The Heraion Collection at the Museum of Delos: between research and expography

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Abstract: This paper stems from ongoing research on the Sanctuary of Hera (Heraion) in Delos, a project developed by the French School of Athens (*École française d'Athènes* – EfA) together with a network of Brazilian collaborators. Specifically, it addresses the close links between archaeological research on the aforementioned sanctuary, dating back to the 19th century, and the local museum built in the early 20th century. Besides discussing research process issues between archaeological site and museum, it examines the prevalent expography of the archaeological artifacts exhibited in the museum. Finally, the text proposes digital strategies to reorganize some limits between archaeological site, local museum, and communications.

Keywords: Heraion of Delos; Archaeological Museum of Delos; Expography; Archaeological research; Digital tools and media.

Introduction

The Museum of Delos holds an exclusive archaeological collection of objects from the local archaeological site. As a site museum[1], it not only preserves these archaeological objects—mostly small and medium-sized artifacts, plus a small number of larger ones found at the Island's many archaeological sites—, but also holds permanent and semi-temporary exhibitions of the findings obtained from excavations at Delos[2]. The museum maintains an intrinsic relationship with the local archaeological site, both as an institution that consolidates the repertoire of its collections and as a physical site for laboratory activities. Such activities

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1 For a typology of archaeological museums in Greece, see Francisco 2018.

2 In 2019, the Museum of Delos (as well as other Greek museums) opened to hold a temporary exhibition on contemporary art. In the case of Delos, the exhibit integrated the local museum and the archaeological site by means of iron sculptures produced by British artist Antony Gormley, titled SIGHT (Gormely et al., 2020).

constitute an organic part of the Island's visitation-experience based on itineraries around its archaeological sites[3] and scenic ruins—especially its architectural features—, and visitation to the museum's exhibit rooms (**Fig. 1-3**).

Fig. 1. The Museum of Delos (background) and ruins at the archaeological site, 2019.
Source: personal archive of Carolina Machado Guedes.

Fig. 2. The Museum of Delos and ruins at the archaeological site (aerial view), 2019.
Source: personal archive of Carolina Machado Guedes.

3 Importantly, Delos was listed as a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1990 (Organização das Nações Unidas para a Educação, a Ciência e a Cultura 2009: 353; Brockman 2011: 132).

Fig. 3. Ruins of the Heraion of Delos and general view of the archaeological site, 2019.
Source: personal archive of Carolina Machado Guedes.

Considering this intrinsic relationship between the archaeological site and the local museum, this paper addresses a specific feature of this complex connection, namely the mobilization of the collection of objects linked to the Sanctuary of Hera (*Heraion*) at Delos, discussing the research process around this complex and its influence on the Museum of Delos' exhibition design. Importantly, the museum has been closed for big renovations since early 2020—a halt that was ratified by the COVID-19 pandemic. In this regard, one cannot anticipate whether the exhibition's logic will be maintained. Besides, the exhibition was undergoing a partial refashioning and, since 2017, many of the Heraion artifacts were removed and placed in the museum storage room. A decision we will better explain later in this paper.

Hence, the following lines have two aims. First, to present the logic between the archaeological site and the local museum, considering its preservation and research purposes, as well as the guiding expography behind the museum's exhibitions until recently. Second, to show how digital tools can be used in the project as to contribute a different perspective by constructing new interconnections between museum and archaeological site.

Research on the *Heraion* of Delos

Archaeological research on the Heraion of Delos dates back to the 19th century. Despite previous interests recorded in drawings and written depictions by travelers in the 18th century[4], local excavations first took place in the 19th century, with the first

4 From the oldest traveler accounts to the first systematic excavations, research on the Heraion of Delos is the object of an ongoing study by Heloisa Vidal, a MSc student at the Graduate Studies Program in the Department of History at Unifesp under supervision of Gilberto da Silva Francisco.

large-scale and more thoroughly recorded excavations starting in 1909 and 1911. This background is essential to understand the Heraion collections at the local museum.

Most artifacts found on the island are stored at the Museum of Delos, whose construction started in 1904[5]. Objects found before this period, however, were kept at various places (for instance, some Delos artifacts were moved to the National Archaeological Museum of Athens), and their whereabouts are now partly unknown. That is, not all objects found in the 19th-century excavations are clearly identified at the museum—in the case of the Heraion, for example, the location of objects found before 1911 is unknown. But starting with the 1911 excavation, the objects have been identified at the museum storage room in numbered drawers, most of which were never exhibited.

After 1911, other excavations—in 1958, 1964, 2002, 2006, and 2008—have taken place, expanding the Heraion collection at the museum. Directed by EFA researcher Pierre Roussel, the 1911 excavation's findings featured in two 1928 publications in the EfA series *Exploration Archéologique de Délos* (EAD), namely in EAD 10 (on the pottery of its votive deposit) and EAD 11 (on sanctuaries around Mount Cynthus, including the Hera Sanctuary) (Dugas 1928; Plassart 1928). In 1956, another part of the votive deposit material was published in the series volume dedicated to terracotta pieces (EAD 23 – Laumonier 1956), and part of the architectonic ruins were reviewed in EAD 36 (Fraisse & Llinas 1995).

Importantly, the artifacts currently held in the museum, which have been consistently published on, come from the 1911 excavations. On the other hand, the objects found in 1958 and later have not yet been widely published. In this regard, a major goal of the research on the Heraion of Delos is to publish the body of sources around a specific question: the history of the cult to Hera in Delos.

As mentioned above, the artifacts found during the 1911 excavations have been featured in many publications and are, to this day, the better known objects in the general expert literature. For example, Dugas' (1928) publication is still widely cited, although interest in it is more linked to the ceramics set than to the cult of Hera[6]. In turn, subsequent interventions in the sanctuary identified an expressive number of objects that remain unpublished.

The excavation chronicles of EfA's *Bulletin de Correspondence Héllenique* (BCH) mention excavations led by Paul Bernard and Jean Ducat (in 1958 and 1964, respectively), but their findings remain largely unknown by the academic community and the general public. EfA's 1959 chronicles on Paul Bernard's 1958 excavations, for example, introduces one single finding: an Attic black-figure vase (Daux 1959: 787-790). The publication on Jean Ducat's excavations (Daux 1965), in turn, features the drawings of some architectural structures found at the site, but the associated materials are only briefly described.

This material remained unstudied in the drawers of the Museum of Delos storage room until the 1990s, when the project's responsibility fell to Haiganuch Sarian, as one of EfA's active projects[7]. Thus, a decades-long gap

5 On the construction stages of the Museum of Delos between 1904 and 1976 and documentation on their process, see Hadjidakis 2003: 109-123.

6 See, for example, Paleothodoros, 2018; Alexandridou 2011: 28, 93.

7 After research resumed, some articles presenting the project and partial interpretation of the materials were published: Sarian 1997, 2000. Information on the findings has also been published in EfA annual reports Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique (Mulliez 2009a, 2009b). For more up-to-date overview on the research and interpretations, see Francisco, Laky & Angliker, 2021.

separate the most recently excavated material from public visibility from when it was found and the 1990s, when their study was resumed in a number of recognition studies. In this regard, the museum stored them and then offered a basis for laboratory analysis of a large set of fragments including ceramics, bones, and metals, among other objects, from various excavations in the 20th and 21st centuries.

This ongoing research, currently under leadership of archaeologist Gilberto da Silva Francisco, will be followed 0by research missions to analyze categories of pottery vases, which range from Geometric Period pieces found in the votive deposit and associated with lateral structures (two outer walls), to Hellenistic pieces associated with the altar and portions of the sanctuary walls. Such analysis will allow us to reflect on the initial and final temporal references of the cult (between the Geometric and Hellenistic periods) and their specific dynamics, in preparation for subsequent publications on the topic (papers and a dossier in EfA's EAD series).

This information illuminates the deep connection between research on this sanctuary and the local museum, which holds all objects found at the archaeological site—except for the large architectural ruins, which are preserved at the original site. However, elements such as tiles and acroteria are kept in the museum storage room. In other words, research on the history of the cult to Hera in Delos, exploring especially the sources found throughout the archaeological interventions at the local site, is largely done at the island's museum.

The Heraion and the Museum of Delos exhibition

Besides hosting archeological research and storing collections from excavations, the Museum of Delos, like most archaeological museums, displays part of its collections in an open exhibition primarily based on typological and chronological references. Hence, instead of presenting objects by recovering their context of use in Antiquity or the context in which they were found, they are recontextualized around elements such as materials, forms, and chronology.

Thus, instead of exhibit rooms or sectors directly aimed at the landscape organization of the archaeological site, the museum reserved seven rooms for the sculptures found there, organized in a chronological itinerary ranging from the Archaic Period to the Roman Period. We also find a large thematic room on "private life," comprising the rich housing complex of the island's Hellenistic Period, a room for Archaic ceramics and, finally, a small room for temporary exhibitions **(Fig. 4)**. This layout was maintained for decades, but recently the room primarily used for ceramic vases was reorganized to include temporary exhibitions.

A significant fact about the objects selected for exhibition is their aesthetic quality and degree of preservation. Most vases previously displayed at the Delos ceramics room came from the votive deposit of the Sanctuary of Hera[8]. According to chronological data, the cult to Hera began in the 8th century BCE and the organization of her sanctuary underwent an important transition in the late 6th and early 5th centuries BCE. (Bruneau & Ducat 2005: 279-281; Francisco, Laky & Angliker 2021: 227-234)

8 On the votive deposit of the Heraion of Delos, see Dugas 1928: 3-8; Plassart 1928: 154-184; Sarian 1997: 62-68; Francisco, Laky & Angliker 2021: 237-239.

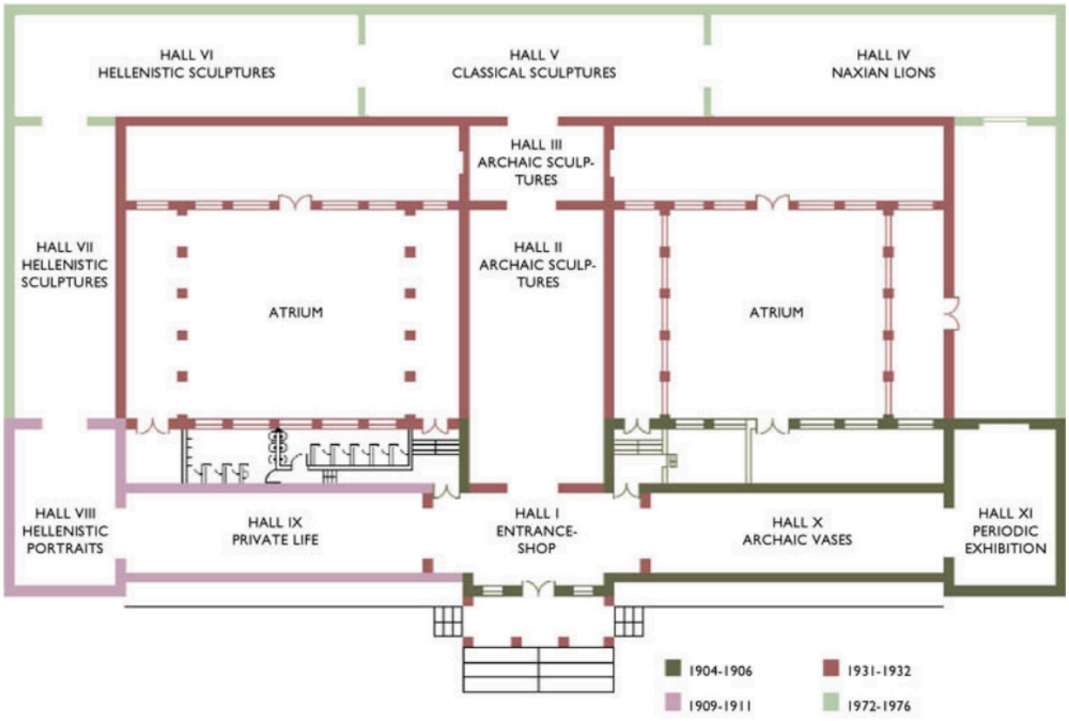

Fig. 4. Plan showing the construction stages of the Museum of Delos.
Source: Hadjidakis 2003: 123.

The votive deposit (the gathered offerings from the previous stage, from mid-8th century to early 5th century BCE, which were buried during the construction of the new temple) has preserved many of its objects in excellent condition. Several ceramic vases, terracotta statuettes, and other objects were found almost intact and thus selected to make up the local museum's exhibition, where they remained until 2017.

However, most of the more poorly preserved objects or those reduced to fragments were kept in the museum storage room, and thus remained unknown by the wider public, including visitors to the museum exhibition. In the case of the ceramic vases found in the Heraion votive deposit, many went unmentioned in Charles Dugas' (1928) systematic catalogue.

Similarly, objects found in later excavations between 1958 and 2008 in a precarious state of conservation (the ceramics set, for example, is quite fragmentary) were not included in the local exhibition, which was still undergoing renovation and expansion works until the 1970s, that is, after the 1958 and 1964 excavations at Heraion.

Thus, between the museum's displays and the drawers of its storage room, objects were preserved that reveal, in the specific contexts of their safekeeping, selections based on their contemporary appraisal, which sensibly interfered with their accessibility—that is, those objects potentially seen by the many tourists who visit the museum each year, and those only seen by researchers with access to the museum's storage room and to specialized publications.

As for the exhibition, let us resume the rationale behind the exhibition design. As mentioned, the expography is primarily chronological and typological, which recontextualize the objects based on a clearly traditional archaeological logic seen, for example, in many catalogues and repertoires.

In general, a relevant example is the international series *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum* (CVA), which prioritizes typological and chronological aspects in the scientific ordering of the numerous collections of Greek vases (Sarian 1998-1999; Francisco 2013, 2018), even when information on their context is known. One such example is volume 69 of the Museum of Naples' CVA publication titled "Raccolta Cumana," which presents the Greek ceramic vases found in the excavations led by Leopoldo di Borbone in Cuma between 1852 and 1857. The publication followed the thread of the series, constraining the set's presentation to a primarily typological and chronological logic, despite the existing context information available.

In the case of Delos, several volumes of the EAD series present objects found in the island's excavations based on a typological-chronological ordering. For example, the EAD publication on the ceramic vases from the Heraion votive deposit—a key study on this ceramic set, but which superficially discusses the religious issue involved in the collection of these vases in Antiquity, prioritizing debates on ceramic categories from a typological and chronological bias (**Fig. 5**, **6**).

In other words, beyond the excavation context (which is potentially observed in a visit to the archaeological site) or conditions of past use associated with systemic contexts, the museum establishes another rationale for exhibiting its objects. But their connection with the finding site and related ancient dynamics are not completely ignored: there are many indications at the museum, such as object labels, that convey context aspects like the specific provenance at the archaeological site (**Fig. 7**).

That is, information on either the original context or the discovery-context of these objects is available, but subjected to a typological- chronological rationale in the museum's expography. Hence the museum, through its internal logic, leads its visitors into a new way of relating to the information about the exhibited heritage, different from the one experienced during external visitation, that is, in visits to the archaeological site. The museum, thus, not only keeps the objects, but also fashions a new way of relating to them.

In the case of the Heraion of Delos, the ceramic vases that made up a significant part of the room dedicated primarily to pottery were organized according to chronology, form and origin (production center). Their relation to the local Heraion can only be noticed as one reads the individual labels amidst a set of hundreds of objects. The same can be said about some marble statuettes placed in the Archaic Period room: they were brought together with other similar sculptures found in various regions of the island, whose layout followed a chronological display. Again, their connection to the sanctuary of Hera can only be made by carefully reading each label (**Fig. 8**).

In this regard, their recontextualization is characterized by organizational strategies from traditional archaeological research. As discussed, this logic is also observed in publications that depict varied object repertories. In the case of the Heraion of Delos, the ceramic vases and terracotta figurines found in its votive deposit (and eventually in other regions of this sanctuary) were published as such. One thus realizes a clear connection between the exhibition and the predominant form taken by sets of archaeological objects in specialized catalogues.

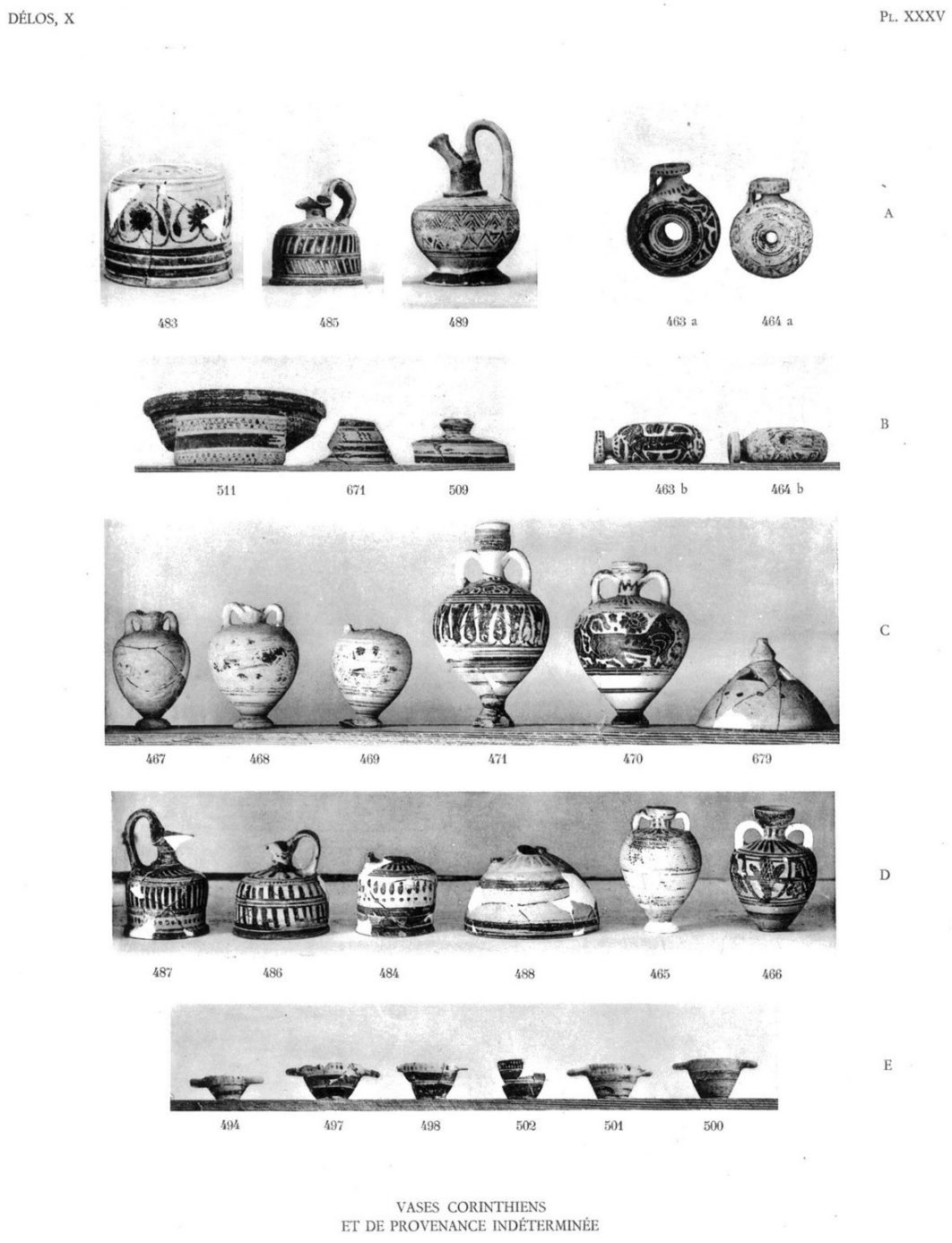

Fig. 5. Plate from the catalog on ceramics from the votive deposit of the Heraion of Delos (EAD 10).
Source: Dugas 1928.

Fig. 6. Displays in the ceramic vases hall – Museum of Delos, 2006.
Source: personal archive of Gilberto da Silva Francisco.

Fig. 7. Terracotta figurines in display case with bilingual label (French and Greek) – Museum of Delos, 2006.
Source: personal archive of Gilberto da Silva Francisco.

Fig. 8. Archaic marble sculptures – Museum of Delos, 2006.
Source: personal archive of Gilberto da Silva Francisco.

More than that, the same logic can be observed in several other Greek museums and in other countries. In other words, the traditional archaeological museum presents an internal landscape that is recognized in different places and situations. As such, one can claim that the Museum of Delos is part of a landscape dynamics characterized by these internationally articulated mechanisms. Its specificity, of course, is in repertoire closely related to the local archaeological site, which hosts the ruins, and the museum's physical space itself.

Thus, the exhibition has a specific feature intrinsically linked to the local archaeological site, but also—considering its organizational logic—proposes a certain communication with traditional archeological aspects, observable in academic publications and archaeological museum exhibitions worldwide: a communication of local character in terms of content, but one that may have global reach in its form.

Digital tools and repositioning the exhibit design

In traditional exhibitions, where objects are arranged in displays and associated with tags and explanatory panels, the process through which real objects (at times, replaced by plaster or reproductions) contrast with their textual narratives is clearly demarcated, excluding an important variety of visual media forms.

But this logic has been redefined in recent years by introducing visual media that rearrange such traditional space (Lester 2006). It is not necessarily about virtualized 3D objects (yet), but the inclusion of audiovisual media (videos and photos) that extend the reach of communication and educational strategies.

Considering this broad debate, in the case of the Heraion project, our proposal applies a twofold strategy: on one hand, it fosters a new debate on the rationale of interactions between museum and archaeological site, by virtually and interactively integrating these two spaces; and, on the other, it brings up the specific debate on the use of technological resources, which enable (in a virtual setting) a more comprehensive experience to the "virtual visitors"—though distinct from that of the island's visitor. Our aim, therefore, is not to exclude on-site visitation as a perspective of knowledge on the archaeological site and its related collection, but to introduce a complementary possibility.

A first step is related to virtual restoration strategies, which recall the ongoing debate on the physical methods by which archaeological objects are restored, considering their numerous historical elements: from the most ancient methods, which sought to reconstitute their original features and often exposed them to irreversible restoration processes, to appreciating hiatuses as aesthetic elements and the prevalent use of reversible and less intrusive methods.

Moreover, physical restoration can also be expensive, requiring displacement of restoration professionals, specific authorizations issued by local heritage authorities, and the use of suitable materials for inserting prostheses into the unpreserved regions of an object. As such, selectiveness is often greater in physical restoration processes. Given this scenario, virtual restoration becomes a promising possibility, since it allows for a diversity of reconstitution proposals without directly interfering in the object's physical constitution. In practical terms, work in virtual spaces ensures the physical integrity of archaeological objects by employing non-intrusive and non-intervening tools in their recording, restoration and reconstruction.

We must also consider the consequences of these new possibilities for communication, that is, the strategies used to publicize these objects. A first interesting element is record expansion, either in terms of the increased number of objects selected for virtual restoration, or in terms of the distinct proposals elaborated for object reconstitution. Moreover, when considering the production of virtual exhibits, the features of the museum's physical space need not to guide the arrangement of displays and shelves.

In a virtual setting, therefore, strategies must be specific. Of course, the virtual record of an exhibition from the museum's physical space can also be virtually replicated (as a kind of virtual visit to the museum as it is physically organized). But other strategies can also be introduced, such as creating sequential rooms that arrange the collection based on the features of the virtual space; and creating distinct itineraries along which collections are introduced in a "moving" way—for example, as a visit guided by spatial references of the virtualized archaeological site itself, among others.

Besides, in this virtual setting, access to the collection does not depend on the visitor's physical displacement. If in the case of the Museum of Delos, a visitor must physically go to the island and buy a ticket to the archaeological site and the museum, in a virtual museum the same collection can be presented differently.

Once again, one experience does not replace the other. We are not thinking in terms of exclusivity but, instead, in creating instruments that enable

other experiences regarding access to the museum collection. These experiences would expand, for example, the strategies related to the visitation of exhibit spaces, inserting, in the museum's narrative, objects that, either for their state of preservation or for their formal, stylistic or technological specificities, have yet to be featured in the main selections of physical exhibits.

Another relevant element is the situation of the objects in the museum, whether in the exhibition or in the storage room, and their connections with the archaeological site, which is based on a recontextualization of objects into groups following primarily typological and chronological criteria. Noticing these basic aspects that contextualize exhibition-objects is essential for proposing other ways of presenting them, based on rationales that could reinsert them into their context of use and discovery.

This perspective could suggest to visitors other forms of presenting an object, a group of objects and their many possible connections: for example, an object can be presented based on its productive settings (a particular workshop or production location), its displacement and use in specific contexts, its integration to archaeological research due to excavation discovery, and its laboratory analysis, storage and integration into communication processes such as public exhibitions.

Importantly, work in a virtual setting goes beyond the possibility of recovering the original contexts in which objects were produced or used. It also allows to place them in complex horizons that integrate new forms of contextualization. It is the reflection of an object from a broad perspective, dialoguing with the narratives on the life cycle or operational chains that interest us here: beyond the proposal of a crystalized object presentation into a "memory theater," a virtual environment can provide a number of interconnected layers in its presentation, thus involving the complexity of the unitary entity and its connections.

By changing the relation to an object and overcoming the distance between (current) object and its (past) role—by recontextualizing archaeological collections within exhibit practices—, visitors now may relate to the objects in such way as to contemplate a diversity of possibilities, outside their attention to coherence by formal similarity arranged in chronological linearity or that proper to the "memory theater."

Given the above, the proposed research on the Sanctuary of Hera seeks to harness all the possibilities enabled by digital tools to build a new expographic logic, based on a new model not restricted to the museum's physical spaces— its exhibition and storage rooms alike—, providing a complementary and immersive experience for its visitors. This goal will be achieved by devising an exhibition aimed at a diversified contextualization of the *Heraion* objects, by returning them to their contexts of creation and use in Antiquity, or to other contexts they became a part of since their integration in the fields of scientific heritage and research amidst the dynamics of modern societies.

Our intention, therefore, is to create a complementary logic of experience beyond a mere alternative to the existing one, to further promote— by the available technological innovations— the dialogue between museum and archaeological site.

Expected tools and a proposal for the exhibition setting

First, we must state that the use of digital tools in archaeological practice is nothing new. Indeed, we are spectators

(and actors) of the exponential increase in their applications to exhibition (and educational) contexts worldwide— which, in turn, were further accelerated from 2020 on due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In such context, the ongoing debates faced a pressing moment of application that allowed their association to the emerging issues due to the pandemic.

Thus, reflecting on these virtual resources and their influence in archaeological research beyond matters of record, scientific dissemination, communication, etc., also involves understanding museum management and communication issues in specific contexts, which presuppose, for example, restrictions to circulation and gatherings of groups of visitors in indoor spaces.

Virtual dissemination of knowledge by museums and by research and teaching institutions has significantly increased. And the diversity of its applications can be easily noticed by simply researching our current search engines. Within this technological approach, some elements guide our creative process, which are structured by two distinct but complementary elements, namely the expographic logic— focused on recontextualizing objects based on various possibilities (production, use, disposal, discovery and contemporary resignifications)— and the materialization of a virtual (visitor) experience by digital technologies.

Virtual applications seek to represent a simulated reality in which the visitor's itinerary along the museum spaces is transferred to the virtual environment. In these simulations, the integrated use of different tools and media forms can significantly expand the visitor's experience with each work of art or archaeological object. One such example is "America treasures," an exhibit hosted at the *Shapespark* platform (a real-time rendering tool), a creative solution aligned with the current demands.

In the case of the Heraion in Delos— the object of discussion in this paper—, a full contextualization of the archaeological material is the starting point for organizing a new expographic logic. This goal can be achieved by integrating different imaging tools (2D and 3D media) and virtual heritage-dissemination platforms. Archaeological illustrations, virtual reality and augmented reality can, therefore, provide us a wide range of working possibilities for construing this new museum rationale encompassing theory, planning, and practice.

As the starting point, our main concern is disseminating knowledge on the *Heraion* of Delos, which may further the ongoing dialogue between the museum and the site, recontextualizing objects in their systemic (behavior) and archaeological (science practice) perspective to aggregate, as much as possible, elements that may also indicate their heritage function between space (setting, or landscape) and objects **(Fig. 9)**.

For each of these specific perspectives, tools and methods, the following will be used for constructing exhibition spaces, which will be organized in two main themes and their ramifications: the systemic context, that is, the context of use and production of the archaeological objects; and the archaeological context, including all stages of the scientific method **(Table 1) (Fig. 10-12)**. Constructing, reproducing, registering, and restoring the archaeological objects and their narratives will be achieved by using different tools. Finally, we will use different platforms to publicize these spaces, resorting to the valuable means of access currently available online.

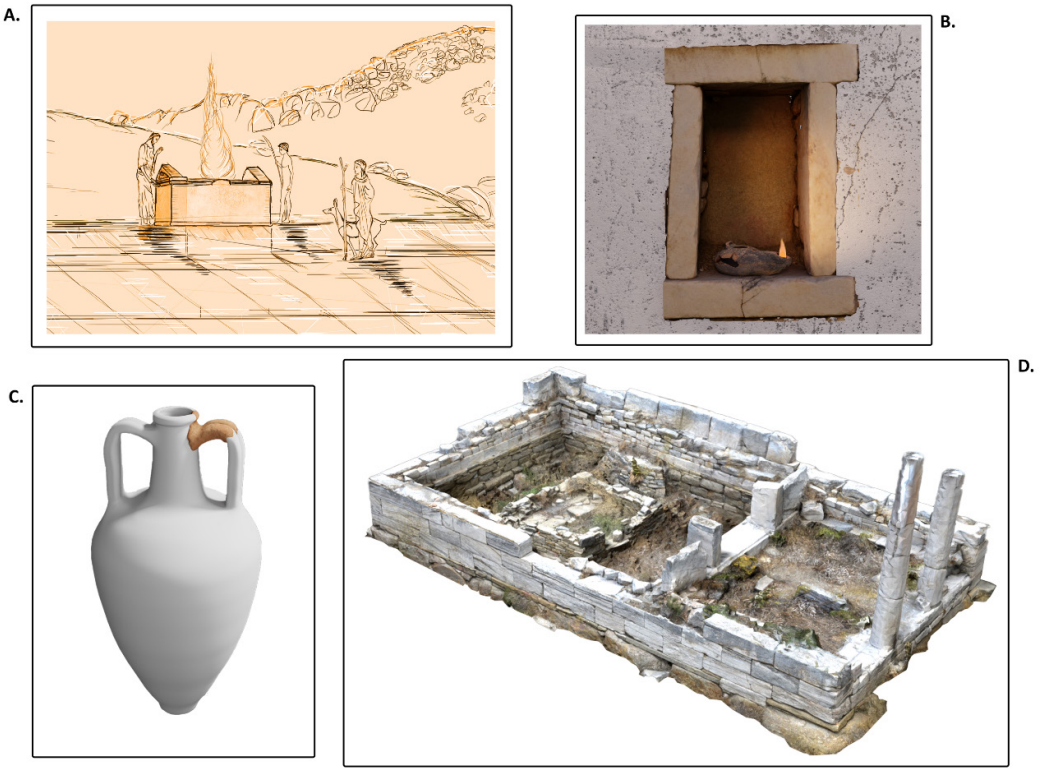

Fig. 9. Systemic perspective – A. Archaeological 2D (Photoshop) Illustration; and B. Archaeological 3D (Blender) Illustration; Archaeological Perspective – C. Virtual Restoration (Blender); D. Photogrammetry (Metashape).
Source: made by Carolina Machado Guedes.

Tool	Aplication	Description	Company	Category
Photoshop	• Archaeological representation • Representation of past behavior	Raster images editor	Adobe	Paid license
Illustrator	• Archaeological illustration • Representation of past behavior	Vector image editor	Adobe	Paid license
Aero	Augmented Reality (AR)	Tool for creating interactive experiences (Augmented Reality - AR)	Adobe	Paid license
Blender	• Virtual representation of the Sanctuary' space • Representation of past behavior • Virtualization of archaeological object	3D modeling, animation, texturing, compositing, rendering and video editing program	Blender	Open license

Tool	Aplication	Description	Company	Category
Metashape	• Virtualization of the archaeological object	Image processing tool and 3D model generation	Agisoft	Paid license
Unreal Engine	• Virtual Reality (VR)	Realtime rendering tool	Epic Games	Paid license
Shapespark	• Virtual Reality • Archaeological Visualization	Realtime rendering tool	Shapespark	Paid license
Sketchfab	• Virtual reality (VR) • Augmented Reality (AR) • Archaeological visualization	Platform for publishing, disseminating and sharing 3D, VR and VA content	Sketchfab	Various options

Table 1. Digital tools and their general applications.
Source: made by Carolina Machado Guedes.

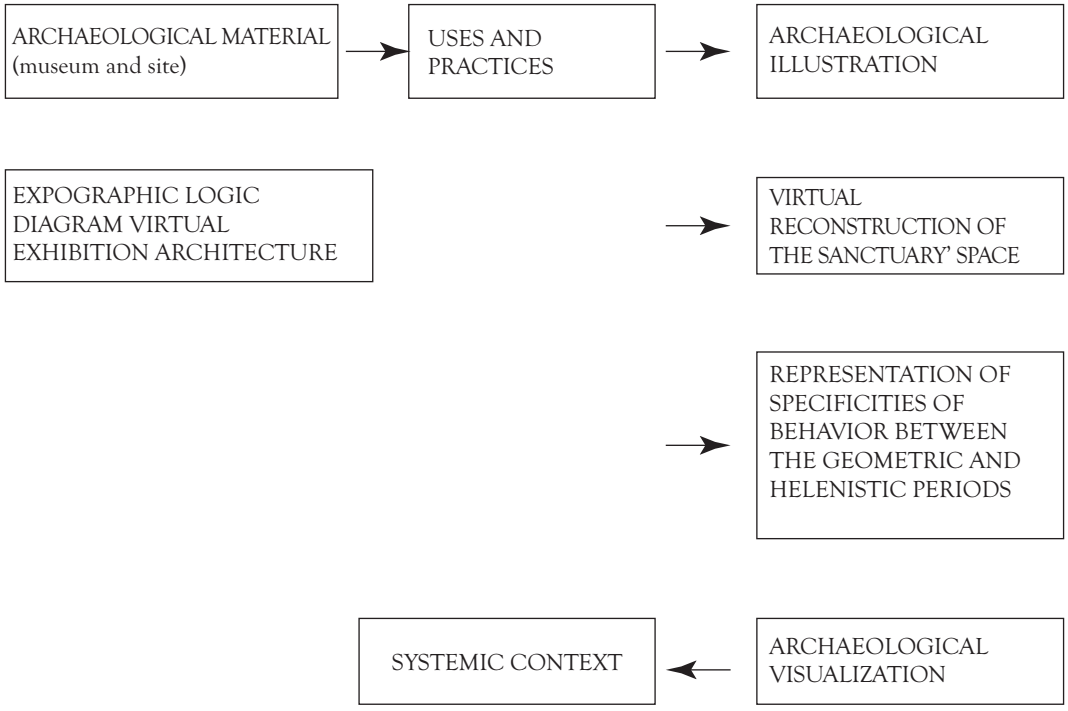

Fig. 10. Stages of building a systemic perspective (behavior).
Source: made by Carolina Machado Guedes.

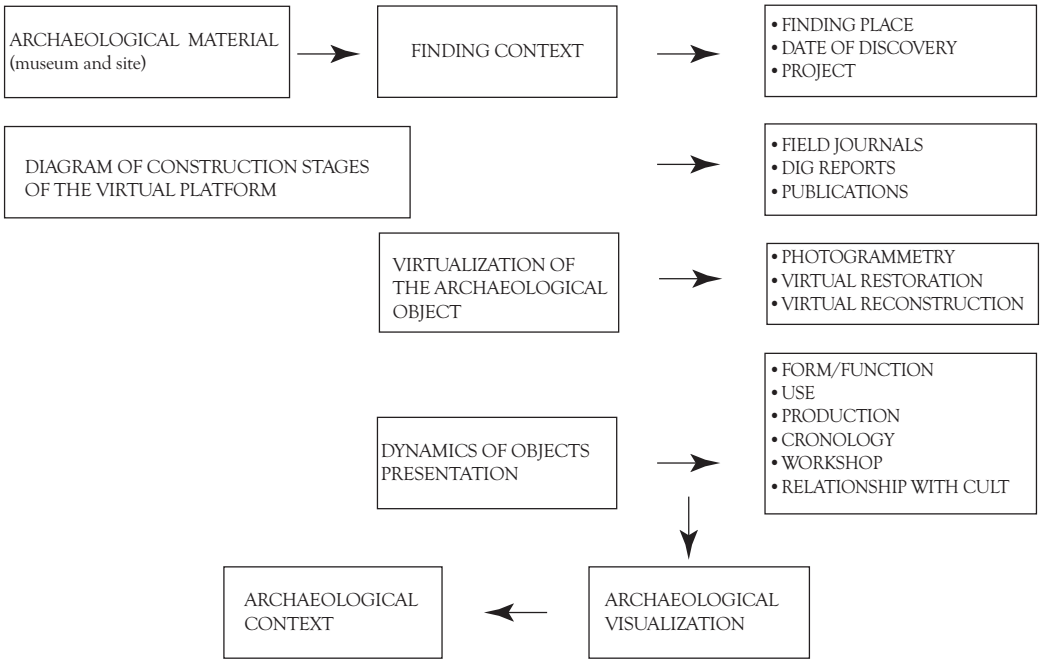

Fig. 11. States of building an archaeological perspective (science practice).
Source: made by Carolina Machado Guedes.

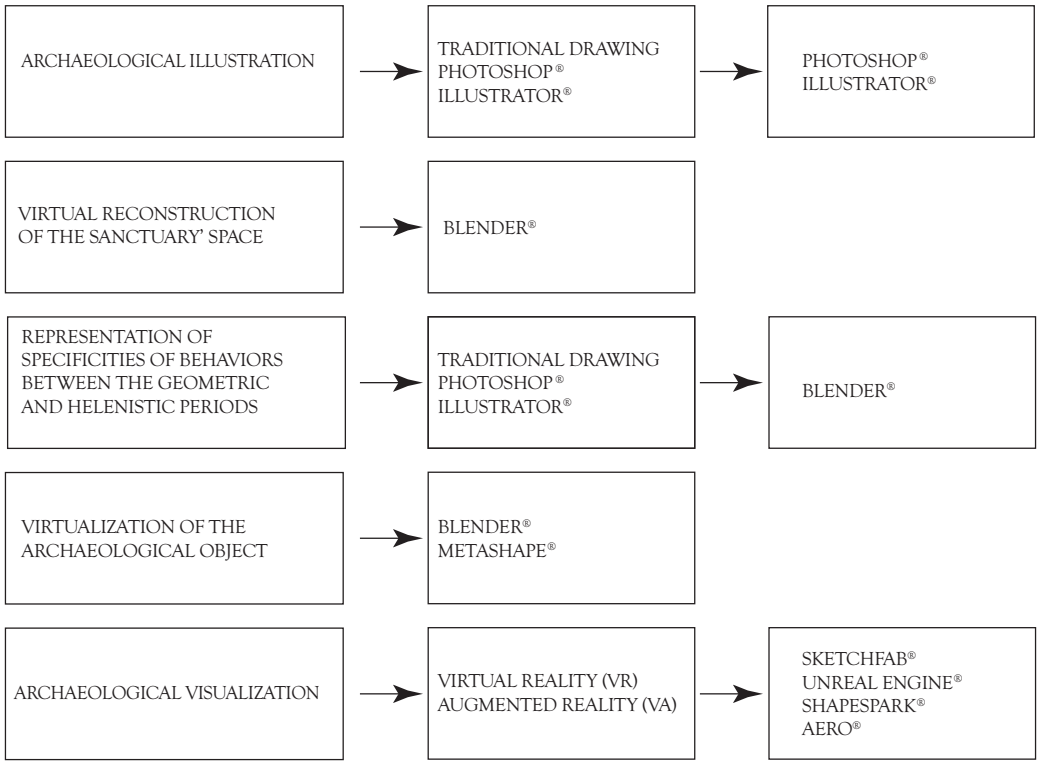

Fig. 12. Chart on the available digital tools and their uses.
Source: made by Carolina Machado Guedes.

Final considerations

In summary, it is important to resume some of the points addressed above: based on the research on the Heraion of Delos, we proposed an interpretation of the dynamics of archaeological research and certain communication strategies associated with the archaeological site and the local museum. This interaction is largely based on and limited to significant spatial issues, such as the recontextualization of many objects found in archaeological excavations under a rationale observed in many archaeological museum exhibitions. Thus, the study of storage and communication processes is essential to understand the ways in which objects are organized as they are integrated into archaeological research, as well as their informational (as documents) and heritage functions.

If well understood, the interactive dynamics between these spheres of discovery, storage and communication that organize the archaeological site and the museum can lead to new reflections capable of integrating current technological innovations. Beyond virtually replicating the archaeological site, the exhibit's physical environment or a given object, these innovations present new possibilities of dialogue between the site and the museum in the aforementioned spheres. In the case of the Heraion of Delos, research based on producing 3D-models in a virtual environment allowed us to go beyond the virtual replication of objects, to reflect on the logic of restoration itself, and to what extent these innovations can be integrated to create new ways to restore or reconstruct.

The proposal introduced above is only one example of a new set of possibilities to conciliate strategies that enable the advancement of archaeological research and communication strategies—both essential activities for knowledge development—based on issues that consider not only technology and archaeology, but also heritage, highlighting its communicational function.

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Resumo: Este texto está inserido no quadro de pesquisas sobre o Santuário de Hera (*Heraion*) de Delos, um dos projetos da École française d'Athènes (EFA) e relacionado a uma rede de colaboradores provenientes de várias universidades brasileiras. Mais especificamente, discutimos no texto a íntima relação entre as pesquisas arqueológicas sobre o santuário de Hera em Delos, que remontam ao século XIX, e o museu local, que foi construído no início do século XX. Nesse sentido, são apresentadas questões relacionadas à dinâmica da pesquisa entre sítio arqueológico e museu local, a lógica da apresentação de vários objetos provenientes do sítio arqueológico na exposição aberta ao público do museu e, além disso, estratégias baseadas em ambiente virtual de reorganizar alguns limites entre sítio arqueológico, museu local e comunicação.

Palavras-chave: *Heraion* de Delos; Museu Arqueológico de Delos; Expografia; Pesquisa Arqueológica; Ferramentas e mídias digitais.

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