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MOSTRA d'OLTRE MARE

MAR. - JUNE 1944

HQ. R. C.

14 GIU 1944

Time in 1400  
Dispatched

F.A.

HEADQUARTERS  
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION  
APO 394

Subcommission for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives.

20034/3/MFAA

13 June 1944.

SUBJECT: Report on Objects ~~Purported to have been~~ Stored  
on the Oltremare Fair Grounds, Naples.TO : <sup>Directly,</sup> Subcommission for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives,  
Headquarters, ACC.*to this Subcommission*1. Reference report on above subject by Major Gardner,  
8 June 44.2. Since a/m report does not include/positive evidence -  
first-hand and hearsay - which, by chance, I am able to supply,  
I have thought it not inappropriate to submit the following.3. During the days 16 May - 1 June 44, I was a patient  
in the 45 Genl. Hospital, U.S. Army, located in the Fair Grounds  
or at least in buildings adjacent to them (ref. Pianta di Citta'  
di Napoli, editore "Il Porto", Napoli, 1940, Tav. 1, square 17 -  
Ist. del Motore and - Bldg. A of Hospital - a structure opp. to  
the S., perhaps not shown on map).4. Shortly after my arrival I visited the Red Cross re-  
creation room in the basement of Building A of the 45th, where I  
noticed a group of exotic furnishings which, having heard of the  
reputed presence in the Fair Ground buildings of remainders of  
Ethnographical exhibits, I at once took to be from that source.  
From speaking to the young lady (Amer.) in charge, whose name I  
did not ask, I learned the following: Sometime after the Hospi-  
tal took possession, a Col. or Lt. Col. called <sup>her</sup> attention to a  
"pile" of furniture etc., some of which he thought could be turn-  
ed to good use by the Red Cross and gave her Carte Blanche to se-  
lect for the use of her hall what she wished. The objects I had  
seen were the results of her selection. The identity of the officer  
referred to can be learned, I am fairly sure, from the lady in ques-  
tion. What had happened to the remainder of the pile either she did  
say or I do not remember.

2410

5. Expecting an official inspection by responsible and more  
competent persons, I made no inventory or detailed inspection of  
the objects I saw, nor can I now describe them adequately. About  
a dozen pieces are involved, among which I recall some tom-toms or  
kettle-drums, stools, benches - the latter having been probably  
reworked to serve their present use.6. I likewise spoke of the matter to Capt. Eppa Hunton IV,  
MAC, Adjutant of the Hospital. As I recall, he substantially con-



firmed what I had learned from the Red Cross lady concerning the origin of the ethnographical objects in the basement of building A. He referred, further, to a visit made in the hope of locating former Mostra exhibits, by an Italian, whose name at the time he only vaguely remembered. "Amadeo" is the sound he remembered: it must have been either Dr. Omodeo or, more probably (see para. 3, Maj. Gardner's report), Dr. Amedeo Maiuri. Capt. Hunton had allowed his visitor full opportunity to search the buildings of the Hospital and had accompanied him in his search, which, as far as I recall, did not reveal what was being looked for.

78. Neither witness mentioned Classical objects - either those named in para. 3 of Major Gardner's report or the reliefs from N. Africa recently spoken of by Major Ward Perkins.

#### 89. Recommendations.

a. That the Red Cross Lady and Capt. Hunton be officially visited and asked to repeat their evidence. Both seemed quite willing to cooperate further.

b. That, with the permission of the above, the objects in the Basement of Bldg. A be examined and inventoried, preferably in the presence of Prof. Beguinot.

Respectfully submitted.

Bernard M. Peebles  
Bernard M. Peebles  
Staff Sergeant  
Chief Clerk, MFAA S/C

2409

First Endorsement.

To Regional Commissioner, Peguin in for Major Gardner MFAA Officer  
The above document forwarded for information and such action as you may think fit.

Warranted Peguin Major RA

for Director MFAA Sub-commissioner Acc

13/6/44.

The hospital authorities have on file requisition slips of all furniture and objects legally scattered thru the hospital installations from the Albrecht Exhibition.

P. S.

28/6/44

HEADQUARTERS  
REGION 3, ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION  
A.P.O. 394, U. S. ARMY

8 June 1944

FA - 73

SUBJECT: Report on Objects Purported to have been Stored  
on the Oltremare Fair Grounds, Naples.

TO : Subcommittee for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives,  
Headquarters, ACC, A.P.O. 394.

1. The Oltremare Exhibition was apparently a purely fascist venture. With the collapse of fascism, the Exhibition was left without supervision or even proper police guard. The various buildings on the grounds have been occupied by American Army Hospital installations since October 1943. There have been several changes of the occupying units.

2. In December 1943, the grounds were visited by the undersigned with Dr. Luigi Penta, a former secretary of the archeological section, in an attempt to find objects purported to have been stored there. Dr. Penta talked with a former custodian of the administration building, who was then acting as interpreter for the hospital units, but without results. At this time the Prefect of Naples was considering appointing a liquidating commissioner to close out the effects of the Exhibition. This appointment was made in January, an Avv. Francesco Maglietta, and Dr. Penta was referred to him to cooperate in removing any collections. It is understood that Dr. Penta never succeeded in locating anything. 2408

3. In April 1944, Dr. Amedeo Maiuri, Royal Superintendent of Antiquities, wrote this office concerning the archeological material left on the grounds and noted a group of sculpture from the Museum of Durazzo, excavated at Butrinto, and a collection of Sardinian and Roman bronzes, coins, arms and casts from the Museum of Cagliari.

4. That month the Exhibition was visited with Dr. Maiuri and an assistant who had supervised the placing of parts of the archeological collection in the basement of the administration building. This building is now the headquarters of the 21st General Hospital. Absolutely nothing was found in the storerooms and enlisted personnel who claimed to have been there since October 1943, stated that there was nothing in the basement when they arrived. It was further



stated that United States Army Engineers were working on the buildings when the hospital units arrived.

5. Through the Engineer Section of PB3, a Lt. Rose, formerly of the 40th Engineers which was then a 5th Army unit, was located. He stated that he and his outfit started work on the Fair Grounds buildings on October 5 1943 and that no storage deposits were seen. This work centered on the present administration building where archeological material was supposed to have been left. Lt. Rose stated that this building had been completely looted, all doors and windows were missing and practically nothing was found in the building. This was confirmed by other Engineer officers.

6. Other requests to locate material supposed to have been left on the Fair Grounds have come from:

a. Prof. F. Beguinot, Director of Royal Oriental University Library; for bibliographical and ethnographical material on Africa.

b. Lt. Col. E. Galante, Italian Army Medical Corps; for bibliographical material on tropical diseases.

2407

None of this has been found to date.

7. It is understood that Dr. Luigi Penta is the only person who can furnish complete lists of archeological material in question. Every effort is being made to secure this list from him and it will then be forwarded to add to this report.

For the Regional Commissioner:

Paul Gardner,  
Major, AUS,  
Regional Fine Arts Officer.

D.O.

20031/MFAA

HQ. ACC - APO 394  
Subcomm. for MFAA  
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23 April 44

Dear Major Gardner:

I am sending you herewith some papers dealing with the subject of the Mostra delle Terre d'Oltremare, as I understand that you are taking action in this matter.

As you will see, these were sent to me by Lieut. Grottanelli, one of the Italian Liaison Officers with A.C.C. at Salerno, whom I know slightly. The Lieutenant is, incidentally, Secretary of the Italian Institute of Anthropology. I showed the papers to Major De Wald, who said that we should try and find out what had happened to the missing exhibits.

I, therefore, went over to Fuorigrotta, where I spoke to a number of Officers connected with the 225th Hospital and other American medical units stationed there, who assured me that little or nothing of the material remained, and, indeed, were only able to show me one assegai which no doubt had belonged to the East African part of the exhibition.

Late last week I was approached by Prof. Beguinot, Direttore of the R. Istituto Universitario Orientale, and arranged with him to go over to Fuorigrotta on April 25th to meet there Lieut. Schmoke, Adjutant of the Area, as well as a certain Salvatore Grandi, who had been one of the custodi of the Exhibition, who it was thought might be able to provide some information about the missing objects.

I am extremely sorry if what action I have taken has in any way affected or damaged your own plans in the matter, and hope you will be good enough to accept my very humblest apologies for what has occurred.

Yours sincerely,

*E. Croft-Murray*  
E. CROFT-MURRAY  
Captain.

Incls:

- 1-Lt. Grottanelli to Capt. Croft-Murray 7 Apr 44 (1687/LP)
- 2-Prof. Beguinot to Educ, ACC, 3 Mar 44
- 3-Translation of Incl 2.

UFFICIO DI COLLEGAMENTO  
CON LA COMMISSIONE ALLEATA DI CONTROLLO  
SALERNO

N. 1687/LP  
Salerno, April 7th 1944

Capt. Croft-Murray  
Monuments and Fine Arts Sub-Com.  
ACC - Advanced Ech.

Dear Captain Croft-Murray,  
as agreed upon by Lt.Col. T.V. Smith, I forward to you a letter  
by the Regio Istituto Universitario Orientale, along with the  
rather bad translation of the same, which I hope you will be  
able to understand.

I shall be very grateful if you will let me know what you can  
do on this matter.



L. V. GROTTANELLI  
Lt., Arty  
Liaison Section

2405

2 enclosures





# R. ISTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO ORIENTALE

IL R. COMMISSARIO

N. di Prot. 8008  
 Categoria 4 Fascicolo 6  
 Risposta o lettera N.        del         
 Allegati N.       

OGGETTO: Materiale della Mostra delle Terre d'Oltremare.

Napoli 31 marzo 194 XX  
 Piazza S. Giovanni Maggiore, 30  
 Telefoni 24 576 - 34 978

*referred to the  
 fine art  
 for I.P.S.*

Mi pregio sottoporre a codesta On.le Com-  
 missione alcune considerazioni e preposte re-  
 lative al materiale bibliografico ed etno-  
 grafico della Mostra triennale delle terre  
 d'oltremare.

2404

Tale mostra, organizzata nell'anno 1940  
 in una vasta area dei dintorni di Napoli e  
 precisamente nella zona di Fuorigrotta, com-  
 prendeva un gran numero di edifici ove erano  
 esposti materiali vari relativi alla storia  
 della colonizzazione e alla etnografia del-  
 l'Africa. Buona parte delle cose che vennero  
 esposte avevano carattere di propaganda piut-  
 tosto che d'indagine scientifica. Ma vi era-  
 no anche molti libri antichi e rari, dei ma-  
 noscritti in lingue africane, degli oggetti  
 etnografici delle popolazioni etiopiche e li-  
 biche; materiali che costituiscono una prezio-  
 sa documentazione scientifica per quella bran-  
 ca di studi che ha ricevuto il nome di africa-  
 nistica e che tra le varie discipline che ten-  
 dono alla conoscenza dell'Uomo ha raggiunto  
 nella seconda metà del secolo XIX e nell'at-  
 tuale post un posto cospicuo.

ON.LE  
 ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION  
 EDUCATION SUBCOMMISSION  
 NAPOLI



14. b. - Indicare sempre nel riscontro, i numeri di Catalogo e Fasc. della presente

2407

Tale mostra, organizzata nell'anno 1940 in una vasta area dei dintorni di Napoli e precisamente nella zona di Fuorigrotta, comprendeva un gran numero di edifici ove erano esposti materiali vari relativi alla storia della colonizzazione e alla etnografia dell'Africa. Buona parte delle cose che vennero esposte avevano carattere di propaganda piuttosto che d'indagine scientifica. Ma vi erano anche molti libri antichi e rari, dei manoscritti in lingue africane, degli oggetti etnografici delle popolazioni etiopiche e libiche; materiali che costituiscono una preziosa documentazione scientifica per quella branca di studi che ha ricevuto il nome di africanistica e che tra le varie discipline che tendono alla conoscenza dell'Uomo ha raggiunto nella seconda metà del secolo XIX e nell'attualità un posto cospicuo.

OCCENNO: Materiale della Westra delle Terre d'Oltremare. =

Allegati N.

Mi pregio sottoporre a cedesta On.le Com=  
missione alcune considerazioni e proposte re=  
lative al materiale bibliografico ed etno=  
grafico della Mostra triennale delle terre  
d'oltremare.

Siccome vi è fondato timore che tali materiali finiscano col de-  
teriorarsi e vadano perduti il sottoscritto si onera far presente a  
cedesta Commissione che l'ente più indicato nell'Italia liberata per  
assumerne la tutela sarebbe queste R. Istituto Universitario Orienta-  
le, che ha già un Centro di studi di Africamistica e un Centro di stu-  
di etnografici, forniti di speciali biblioteche. Gli anzidetti libri ed  
oggetti potrebbero esser fusi con quelli dell'Istituto e messi a di-  
sposizione degli studiosi.

Ove cedesta Commissione accogliesse tale idea ed autorizzasse in  
linea di massima la cessione all'Istituto Orientale di tale materia-  
le, il sottoscritto si riserverebbe di far presenti le modalità che  
potrebbero seguirsi per la sistemazione legale, per la scelta degli  
oggetti e per i mezzi di trasporto.

Con ossequio.

IL DIRETTORE

*F. Legnani*



1256

TRANSLATION No. 162. ITALIAN LIAISON SECTION. APRIL 7, 1944. Sgt. Sorini.

ROYAL ORIENTAL UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE.

Naples, 31st. March 1944

THE ROYAL COMMISSIONER.

File No. 8008

Subject: Collection of Exhibits of Possessions beyond the Seas. Overseas Territories

I beg to bring to your attention some considerations and proposals relative to the bibliographical and ethnographical material of the triennial Exhibit of Possessions beyond the Seas. This Exhibit, organized in 1940 in the Naples Area, specifically at Fuorigrotta, included a large number of buildings which exhibited various displays regarding the history of colonization and the ethnography of Africa. A larger part of the displays were more of a propaganda nature rather than of scientific research. But there were also many old and rare books, some manuscripts in African languages, some ethnographic items of Ethiopian and Libyan populations; all this material makes up a valuable scientific documentation for that branch of study which has been named "Africanistic", and which, through the various avenues which deepen the knowledge of Man, has attained a high level from the middle of the 19th. century to the present time.

Whereas there is a tangible fear that these exhibited items may end up by becoming deteriorated or lost, the undersigned wishes to point out that in liberated Italy their care and safety would best be assumed by the Royal Oriental University Institute, which already has study centers in Africanistica and in Ethnography, furnished with special libraries. The above mentioned books and articles could be added to those of the Institute and thus be put at the disposal of students.

Should the Commission agree to the above proposal, I could furnish details for the procedure whereby such a step could be effected under law, for the selection of material, and for means of transportation.

Respectfully yours,

The Director

/ s/ F. Seguinot.

2403

Subject: Collection for the Exhibit of Possessions beyond the Seas.

I beg to bring to your attention some considerations and proposals relative to the bibliographical and ethnographical material of the triennial Exhibit of Possessions beyond the Seas.

This Exhibit, organized in 1940 in the Naples Area, specifically at Fuorigrotta, included a large number of buildings which exhibited various displays regarding the history of colonization and the ethnography of Africa. A larger part of the displays were more of a propaganda nature rather than of scientific research. But there were also many old and rare books, some manuscripts in African languages, some ethnographic items of Ethiopian and Libyan populations; all this material makes up a valuable scientific documentation for that branch of study which has been named "Africanistic", and which, through the various avenues which deepen the knowledge of Man, has attained a high level from the middle of the 19th. century to the present time.

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Respectfully yours,

The Director

/ s/ F. Seguinot.

2403



HEADQUARTERS  
REGION 3, ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION  
APO 394, U.S. Army

15 April 1944

SUBJECT: Passes for entry to the Oltremare Grounds.

TO : The Surgeon, P.B.S. (Thru FBS Liaison Officer, Hq ACC)

1. A section of the Oltremare Exhibition, whose grounds are now occupied by a military hospital, was made up of important classical art collections from the State Museums of Durazzo, Butrinto, Cagliari and private sources.

2. These collections are still on the grounds and in order to prevent any further damage to them, it is important to remove them to a place of safety.

3. In order to supervise this removal, the Royal Superintendent of Antiquities has asked that passes authorizing entry to the Oltremare grounds be issued to Dott. Luigi Penta, Secretary of the Archaeological Section, Dott. H. Grieco, Secretary of the Ethnographical Section and to Sig. Giulio Formati, employee of the Superintendency.

For the Regional Commissioner:

O.W. CAMPBELL  
Captain, AUS,  
Adjutant.

2402



1259