

## ***Creating Brand Identity in Museums, the Troy Museum***

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### **Abstract**

The Troy Museum was founded in the ancient city of Troy, which is included on the UNESCO world heritage list. For the establishment of the museum, the National Architectural Project Competition was held in 2011 and the foundations of the museum were laid with the project of the winning team in 2013. 2018 was declared the Year of Troy by the Çanakkale Governorship and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, thus the Troy Museum was opened in the same year. Troy has Homer, Iliad, Trojan legends, and a history dating back to 4000 B.C. The purpose of the museum is to exhibit and protect the archaeological artifacts unearthed from excavations at the Troy Ruins. The Troy Museum, which was constituted with a contemporary museum understanding, has become a successful museum by increasing its recognition throughout Turkey. The Troy Museum has carried its national recognition to the international arena as well. The Troy Museum received the 2020/2021 European Museum Academy (EMA) Special Mention Award and won the European Museum of the Year Awards (EMYA) special commendation in 2020 for its innovative exhibition approach and structure which is combining the past and the present by addressing contemporary issues. Despite the emergence of the coronavirus in 2020 and isolating the whole world, the Troy Museum has become known for crossing the border and showing cultural resistance. The museum, which has a short history, has become a brand by achieving a lot in a short time. This study will focus on how the Troy Museum increased its prestige in all circumstances through applications and policies before and during the coronavirus.

Keywords: Museum, Troy, Cultural Heritage, Pandemic, Brand Identity

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## Introduction

Contemporary museums are among the most important institutions that increase the visibility of the city by contributing to the city they are located in. The new museum of the ancient city of Troy, Çanakkale, which is on the UNESCO World Heritage List, was opened in 2018. The Troy Museum stands out with its visitor-oriented, educational museum approach and the use of technology.

The first steps of museum activities in the city of Çanakkale took place in the time of Atatürk and the collection of historical and stone artifacts started in 1936 and then the Museum Directorate was established in 1965. A museum collection began to form through the artifacts obtained because of the excavations and the return of the artifacts smuggled abroad. With the expansion of the collection and the proliferation of finds, a museum building was needed. In line with this goal, the museum building was built in 1984. However, due to the inadequacy of the museum building over time, a new museum building was needed and the idea of establishing the Troy Museum emerged (Troya Müzesi Stratejik Plan 2018-2023). The National Architectural Project Competition was held in 2011 and the construction of the museum building was started in 2013. Troy Museum, which opened its doors to its visitors on October 10, 2018, is in Tevfikiye Village of Çanakkale.

The decision to build the Troy Museum was taken by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to exhibit the excavated artifacts from the Troy archaeological region, which has a historical and mythological background. Çanakkale Archeology Museum was closed and the Troy Museum was built in its place. The most important point when creating the exhibition area is the Trojan War and its heroes, which form the basis of the Trojan narratives, the current excavation findings, and excavation techniques of Troy to the visitors (Troya Müzesi Mimari Yarışması Şartnamesi, 2011, p.15).

The museum where the artifacts obtained from the excavations in the ruins are exhibited and preserved, was built because of the architectural project competition held in 2011. For this purpose, it was deemed appropriate to hold a competition for the construction of the new museum and was organized as a national, free-participation, one-stage architectural project competition (Troya Müzesi Mimari Yarışması Şartnamesi, 2011, p.15). It is aimed to increase the economic and social value of Çanakkale city in the eyes of local and foreign tourists and to make the city a tourist attraction point through the Troy Ruins and the Troy Museum.

The Museum of Troy is classified as an archeology museum with its mission of exhibiting, protecting, and transferring the artifacts of the region where it is located. The Troy Museum is located in a three-story building. Visitors who start their tour inside the museum follow the story consisting of seven parts: Archeology of Troas Region, Bronze Age of Troy, Iliad Epic and Trojan War, Troas and Ilion in Antiquity, Eastern Roman and Ottoman Period, Archeology History, Traces of Troy (Troya Müzesi Stratejik Plan 2018-2023). The museum consists of exhibition, storage, administrative units, conservation-restoration laboratory, temporary and permanent exhibition halls, cafe, restaurant, and sales areas.

Peace and belonging come first among the elements that inspired the Troy Museum. From Alexander the Great to Mehmet the Conqueror, every thought in the geography of Troy brought its own hero to the fore. The Museum of Troy includes all the heroes of Homer, the best example of this is that there is a section in the exhibition even in the name of Heinrich Schlimann, who smuggled the Treasures of Priam. For this reason, the Troy Museum has a

language of peace that is free from arguments and ideologies. In addition, the Turks became a part of Troy for the first time by creating identity awareness by reading together with the Anatolian ties of Troy (Gölcük, 2020b).

### **Creating a Museum**

The city brand refers to the whole of the historical, cultural, and social values that create the unique elements of a city itself. The thoughts of society express the image of the city. In line with this purpose, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism conducted research to provide better service and it was informed that local and foreign tourists visited the region in a short time like two hours. For this reason, it has been decided to build the Troy Museum, which will develop the city of Çanakkale socially and economically, make the region more attractive in the touristic area, and as a center with an interactive exhibition method (Troya Müzesi Mimari Yarışması Şartnamesi, 2011, p.15).

The city of Çanakkale, which has hosted many civilizations in history, is one of the most important cities in Turkey in terms of history and culture. Excavations in the ancient city of Troy were carried out for the first time in 1871 by Heinrich Schlieman, and then it became a world-renowned place. The ancient city of Troy has a long history with the epic of the Iliad, the legend of Troy, and its 4000-year history. The region, which has national and international recognition, was declared Troy Historical National Park in 1996 and was included in the UNESCO world cultural heritage list in 1998. The year 2018 has been declared the Year of Troy by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, as the twentieth year of its inclusion in the list.

It is known that the Troy Museum has participated in many competitions since its establishment in 2018: The European Museum of the Year Award- EMYA 2020 Application, 2020 Baksı Culture and Art Foundation "Anatolian Awards" Application and Attraction Star Awards' Application (Troya Müzesi Stratejik Plan 2018-2023). Troy Museum won the European Museum of the Year Awards special award for 2020 (the European Museum of the Year Awards (EMYA) special commendation in 2020), but the results were announced in 2021 due to the coronavirus. "Çanakkale Biennial" competed in the Baksı Culture and Art Foundation competition in the "Timed Events" category, and a part of the biennial held at the Troy Museum. Troy Museum received the "most successful museum" award out of eighty museums because of the Attraction Star Awards' application. At the same time, the Troy Museum was included in the "World's Greatest Places 2019" list in Time Magazine (Time). The city of Troy keeps its long historical past alive in its own museum and makes its name known in a short time with the successes of the museum. The museum is established in 2018, it received the 2020 European Museum of the Year Commendation Award and the 2020/2021 European Museum Academy Special Award. It is also justifiably proud of being the first Turkish Museum to receive both awards. The awards received by the museum during the pandemic process were held in an online ceremony under the conditions of the day (Özdener, 2021).

### **Creating a Brand During the Pandemic Period**

During the pandemic period, the Troy Museum did not interrupt its activities and continued its activities on social media (Image 1). In 2019-2020, the Troy Museum was provided visit the museum in the accompany of experts. In this context, Zeytinburnu Municipality brought visitors twice a week and supplied guidance services to 1461 people in total. A "visitor

welcome" was held in the accompany of a museum staff assigned as of September 2020 and within three months, the museum's score in Turkish Museum increased from 4.5 to 4.9, and visitor satisfaction was increased by strengthening the institutional image of the museum (Troya Müzesi Stratejik Plan 2018-2023). However, the "visitor welcome" application could not be continued due to the lack of museum staff. On the other hand, The Troy Museum started to make social media events and live broadcasts with the slogan "We are not closed! We Opened a New Door". The museum set out with the aim of being together without being side by side (Gölcük, 2020a). The museum announced these activities with the following text:

*"As you know, museums and archaeological sites in our country are closed to visitors due to COVID-19. However, in this environment we are in, we think that the social function of museums has emerged more clearly. Museums can become a place of "escape" from the wide world they contain. These places, which fit the history of humanity, can be a shelter for us today. At this point, a "physical" meeting is not necessary. Yesterday you were our visitors, today the Museums will be your visitors to your homes. We are ready to stay connected to each other and to ensure the continuation of cultural transfer with the tools offered by the era.*

*There is nothing "closed". We have opened a new door, and through this door, we are ready to be together, communicate, share, and cooperate. Today, museums are needed more than ever. The new and predominant role of our "visitors" is now to "follow". Contrary to popular belief, our communication with you has become stronger during this time. We interact more than ever before. This desire you show pushes us to produce. We are not side by side, but we are 'together'. We closely follow the developments in the world. We are aware of our responsibilities. As the Museum of Troy, we are trying to be more interactive with you during this process. In this context, we will be together with Instagram live broadcasts from now on. We will continue to share the world of Troy with you. From Troy with Love..." (Troya Müzesi Stratejik Plan 2018-2023).*

The Museum of Troy became the first museum to start social media live broadcasts in Turkey and was among the pioneers in Europe. One of the most important branches of social media, whose importance has increased with the Coronavirus, the number of Instagram followers of the Troy Museum increased by 278% after 25 live broadcasts, and while the average age of followers is 44 and above, it has managed to include young masses by falling to the age range of 24-34 (Troya Müzesi Stratejik Plan 2018-2023).

Aeneas Culture Route, the first European Cultural Route of Turkey, of which the Troy Museum is a project partner, was registered in 2021. Starting from Troy, the route proceeding through the Aegean Sea reaches Europe. The route provides intercultural transition and serves as a contact between five countries on the continent with the passage of sea routes. The selected countries and routes include the ports and archaeological sites that Aeneas visited on his journey to the founding of the Roman Empire after escaping the Trojan War (Ünsal, 2021).

In 2021, the 150th anniversary of the Troy excavations was celebrated during the pandemic. The 150th anniversary of the first excavation permit given to Heinrich Schliemann by the Ottoman State was commemorated. To this end, on 27 August 2021 "The 150th Anniversary of Troy Excavations in the Light of Ottoman Documents" exhibition was held. Considering

the subject through the Ottoman State archives, which permitted Schliemann to excavate, what the Ottoman bureaucracy did with the artifacts and treasures smuggled abroad; how the Troy excavation was followed; it has been tried to illuminate how and under what conditions the legal process initiated by the Ottoman Empire in Athens was carried out (Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı).

A 3D Mapping show is planned for the Troy Museum, which will provide better service to the changing visitor profile with the developing technology during the Coronavirus period and will also be beneficial in terms of tourism. However, on International Museum Day in 2022, 3D mapping was presented to the visitors for the first time in the garden of the Troy Museum, accompanied by laser, pyrotechnics, light, sound, and music (Çanakkale Valiliği, 2022).

The transition of museums to the virtual environment began in March 2020, which is the period when the pandemic emerged in Türkiye. Troy Virtual Museum had a total of 1,179,479 virtual visitors between March 2020 and March 2021 (Batuhan, 2021, p.127). This shows that there has been a visitor density in the virtual environment of the museum during the pandemic. During the pandemic, the Troy Museum carried out activities on social media on 25 different topics. Online activities, which started with Troy Museum Director Rıdvan Gölcük, continued with evaluations on different names and subjects.

| <b>ACTIVITIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA DURING THE PANDEMIC PROCESS</b> |                                   |             |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Name</b>   | <b>Presenter</b>                  | <b>Date</b> |
| Historical Outbreaks in Troy                                  | Rıdvan GÖLCÜK                     | 31.03.2020  |
| The First Treaties in History                                 | Rıdvan GÖLCÜK                     | 2.04.2020   |
| The Light that Shines Through the Ages: “Glass”               | Güney Can GÜLŞAN                  | 6.04.2020   |
| Troy Museum and Architecture                                  | Rıdvan GÖLCÜK and Ömer Selçuk BAZ | 8.04.2020   |
| Trade from Amphora to Plastic Bottle                          | Kemal ÇİBUK                       | 7.04.2020   |
| The Memory of Troy: Akköy Jugs                                | Hazal FIRAT                       | 9.04.2020   |
| Protecting Troy Treasures from Hitler                         | Rıdvan GÖLCÜK                     | 13.04.2020  |
| Troy Museum in the Context of New Approaches in Museology     | Özgür ÇAVGA                       | 15.04.2020  |
| Reflections of Antiquity: Assos                               | Osman ÇAPALOV                     | 17.04.2020  |
| From the Mother Goddess to Anatolia                           | Kemal ÇİBUK                       | 21.04.2020  |
| Were the Trojans Turks?                                       | Rıdvan GÖLCÜK                     | 22.04.2020  |
| Polyxena – At the Beginning of a New Age                      | Musa TOMBUL                       | 27.04.2020  |

|   |  |                              |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| Wars, Fires, Destruction, and Aftermath in Troy   | Prof. Dr. Rustem ASLAN   | 29.04.2020                   |
| Assos 1881-1883 Diplomacy – Archeology - Human  | Prof. Dr. Nurettin ARSLAN  | 1.05.2020                    |
| The Ancient City of Parion, Pearl of Northern Troas, and Cultural Heritage  | Prof. Dr. Vedat KELEŞ  | 6.05.2020                    |
| Alexandria Troas Excavations  | Prof. Dr. Erhan ÖZTEPE   | 6.05.2020                    |
| Beyond: The History of Troy in the 20th Century   | Rıdvan GÖLCÜK  | 8.05.2020                    |
| Maydos Kilisetepe Mound Excavations   | Doç. Dr. Göksel SAZCI  | 11.05.2020                   |
| Underwater Archeology in Turkey   | Doç. Dr. Hakan ÖNİZ  | 15.05.2020                   |
| During the Turkish World Museums Week Event, the Troy Museum was introduced in the Zoom Live Broadcast for “the Museums of the Turkish World” | Rıdvan GÖLCÜK<br>Moderator: Firuza SULTANZADE                          | 21.05.2020                   |
| Interview on “The Legend Continues Museum of Troy” on the page of the Association of Archaeologists.  | Rıdvan GÖLCÜK<br>Moderator: İlkay İVGİN                                | 29.04.2020                   |
| Interview on "Museums and Communication in the Days of Pandemic: Museum of Troy" on the Page of the Association of Archaeologists             | Rıdvan GÖLCÜK<br>Moderator: Canan Cürgen GÜLTAŞ                        | 30.05.2020                   |
| 41st Museum Meetings  | Rıdvan GÖLCÜK  | 14.05.2020                   |
| Readings of the Iliad   | Rıdvan GÖLCÜK,<br>KemalÇİBUK,<br>Güney Can GÜLŞAN and<br>Osman ÇAPALOV | 23.03.2020<br>(5 broadcasts) |

**Image 1.** Source: Troya Müzesi Stratejik Plan 2018-2023.

## Conclusion

Troy Museum provides the branding of Çanakkale city and is the symbol of Çanakkale. The museum has extended the time spent by visitors in the region in terms of cultural tourism.

The Troy Museum is an institution that has been working actively since the day it was opened and works within the understanding of contemporary museology. It has shown that the sustainability and continuity of museums are possible during the pandemic process. The museum, which is new in terms of its establishment date, has become visible both nationally

and internationally. It is seen that the museum continues to create and develop itself with its online activities and contemporary efforts during the pandemic period.

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