KENYA MUSEUM SOCIETY

TRACKER

April 2019

The Jain Shwetamber Munisuvratswami Temple (see p. 10) Photo Jill Ghai

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Kenya Museum Society News

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 22 May 2019
FROM SECRETARY, DR. MARLA STONE

Due to a scheduling conflict with Nature Kenya's AGM, the KMS AGM **has been changed** to **Wednesday, 22 May, at 6:30pm in Ford Hall**. See the agenda below. **Wine, juice and bitings will be provided from 6:15.**

The meeting will be preceded by a **tour of the new KMS-funded Bees Exhibition** in the museum at **5:45 pm.**

Any member who wishes to nominate officers or other Council members is encouraged to contact the KMS office by email or phone at least two weeks in advance. Any member who wishes to submit a resolution at the Annual General Meeting must do so by sending it in writing by Friday, 18 May, to the Secretary, Dr. Marla Stone, via the KMS email (info@kenyamuseumsociety.org)

Please **confirm your attendance** on or before **Monday, 20 May** by email to (info@kenyamuseumsociety.org) or phone (020 3743808, 0724 255299, or wireless 020 2339158). If your membership has lapsed or will soon lapse you may renew prior to the beginning of the meeting. Though all categories of members are encouraged to attend, only paid-up members, exclusive of student members, visitor members, NMK special category members, and KMS staff, will be able to vote on any issues.

The agenda for the AGM will be as follows:

1. Opening of Meeting
2. Approval of Minutes of 2018 AGM
3. Chairperson's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. New Business
   a. Election of officers and other Council members
   b. Appointment of auditor
   c. Additional new business
   d. Revision of visitors membership charges

6. Adjournment

Please mark your calendar now to attend. Thank you.

Trips and events

By participating in KMS events, you are helping to support projects of the National Museums of Kenya.

Longer Trips (more than 2 nights)

Marich Pass and Turkwell Gorge

19-22 April, 2019

The Easter trip is to this incredibly beautiful part of West Pokot. We shall stay at the simple but charming Marich Pass Field Studies Centre. It is strung along the Maruny River, and surrounded by bush full of birds. In the distance you see Mt Sekerr and Mt Koh.

Programme

Day 1 – Depart Nairobi at 7 am. Picnic lunch en route, stop in Kapenguria and visit the Kapenguria Museum. There is a fine exhibition on the trial of the Kapenguria Six during the Mau Mau period. Arrive at Marich. There may be time for a pleasant walk along the Maruny River. Dinner.

Day 2 – Take the road towards Turkwell Gorge. Visit the Turkwell Power Plant (permission yet to be confirmed). Lunch and a swim at the Club in Turkwell.

Day 3 – Spend the day in the area. Visit a local market in one of the nearby "towns" and the Wei Wei Irrigation Scheme.

If time permits a walk in the area around the Field Study Centre.

Day 4 – After an early breakfast depart for Nairobi.

Cost: Ksh 23,800 [The menu at Marich Pass has some gaps so I will carry some extra tasty things. Hence the small increase in price – Narinder]

Included: FB for 3 full days, guide fees, tips.

Not Included: transport, picnic lunch on day 1 and 4, entry fee to Kapenguria Museum (if any)

Bookings: 0724 255299 or info@kenyamuseumsociety.org

Payment Options:

1. M-PESA PayBill Business no: 400800, Account no: 6571570019

2. A cheque payable to Kenya Museum Society

3. **Direct Bank Transfer;**

Bank: Commercial Bank of Africa
Account Name: KENYA MUSEUM SOCIETY

Bank Account: 657 157 0019; Bank Code: 07; Branch: Westlands; Branch Code: 004
Bank Swift

code: CBAFKENX

The Tugen and Cherangani Hills

May 1-5 (4 nights)

The Tugen and Cherangani Hills

1-5 May, 2019 (4 nights) This is one of the most fascinating but lesser known parts of Kenya. On this 4-night trip we head beyond Nakuru towards the Tugen Hills. Parts of the hills are heavily forested. The road then plunges towards Kerio Valley, giving magnificent views. The valley includes Lake Kamnarok, Rimoi Park, Chebloch Gorge and Torok Falls. The dramatic Elgeyo Escarpment is on our left as we climb into the Cherangani Hills, home of many of Kenya's marathon and middle distance runners. Kerio Valley may not have made it home but it has a superb birdlife.

Trip is full!

In Iten, we shall stay at Kerio View Hotel. This is a Swiss chalet-style hotel overlooking Kerio Valley. Kerio Valley is the best place in Kenya for this sport. It is also the hotel where the famous runners stay. St Patrick's School in Iten has produced a stream of famous runners.

Programme:

Day 1: Drive to the Tugen Hills. Visit a small museum near the site where the fossils of the 5-6 million old hominid Orrorin Tugens is were unearthed in 2001, making it the oldest hominid ever found in Kenya. Picnic lunch. We reach Sego late afternoon. There may be time for a birdwalk around the lodge or just swim and relax on the rooftop garden with its 180 degree view of the Elgeyo Escarpment. Dinner at Sego.

Day 2: Visit Chebloch Gorge and possibly Lake Kamnarok or drive high up into the Cherenganis. Picnic lunch. Dinner at Sego.

Day 3: Drive to Iten. Visit the 'stadium' where many runners can be seen on their morning run. Drive into the higher Cheranganis. The farms give way to forest and the landscape is beautiful. This is a popular area for hiking. Picnic lunch.

Day 4: After breakfast head to Baringo. We stay at the beautiful and rather expensive Tumbili Cliffs Lodge. Evening birdwalk. A night star tour if the sky is clear.

Day 5: After breakfast we depart for Nairobi. Lunch stop in Nakuru.

Cost: Ksh 34,600 per person sharing. Single room supplement available on request.

Included: Half board for 3 days, full board in Baringo (please carry your own picnic lunches for the days 1-3). There may be a small charge for the star gazing.

Not Included: Transport, entry to Tugen Museum, picnic lunches, boat trip in Baringo.

Off-peak Mara

24-26 May

Enjoy the tranquil beauty of the Mara in May. There are few minibuses but plenty of game. We shall stay at the beautiful Sarova Mara Camp.

Cost: 21,800 ksh pp sharing
Included: 2 days FB
Not included: transport, park entry and lunch on Sunday.
Book and Pay by Mon 13 May

Turkana

8 – 17 June

The KMS annual trip to this amazing part of Northern Kenya.

Programme

Day 1 – Overnight at Archers Post

Day 2 and 3 – Stay at South Horr. It will include a walk in the town, drive around the area and evening sundowners in the dry river bed.

Day 4 – Loiyangalani. Late afternoon visit to the desert Museum. Sundowners overlooking the Lake.

Day 5 and 6 – Arrive at the Museum's archaeological site in Koobi Fora. Guided tour of the Koobi Fora Museum. Evening bird walk along the lakeshore.

Day 7 – Visit the Petrified Forest, drive through this amazing desert to North Horr, an interesting oasis settlement in the desert. A walk along the shallow streams and look for endemic bird species.

Day 8 – Overnight camp in the Chalbi Desert under an awesome night sky.

Day 9 – Stay in Marsabit. If time permits an afternoon walk in the town.

Day 10 – Drive to Nairobi (it's tarmac all the way)

Accommodation: Both camping and banda options available throughout. Members pay for whatever they choose; camping is usually Ksh 500 and Bandas Ksh 1,000

Transport: In comfortable land cruisers that sit 6 persons

Included: All meals provided for 9 days. All camping equipment, including mattress and pillow, provided but you pay your own camp/banda fee.

Not included: Lunch on day 10, park entry to Sibiloi National Reserve.

Cost will be forwarded to you as soon as we receive it.

➢➢The trip was originally advertised from 8 -16 June. If anyone had made a flight booking that clashes with 17 June, kindly let us know.

Day Outings

Are you looking to have some relaxing Saturdays away from your busy schedule and yet not willing to travel too far? Here are some carefully selected and excellent day outings coming up soon (April – June) that you can sign up for.

#TourRelaxLearn

Karura Forest: Saturday, 27 April 2019 Time: 9 am to 12 pm

The Karura Forest Reserve is an urban upland forest on the outskirts of Nairobi. This remarkable geographical location and natural resource is one of the largest gazetted forests in the world fully within a city limit. It covers an area of about 1,000 ha (2,500 ac) and today is a shining example of how country-based corporate social responsibility and individual philanthropy can serve to secure and protect a country's natural resources.

It is the perfect place to get your muscles moving and blood pumping as it offers eco-friendly opportunities for visitors to enjoy a leafy green respite from the hustle and bustle of the city. One can walk, jog, or simply sit quietly and experience the serenity of nature in all its diversity.

The forest has several historical sites and areas of special interest, which include:

- a 15-metre waterfall
- an old chimney incinerator – used by the Central Bank for the burning of decommissioned currency up until the mid-1990′s
- an abandoned stone quarry pond, now called Lily Lake
- caves which are considered sacred by many and steeped in Kenyan history (they were formerly used by the Mau-Mau freedom fighters as hideouts during the struggle for Independence)
- patches of bamboo
- marshlands that attract bird life including winter migrants from Europe and Asia

- Serene Groves of secondary and primary indigenous trees.

The forest is also where Professor Wangari Maathai (late leader of the Green Belt Movement and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate) carried out a much-publicized campaign for saving the forest from developers who tried to grab large portions of the north of the central section of the forest. The forest became a symbol of the fight against land grabbing in Kenya.

Charges;

KMS Members Ksh 700 Non-Members Ksh 900

The tour includes:

- Guide fees & tip
- A guided tour of the forest including the waterfalls and caves
- A talk on the heritage of Wangari Maathai
- Birdwatching
- An opportunity to purchase trees from the nursery within the forest.

Excluded: Picnic Lunch, entrance fees and transport.

Optional: Tree planting

City Walking Tour: History of Nairobi street names & gazetted buildings Sunday, 12 May 2019

Archaeology & Palaeontology dept. behind the scenes guided tour Saturday, 18 May 2019 Nairobi National Museum

Entomology dept, behind the scenes guided tour – KMS & Muthaiga Country Club Members Saturday, 8 June 2019 Nairobi National Museum

Bookings: 0724 255299 or info@kenyamuseumsociety.org

Payment: Safaricom - M-PESA PayBill Business no: 400800, Account no: 6571570019

➢*By participating in KMS outings/events, you not only meet interesting people and make friends, but help support the National Museums of Kenya.*

#OurMuseumOurHeritage

Talk

Excellent background for the Beekeeping exhibition!

Kenya Museum Society and Muthaiga Country Club

Bees in Decline

How it affects Kenya's Biodiversity and Economic Development

Did you know that one third of our global food supply is pollinated by bees and without bees, humans wouldn't have very much to eat?

Prof. Mary Gikungu

Kenya's top bee specialist, pollination ecologist and Director, National Repository and Research, National Museums of Kenya

Dr. Gikungu will fascinate you with her breadth of knowledge of how a hive operates and her comparisons of the bee social structure to that of human organizations.

Try to think of a question she cannot answer about bees!

Saturday, 13 April 2019

Muthaiga Country Club

Bitings & Bar 6:30pm, Lecture 7:00 pm

Cost: Ksh 3,300 Canapes, Lecture and Dinner, Child (7-12 yrs) Ksh 2,600
Ksh 1,500 Canapes and Lecture only, Child (7-12 yrs) Ksh 900

Note: Prices do not include drinks

Bookings: 0724 255299 or info@kenyamuseumsociety.org

M-PESA PayBill Business no: 400800, Account no: 6571570019

PLEASE NOTE: There will be a club surcharge of Ksh.500 for any unregistered guests

Kids' Special Art Session: #PaintingWithoutBrushes
Saturday 13 April 2019 Nairobi National Museum

Guest artist – Remy Musindi, professional artist who is passionate about young and upcoming artists
Ages 6-12 years (no younger, please)

Art's role in education is to help children develop their own skills and interests, promoting individuality and expression.

This will be a guided, artsy-craftsy, thought provoking event which will encourage children to explore/improve their artistic skills and feed any passion they may already have for art. They will use their creative skills and materials around them (leaves, potatoes, cut-out paper designs, and even their hands), but not brushes, to make expressive paintings. The methods can then be replicated at home.

Note: Children must wear clothes which won't matter if they get paint on them.

Price: Ksh 800 – member's child Ksh 1,000 – non-member's child

Included: Paint Art materials Artist's allowance Water/juice & biscuits

What to bring: perhaps extra drinking water, snacks.

Optional: Picnic lunch (to eat in the garden after the event)

Payment: M-PESA PayBill, Business no: 400800, Account no: 6571570019

Bookings: 0724 255299, 2339158 or info@kenyamuseumsociety.org

Pre-registration is appreciated for planning purposes.

Account of a past KMS trip: To the Jain Temple
by Jill Ghai (photos and captions by Saryoo Shah)

Unless you go personally to pay your electricity bill at Stima Plaza in Kolobot Road, you may never have seen the Jain Shwetamber Munisuvratswami Temple. Or, indeed, a second Jain Temple just up the road.

A group of interested KMS members had the privilege of visiting the first on March 30th. The temple is one of three in Nairobi (and there is also one in Mombasa). The third Nairobi temple is in Keekorok Road in the city. The temples date from the 1920s and 30s.

This is the Munisuvrat Swami in whose honour this Jain temple is built. You can see tortoises – his traditional emblem - outside the temple in the photo on the cover.

The temple used to be used not only for worship purposes but as the main community gathering place before the building of the Visa Oshwal Centre on the Ring Road (one used to say "opposite Nakumatt Ukay" before that was demolished!). Indeed, it still is very much a community centre, as we discovered when we were warmly welcomed, and able to have a snack of rice and dhal in the seniors lounge. The temple serves some simple food for its older members each morning. Classes for young members of the community, and other activities such as yoga classes are regular events.

The group was given an interesting introduction to Jain philosophy by Ms Bina Shah who has made explaining Jainism, particularly to the community itself, a mission, in addition to her career as a pharmacist. She explained that when the community came to Kenya they did not come with priests, and there was not a very profound understanding of the religion among the adherents.

This is Siddhachakra. Siddhachakr encompasses 9 pure states: 1 Siddha- the pure soul. 2 Arihant-the enlightened soul. 3 Acharya-a monk who heads the religious community. 4 Upadhyaya-the monk who studies & teaches the scriptures. 5 Sadhu- a renunciate. 6 Samyak Darshan- right belief. 7 Right knowledge. 8 Right conduct. 9 Right Austerity. It shows Jain path to liberation.

Jainism is the oldest surviving Asian religion, predating both Buddhism and Hinduism. At its core it is a very ascetic religion, basing itself on *ahimsa* or non-violence. A true Jain is a vegetarian, even avoiding eating root crops because they cannot be harvested without endangering living creatures. In fact all life has a soul in Jain thinking.

Jains do not worship any god, but venerate a number of figures who attained enlightenment, and freedom from the cycle of rebirth. The 24th of these *tirthankaras* (in the current long cycle of an endless series of cycles), was Mahavir, 599–527 BC, who taught and gave structure to Jain teachings.

The temple itself (or *Derasar*) is domed, and beautifully carved from sandstone and marble by Indian craftsmen (in the case of the marble, Muslim craftsmen). The inner sanctuary has carvings of some of the tirthankaras, and round the walls are relief pictures of some of the notable sites of Jainism, in Gujarat, Bihar and elsewhere, particularly where individual tirthankaras attained enlightenment.

It was undergoing some refurbishment, so there were few worshippers, but several were there. We could see people performing some of the pujas, or acts of prayerful offering, we had been told about. These included especially the rice puja, in which people form with rice grains a classic pattern showing a swastika: the four corners of which "symbolise the four states into which a soul can be born - human, plant/animal, heavenly being, hell being". Three large dots above this symbolise right faith, right knowledge and right conduct. "Above those comes a crescent with a dot above it, which symbolises the liberated beings at the very top of the universe".

Many thanks to Ms Shah and KMS Council member Saryoo Shah.

The flanking pictures are of carving of celestial nymphs.

The centre picture is Rushi Mandal. It is full of mantras hence has a lot of seed energies and is therefore highly powerful

KMS Gift Shop

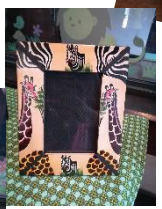
Open daily 9.00am to 5.30pm

New Stock at the Kenya Museum Society Gift Shop

Have you been to the revamped KMS Gift Shop at the Nairobi Museum?

This is the place to be, if you are looking to do an early Easter holiday shopping or are looking for some unique gift items, jewellery, bags, books about Kenya and East Africa, souvenirs…

Your purchase supports the National Museums of Kenya as well as the communities where some of the items are made.



➢For non-members (or those who have forgotten their cards at home), you can go to the shop without paying the museum entry fee.

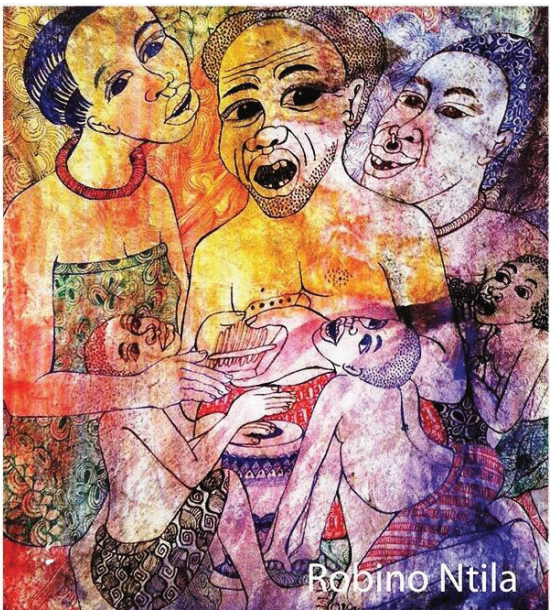
➢And you can come into the shop from the museum, and return to the museum.

Exhibitions

New Exhibition at the Nairobi Gallery

TINGA TINGA AND THE LEGENDARY ARTISTS OF TANZANIA

April 7th 2019 - November 7th 2019



When Pablo Picasso first saw African masks, textiles and artifacts at the Universal Exhibition in Paris in the early 1900's, he remarked that they were "the most beautiful and the most powerful things the human imagination has ever created". For Picasso, these artists from Africa had created something the European artists had failed to do, ie.. to create art forms that perfectly blended form and function with meaning. The African artists liberated the European artists from centuries of artistic naturalism. Thus the exposure of African art changed the entire course of Western art as it moved toward abstraction and cubism – the twin pillars of modernism.

Probably the Universal Exhibition at the beginning of the last century did not include art from East Africa, but later on the art of the Makonde of Mozambique and Tanzania was another African art form that had an impact on world art. It was termed "religious,

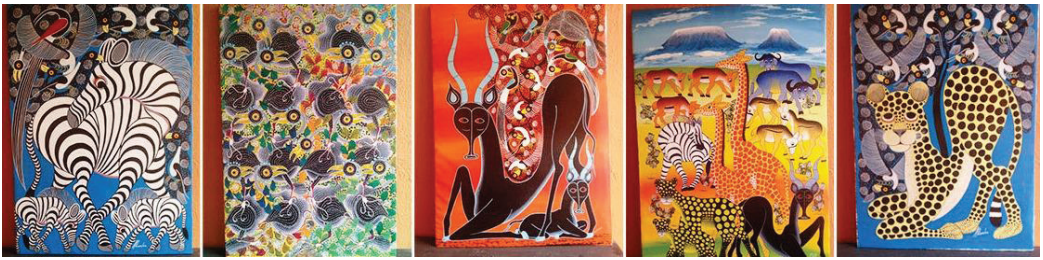
passionate and abstract" yet much of it was produced for the Western art consumer. The Makonde had become famous for their stunning heads of carved ebony, incised in tribal motifs and decorated with real human hair. During the last century, the Ujumaa ("Tree of Life") and the Picasso-like "Shetani" (spirit) sculptures had a huge effect on Tanzanian artists like those of "Nyumba ya Sanaa" (NYS) an art centre founded in Dar es Salaam by Sister Jean Pruitt, an American Maryknoll Sister born in Michigan and raised in California. George Lilanga of NYS completed the circle of African artists influencing European artists and vice versa after he went to Paris in 1976 and saw an exhibition by Picasso, and proclaimed Picasso his favourite artist of all time. Robina Ntila was another artist in the stable of NYS. Joseph Murumbi, co - founder of African Heritage bought many Makonde gures in ebony, limestone and ivory in Dar es Salaam, which are now in the Murumbi Collections. There are also artworks on Masonite boards by first generation "TingaTinga" artists which he sold to the Kenyan government in 1976 which are displayed in the Murumbi Gallery at the Kenya National Archives.

Pioneer artist Edward Saidi Tingatinga (1932-1972) began his career in the 1960s with some of the new materials which had become available, using scavenged masonite ceiling boards for canvases and bicycle enamel paint from one of his early careers as a bicycle repairman.

Before long, the original TingaTinga realized he could make a living painting full time by drawing on the folklore of his Ndonde and Makua heritage who painted similar designs on their clay houses. Soon he was training his family members and friends to assist him. His art is quite different from the recent TingaTinga copies ones sees in all the markets of East Africa. It was more naïve, usually with a plain background and one subject such as the spotted leopard which was most popular in this art. Sadly, TingaTinga was shot dead during an automobile chase in Dar es Salaam in 1972, when he was mistaken as a burglar and killed in a hail of bullets from the police. His memory lives on through all his many disciples, with new generations of painters continuing to paint, now mainly on canvas rather than on the Masonite ceiling boards, as most of their customers are tourists and visitors to Africa. Recently an original painting by Edward Saidi TingaTinga sold for a record sum at the Art Auction East African 2019 in Nairobi, the most ever recorded for an African artist at this auction. There is a huge TingaTinga school of painters still flourishing in Tanzania with hundreds of adherents painting TingaTinga-like designs on everything from keyrings to wooden trays and handbags. In recent years TINGATINGA birds and animals and other creatures have lent inspiration to a series of children's books and TV programs and even a musical which is gracing the stages of New York's Broadway. However the images used in these endeavours bear little resemblance to the original TingaTinga

artworks from the mid l970's. At the recent musical in Nairobi there were only one image which can be traced to the original TingaTinga art. That is the hornbill (which is considered a messenger bird to the spirit world in many African societies). The hornbill is almost a trademark image in TingaTinga art, found in almost every painting no matter the main subject. This exhibition features works from the second and third generation of TingaTinga artists.

The exhibitions at Nairobi Gallery are dedicated to Sister Jean Pruitt and credit for information above is given to the book she produced "INSPIRED: Three Decades of Tanzanian ART", 2013.



Programme for Junior Biologist - The Future Volunteers

This is a vocational programme to be run at the Nairobi Snake Park and Aquarium section at The National Museums of Kenya. This is a career foundation development for children between the ages 7-13 years. They will have a chance to volunteer and acquire job learning skills which cannot be acquired through the rapidly advancing technology. Learning job requirements through internet is easy, but

inspirations, techniques and skills are hands-on acquired.

Therefore, the Nairobi Snake Park invites your children for hands-on learning activities at no cost. Children interested in volunteering at the Snake Park should show interest, passion, and capability in dealing with reptiles and fish at the park. The park exhibits live creatures and this requires caution, alertness and seriousness.

Application for entry is free To apply student must write an essay about "The importance of conserving wildlife in zoos and conservancies to the country".

For more information, please contact us on email: curator.snakepark@museums.or.ke or 0721 – 512 488 or 0720 – 044 096

News and comment

Mama Ngina Drive

The *Star* recently (March 23) published an item on the refurbishment of Mama Ngina Drive in Mombasa.

It said that "The project currently is being managed through an agreement among the Tourism ministry, the Mombasa county government and the National Museums of Kenya." But the Ministry will hire a private firm to manage it.

However the NMK will retain the mandate of preserving the history of the site. That would include mosque relics – so far "Artefacts from a 13th Century mosque have been unearthed at the waterfront and archaeologists hope to find at least three more mosque sites."

An earlier report (*Standard* January 13) said that "'There is archaeological evidence to prove that Mama Ngina was the foundation of the city (Mombasa),' says National Museums of Kenya Deputy Director Athman Hussein.

Oral and archeological accounts indicate the place was ancient settlement for Waswahili of Tauca or Wakilindini, which in the 15th century split into three communities; Wachangamwe, Wakilindini and Watangana."

Inside the Lamu Museum

Seawall protecting Fort Jesus

The Government newspaper pull-out *MyGov* reported on March 12 that the wall to protect Fort Jesus from the depredations of the rising seas will be completed by the end of May.

Visit to a World Heritage Site

The launch of the Biocultural Community Protocol for Lamu County (focussing on the Bajun, Orma, Sanye, Aweer and Swahili) was the occasion for a visit to Lamu.*

* If you are interested in the document it will no doubt appear soon on the website of Save Lamu at http://www.savelamu.org.

Your editor took the opportunity to revisit the Museum – always a pleasure, as much for the intriguing building as for the exhibits.

But it was also a chance to reflect on the issue of the world heritage status of the town. It has been under threat from various directions. On the one hand the huge LAPSSET project* threatens the lifestyles, environment and culture of this unique area. In a major case last year the High Court held that traditional fishermen had a right to continue to fish and as indigenous peoples their rights must be given sensitive and priority consideration. The scheme's implementers had not used the "due diligence required to consult the indigenous residents of Lamu Island on the impacts of the Project on their culture. This lack of consultation led to an inadequate cultural impact assessment, and equally insufficient cultural impact mitigation measures", thus their right to enjoy their culture had been violated.

Among the court's orders was that government should ensure the development of a World Heritage Management Plan.

Countries that are parties to the UNESCO Treaty accept responsibility for the sites in their territory: "the duty of ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage …situated on its territory, belongs primarily to that State. It will do all it can to this end, …."

On and through the top floor of a heritage building repaired by the NMK and supported by the US Embassy

Kenya has to report regularly to UNESCO on the state of conservation of the site. Last year UNESCO's decisions on Kenya's report included the following:

* Lamu Port South Sudan Ethiopia Transport Corridor.

1. Carry out additional studies to ascertain any effects that the pollution resulting from the coal-fired power plant may have on the fragile coral stone buildings of the Old Town and any other impacts on other attributes that carry the OUV of the property;
2. Requests furthermore the State Party to complete the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the LAPSSET Corridor Development Authority and the National Museums of Kenya (NMK) to include the NMK on the LAPSSET Board, as mentioned during the 2015 mission;
3. Recommends that the State Party set up a significant funding mechanism to deal with conservation issues, including training in traditional building technologies and the use of traditional building materials, within the Lamu Old Town World Heritage property as the LAPSSET project continues to develop;

The Tracker has reported before on the threat to LAmu of boda bodas, including the report that "Lamu Old Town has banned all types of boda-bodas from operating within its streets following a consultative forum held together with the county government of Lamu"*

The sea front road, with competing modes of transport.

It is true that there are signs on the sea front road saying no boda bodas beyond this point. But this does not protect a great deal of the town, and is not entirely respected. While it is true that you do not encounter then on the main shopping street or the main square outside Lamu Fort. And as you walk along the narrower streets (some not even wide enough for two to walk abreast) you are about equally likely to have to step aside for a donkey or a boda boda. People in Lamu are very unhappy about this – though of course people of Lamu also use them (and apparently a ride on a boda boda is cheaper than on a donkey).

* https://www.kenyans.co.ke August 21 2018.

The World of Museums

Russian Museums Alarmed by Order for 'Patriotic Education'

March 23, 2019 16:19 GMT By Lilya Palveleva Robert Coalson*

Late last month, Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky set off alarm bells among culture aficionados when he sent a letter to regional administrations ordering them to bring the museums in their purview into line with "the state's priorities." The report sparked lively discussion in closed social-media groups frequented by museum workers and advocates. Many comments speculated that the government of President Vladimir Putin intends to "politicize museums, with all that that entails." When one commenter asked what museums would be asked to promote, another joked, "More likely 'whom'?" -- hinting that museums would be forced to glorify Putin. One wag wondered if the Central Armed Forces Museum in Moscow would soon be exhibiting "that very Buk," a reference to the Russian anti-aircraft system that is widely believed to have been used to shoot down a Malaysia Airlines passenger jet over separatist-held territory in eastern Ukraine in July 2014, killing all 298 people aboard.

Irina Velikanova, director of the Museum of Contemporary History in Moscow (the former Museum of the Revolution on Red Square), in an article published on the ministry's website, offered to assist regional museums in complying with the Culture Ministry's instruction. "The Museum of Contemporary History is ready to become a methodological center providing assistance to regional museums on the creation of high-quality, modern exhibitions covering the most recent period of Russian history," she was quoted as saying. The article praises the museum's exhibition on the last 30 years, noting that it includes, among many other things, a soccer ball signed by the Russian national team that played in the 2018 World Cup hosted by Russia and the pen with which Putin signed the document on the annexation of the Ukrainian region of Crimea in 2014. "Our people often do not remember and do not know the history of the beginning and the middle of the 20th century, and often don't even know about the events of our history from the end of the 1980s to the 2000s," she said, noting that in a recent survey, 74 percent of respondents were unable to name Mikhail Gorbachev as the first and only president of the Soviet Union.

Anna Gorskaya, director of scholarly and educational programs at the Murom Historical-Art Museum in Vladimir Oblast told RFE/RL that the government's apparent focus on contemporary history is problematic for museums. "Speaking as a historian of education, I can say that it can be rather complicated for museums to treat

* Extracted from Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty https://www.rferl.org/a/russian-museums-medinsky-patriotic-education-alarmed/29838273.html

contemporary history," Gorskaya said. "Modern times are more a field for political scientists than for historians. Historians need to look at events from some remove, and for that the passage of time is necessary. Only then does the possibility of making historical judgments arise. That's why I think maybe it isn't a good idea to rush to bring exhibitions right up to the current day."

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