

[DOI: 10.20472/IAC.2015.018.133](https://doi.org/10.20472/IAC.2015.018.133)

BIRSEN UNAL

Selcuk University, Turkey

MUSEOLOGY IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Abstract:

History is one of the most essential academic disciplines for the existence of states, societies and nations. Historical sources are important elements in order to research history as an academic discipline, to evaluate the past events and to illuminate the period when they occur. Aboveground and underground historical sources reveal the political, social, economic, religious and cultural approaches of the states, nations and societies. States, nations and societies have gradually paid special attention to the protection of historical artefacts within the frame of these values. They have taken them under protection.

With regards to archaeology, the Ottoman Empire had been a rich country in terms of aboveground and underground historical sources because of its geographical position and historical past. However, there had not been any efficient effort to protect and evaluate the historical sources for centuries. This caused the impairment of many historical sources in the Ottoman Empire either consciously or unconsciously. Apart from the damage they got in the archaeological site where they were discovered, this situation caused the smuggling of the historical artefacts from the Ottoman Empire.

After the second half of the 19th century, historical artefacts discovered within the state boundaries were taken under protection with regulations. As in other states, the ownership of historical artefacts became a prestigious element in international affairs. Operations were carried out about confiscating and recording the historical artefacts and the data related to the place where they were discovered. The increasing numbers of the collected historical artefacts in War Warehouse caused lack of space for storage. Therefore, other places were allocated to solve this problem.

Preservation, protection and recording of the historical artefacts have revealed museology activities in the Ottoman Empire. Systematic museology activities, started in 1846, became one of the important issues even during the war period. In this regard, the practices and the measures taken indicate that museology activities actively operated even if they started late in the Ottoman Empire. In this study, we will discuss both the confiscation of underground and aboveground historical artefacts and the related studies conducted about this issue in the Ottoman Empire.

Keywords:

Ottoman Empire, museology, source, artefact, preservation, museum

JEL Classification: Z00