excavation, differing from archaeological site museums. Conversely, some scholars, such as Saiping (2010, 12), argue that archaeological site museums can be classified under the scope of archaeological museums. Lining (2018, 104) elucidates this division by stating that archaeological museums comprise two categories: archaeological site museums, which rely on the site excavations, and museums dependent on



Figure 12. Archaeological site museums in British classification systems, as a sub-type of archaeological museums.

archaeological excavation institutions, with the latter concentrating on the exhibition of archaeological work, theories, and historical development. Yifu and Jing (2022, 20–21) further refined this categorisation by classifying archaeological museums into thematic, regional, and site museums based on the spatial nature of their collections. Moreover, this categorisation is further evidenced by the British museum

Table 3. Identities of institutions associated with archaeological sites.

| Institutions Characteristics | Ownership | Purpose | Exhibition focus | Collection Type |
|---|---------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Archaeological Site Museum | Commonly Official Ownership | Archaeological Site Conservation, Interpretation and Study | Archaeological Site and Excavated Objects in Original Appearance | Archaeological Site and Excavated Objects |
| In Situ Museum /On-Site Museums | Commonly Official Ownership | Site Conservation, Interpretation and Study | Site and Excavated Objects in Original Appearance | Site and Excavated Objects |
| Archaeological Site Protection Building/ Archaeological Shelter | Commonly Official Ownership | Site Conservation | Site in Original Appearance | Site |
| Ancient Architecture Museums | Official and Private Ownership | Ancient Architecture Conservation and Interpretation | Restored Ancient Building and Daily Necessities | Historical Daily Necessities |
| Archaeological Heritage Museum | Commonly Official Ownership | Regional History and Heritage Interpretation and Study | Regional History and Culture | Regional Heritage and Artefacts |
| Archaeological Open-Air Museum | Commonly Non-Official Ownership | History Education, Study and Enjoyment | Lives and Behaviours of Historical People | Reconstructed Buildings and Historical Materials and Artefacts |
| Archaeological Visitor Centre | Commonly Non-Official Ownership | Visitor Service and Auxiliary Interpretation | Auxiliary Exhibition of the adjacent Site | A Few Cultural Relics |
| Archaeological museum | Commonly Official Ownership | Interpretation and Study of Regional Archaeological Results | Archaeological Results and Works | Regional Archaeological Artefacts |

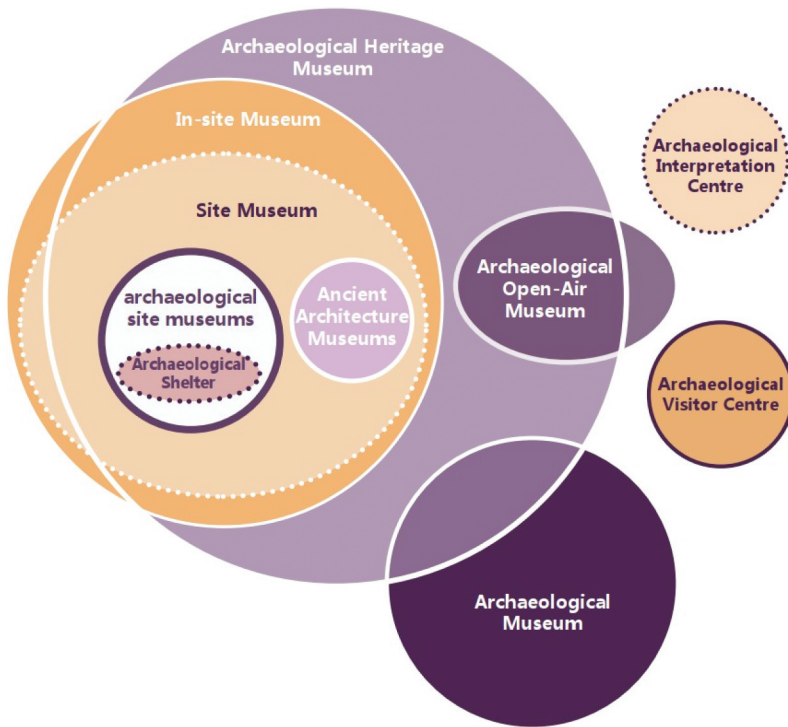


Figure 13. Interrelationship among these institutions related to archaeological sites source: Author, 2023.

classification system, wherein museums are categorised as general museums, art museums, natural history and science museums, history museums, science and technology museums, and virtual museums (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2023b). Within the category of history museums, there exists a specific branch termed the ‘archaeology museum’. Archaeological site museums are exclusively attributed to the category of archaeological museums (Figure 12). In summary, this study prefers classifying archaeological site museums as a subset of archaeological museums.

Conclusion

The preceding analysis has clarified the functions, purposes, and ownership of various institutions associated with archaeological sites. Table 3 summarises the identities of these institutions, while Figure 13 illustrates their general interrelationships. However, it is important to note that with the evolving concepts of archaeology, conservation, and architecture, the boundaries between these institutions have become increasingly blurred and complex. While these summaries may not encompass all cases or fully represent the characteristics of these institutions, they can at least offer new perspectives on clarifying some prior misconceptions and ambiguities in definitions.

Acknowledgements

I express my sincere gratitude to Roeland Paardekooper, Michael Parker Pearson, Rob Symmons, Georgios Papaioannou, Kecheng Liu, Dongming Xu, Jonathan Hale, Fan Yang, Peng Wang, Lichao Gan, Cohava Peterman-Lifchitz, Weilong Shen, Roy Albag, Luo Guo, and Bo Chen for their valuable contributions through interviews. My appreciation also extends to my supervisor, Mr Russell Light, for his indispensable guidance. I am also thankful for the valuable work provided by the editor.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Notes on Contributor

Chen Zhang, a doctoral candidate at the University of Sheffield's School of Architecture, specialises in an array of research interests encompassing museum studies, heritage conservation, and selected domains of architectural theory and history. His current scholarly focus predominantly revolves around the study of Chinese site museums.

ORCID

Chen Zhang  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7185-1054>

References

- Banerjee, S., and V. Kumar. 2015. "Archaeological Site Museums-An Appraisal." In *Cultural Contours of History and Archaeology in Honour of Snehasiri Prof. P. Chenna Reddy*, edited by E. S. N. Reddy and K. K. Naik, 17–20. https://www.academia.edu/download/56607216/2-Sulekha_Banerjee.pdf.
- The Canadian Encyclopedia. 2007. "Archaeology." The Canadian Encyclopedia. Accessed January 5, 2024. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/archaeology>.
- Caple, C. 2009. "The Aims of Conservation." In *Conservation: Principles, Dilemmas and Uncomfortable Truths*, edited by A. Richmond and A. Bracker, 25–31. London: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Collins English Dictionary. 2023. "Heritage Definition and Meaning | Collins English Dictionary." Accessed December 24, 2023. <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/heritage>.
- Crane, S. A. 2006. "The conundrum of ephemerality: Time, memory, and museums." In *A Companion to Museum Studies*, edited by S. Macdonald, 98–109. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470996836.ch7>.
- Curteis, T. 2018. "The Use of Environmental Survey and Monitoring in the Design and Evaluation of Archaeological Shelters." *Protective Shelters for Archaeological Sites: Proceedings of a Symposium, 23-27 September 2013, Herculaneum, Italy*, edited by Z. Aslan, S. Court, J. M. Teutonico, and J. Thompson, 40–50. London: British School at Rome. https://www.academia.edu/download/57464215/2018_Aslan_ProtectiveShelters.pdf#page=49.
- Demas, M. 2002. "Planning for Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites." In *Proceedings of the Management Planning for Archaeological Sites: An International Workshop Organized by the Getty Conservation Institute and Loyola Marymount University, 19-22 May 2000, Corinth, Greece*, edited by G. Palumbo and J. M. Teutonico, 27. Institute and Loyola Marymount University, Getty Publications. https://www.getty.edu/publications/resources/virtual_library/9781606061244.pdf#page=676.
- Egloff, B. J. 2019. *Archaeological Heritage Conservation and Management*. Oxford: Archaeopress.
- Encyclopaedia Britannica. 2023a. "History Museums." Accessed November 3, 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/museum-cultural-institution/History-museums>.

- Encyclopaedia Britannica. 2023b. "Museum – Types of Museums." Accessed October 31, 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/museum-cultural-institution/Types-of-museums>.
- Encyclopaedia Britannica. 2024. "World Heritage Site." Accessed January 3, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/World-Heritage-site>.
- Escribano, A., P. Miralles, and F. Serrano. 2020. "Heritage and Museums as Objects of Education for Citizenship in the Teaching of History." In *Handbook of Research on Citizenship and Heritage Education*, edited by E. Delgado and J. M. Cuenca, 103–125. Hershey, PA, USA: IGI Global.
- EXARC. 2021. "Definitions- Definition of Archaeological Open-Air Museums (AOAM)." EXARC. Accessed November 9, 2021. <https://exarc.net/about-us/definitions>.
- Fangyin, K. 2014. "Research on Humanised Exhibition Design in Archaeological Site Museums." [考古遗址博物馆人性化展陈设计研究] (Master's thesis, 中国社会科学院研究生院 [Graduate School of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences]).
- Fouseki, K. 2015. *Dispute Management in Heritage Conservation: The Case of in situ Museums*. Vol. 2776. Oxford, UK: British Archaeological Reports Ltd.
- Geering, C. 2019. *Building a Common Past: World Heritage in Russia Under Transformation, 1965–2000*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, V&R Unipress.
- Guo, W., and X. Zhang. 2023. "'论考古博物馆的使命与叙事' [On the Mission and Narrative of Archaeological Museums]." Accessed October 13, 2023. <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/a82QFjfkriZbLsequomyA>.
- ICAHM. 1996. *Vestiges Archeologiques: la Conservation in situ Archaeological Remains: In situ Preservation*. Montréal: ICOMOS Inter-national Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management.
- ICOMOS. 1979. *The Australia ICOMOS Guidelines for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance* ('Burra Charter'). Burra, Australia: Australia ICOMOS. Accessed November 10, 2023. <https://australia.icomos.org/publications/burra-charter-practice-notes/>.
- ICOMOS. 1990. "Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage." Accessed November 10, 2023. <http://wp.icahm.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/1990-Lausanne-Charter-for-Protection-and-Management-of-Archaeological-Heritage.pdf>.
- ICOMOS. 2021. "Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage (1990)." Accessed November 15, 2022. <http://wp.icahm.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/1990-Lausanne-Charter-for-Protection-and-Management-of-Archaeological-Heritage.pdf>.
- Ji, X., and L. Jiayu. 2010. "'要重视和加强考古学博物馆建设' [Attaching Importance to and Strengthening the Construction of Archaeological Museums]." *Liaoning Museum Journal* [辽宁省博物馆馆刊] 5 (1): 484–491. CNKI:SUN:LNBW.0.2010-00-051.
- Küseh, U. S. 1989. "Open-Air Museum versus Site Museum." *SAMAB* 18 (5): 183.
- Li, H. 2014. "'遗址博物馆的广义与狭义辨析' [Analysis of the Broad and Narrow Definitions of Site Museums]." *中国博物馆* [China Museum] (4): 72–76. <https://org/CNKI:SUN:GBWG.0.2014-04-014>.
- Lining, K. 2018. "'考古博物馆的缘起与演进' [The Origin and Evolution of Archaeological Museums]." *文博* [Wenbo] (2): 100–105. <https://org/CNKI:SUN:WEBO.0.2018-02-015>.
- Longbin, L. 2009. "浅谈考古遗址博物馆的建设和发展" [Discussion on the Construction and Development of Archaeological Site Museums]. *收藏* [Collection] 2. <https://org/CNKI:SUN:SQYJ.0.2009-00-027>.
- Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development. 2015. "'博物馆建筑设计规范' [Museum Building Design Code]." Accessed January 4, 2024. https://www.mohurd.gov.cn/gongkai/zhengce/zhengcefilelib/201507/20150703_224143.html.
- Moolman, H. J. 1996. "Site Museums: Their Origins, Definition and Categorisation." *Museum Management & Curatorship* 15 (4): 387–400. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0964779609515499>.
- Nan, Z. 2004. "'遗址博物馆建筑研究' [Research on the Architecture of Site Museums]." Master's thesis, Tianjin University. <https://doi.org/10.7666/d.y591115>.
- Paardekooper, R. 2013. *The Value of an Archaeological Open-Air Museum is in Its Use: Understanding Archaeological Open-Air Museums and Their Visitors*, 300. Leiden: Sidestone Press.
- Paardekooper, R. 2014. "The History and Development of Archaeological Open-Air Museums in Europe." In *Experiments Past: Histories of Experimental Archaeology*, edited by R. Paardekooper and

- J. Reeves Flores. Leiden: Sidestone. https://www.academia.edu/8628414/The_History_and_Development_of_Archaeological_Open_Air_Museums_in_E.
- Paardekooper, R. 2020. "The Story of Your Site: Archaeological Site Museums and Archaeological Open-Air Museums." *EXARC Journal* 4. <https://exarc.net/ark:/88735/10540>.
- Papaioannou, G. 2022. "Site Museums and Archaeology." In *The Oxford Handbook of Museum Archaeology, Oxford Handbooks*, edited by A. Stevenson, online ed. Oxford Academic. 18 August. accessed February 13 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198847526.013.4>.
- Pesaresi, P., and J. Stewart. 2018. "Shelters Evaluation, Monitoring and Maintenance in the Context of Archaeological Site Management." *Protective Shelters for Archaeological Sites*. https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/57464215/2018_Aslan_ProtectiveShelters-libre.pdf?1538138101=&r.
- Pye, E. 2010. "Archaeological conservation: scientific practice or social process?." In *Conservation*, 129–138. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780080941714>.
- Room, I. X. 1972. "Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage." Accessed January 3, 2024. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/>.
- Saiping, M. 2010. "'考古博物馆的新尝试—兼谈学科知识普及与学科博物馆的建立' [A New Attempt at Archaeological Museums: Discussing the Popularisation of Disciplinary Knowledge and the Establishment of Museums]." *博物馆研究 [Museum Studies]* 1:12–16. <https://www.cqvip.com/qk/83118x/201001/33532500.html>.
- Shafernich, S. M. 1993. "On-Site Museums, Open-Air Museums, Museum Villages and Living History Museums: Reconstructions and Period Rooms in the United States and the United Kingdom." *Museum Management & Curatorship* 12 (1): 43–61. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0260-4779\(93\)90005-A](https://doi.org/10.1016/0260-4779(93)90005-A).
- Shan, J. 2011. "'试论考古遗址公园的科学发展' [A Discussion on the Scientific Development of Archaeological Site Parks]." *中国国家博物馆馆刊 [Journal of the National Museum of China]* 56 (01): 4–18. CNKI:SUN:ZLBK.0.2011-01-007
- Shaozhe, P. 2014. "'遗址展示地的游客服务中心设计研究' [Design of Visitor Centres in Site Exhibition Area]." Master's thesis, Beijing Architecture University. <https://chn.overseas.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbcode=CMFD&dbname=CMFD201402&filename=1014332570.nh&uniplatform=OVERSEA&v=Rp04SjrwOCrSbHhuQfzoMgNBuY5j9HZLB2a98mx8E2C61MPKLEsdGaoNspZJsZ8p>.
- Stancheva, M., and F. Fülepe. 1982. *Musees de Site Archeologique*. Paris: ICOM. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000049189>.
- Tugas, P. I., J. J. Tresserras, and J. C. M. Mellin. 2016. "Heritage Interpretation Centres. the HICIRA Handbook, tDAR." Accessed December 24, 2023. <https://core.tdar.org/document/420049/heritage-interpretation-centres-the-hicira-handbook>.
- Unknown Author. 1992. "世界文化和自然遗产" [World Cultural and Natural Heritage]. 世界知识出版社 [World Knowledge Publishing].
- Vergo, P., ed. 1997. *New Museology*. London: Reaktion books.
- Wenli, Z., W. Yongqi, and L. Shuping. 1999. "'遗址博物馆学概论' [Introduction to the Site Museum]. 西安: 陕西人民出版社 Xi'an: Shaanxi People's Publishing House].
- Xiao Sun, 1989. "'试论遗址博物馆的个性特征' [On the Unique Characteristics of Site Museums]." *中国博物馆 [China Museum]* (4): 62–66. <https://org/CNKI:SUN:GBWG.0.1989-04-012>.
- Xiayong, Z. 2009. "'在全球秩序的建立中确立文化身份—访西安建筑科技大学建筑学院院长 刘克成' [Establishing Cultural Identity in the Establishment of Global Order - an Interview with Dean Liu Kecheng of the School of Architecture, Xi'an University of Architecture and Technology]." *设计家 [Design Magazine]* (6): 26–33. <https://org/CNKI:SUN:SHEJ.0.2009-06-006>.
- Xu, D. 2018. "A Multi-Perspective Observation of Site Museums: Case Study of Archaeological Site Museums in China, with Norwegian Example as Reference." <http://hdl.handle.net/11250/2583781>.
- Xuecai, Y. 2001. "遗址论[Site Theory]. 东南大学学报: 哲学社会科学版 *Journal of Southeast University. Philosophy and Social Sciences]* 3 (2): 45–49. <https://www.cqvip.com/qk/83687x/200102/5194829.html>.
- Yifu, G., and X. Jing. 2022. "'中国考古博物馆的定义,类型与特点' [Definition, Types and Characteristics of Chinese Archaeological Museums]." *博物院MUSEUM]* 3 (33). <https://org/CNKI:SUN:BOWY.0.2022-03-003>.
- Yongqi, W., L. Shuping, and Z. Wenli. 1996. "'论遗址博物馆学' [On the Study of Site Museums]." *文博 [Wenbo]* 1:86–97. <https://www.cqvip.com/qk/96387x/199601/1004832785.html>.

Yuyue, Z. 2016. "Analysis of the Current Development and Problems of Prehistoric Archaeological Site Museums in Liaoning Province" [辽宁省史前考古遗址博物馆的发展现状与问题剖析]. (Master's thesis, 辽宁大学 [Liaoning University]). <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD201701&filename=1016099051.nh>.

Zhang, C., and R. Light. 2023. "Exploring the Inherent Conflicts of the Site Museum." *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum* 17 (1): 7–14. <https://doi.org/10.18848/1835-2014/CGP/v17i01/7-22>.