

## HISTORY OF MUSEUMS IN PAKISTAN

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### ABSTRACT

*This study deals with the origin and development of museums in Pakistan. Pakistan has a rich civilizing inheritance. This inheritance needs to be saved and displayed for the new generations in tangible form. For this purpose, museums are the preeminent places to house and save these tangible legacies. This specific study proves that museum is always the face of any culture, civilization and its successive evolution. Regarding this significance museum study has been a deserted topic since the emergence of Pakistan. This study presents an effort to highlight the significance of museums of Pakistan with their chronological historical existence.*

### INTRODUCTION

Museums are complete institutions to safeguard the cultural inheritance of any nation. When the Britishers made colonies in subcontinent in the 18th century, the idea of establishing museums took its birth. Sir William Jones, was the British historian who shaped the Asiatic Society in 1784 at Calcutta to learn India's cultural and historical legacy. This was the seedling of the idea to have a permanent space to display some historical objects. Asiatic Society succeeded to get the approval of a proposal to start a museum in 1796.

First museum in Subcontinent was set up by the efforts of Asiatic Society, at 1 Park Street, Calcutta in 1814. in 1861 Archaeological Survey of India was founded by Alexander Cunningham who became its first Director General. Archaeological Survey of India conducted assorted explorations and investigations. In the result of these investigations, antiquities on large scale were collected. To house these antiquities, Sir John Marshall established many site museums. Therefore, the era of development of museums began in subcontinent by the Britishers.

### MUSEUMS IN PAKISTAN

At the time of independence, there were seven museums working in Pakistan. Lahore Museum, Peshawar Museum, Harappa Museum, Moenjodaro Museum, Taxila Museum, Armory Museum of Lahore Fort and Mughal and Sikh Galleries in Lahore

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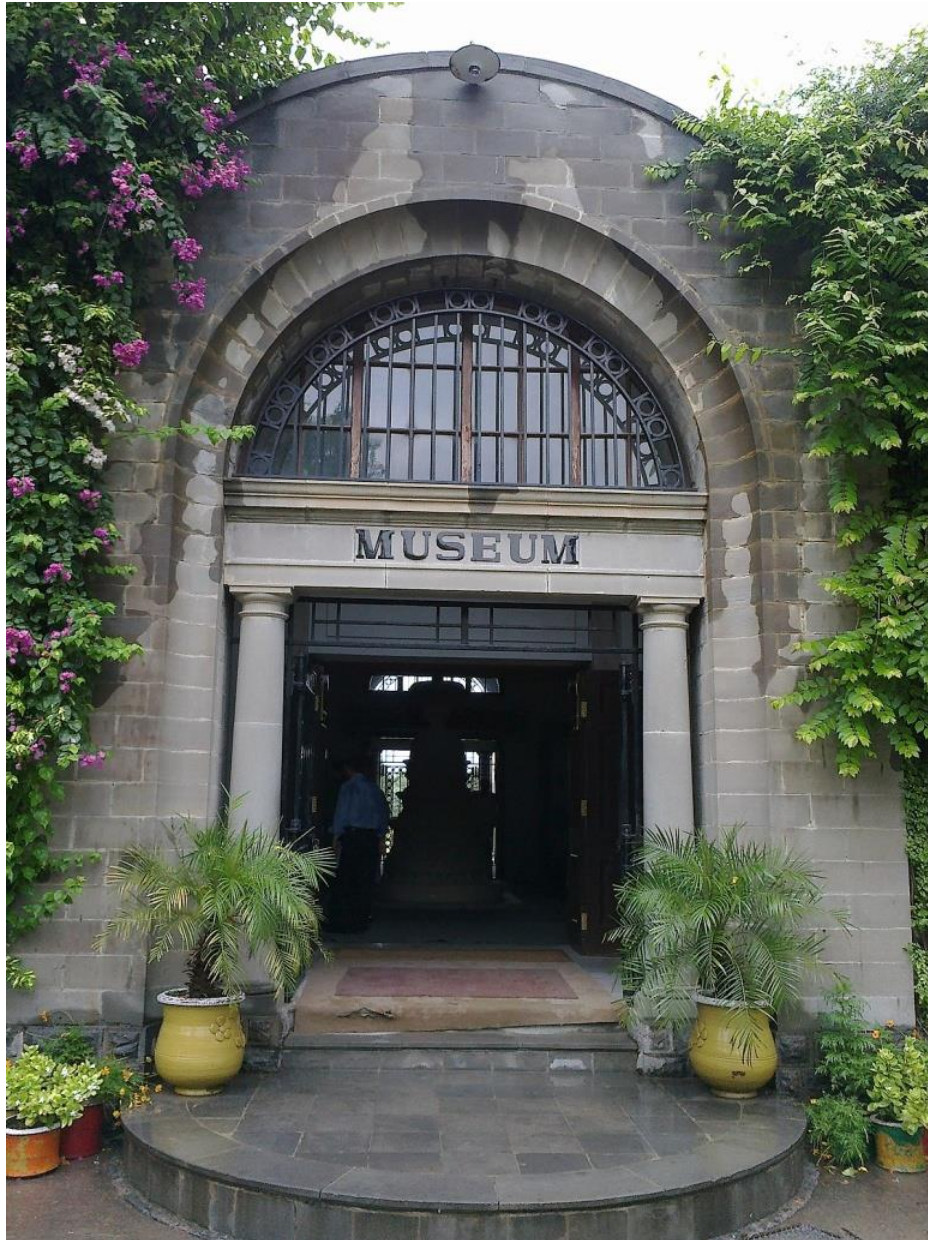
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Fort. The central Government had controlled these five site Museums except Lahore Museum and Peshawar Museum. Provincial Government was holding the control of Lahore and Peshawar Museums.

### **TAXILA MUSEUM**

Taxila Archaeological Museum was established in 1918 in Taxila Punjab it has a rich collection of antiquities related to pre and proto historic period. Archaeological museum of Mohenjo Daro was founded in 1925. It is a famous museum due to its display of site antiquity of Ancient Indus Valley Civilization.





### **MOENJHO DARO MUSEUM**

Museum of Harappa was established as a site museum in 1926. The Government of Pakistan constructed its proper building in 1966. Armoury Museum in Lahore Fort was made in 1928.



### **HARAPPA MUSEUM**

Lahore museum was established in 1865-66 during the colonial period on the site of present Tollinton Markete which was in 1894 shifted to the present location. Peshawar

Museum was built during 1906 to 1907. It was built by the Britishers in the memory of Queen Victoria. Agriculture Museum of Layallpur formed in 1909 is renowned for its botanical work. An art and craft Museum known with the name of Faqir Khana Museum in Lahore was prepared in 1937.



Lahore Museum



Peshawar Museum

Soon after independence, Establishment of National Museum of Pakistan was planned. In 17th April 1950, in Freer Hall building, the structure of National Museum of Pakistan in Karachi was opened for visitors. New plans were formulated for the development of this National Museum. The government in 1950 also shaped an Advisory Council for the purchase of antiquities and works of Arts.



National Museum of Karachi

An Industrial and Commercial Museum was made in Lahore in 1950 for research. Pakistan Forest Museum in Abbott bad was established in 1952. In 1956, an Archaeological Museum was founded in the University of Karachi.

Swat Museum of Saidu Sharif was erected in 1959. It has a display of Buddhist relics and objects of Golden Age Another archaeological museum of Bhanbnore was built in 1960.



Army museum Rawalpindi

A very famous Museum was established in Rawalpindi in 1961 named Army Museum of Rawalpindi. It has a display of two centuries of military history with beautiful arrangements. In this museum, the uniform of Sir Claude Auchinleck has also been displayed. Peshawar University also maintained a famous Museum in 1966 to display rich archaeological material. In 1967, Mangla Dam Museum was recognized in natural History, geography and archaeology. Umar Kot Museum was founded in 1968 which represents the regional history.

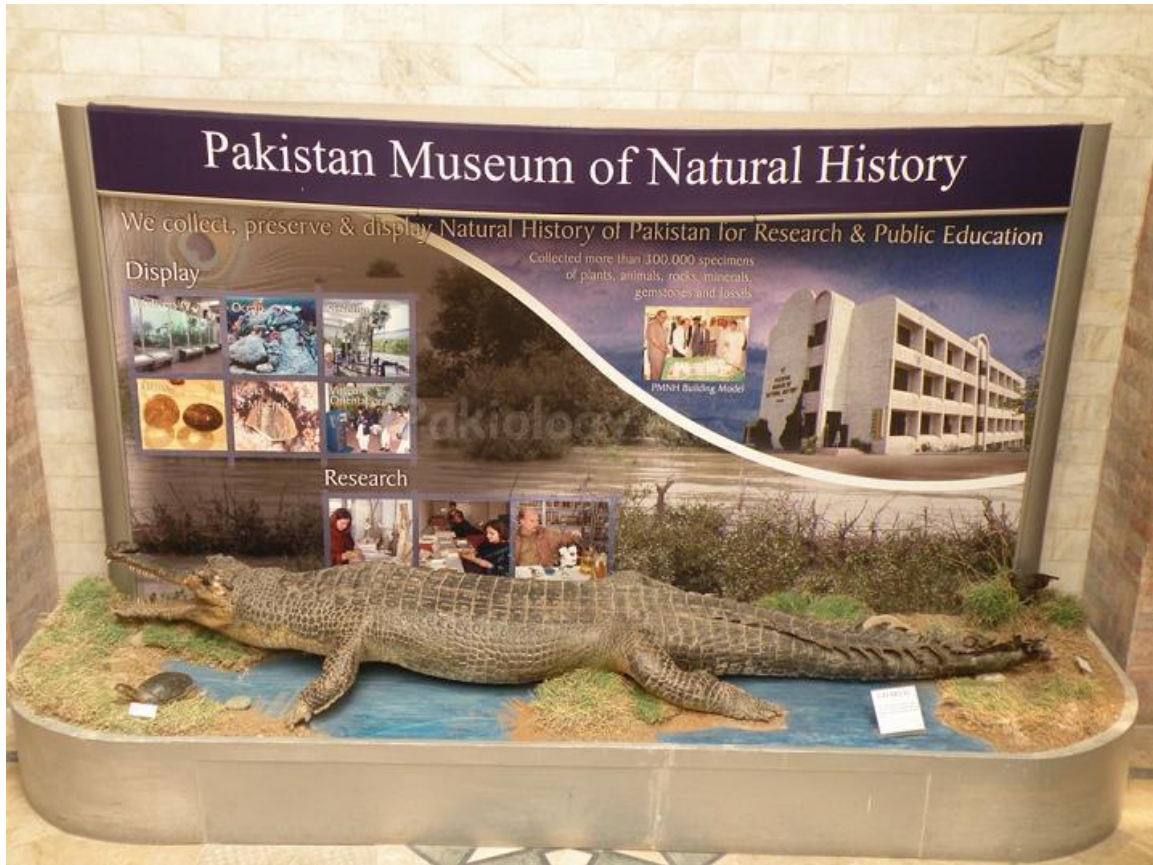


Display of army guard in Army Museum Rawalpindi



Museum of Umerkot

In 1969, a Science and Technology Museum was constituted in Engineering University of Lahore Dir Museum of Chakdara was become functional on 1970 to display regional archaeology and ethnology. Folk Art Museum in Islamabad was set up in 1973. In 1974, Bahawalpur Museum was created in which natural history and archaeological material is the part of exhibition there. Hyderabad museum was built in 1974, is known for the display of archaeology, anthropology, art and crafts. In 1975, an Art Gallery was made at Shakir Ali's Lahore residence.



Pakistan Museum of Natural History

The development of museums in the country has been impressive. In the last decades a few museums being established, and many others reorganized on modern lines. A museum completely dedicated to Allama Iqbal at Javed Manzil, Lahore was formulated. Another House Museum in Quaid-I-Azam House Karachi was established.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF MUSEUMS**

Museums are no doubt complete institutions; always providing the clear background and pictorial evidence of records to learners. Learners of all ages find this mode of education more comprehensive and uncomplicated. In this modern age, when everything has come in 3D, so the importance of museums has increased a bit. Everyone prefers to see historical events in a pictorial story rather than in a book. Therefore, museums of all categories help their visitors in this regard.



Monica O Montgomery says “Museum education has the power and the responsibility to do the challenging inner work of tackling tough topics and turning them into teachable moments”. Unfortunately, less attention is giving to this smart mode of education in Pakistan whereas people can get a lot of knowledge about history, arts, culture and many more through museums. Actually exhibitions in museums support the learners to think critically and develop their skills to confer the coming challenges in the field of modern education. For example, when a visitor visits the different galleries of Army Museum Rawalpindi, Pakistan seeing the scenes of wars, igloos of Siachin etc, feels the reality of past. Museums are the backbone of any country’s tourism industry where a tourist can comprehend the whole cultural past and present of concerned country. Then visitor travels around the country with the picture captured by his mind while in museum. Therefore, the publicity and marketing in the field of museums through seminars, workshops, brochures and social media can help in stabilizing the tourism industry in Pakistan that is the immense need of this time. Government needs to pay special attention to the development and organization of museum industry.



Scene of Siachin Igloo at Army Museum Rawalpindi

## **CONCLUSION**

Museums and their studies have been an interesting mode of acquiring education in all ages. Unfortunately, in Pakistan Museum Industry is suffering with lot of problems. No attention is given towards Museums and their studies. Awareness is unavailable to the public to get maximum benefits with maximum visits of museums. In Pakistan, a less literary work is available about Museology.

Museums in Pakistan have shortage of staff, lack of funds and poor conditions of buildings. Old buildings must be renovated properly considering the rules of museum security and conservation of displayed precious artifacts there. Museums are very sensitive public organizations storing and caring our cultural heritages. Therefore, custodians of the museums in Pakistan have a great responsibility to improve the condition of museums in all aspect. They should properly inform the Government about the hurdles, which are becoming the reasons of bleakness in museums.

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