

2015 FYP FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

3rd Prize

A comparative study of university museum, the Nicholson Museum of the University of Sydney and the Art Museum of the Chinese University of Hong Kong

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This research, from an anthropological perspective, discovered roles of university museums, dynamic social relationship between university museums, university academic departments and donors, as well as its power in constructing identities. The goal was to show university museums were not only important academic research centers and public showcase of universities,



but sites of power politics. Sydney and Hong Kong, where the Nicholson Museum of the University of Sydney and the Art Museum of the Chinese University of Hong Kong located, shared unique historical background of being a British colony. The two museums' ways of interpreting and constructing history and knowledge through exhibitions were deeply related to their colonial background. Moreover, the Nicholson Museum, which was an archaeological museum, worked closely with the Archaeology Department of Sydney University; while the Art Museum collaborated with the Fine Art Department of the Chinese University of Hong Kong to develop its role as a Chinese art museum. In a globalized world searching for national or cultural identities, the Nicholson Museum's and the Art Museum's interpretations towards relationship between citizens and cities, and nation states, contributed to created senses of belonging and identities in the post-colonial time of Sydney and Hong Kong respectively. Quantitative and qualitative data had been gained for this research by participating in internships and voluntary work of the two university museums and conducting in-depth interviews with their professional curators by the author. Through this comparative study of university museums, roles, functions and missions of university museums could be examined and their importance could be highlighted.