

Behind the glass case

A comparative study of two sets of human remains in
Norwegian museums



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Sammendrag

Kjernen i avhandlingen er casestudiet av to kvinnelige menneskelevninger. Dismutenibtes og ”Maren i myra” er fra ulike kulturelle og historiske kontekster. Dismutenibtes er en gammel egyptisk mumie og inngår i utstillingen ”De egyptiske mumier” på Kulturhistorisk museum i Oslo. ”Maren i myra” er derimot en kvinne med ukjent bakgrunn. Hennes levninger er utstilt på Teknisk museum i Oslo, i utstillingen ”Sunn sjel i et sunt legeme”. Gjennom grundige studier av biografiene og utstillingene til Dismutenibtes og ”Maren i myra” har jeg undersøkt om det foreligger fremstillingsmessige paralleller mellom de to utstillingene og mellom biografiene. Videre reiser studien forsøksvis en diskusjon om det finnes en mer passende måte å stille ut menneskelevninger på og hvordan det kan gjøres.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Archaeology is not linked to any particular period of the past. It is however a type of methodology used to understand history's occupants and their behavioural systems (Swain 2007:8). This is achieved largely through excavations, the authentic and romantic heart of archaeology (Swain 2007:8), which result in the discovery and gathering of material culture, also known as artefacts, objects or things. Consequently, archaeology has always had a close tie to museums due to the simple fact that museums take the objects that archaeologists dig up. These archaeological artefacts are then kept in museum storerooms, and sometimes displayed and interpreted for the public to experience (Swain 2007:11-12). The archaeological assemblage offers unique insight into the social, cosmological, economical, political, biological, geological and geographical spheres. This is a complex and arduous task. Consequently, archaeology has established and continues to develop philosophical and methodological ties to many other academic fields, such as anthropology, natural history, physical sciences, biological sciences, computer science and mathematical sciences. Archaeology brings these disciplines closer to understanding the human past (Ellis 2000:xv-xvi).

One of the most valued and remarkable archaeological finds is human remains because they were once living people. Within the field of archaeology, there is an ethical obligation to treat human remains with respect and dignity. Changes in professional knowledge, practice and guidelines over the past decade reflect a greater understanding that our viewpoints are grounded in Western concepts of the body, death, heritage and identity (Redfern and Clegg 2017).

For the last four years, I have worked as a disseminator at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo. Through my conversations and discussions with museum visitors of all ages, I became increasingly aware of the power and vulnerability of displayed human remains. I wanted to find out more about the people behind the class case. I was curious not only about what was presented in the exhibitions, mostly information on the social context of their living life, but also about their biography in its entirety. Moreover, I believe that archaeologist should be invested in how archaeological finds are managed, interpreted and presented to the public in

museum exhibitions. Archaeologists must remember the close relationship between the discipline and museums. This thesis searches for common ground between human remains displays in museum collections through a comparative study of two sets of remains, Dismutenibtes and “Maren i myra”, from different historical and cultural contexts. Dismutenibtes is an ancient Egyptian mummy displayed in “The Egyptian mummies” exhibition at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo. “Maren i myra” is a woman of unknown identity displayed in the exhibition “Sunn sjel i et sunt legeme” (“Healthy mind in a healthy body”) at the National Medical Museum, which is part of the Museum of Science and Technology in Oslo. Through my study of these two women, I will examine if there is a more appropriate way of displaying human remains, and how that might be achieved.

Chapter 2 describes how human remains have been regarded, managed and treated specifically in Norway. This chapter traces the main approaches that have been used to study and analyse human remains. Moreover, this chapter also presents the ethical guidelines and legislation Norway follows on a national and international level.

Chapter 3 introduces and explains the different methods used to gather relevant and sufficient data to answer my research question. My thesis relies on mixed methods research, a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods.

Chapter 4 introduces the different types of data and the results of their analysis. My data includes newspaper articles, electronic correspondence (e-mails), blog and conservation rapport, exhibition observation notes, photogrammetry and interviews transcripts.

Chapter 5 compares and discusses the data gathered during this project to figure out if there is a more appropriate way of displaying human remains.

Chapter 2: Background

2.0 Introduction

This chapter describes how human remains have been regarded, managed and treated. First, the chapter traces the evolution of the study of human remains in Norway, in addition to the development of the main approaches used to study and analyse them. Second, it introduces the importance of museums and their collections, some of which are controversial, that harbour human remains. Third, this chapter explains the ethical guidelines and legislation Norway follows on a national and international level. Understanding this part of Norway's history sheds light on the current treatment of human remains in the country.

2.1 Studying human remains

Human remains have been a continuous fascination for archaeologists and museum curators for centuries (Fagan 2007:xv). The study and analysis of human remains is important because it improves understanding of life both in local and global context (Alfonso and Powell 2007:5). The physical remains of the human body often consist of bones, teeth, and rarely of preserved skin, hair, and soft tissue. The osteological analyses, in other words the analysis of the bones, can offer the biological sex, age and cause of death of an individual. Using osteological data with other archaeological material, like for example grave goods, gives the potential to reconstruct social identities, gender roles, and social status (Stutz and Tarlow 2013:3).

From an archaeological perspective, the investigation and analysis of human remains has changed in both methods and possibility. This change is illustrated in the development of the different approaches and objectives of “physical anthropology” and “oste archaeology”. To understand and differentiate between these two disciplines it is important to define them. Anthropology is an academic discipline that examines the physical, social, material and cultural development of mankind (Sellevold 2014:17-18). Subsequently, physical

anthropology is a sub-discipline of anthropology, focussing on studies of the human body in all its aspects. During the beginning of the 20th century, the term “physical anthropology” was used in Norway to designate the study of human skeletal remains from archaeological excavations. The term “human osteology” deriving from the word “osteon” meaning bone, became widely used. At present, osteoarchaeology has replaced these two terms. Osteoarchaeology incorporates studies of both animal and human remains (Sellevold 2014:17-18).

2.1.1 The beginning

In the 1890s, Norway was swept by a national sentiment resulting in the dissolution of its union with Sweden in 1905. It was in this time in history that a Norwegian tradition of physical anthropological study was established. Prehistoric migration theories returned as a key topic in Norwegian academic debates. Rudolf Keyser, a professor of history at the University of Christiania (Oslo), played a crucial role in establishing historical scholarship in Norway. Keyser described the ancestors of the Norwegians as biologically superior to those of Sami, an indigenous people (Kyllingstad 2012).

Together with his colleague Peter Andreas Munch, Keyser formed a narrative, which maintained that the Germanic invasion gave birth to the Norwegian nation. This had a massive influence on the literature and on the perception of national history in Norway. Keyser’s theory remained unchallenged for two decades, until the late 1860s when classical theories of cultural evolution emerged in the international academic world. One of Keyser’s critics was historian and ethnographer Ludvig K. Daa. Daa maintained that the physical and cultural traits of ancient Norsemen were not the result of the invasion of a biologically distinctive group, but instead the gradual adaptation to the natural environment in Norway. Daa was an adamant supporter in “Scandinavism”, which was a cultural and political movement that promoted solidarity between Scandinavian countries (Kyllingstad 2012). Ludvig K. Daa was, with his colleague Liebein, the scholar who investigated the ancient Egyptian mummy Dismutenibtes. He published an article in 1875 on Egyptian antiquities at the university’s Ethnographic Museum, as it was called at the time (Daa 1875). These developments had significant influence and explain the treatment and management of human remains in museum collections.

2.1.2 The evolution of the study of human remains

Physical anthropology in the 20th century in Norway can be divided into three periods, according to the scientific community: "the anthropological", "antiquarian" and the "archaeological" period. However, Berit Sellevold argues that there is in fact a fourth period which she calls the "osteochaerological" period (Sellevold 2014:19). This chapter will follow her reasoning.

2.1.2.a Anthropological period

The founder of physical anthropology in Norway was an army physician named Carl Oscar Eugen Arbo, who conducted extensive physical measurements of army recruits (Kyllingstad 2012). Between 1908 and 1945, professor of anatomy Kristian Emil Scheiner headed the anthropological collection. Scheiner's main aim was to map the Sami and Norwegian population anthropologically based on morphological studies of bones. He provided craniological description of the Norwegian and Sami population groups from Iron Age to the Medieval Period. However, he also included living population groups in his study (Sellevold 2014:19-20).

2.1.2.b Antiquarian period

From the Second World War to the middle of the 1980s, Norwegian antiquarians carried out excavations of skeletal remains. These excavations were mostly executed by the Directorate for Cultural Heritage. The aim was to rescue skeletal remains and not to collect material and data for skeletal research as had been done in previously years. Human remains were mostly uncovered in excavations connected to road and building construction work in medieval towns such as Oslo, Tønsberg, Bergen and Trondheim. During the antiquarian period, few research projects involved human skeletal remains, moreover, skeletal finds were often reburied (Sellevold 2014:20-21).

2.1.2.c Archaeological period

From the end of the 1980s to 1994, archaeologists have assumed responsibility for human remains recovered during archaeological investigations. Numerous excavations in Norwegian medieval towns have produced quantities of human remains from churchyards. The

Archaeological Interim Committee commissioned a report on the state of human osteology in Norway in 1986. Consequently, the Directorate for Cultural Heritage and the five archaeological museums established an Osteology Working Group and a Physical Anthropological Work Unit on 1 January 1990. The Work Unit participated in excavations of graves and human remains, thereby participating in both planning investigations and engaging in the fieldwork and analysis. However in 1994, the Work Unit was closed down. Its tasks were transferred to the Osteoarchaeology laboratory located at the Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research (Sellevold 2011:317).

2.1.2.d Osteoarchaeological period

This period stretches from 1994 to the present. Osteoarchaeology is an interdisciplinary science. It depends on both humanistic sciences and natural sciences to achieve its objectives. The humanistic disciplines such as archaeology, ethnography and history deal with the cultural historical aspects of human remains and burial. Furthermore, the last couple of decades have seen a raise in the use of natural sciences analyses of bones and objects, like for example radiological dating, microscopy, DNA and biomolecular analyses (Sellevold 2014:23). Moreover, the fact that osteoarchaeology is interdisciplinary have also given the opportunity to use medical imaging such as X-rays, CAT scans and 3D models in research (Loynes 2015:5). To this end, this thesis follows the interdisciplinary tradition of osteoarchaeology.

2.2 Collections of human remains

Museums and archaeology have been part of a shared endeavour to recover and study the material world. Their Enlightenment roots gave way to explosive growth in the nineteenth century. This was mostly aided by and aiding the colonial project. Resulting in each becoming established academic and cultural institutions. However, their bond is maintained by the fact that neither could exist without each other or material culture (Riggs 2014:14).

Since, this thesis analyses two particular sets of human remains displayed in museum exhibitions, an examination of the origin of these kinds of collections in museums in general can help explain where these particular collections come from and why they were created.

Many museums with archaeological collections hold human remains. Moreover, many archaeological collections come from cemetery excavations and have contributed to medical research (Swain 2007:160).

2.2.1 The origin of human remains collections

Contemporary museum collections of human remains tend to come from three main sources. The first source is forensic investigation or cadaveric dissection. The second major group of skeletons are from culturally affiliated or ethnically identified contexts. These include a wide range of archaeological skeletons that were excavated primarily in the twentieth century and had been created by racial science in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Third, some collections contain human remains with no known cultural affiliation but of clearly archaeological origin. Precise recording has not been a priority, which has resulted in the archaeological context being poorly recorded or entirely lost (Cassman, Odegaard, and Powell 2007:1-2). However, in Norway, many collections of human skeletons originate from the nineteenth century.

2.2.2 Human remains in Norway at present

Berit J. Sellevold (2014) explains that there are no completed records of human osteological material from archaeological sites in Norway. However, the Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research wishes to establish a national register of skeletal finds. That said, in 2000, a survey discovered at least 5000 finds of cremated skeletal remains from prehistoric sites. At present (2014) there are more than 700 finds of unburnt skeletal remains dating from prehistory to post-medieval archaeological contexts. Of these unburnt remains, around 5500 are in Scheiner's Collection at the University of Oslo. Furthermore, around 1000 unburnt remains are in the Museum of Natural History and Archaeology, NTNU, Trondheim University Museum, in addition to around 100 in the Museum of Archaeology at the University of Stavanger (Sellevold 2011:318). Moreover, Unn Yilmaz clarifies that preserved human remains from AD 1050 or older, are rare finds in Norway, with only 400 currently in existence. This means that the majority of archaeological human remains come from inhumation burials from a Christian context. Out of these, approximately 2000 individuals are from post-Reformation contexts, thus after AD 1537 (Yilmaz 2014:313).

2.2.3 The Schreiner Collection

Professor of anatomy Kristian Emil Scheiner headed the anthropological collection from 1908 until his retirement in 1945 (Sellevold 2014:19-20). Under his leadership, physical anthropology became an important discipline at the University of Oslo. Originally the development of anthropology at the university was related to increasing archaeological activity. This promoted the expansion of the collection of ancient skulls. However, archaeologists were mostly interested in learning about the Norwegian past, and not Sami settlement. Consequently, the Anatomical Institute began to conduct its own excavations to study prehistoric Sami settlements of northern Scandinavia. Between the First World War and the Second World War a great number of Sami burials were excavated. It has been estimated that more than 500 skulls were brought to the institute. Thus making this collection quite controversial to this day, in addition to being a black mark of Norwegian archaeology and anthropology. Alette Scheiner and Kristian Scheiner held the opinion that remains of past population had to be analysed alongside living population. Thus, they decided to enter into a partnership with an army doctor by the name of Halfdan Bryn. This initiated an anthropometric survey of army recruits from both Sami and Norwegian regions (Kyllingstad 2012).

At the end of the 1970s, the anthropological collection was named “The Scheiner Collection”, although it was closed down in 1986 (Sellevold 2014:20). The Archaeological Interim Committee decided to stop depositing funds into the collection. Subsequently, human skeletal remains have been brought and managed by the five archaeological museums in Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim, Tromsø and Stavanger (Sellevold 2011:319). At present the Schreiner Collection contains more than 7000 archaeological and other skeletal finds, as well as around 1000 Sami remains. Moreover, the archaeological finds in the collection includes approximately 5% prehistoric, 50% medieval, 15% post-medieval and 30% undated finds (Sellevold 2014:20). The Schreiner collection is a significant part of Norwegian cultural history. This collection illustrates not only how and why the study of human remains was undertaken but also the origin of many of the human remains still in medical and museum collections in Norway.

2.2.4 From Egypt to Norway

“The Egyptian mummies” exhibition at the Museum of Cultural History harbours the ancient Egyptian mummy, Dismutenibtes. There is some uncertainty regarding when she actually arrived to Christiania. However, in his article Anders Bettum (2010) informs that the earliest document citing any of the objects of this collection, is a letter dated March 25, 1842 (Bettum 2010). The letter is addressed to Professor R. Keyser, the manager of the museum called Collection of Scandinavian Antiquities, from the Academic Board. The Board asked Keyser to receive an ancient Egyptian Mummy and Siberian weapons transferred from the Zoological Museum to the Collection of Scandinavian Antiquities. Bettum establishes in his article that the mummy mentioned in the letter is most likely Dismutenibtes (Bettum 2010).

In 1862, Ludvig Daa was appointed as the first curator of the ancient Egyptian collection. Soon after, he wrote a letter to two zoologists, Professors Rasch and Esmark, who had worked at the faculty of mathematics and science prior to the transfer. Daa’s letter sought more information about the mummy, Dismutenibtes. Professor Rasch replied that the mummy was a gift to the University of Christiania from Giovanni Anastasi (Bettum 2010). Anastasi was a successful merchant who also served as Swedish-Norwegian Consul-General in Egypt. He was one of the many consular collectors of the early nineteenth century. Anastasi employed agents to buy antiquities from residents of Thebes and Saqqara (Thompson 2015:215). Anastasi is known to have sent his first shipment of Egyptian antiquities to Europe in 1826 (Bettum 2010).

In his letter, Professor Rasch also mentions that the mummy Dismutenibtes was opened when she arrived at the Zoological Museum. Professor Rasch states that he was not present during the unrolling of Dismutenibtes but that Professor Jens Rathke and Professor Cristopher A. Holmboe were. Professor Rasch also explains in his letter that Dismutenibtes was left exposed and unprotected in the exhibition for several years. He disapproved of how the general public was left to help themselves to the bandages of Dismutenibtes as a form of souvenir (Bettum 2010). The journey of Dismutenibtes is important to be aware of because it explains how and why she ended up on display in the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo. It is part of her biography.

2.3 Protecting human remains

Studying the legislation, guidelines and institutions that dictate how Norway manages human remains reveals how legislation concerning human remains has changed and developed. Many committees and organizations aim to protect and ensure the ethical treatment of human remains. Norway follows international and national legislations and guidelines such as, ICOM (International Council of Museums), UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), the Norwegian Cultural Act, the Norwegian Burial Act and the Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees.

2.3.1 International

In 1995, Norway ratified The Valletta Treaty, also known as The Malta Convention. The aim of the Convention is to protect “archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study. To this end shall be considered to be elements of the archaeological heritage all remains and objects and any other traces of mankind from past epochs”(COE 1992-01-16). Consequently, the Convention includes human remains and graves. Furthermore, Norway has ratified other international agreements, such as the Geneva Convention and various UNESCO conventions (Sellevoid 2011:322). Norway also follows the guidelines put forth by ICOM, The International Council of Museum. The ICOM Code of Ethics for Museum paragraph 4.3 titled, Exhibition of Sensitive Materials, states, that human remains must be displayed in a manner consisted with professional standards. The exhibition must consider the interest and beliefs of the members of the community from whom the objects originated. Human remains must be displayed with tact and respect for the feelings of human dignity held by all people (Jantsch and Ødegården 2014:217).

2.3.2 National

2.3.2.a Norway

As the study cases of this thesis are two sets of female human remains located in Norwegian museums, is it key to understand the legislation and guidelines put in place on a national level to protect them. Moreover, since one of the case studies, “Maren i myra”, is a Norwegian set

of human remains dated to post-Reformation (1537), it is interesting to see if there is legislation and guidelines that protects a case like hers.

The Norwegian Cultural Heritage Act (1978) and the Burial Act (1996) are the most important pieces of legislation with regard to archaeological human remains. The Cultural Heritage Act ensures the protection of prehistoric and medieval archaeological remains, however, finds dated after the Reformation in 1537 do not have the same legal protection (Lorvik 2014). Still, the Ministry of the Environment may issue a protection order in the case of post-Reformation structures and sites of value for cultural history, for example, graves and cemeteries. The Norwegian Burial Act (1996) is also relevant in connection with archaeological human remains because a considerable number of Norwegian churchyards contain both automatically protect remains and remains without any legal protection (Sellevold 2011:322).

A National Committee for Research Ethics on Human Remains (Skjelettutvalget) has also been formed in Norway. Established in 2008, the committee provides guidance regarding the utilisation of human remains in research. Moreover, the National Committee for Research Ethics on Human Remains has also published a booklet with ethical guidelines (NESH 2016). These guidelines request respect for human remains regardless of age and condition. The booklet states that all human remains should be treated with discretion and dignity and suggests that it is appropriate to consider what one would assume to be the wishes of the person in question, especially in cases of relatively recent human remains (NESH 2016).

2.3.2.b Egypt

Since one of the case studies in this thesis is an ancient Egyptian mummy, understanding Egyptian national legislation states regarding human remains is critical. Salima Ikram explains that there is currently (2011) no set legislation concerning the excavation of human remains; still strict rules exist regarding archaeological excavation. Permits must be acquired through the SCA, the Supreme Council of Antiquities. Furthermore, if a cemetery is being excavated, physical anthropologists must be part of the project (Ikram 2011:497). Moreover, there are no ethical concerns concerning the excavation of Pharaonic or pre-Pharaonic human remains. However, some early Coptic Christian cemeteries are completely excluded from excavation. The reason for this is that the cemeteries have been in use for approximately 150-

300 years. Moreover, there is sensitivity concerning the display of human remains. The Royal mummies were removed from display in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo in the 1970s. However, they returned for the public to experience with new refurbished rooms and display cases (Ikram 2011:497). When it comes to taking cultural heritage out of Egypt, no human remains can leave the country under current Egyptian law. However, it is possible to obtain export permits for samples for the purpose of scientific study (Ikram 2011:497).

2.4 Summary

This chapter shows the study of human remains, evolving from “physical anthropology” to “oste archaeology”. As this thesis investigates two sets of human remains displayed in Norwegian museums, this chapter also presents the origin of human remains collections, and tells the stories of two human remains collections. Conclusively, this chapter provides the different legislation, guidelines and the institutions that direct how the management of human remains is in Norway.

Chapter 3: Method

3.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces and explains my research methods. Since, archaeology involves many periods and types of material culture, the discipline has established and keeps developing philosophical and methodological ties to other academic fields, for instance, social sciences, natural science, computer and mathematical sciences (Ellis 2000:xv-xvi). Different types of disciplines combined with archaeology help come closer to understanding the human past (Ellis 2000:xv-xvi).

Research methods involve a range of tools and techniques used for different types of enquiry. Nicholas Walliman (2011) compares research methods to the variety of tools used for doing different practical jobs, such as using a pick to break up the ground or a rake to clear leaves. It is essential to know which tool to use for the best possible outcome (Walliman 2011:7). For instance, in this thesis the interviews are used as a tool to gather background information on the two exhibitions, “The Egyptians mummies” and “Healthy mind in a healthy body”, as well as background information on the two female human remains, Dismutenibtes and “Maren i myra”. Another tool is photogrammetry, a method used to make three-dimensional models. In this case, models not only offer information about these remains but also introduce the possibility of the eventual replacement of human remains with replications.

3.1 Research methods

Most research methods fall into one of two categories: qualitative and quantitative. Both methods have specific characteristics, yet, at times, overlap. However, a third research method is gaining ground in research: mixed methods.

3.1.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is non-numeric and is, according to Sherman and Webb (1988), concerned with developments as they are lived and experienced. Performing this type of research requires care, preparation and commitment (Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight 2010:60-61). Qualitative studies include a variety of data collection methods, for example participatory and non-participatory observation, document analysis, interviews, video recording and audio recording (Corbin and Strauss 2008:27). Scholarly criticism directed at qualitative methods points out that data cannot be generalised because social life changes over time (Ragin and Amoroso 2011:163-165).

3.1.2 Quantitative research

Nicholas Walliman (2011) argues that quantitative method is identified by measurements, which are “usually expressed in numbers” (Walliman 2011:72). Mathematical procedures analyse this numerical data, then portrayed in percentages, statistical terms or mathematical models. Quantitative research methods are criticised for failing to represent complex social phenomena and social context, because they often neglect cultural or historical events (Ragin and Amoroso 2011:111-113).

3.1.3 Mixed methods research

The mixed methods research has emerged during the past 20 years as “a type of research design in which qualitative and quantitative approaches are used in types of questions, research methods, data collection and analysis procedures and/or inferences” (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009:6-7). Social and behavioural scientists have frequently used the mixed methods research in their studies because it offers an alternative to the strict use of quantitative and qualitative traditions.

This thesis employs mixed research methods to gather information about Dismutenibtes and “Maren i myra”. Using different types of research methods gives the possibility to see and understand the material, the participants and institutions perspective. Data collection methods include document analysis, exhibition analysis, photogrammetry, and interviews.

3.2 Thinking about method

Before collecting data, the researcher must establish what type of information she seeks. It is essential to have a clear understanding of the nature of the research. As research is never completely objective, it is equally important to remember that the point of view of the researcher is a powerful influence on the work. Researchers hold opinions and expectations that influence ways in which the research is recorded and analysed (Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight 2010:83-84).

3.3 Case study

A case study is not a methodological choice; it is, however, the choice of an object to be studied. A researcher makes a conscious choice to study a specific case. On the one hand, the case study is the process of learning about a specific case. On the other hand, the case study is also the product of our learning (Stake 1994:236-237). Investigating a case study entails performing research on a system confined in space and time and fixed in a physical and sociocultural context. This type of research is conducted using diverse methods and data sources, such as observation, interviews, visual material and documents (Gobo 2011:16). Moreover, a particular case study is examined and analysed to provide insight into an issue or to develop a theory. Often it plays a supportive role, facilitating the understanding of our research interest. Researchers choose which cases to study based on our expectation of their ability to advance our understanding on a particular subject (Stake 1994:236-237). This master thesis attempts to figure out if there is a more appropriate way of displaying human remains and how this might be achieved.

This research compares two case studies: two sets of human remains, located in two different Norwegian museums. One set of human remains is an ancient Egyptian female mummy, named Dismutenibtes, whose coffin dates to the 25th dynasty. The other set of human remains is called “Maren i myra”. This is not her given name, but the name given to her by the Norwegian Medical Museum located in the Museum of Science and Technology in Oslo. Dismutenibtes and “Maren i myra” are from completely different cultural contexts. On the one hand, Dismutenibtes had a highly ritualised burial. She also had high social standing since

she was mummified. On the other hand, “Maren i myra” was discovered in an unmarked grave. She is presented as one of the many victims of the cholera epidemic of Oslo in the 1850s.

I attempted to gather as much information from different types of sources about these two sets of human remains. These included information about the exhibitions and museums the case studies are located in: What do the exhibitions look like and what is the space allocated for the remains. How are they placed? What types of artefacts are exhibited around them and how are these other artefacts displayed? In addition, it is equally critical to research the biography of Dismutenibtes and “Maren i myra”: What do we know about them? Do we have any recent information about these remains? Why are they displayed? How are they displayed? Will they be displayed differently in the future? This comparative study will assist in understanding how we have perceived and still perceive human remains.

3.4 Documents

3.4.0 Introduction

A literature review can reveal the inspiration for the research project and show how it assists in developing ideas and theory. To be aware of written work about a subject it is useful to keep an open mind and to search not only for academic writings but also other types of written work like for instance newspaper articles and literary works (Walliman 2011:59).

3.4.1 Getting started

The university library database is good place to begin any document search; it encompasses huge amounts of information on many different subjects and topics. Searching a library database also ensures the most current information available (Walliman 2011:53-54).

I use primary and secondary sources to get a broader perspective on my two case studies. Primary sources include first-hand documents like legislation texts, newspaper articles, interview transcripts, conservation rapport, blogs, observation notes and museum Internet

webpages. Secondary sources, like academic articles and books, offer data that has already been collected and analysed, by someone else (Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight 2010:105).

3.4.2 Finding Documents

This thesis examines the treatment of human remains and the way in which they are displayed. I began my research with a literature review in order to obtain a thorough overview of the past treatment of human remains and the creation of museum collections. In addition, I decided to look up Norwegian and international legislation and guidelines written for the protection of human remains. I did a broad search on my university library database and amazon. These are some of the key words and phrases that I used at the beginning of my research project: museum exhibitions, museum exhibitions and Egyptian mummies, medical collections, unrolling mummies, human remains collections, human remains, displaying human remains, ethics and museum exhibitions, ethics and human remains, human remains as objects, burial archaeology and osteoarchaeology. However, performing a literature review means not only finding the relevant information but also taking a critical position on the ideas they contain. This is an essential step in determining the quality and relevance of documents. The process involves an objective critique and evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of a document (Walliman 2011:57-59).

Almost all my data is collected from primary sources, while my literature review consists of secondary sources and academic texts. Among my primary sources is the Cultural Museum blog written by conservator Anne Håbu, unpublished conservation rapport also written by Håbu, unpublished electronic correspondence (emails), which is part of the unpublished conservation rapport and different newspaper articles about Dismutenibtes and “Maren i myra”. Moreover, I am the author of the interview transcripts, observation notes from the exhibitions and photogrammetry sessions.

3.5 Exhibition analysis

3.5.0 Introduction

Museums went through an immense transformation during the last century. Nicholas Thomas (2010) argues that museums are not only institutions or collections of objects but they are also a method, in the sense that they are an activity. This activity has its moments. The moments we reflect on, as visitors, are those of the discovery of, description of and connection to what we see (Thomas 2010). Because Dismutenibtes and “Maren i myra” are sheltered by museums and displayed in exhibitions, it is fundamental to describe their locations of display. I was able to analyse the exhibitions by, experiencing, observing and recording particular elements of the display and the design.

3.5.1 Preparations

My observations of the two different exhibitions might have been affected by my work at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo, where the mummy Dismutenibtes is displayed. As researchers, we must be aware of the inherent biases we bring to our research (Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight 2010:83-84). I had not visited the exhibition with “Maren i myra” for many years so I was able to observe and experience it as a first-time visitor. Still, political and value-based motivations and bias might affect the experience (Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight 2010:83-84).

Before going to visit the two museum exhibitions, I needed to understand clearly what factors of the display to study. Different elements of a display contribute to the narrative and concept of an exhibition. Museum exhibitions use basic tools of communication in order to disseminate this narrative and concept to the public. These tools include objects, words, pictures and assorted props, and they are used to stimulate different senses, such as sight, sound, touch and occasionally smell. Moreover, added to this are the elements that play a key role in the experience of the public. The way words, objects and pictures are combined, grouped and added to other elements, such as space, light, colour and props all contribute to an exhibition’s context, atmosphere and ambience (Swain 2007:217).

Although I wanted to do a thorough investigation and analyses of the two exhibitions in question, I also decided to allow myself to experience the museum exhibition like any other member of the public. My goal of this kind of empathic observation is to achieve a kind of objectivity while at the same time acknowledge that it is necessary for researchers to place themselves in the social actor's position. Only by embracing the subjective meanings used by the social actors can their actions be understood (Blaikie 2010:50-51).

In addition to recording my observations by hand, I photographed the exhibitions. Photographs have been described as a precise record of what was in front of the camera when its shutter snapped. They can provide key data for the researcher (Rose 2012:301). I therefore chose to create a photo-essay as part of my exhibition analysis. A photo-essay is a combination of writing with photographs. Photographs and text are combined to interpret a social situation or problem (Rose 2012:298). Putting photographs together with text is a helpful medium for presenting and building an argument (Rose 2012:319).

Photographs provide a visual understanding and recollection of the two different museum exhibitions. This visual aid is helpful when comparing the different displays, and the different and similar ways the exhibitions uses the space to disseminate the narratives of these two sets of human remains. Because I was not equally familiar with the two exhibitions, photographs allowed me to compare them on equal grounds.

3.5.2 Experiencing the exhibitions

While in the exhibitions I wrote down my observations about the objects and their placement, the words associated with the human remains, building and locations, the pictures and assorted props placed beside the display, models and reconstructions, the lighting of the exhibition, the space and the presentation of time. I also noted more subjective observations, such as how I experienced the exhibitions and the atmosphere of the exhibitions. As previously mentioned, museum exhibitions are an activity. As visitors we interact with, discover and participate in our surroundings. I was not alone in the museum exhibitions when I was observing and recording. Members of the public were also present. I found myself not only taking notes on the different elements of the exhibitions and my experience but also on the different reactions of other visitors to the displays (Thagaard 2013:79-80). This was possible because I acted like a regular museum visitor and toured unnoticed by others. This

enabled me to observe the other visitors' reactions to the display without influencing the atmosphere of the room (Thagaard 2013:87-88).

3.6 Photogrammetry

The digitalisation of cultural heritage is the result of an eager collaboration between social sciences and scientific analyses. This is a mixture of processual and post-processual method. Processual archaeology, also called “new archaeology”, was developed during the 1960s (Renfrew and Bahn 2005:212) to find patterning within a cultural system (Renfrew and Bahn 2005:213-217). However, post-processual archaeology began in the 1970s and continued into the 1980s as a critical response to processual archaeology. This school favours the meaning of symbolism, history, agency and critical approaches (Renfrew and Bahn 2005:207). In current archaeological research, it is common to use both processual and post-processual concepts.

3.6.1 Getting started

Since I work as a disseminator at the Museum of Cultural History, I learned that Håbu was starting a new project involving one of the in-house ancient Egyptian mummies, Dismutenibtes. I contacted Håbu and asked her if I could photograph the mummy. I explained that I wanted to make a three-dimensional (3D) of her. She invited me not only to join the photogrammetry team but also the larger discussion. I was then able to participate in several photography sessions, which allowed me to observe and work on the Dismutenibtes project.

Photogrammetry is based on photography. Throughout this process, I used a Nikon D90 camera with a 18-105 mm lens. The software used to render the 3D model was Agisoft. I used two different computers during this process: Agisoft PhotoScan Professional Trial on my own laptop and Agisoft PhotoScan Professional Edition on a stationary computer belonging to the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo.

3.6.2 Preparations

Before being able to photograph the actual mummy, the photogrammetry team, consisting of Steinar Kristensen, Magne Samdal and myself, had a test run with a “mummy dummy”.

Steinar Kristiansen and Magne Samdal are engineers working for the Museum of Cultural History. The test run was done to familiarise ourselves with the shape of the mummy and to find out what sort of pictures will achieve the best results.



As shown in the picture above, strips of red tape were attached to the linen of the mummy dummy to serve as reference points indicating where and how the object overlaps. When photographing, it is important to hold the camera at the same level for each image. Better quality photographs afford the computer software a better understanding of the structure and shape of the object. One must photograph the mummy from all angles to ensure that every part is photographed. Right after I had photographed the object, I loaded my pictures into Agisoft PhotoScan Professional Trial. This version of the programme allows you to render a model but not keep the model; therefore I took screenshots of the end result (see screen shot below).



3.6.3 Making a 3D model

Since, Agisoft PhotoScan Professional Trial does not save the 3D model, Steinar Kristensen and Magne Samdal, generously allowed me to use their stationary computer with Agisoft PhotoScan Professional Edition to render my final 3D model of the mummy Dismutenibtes. Altogether, I created two 3D models of Dismutenibtes. The first 3D model I made on my own laptop, the second and final 3D model I rendered on the stationary computer at the museum (see Chapter 4).

There are four stages to creating a 3D model in Agisoft Photoscan. The first task is to align your photos by going to Workflow and then selecting Align Photos. This setting was chosen for the accuracy of the photographs. I learned that it is a good idea to make a simple model first and then make it more accurate later. Stage two of the process is to build a dense cloud. For this one goes to Workflow and selects Build Dense Cloud. For high-end computer work, choose medium or high quality. The third stage is for the computer to build the mesh (surface) of the artefact. This is achieved by going to Workflow and selecting Build a Mesh. The mesh is formed from the points that derive from the photographs. Stage four is building the texture of the object photographed, thus, once again, going to Workflow and selecting Build Texture. This process yielded a finished model with the same colour as the original object.

3.7. Interviews

3.7.0 Introduction

I involved the people that worked closely with displaying Dismutenibtes and “Maren i myra”, my case studies. The ideas, expertise and knowledge of the professionals working with Dismutenibtes at the Museum of Cultural History and with “Maren i myra” at the Norwegian Medical Museum, part of the Museum of Science and Technology in Oslo, are at the core of the assemblage of data about the identity and biography of the two sets of human remains and their display.

I conducted interviews with Eyvind Bagle, leader of the research and exhibition section and the deputy head of the Norwegian Maritime Museum, Ellen Lange, curator at the Norwegian

Museum of Science and Technology, and Anne Håbu, conservator at the Museum of Cultural History. All three worked closely with Dismutenibtes or “Maren i myra” and know the processes involved in curating a museum exhibition. Their expert opinion played a crucial role in the final decisions on how these two women were displayed and are still being displayed.

3.7.1 Getting started

It was easy for me to move forward with my research on the Dismutenibtes project, since I was already working on an outreach team for the exhibit. I asked the main conservator Anne Håbu for an interview. She kindly accepted, on the condition that she receive the questions beforehand.

It was challenging to find my footing in the search for information about “Maren i myra”. There is very little information available about her, and I had no previous connection to the Norwegian Medical Museum. My first step was to find the list of names of the employees on the museum website. Ellen Lange was cited as one of the curators working for the National Medical Museum. I wrote to her and presented my master project and myself. I also asked if it was possible to find more information about “Maren i myra”. In my request, I included my project description and research goals. She invited me to meet with her and some of her colleagues on 14 September 2016 at the Museum of Science and Technology. We discussed my thesis by going through my project description. During the meeting, I asked questions, and the conversation encouraged me to proceed with “Maren i myra” as a case study. The lack of information about the construction of the exhibition as well as the set of human remains known as “Maren i myra” made me want to use her in a comparative study with the mummy Dismutenibtes. The pertinent information I got was that they had not been able to dig up any museum documents on “Maren i myra”. Furthermore, the museum had no plans to re-organise or re-examine the exhibition “Healthy mind in a healthy body” where “Maren i myra” is displayed. After this meeting, I stayed in contact with Ellen Lange, and we scheduled an interview.

I connected with Eyvind Bagle through Ellen Lange. She had met him and informed him of my project. He wrote me and explained that he was one of the people in charge in the creation of the exhibition where “Maren i myra” is displayed, “Healthy mind in a healthy body”. He

also generously offered to answer my questions and graciously accepted my request to interview him.

3.7.2 Preparations

Before starting any interview, I consulted the guidelines of the Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees. The guidelines explain that in qualitative interviews it is imperative to safeguard the integrity of the interviewees. This must be done both during the actual interview and afterwards, as well as when the results are interpreted and presented (Fangen 2015).

Before each interview, the interviewees received a Word document with a set of questions. The email encouraged detailed answers about the different topics, because my goal was to perform an in-depth interview in order to gather as much information as possible. I also informed them that I would be audio recording the interview and requested their signed consent before proceeding. All of this was agreed upon before meeting each of the interviewees. The interviewees were asked to read and sign the consent form written for this project. The consent form included the background and the objective of the research paper and described the study procedures and the ways in which the information gathered during the interview would be used. The consent form also states that by signing the document the interviewee participates voluntarily in the study (see appendix). The interviewees and I kept copies of the signed consent form. All of the interviews were conducted at the interviewee's work place.

3.7.3 Conducting interviews

During my first interview with Eyvind Bagle, I realised that qualitative interviews build on conversational skills you may or may not already have. Even though I had prepared questions in advance, I had to allow for flexibility and develop unprepared probes and follow-up questions during the interview. Thus, the dialogue was not constricted to the prepared questions but allowed to follow the conversational style and rhythm of the interviewees. This allowed for the questions and answers to follow one another logically (Rubin and Rubin 2005:110). Consequently, the three interviews, starting with Eyvind Bagle followed a more conversational style. I listened to each answer and determined the next question based on what was said. The prepared questions initiated the conversation on a specific matter and

allowed the interview to maintain a certain structure throughout, whereas the probes and follow-ups encouraged elaboration, detailed answers and anecdotes.

Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin (2005) present an interview model called “the tree and branch”. This model is compared to a tree with the trunk representing the research problem and the branches as the main questions. According to this model, in the interviews, the researcher would try to ask all the main questions while at the same time follow up on each to obtain the same degree of depth, detail, vividness, richness and nuance. My original purpose was to follow this model. I had prepared questions and ensured that the questions were logically related to one another so as to ensure a smooth transition from one question to the next. I was trying to learn more about not only my two case studies, but also the history of events that led to these exhibitions. In an effort to reconstruct the history of these events, I organised the questions to follow the chronology of the creation of the exhibitions, finding out what happened first then next. This is the easiest and most direct way of getting people to share narratives (Rubin and Rubin 2005:145).

I used the “tree and branch model” in collaboration with the “river and channel model”, also introduced by Rubin and Rubin (2005). This concept encourages the researcher to explore an idea or an issue in great depth and then follow wherever it leads, as one follows a particular river. This model allows for an even closer account of the exhibition events. I wanted my prepared questions to be answered, but I did not the prepared questions to impede the interviewees ability to impart their story. So I allowed in some instances during the interviews for a river-and-channel pattern. The interviewee might take you down another path and instead of returning immediately to the prepared questions, one continues by following up on the follow-ups until the narrative is told (Rubin and Rubin 2005:146).

3.7.4 Recording and transcribing

There are several reasons to use or not to use a tape recorder during an interview. I chose to record all my interviews. I had never held an interview before this study, so the tape recorder provided me with a certain security and enabled me to give my full attention to the interviewee rather than worry about whether or not I noted down each detail. Moreover, notes can not capture exactly what was said, just the essence of what was said. Notes tend to simplify and flatten the interviewee’s response. Often when taking written notes one must

neglect details, skipping material to keep up with the pace of the speaker. Because I worried that content would be lost or incorrect, I chose to record the interviews with a tape recorder.

Before beginning to interview my sources, I knew that I wanted to use verbatim transcripts, in other words to quote interviewees' comments in my thesis. The tape recorder delivers the exact wording of the interviewees. I also wanted to braid my interviewees narratives along with the rest of the information collected from other sources further into my discussion on the subject of my thesis (Weiss 1994:53-55).

After completing my first interview with Bagle, I investigated the best way to transcribe our conversation. I transferred the recording on to my computer so that I could easily play and pause the recording while writing every word said during the interview on to a Word document (see appendix). After I had finished transcribing the three interviews, I deleted sounds like "um", unnecessary repetitions and un-finished sentences as I regard them as unnecessary for my fact-finding process (Weiss 1994:55-56).

3.8 Summary

This chapter presents the research methods used to gather the different types of information from different sources. The mixed methods research approach allowed me to dig deeper into the two case studies, Dismutenibtes and "Maren i myra". Thus, I used qualitative and quantitative research methods. The data collection methods used in this thesis includes document analysis, exhibition analysis, photogrammetry and interviews.

Chapter 4: Data analysis

4.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the different types of data and their analysis. My data includes newspaper articles, electronic correspondence (e-mails), blog and conservation rapport, exhibition observation notes, photogrammetry and interviews transcripts. When considering different forms of data analysis, I asked myself: What is the goal of this research? What form should it take? What analysis technique would be most effective? Should the same technique be employed for all the data?

As Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss (2008) write, a researcher cannot continue gathering data forever; at some point it is necessary to give the data significance. Corbin and Strauss (2008) argue that analysis is both an art and a science. The “art” aspect is the creative use of techniques to solve analytic problems, however, the science is the coherent construction of an explanatory story from the data (Corbin and Strauss 2008). Hence, analysis must involve interpretation.

Interpretations are the fundamental processes that aim to find the meanings of events, texts, objects or experiences. They are not exact replications of data, but rather the researcher’s understanding and impression of data. Researchers might resemble translators who translate other person’s words and actions. They are thus the intermediaries between the data and the reader. Language translators know that it is not easy to convey meaning. Words can have different meanings from one language to another, and also from one situation to another (Corbin and Strauss 2008).

4.1 Finding order in chaos

The empirical world is a chaos of observation, until the researcher imposes order on it. As researchers, we select, sort and categorize, sometimes ignoring what is not useful to us, and

then we organize what we need into data for analysis (Coxon 1999:v). In this research, I attempted to collect data methodically. I recorded in notebooks, colour-coded folders, labelled information, transcribed tapes and highlighted photocopies. Despite my deliberate organization, it is a challenge to create order from heaps of information. The whole point of data analysis is to move from chaos to order, to attain a coherent overview of all the information collected. This can be difficult if the data comes in different forms, as is the case of this thesis (Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight 2010:212-213). The first step is classifying the data by types and thereafter establishing subgroups within the general category. This helps to organize material and to identify patterns and to serve as a basis for the development of explanations and conclusions (Walliman 2011:132-133).

I drew on Loraine Blaxter, Christina Hughs and Malcolm Thigh (2010) for inspiration when constructing an analysis technique best suited for my data and my research question. My first analysis technique is coding. This is the process by which items or groups of data are assigned a code. In this case the code is a number that differentiates between the different types of data, for example, newspaper articles has the code number 1. My second analysis technique is annotating. This is the process by which my written material is highlighted. This process helps draw attention to what I consider to be the significant sections for my research. In this process I also write comments, observations and explanations in the margins, a sort of mini-summary of the text (Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight 2010:220-221). My third technique is labelling. This is a process by which I label passages or statements with significant words. These labels serve to direct further analysis. My fourth and final analysis technique is selection and summary. This is the process by which, you produce a reduced version of the data (Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight 2010:220-221).

The same information can be found in the different types of data. To avoid repetition, I chose different types of information from different types of data. This will hopefully provide a comprehensive unit of information about the two study cases in this thesis.

The presentation of this thesis data follows the same order as the previous chapter. First there will be a presentation of the analysis of documents: newspaper articles, electronic correspondence (emails) and blog and conservation rapport. Then, there will be a presentation of the analysis of the two exhibitions. Thereafter, there will be a presentation of my observations during my photogrammetry sessions. Finally, there will be a presentation of the three different interviews. I have chosen to divide them into two topics. The first is “Maren i

myra”, the female human remains displayed at the Museum of Science and Technology in Oslo. The second topic is the ancient Egyptian female mummy Dismutenibtes displayed at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo.

4.2 Dismutenibtes and “Maren i myra” in the media

4.2.1 “Maren i myra”

“Maren i myra”, is the well-preserved remains of a female victim of Oslo’s cholera epidemic of the 1850s, in which one-third of the city’s citizens perished. According to a newspaper article written by Hanne Hånes, the mummy was discovered during construction work in 1898. The article explains that Rikshospitalet, one of Oslo’s teaching hospitals, featured “Maren i myra” at an open house in honour of the institution’s 175th anniversary in 1989. The event, open to the public, displayed the mummy and offered lectures explaining how such a “fat” mummy is created and how the skin transforms into a wax casing over time (Hånes 25.09.1989).

Still, Forskning.no, a website that offers news articles featuring Norwegian and international research, brings us to more recent events. One article explains that “Maren i myra” could be observed by visitors in a glass casing at the Norwegian National Medical Museum on 10 June 2003 at 07:00. The museum’s director Gunnar Neiheim is quoted saying to NTM that the National Medical Museum is a natural fit for the Norwegian Museum of Science and Technology. Neiheim stated that he had big expectations that the number of visitors will increase. Furthermore, he also believed that the National Medical Museum would become a popular destination especially for school children. The museum management anticipated 140,000 visitors annually, including 90,000 under the age of 18 (Forskning.no 10.06.2003 08:41). The director also explained that the exhibition would feature large posters and illustrations with concise explanations, making it more than just a collection of medical equipment and artifacts. The main theme for the exhibition is public health and the big diseases from 1850 to our present day. The ambition behind the exhibition, Neiheim explains, is to show the connection between societal and health development. The exhibition’s cholera section portrays a reenactment of a fairly common poor household in the capital, Christiania, in 1850. People lived close to each other and rarely washed. In Stabelgården in

Hausmannsgate, 150 people shared 20 rooms. In Pipervik around 5 people inhabited a single room. The museum shows one of these rooms: A boy in a confirmation outfit lies in his sick bed with his siblings and mother by his side. Under the bed is a pig and hen. In the space of just a few months, 2,500 people died of cholera (Forskning.no 10.06.2003 08:41). “Maren i myra” is part of the exhibition. According to Neiheim, no one knows who she was, just that she died in the cholera epidemic that ravaged the capital in 1850. She was found during construction work in a churchyard in the early 1900 and was given the name “Maren i myra”. For fear of the infection spreading, the diggers at the time were told to bury the dead in the soil water, and deeper than usual. Director Neiheim stated that if “Maren i myra” grave had not been humid and poorly oxygenated, the Norwegian Medical Museum would truly be less enriching (Forskning.no 10.06.2003 08:41).

However before opening the exhibition to the general public, the museum attempted to raise awareness and curiosity about the new National Medical Museum and its exhibitions. Newspaper reporter Erik Ingebrigtsen describes in his articles that on 4 October 2003 “Maren i myra” remains were brought into the studio of a Saturday television program called “Klisterhjerne”. In his strong reaction piece, Ingebrigtsen raises a number of ethical issues, including the use of human remains for entertainment and marketing purposes, especially in cases of human suffering or death. Ingebrigtsen recalls circuses and fairs that once displayed so-called “freaks” as deformed human remains and asserts that society would now never exhibit pictures of children with infected wounds from the 1950s to create a picture of the grotesque. Ingebrigsten expressed hope that the Norwegian Museum of Science and Technology would present the human remains of “Maren i myra”, with more respect and dignity than what was presented in the promotional television program. To play on people’s fascination with the macabre and the sensational and to draw numbers to the museum is not worthy of a medical history exhibition (Ingebrigsten 10.10.2003).

4.2.2 Dismutenibtes

The Museum of Cultural History blog written by main conservator Anne Håbu presents a great deal of new findings on the ancient Egyptian mummy, Dismutenibtes. The blog entry called “A mummy brought to the country” published on 2 February 2016, explains that in August of 1838, the Corvette arrived at the port of Christiania. On board was a gift to the Royal Norwegian University donated by the Norwegian-Swedish Consulate General in

Alexandria, Giovanni Anastasi. The gift consisted of an Egyptian mummy in a sarcophagus with an accompanying outer chest as well as 42 Arabic, Persian and Turkish books. At the time, the university was located in Mariboegården in Prinsens gate 20. Not long after the mummy arrived, professors Jens Rathke and Christopher A. Holmboe examined the mummy. The mummy and coffins were transferred to the collection of Nordic antiquities in 1842 (Håbu 2016a). When the Ethnographic Museum was established in 1853, the mummy was transferred there. Dismutenibtes was thereafter transferred from the Ethnographic Collection to the Antique Collection in 2003. In 2002-2003, it was displayed in the exhibition “The Mummy Lives” and has since been displayed in the Museum of Cultural History’s Egypt Hall (Håbu 2016a).

Additionally, *Dagbladet*, one of Norway’s biggest newspapers wrote a feature story on the Dismutenibtes project in 2016. The article offer’s details about Dismutenibtes’s life: Dismutenibtes came from a priest family. Both her father, Hotepamon, and the grandfather, Patjened, were guardians of the Amon temple’s treasure chamber, a social position passed on from generation to generation. Dismutenibtes was married to Padiamonet. Dismutenibtes belonged to a social sub-elite that consisted of influential people who were able to earn a living outside of the fields of most other ancient Egyptians (Gisme 2016).

There is a certain prestige in Europe for a museum that holds mummies in their collections. Anders Bettum, an Egyptologist connected to the Oslo Museum, tells reporter Bjørn Egil, that interest for Egypt has spread throughout Europe. According to Bettum, all museums want to hold ancient Egyptian objects in their collections. Indeed, Dismutenibtes’s husband is located in the British Museum and her son in a Belgium museum. Despite this, Håbu would like the mummy to be able to rest in peace. Thus, she is determined to complete a thorough examination of Dismutenibtes so that the mummy can eventually be resealed permanently. The whole point of mummification is to be covered; at the museum they have done the opposite. They have opened something connected to the ancient Egyptian gods, not to earthly Norwegians. Håbu sees this project as a “re-wrapping” of Dismutenibtes. The mummy was first unwrapped in the 1800s. Håbu wants to see it made whole again (Halvorsen 22.04.2016).

4.3 The Dismutenibtes Project

4.3.1 Conservation rapport



The photograph above, acquired from the conservation rapport written by Håbu, shows external objects found on the ancient Egyptian mummy Dismutenibtes during the conservation work. The four different objects are remains of a burnt matchstick, a cigar, etiquette and a shoelace. These objects are most likely from one of the investigations that took place in the 1800s.

4.4 Dismutenibtes's fate

An internal discussion in the format of electronic correspondence (emails) acquired from the conservation rapport written by Håbu took place during the Dismutenibtes project. The main issue discussed was how Dismutenibtes should be displayed at the conclusion of the conservation project. Two clear opinions were voiced in this discussion (Håbu 2016b).

One of the opinions raised during the discussion is that the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo has a duty to exhibit cultural history and not anatomy. How an ancient Egyptian mummy was prepared before its resting place should be more important for the museum and the public than seeing how the body of a mummy looks today. Moreover, a mummy is a ritualized body, and that body is transformed during the mummification process into a “sah”, a sanctified body. Additionally, by exhibiting an exposed body, the museum might invite the “wrong”

type of questions. The museum should encourage the “right” questions, for instance; what is a mummy? What was its purpose? How did one live and die in ancient Egypt (Håbu 2016b)?

Thus, by displaying the exposed body of Dismutenibtes, the museum would draw focus away from her story, which might be disrespectful and even unethical, considering the original intent of her “sanctification”. Rather, covering her affords her a worthy final rest. Moreover, the investigation of Dismutenibtes removed all of the linen that covered the face and body, so re-covering Dismutenibtes would bring her closer to the original function of a mummy. It would also help correct some of the past wrongdoings of the museum (Håbu 2016b).

On the other hand, displaying the exposed body of Dismutenibtes would bring the public closer to Dismutenibtes as a human being, a woman from ancient Egypt. This would give visitors an even stronger encounter with history. Moreover, some felt that the general public deserved just as much access to these artifacts as the researchers (Håbu 2016b).

4.5 Experiencing exhibitions

4.5.1 “Maren i myra”

“Healthy mind in a healthy body” is the first exhibition of the Medical Museum. It opens with an introduction to the cholera epidemic in Oslo. The first poster of the exhibition depicts a type of grim reaper. The title of the poster is: “Cholera! No one knows how it spreads; no one knows how it can be treated”. The photograph below presents the first posters that greets visitors coming into the exhibition “Healthy mind in a healthy body”.



Figure 4.2 Photograph of the exhibition “Healthy mind in a healthy body” taken by Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg 6 February 2016

The exhibition has soft lightning, thus, seems quite dark and gloomy. Immediately to the left there is a diorama and human remains. The photograph below shows parts of the diorama on the left and the human remains of “Maren i myra”.



Figure 4.3 Photograph of diorama and “Maren i myra” taken by Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg 6 February 2016

This all contributes to the room's melancholy and austere ambiance. The diorama depicts three life-size individuals, dressed in 1800 costume, inflicted with cholera; they are painted blue around the eyes suggesting severe dehydration. One of the dolls is lying down and seems to be near death. The text—only in Norwegian—bears information about the industrialization of Europe in the 19th century, how people from rural areas moved into towns. It also explains how the living situation in the big cities such as Christiania was tough, unsanitary and noisy. There is also an extract from the book by Henrik Wergeland written in 1835 called *Den Indiske Cholera* (The Indian Cholera). The photograph below is a closer look of the diorama and its text, as well as a side view of the human remains of “Maren i myra” and the text.



Figure 4.4 Close up photograph of diorama and “Maren i myra” taken by Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg 6 February 2016

The human remains are presented as a cholera victim, with her naked squashed body that seems to be made of wax. The human remains are also lacking feet. The display text states that no one knows who this woman is but that she has been given the name “Maren i myra”. The text goes on to read that she died during one of the cholera epidemics in Oslo in the 1850s and that she was found during construction work in a churchyard in the early 1900s. In the display of “Maren i myra” there is a photograph of two pages from Anderløkka Cemetery protocol book from 1853, when Christiania was ravaged by cholera. The photograph on the next page shows how “Maren i myra” is displayed and positioned in the exhibition.



Figure 4.5 Close up photograph of “Maren i myra” taken by Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg 6 February 2016

“Maren i myra” is used as a starting point to explain the development of modern medicine in addition to how the alteration from wooden pipelines to steel pipelines helped to improve public health in Norway. The exhibition from the display of “Maren i myra” resembles a labyrinth. The wall of the labyrinth tells a different side to the story about the understanding of disease. The walls closest to the display of “Maren i myra” explain that the change of material in the pipelines is what ultimately helped to defeat cholera. The exhibition also explains the discovery and early understanding of bacteria and the spread of disease. The two photographs below show what greets the visitor when continuing through the exhibition. This part of the exhibition is located to the right of the human remains of “Maren i myra” and presents and explanation of the connection between the disease and the pipelines.



Figure 4.6 Photograph of the exhibition “Healthy mind in a healthy body” taken by Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg 6 February 2016



Figure 4.7 Photograph of the exhibition “Healthy mind in a healthy body” taken by Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg 6 February 2016

While in the exhibition for almost two hours, I was interested in the public's reactions to the exhibition, in particular to "Maren i myra". The comments I heard the most were:

- "Æsj!" (Yuck!)
- "Hva er det?" (What is that?)
- "Er den ekte?" (Is it real?)

Adults, mostly parents and grandparents, had difficulty explaining "Maren i myra" to children because of the lack of information. Many adults explained that her appearance, a naked, squashed body, was the result of cholera. The children were asking if "kommer den til å gå igjen?" (Will it ever walk again?).

4.5.2 Dismutenibtes

"The Egyptian mummies" is the only exhibition at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo that has ancient Egyptian artefacts. It is located on the second floor of the museum. As one enters the exhibition, there is a mounted coffin. The photograph below shows the mounted coffin that greets the visitor when entering the ancient Egyptian exhibition.



Figure 4.8 Photograph of the exhibition "The Egyptian mummies" taken by Anissa G. Naguib LeCberg 16 June 2017

To the left of the mounted sarcophagus are two mummies. They are placed at a right angle to each other. The text reads that these are two female mummies. The photograph on the next page shows the two mummies placed to the left of the mounted coffin.



Figure 4.9 Photograph of the two mummies taken by Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg 16 June 2017

One of the female mummies is Dismutenibtes. The text explains that the Dismutenibtes sarcophagus is from the 25th dynasty (747-664 B.C) and that she is probably of Theban origin. Her coffin illustrates the aesthetic changes that have taken place since the 21st dynasty. Fewer figures give a spacious, airy feeling. The text also explains that the hieroglyphics on Dismutenibtes's bottom coffin tell about her social title and her family tree. Dismutenibtes bore the title "nebet-fer" (housewife), meaning that she was responsible for running the household. Dismutenibtes father, Hotepamon, was a foreman of the treasury at the Amon temple, a social position he inherited from his father, Patjenef.

The text also explains that the winged figure on Dismutenibtes's top coffin is the Sun God, Ra, in his nocturnal form. Further down on the coffin is another winged figure, a falcon, which was the Sun God in the day, also connected to Horus, the son of Osiris. Moreover, the text explains that on the bottom of the coffin there is a djed pillar personified as a deity. This pillar symbolizes Osiris's backbone, thus representing stability and duration. The afterlife in ancient Egyptian mythology is considered eternal, so the djed pillar often occurs in connection with burial. The text states that the hieroglyphs on the coffin read: "I am Djed, son of Djed, conceived of myself in Mendes, born of myself in Mendes."

The photograph below shows the display of the mummy Dismutenibtes after the conservation project. The photograph also shows the artefacts placed around the display. On each side of Dismutenibtes is a statuette of Osiris, God of the Afterlife in ancient Egyptian mythology. On the left side of Dismutenibtes, the statuette of Osiris depicts the God as a living king on his throne, on the right side of Dismutenibtes the statuette depicts Osiris as the first mummy. The wall behind Dismutenibtes is painted with stars in homage to Nut, Goddess of the Sky. Nut is

also an important god in the afterlife. On the wall to the right of Dismutenibtes is a photograph of wall paintings found on the inside of pyramids.



Figure 4.10 Photograph of Dismutenibtes after the conservation project taken by Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg 16 June 2017

Before the Dismutenibtes project, her cranium, hair and other body parts were exposed. This made it possible to see the human with the mummy. However, Dismutenibtes has since been re-covered with linen and now resembles a mummy. It is easier to imagine what a mummy looked like before going on its voyage to the afterlife. The photographs below show how Dismutenibtes was displayed before and after the conservation project.



Figure 4.11 Close up photograph of Dismutenibtes before the conservation project taken from the conservator blog (Häbu 2016a)



Figure 4.12 Close up photograph of Dismutenibtes after the conservation project taken by Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg 2016

While working as a disseminator in this exhibition, I witness different reactions to Dismutenibtes from the public, be it school children or adults:

- “Er den ekte?” (Is it real?)
- “Æsj!” (Yuck!)
- ”Det er ekkelt og skummelt” (It is disgusting and scary)

4.6 Photogrammetry

Before starting conservation work on the mummy Dismutenibtes, almost everyone involved in the project held a meeting on 24 February 2016. The photogrammetry team consisted of Steinar Kristensen and Magne Samdal, two engineers working for the Museum of Cultural History, and myself. They help me through the whole process of making a 3D model. The reason for this meeting was to explain to everyone involved why and how this project was going forth. There was a lively discussion on the topic of Dismutenibtes, Egyptian mummies and the history of treatment of human remains, especially Egyptian mummies by museums and others. The group also visited the exhibition in which Dismutenibtes is displayed. This exhibition is on the second floor of the Museum of Cultural History. While in the exhibition we got a guided tour from Professor Saphinaz Naguib and Anders Bettum. I had two photogrammetry sessions. I took pictures of Dismutenibtes to be able to create a three-dimensional model of her.

On 2 March 2016, Dismutenibtes was brought up from the exhibition and placed in a closed room on the 4th floor of the museum. This is the floor occupied by most of the conservators. This room served as a laboratory to protect the mummy. The people present were Anne Håbu, Steinar Kristensen, Magne Samdal, Mårten Teigen and myself. Teigen is one of the photographers of the Museum of Cultural Heritage and helped document all the stages of the conservation work on Dismutenibtes. Photography lights had been previously placed to ensure good photography. No conservation work on Dismutenibtes had been performed because conservator Håbu wanted every stage of the conservation work to be documented with photographs. Thus, the first stage of the conservation process was to photograph as well as make a 3D model of the body of Dismutenibtes and the bottom half of her coffin (see picture on next page).



Steinar Kristtensen and Magne Samdal photographed Dismutenibtes in order to create a 3D model for the museum, in addition to helping me take pictures for my 3D model. It was important to measure Dismutenibtes and her coffin to have reference points for later in the process. This is to have a clear understanding of how the coffin overlaps. The photogrammetry team chose to use the bird on both sides of the coffin as reference points. I drew a rough sketch of the coffin and recorded all the measurements and reference points (see picture below).

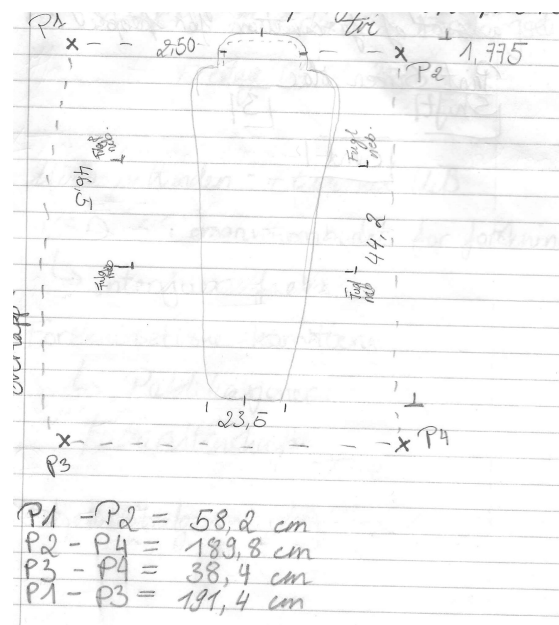


Figure 4.14 Sketch with measurements of the coffin of Dismutenibtes, made by Anissa G. N. Leerberg 2 March 2016

Finished rendered 3D model of Dismutenibtes on next page.

4.7 Interviews

4.7.1 Interviews with Eyvind Bagle on 13 January 2017 and Ellen Lange on 16 January 2017 on “Maren i myra”

In January 2017, I interviewed Eyvind Bagle and Ellen Lange about their experiences with “Maren i myra.” At the beginning of both interviews I asked the interviewees to introduce themselves. Bagle is the assistant manager at Maritime Museum. From 2000 to 2005 he worked at the Museum of Science and Technology in Oslo. In 2003 Bagle was responsible for artefacts at the Museum of Science and Technology. Lange is one of three medical history curators currently working at the Norwegian Medical Museum in Oslo. She has worked at the museum since October 2002. Lange describes this museum “as a museum in a museum” because it is located within the walls of another museum, the Museum of Science and Technology in Oslo.

I asked Bagle to talk about “Maren i myra”. He explained that “Maren i myra” was most likely a woman who perished in the cholera epidemic of Oslo in the 19th century. It could have been the epidemic in the 1830s, 1840s or 1850s. It is not known. “Maren i myra” been displayed in the Museum of Science and Technology since 2003. No one has been able to find any written record about “Maren i myra”. The museum does not know who she was, her name, when she was born or when she died. He informed me that the name “Maren i myra” is a nickname and comes from a song from the 20th century. Yet, it is not known who actually gave her that name. Bagle stated that there is no specific date on when she was found or when she was brought to Rikshospitalet. The reason for her mummified appearance is that she was buried very deep. Because there was no oxygen, the fat tissue in the body turned into wax (Bagle 2017).

I wanted to know in what context the exhibition “Healthy mind in a healthy body” was created. Bagle explained that the reason for the creation of the Norwegian Medical Museum was that Rikshospitalet, one of the University hospitals in Oslo, was being moved from downtown Oslo, Pilestredet, to Gaustad, where the hospital is today. The old Rikshospitalet at Pilestredet had a medical history collection. A number of the professors wanted to establish a National Medical Museum. However, for various reasons, mostly cost, the Norwegian

Department of Health did not want a hospital or a museum at Pilestredet. The Health Minister, Dagfinn Bråten, minister of the Kjell-Magne Bondevik government, wanted to move the medical history collection into an already well-established museum. This was part of his government's consolidation project of museums. The idea was to make fewer museums in Norway. After some negotiation, it was decided that the medical collection should be moved to the Museum of Science and Technology. So in 2002, exhibition space was put aside for a Norwegian medical museum. The transfer was hectic. All types of medical equipment had to be moved from the old hospital to the Museum of Science and Technology (Bagle 2017). Furthermore, Lange explained that the exhibition Healthy mind in a healthy body was the first exhibition made for the opening of the Norwegian Medical Museum. "Healthy mind in a healthy body" opened in June 2003 and was part of the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Norwegian Health Care system (Lange 2017). Bagle continued to explain that he was in charge of the registration alongside pathologist Kjell Elgjo from the University of Oslo. The team in charge of the move had to go through the whole collection at the old Rikshospitalet before it could be moved to the museum. Bagle and Elgjo went through the whole medical collection. The collection had a lot of different medical equipment and artefacts. There were a number of organ "preparations" with tissue samples and foetuses. Kjell Elgjo told Bagle what the different organ preparation were and their context. The registration of the organ "preparations" was on a whole different level of quality than what was done for "Maren i myra". The whole operation of moving the collection was completed on a tight schedule and budget (Bagle 2017).

I wanted to know what kind of information was available about "Maren i myra" when the exhibition "Healthy mind in a healthy body" was made. Bagle recalled that he had been told that "Maren i myra" was used as a practical joke on people visiting the Forensic Department. She was hanging from her neck in a cupboard and used to scare people. However, Bagle did point out that he never witnessed this. What was certain was that he found "Maren i myra" hanging by her neck in a cupboard before she was brought to the Museum of Science and Technology. "Maren i myra" still has a hole in the back of her neck (Bagle 2017).

I then asked if he knew whether any conservation work had been done on the human remains of "Maren i myra". Bagle confirmed that conservation work had been performed on "Maren i myra" before displaying her. She was cleaned and underwent a chemical treatment to half decomposition. Bagle and his colleagues persuaded the management of the Museum of

Science and Technology to invest in a good display case, which was brought all the way from Germany. Bagle believes that this was one of the most costly items purchased for the exhibition. It was necessary to preserve the remains. Bagle also stated that there had been internal discussions on whether or not the museum should exhibit “Maren i myra”. He relayed his previous feelings of uncertainty about her display due to the lack of information about her. However, the management of the museum was convinced that she should be displayed; they also wanted her to be the centrepiece of the exhibition (Bagle 2017).

With the help of “Maren i myra”, the exhibition “Healthy mind in a healthy body” tries to show that there were different factors that lead to the development of public health in Norway. It was not only the professionalization of doctors, but also by mere chance. “Maren i myra” is displayed beside plumbing because the authorities at the time had ordered the pipes in the city to be changed. The museum did not have enough information about “Maren i myra”, but they did have enough information about the social context of the cholera epidemic, so that is what the exhibition is about. Bagle explains how “Maren i myra” was displayed as a representative for all those who died during the cholera epidemic. Bagle also said that she was also used to attract people to the museum, a point that has since been criticized in newspaper articles. The museum is not sure whether or not she actually died of cholera during the epidemic in Oslo. It was just assumed that she had since she was recovered very deep in the same grave with other cholera victims. Bagle goes on to say that the information about her was all “a bit circumstantial” (Bagle 2017).

Many national and international institutions call for the display of human remains with respect and dignity. Thus, I was curious about what sort of efforts were implemented to uphold the dignity of “Maren i myra” and how Bagle and Lange interpret these terms?

Bagle described how when “Maren i myra” was recovered from the rotting cupboard in the Forensic Department, it was thought that “this is something for the collection of the museum, it is not to be de-accessed”. Either she could be put in storage or displayed. Bagle also explained that it was thought that by taken her down from the cupboard and putting her in a good quality display case, they were giving her a more appropriate resting place. The atmosphere of the exhibition is sober, and she is no longer hanging from her neck. It was felt that “Maren i myra” was given “a kind of resting place”. Bagle is aware that some people object to this definition because she is being displayed and not buried. She is displayed as a

“testimony, a witness from that time”. They do not know who she was, but she was probably did not belong high on the social ladder. The Museum of Science and Technology chose to not place “Maren i myra” in the middle of the exhibition but a bit retracted. It was believed that this was a vast improvement from hanging her by the neck. However, Bagle agrees that the dignity of “Maren i myra” should be further discussed “because she is not really resting”. He suggested that one way to give her back her dignity could be to cover some of her body parts, because she is naked (Bagle 2017).

Lange argued that a way to dignify human remains is to grant them as much attention as possible. She disagrees with the idea that human remains can only achieve dignity through burial, “Till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return”. Lange states that human remains have the power to open up different types of questions and feelings in museum visitors. She stated that human remains open for a broad discussion especially when it comes to ethics: “Is it OK? What makes it OK and not OK? How do you do it?” (Lange 2017).

Bagle describes how he has observed the public being repulsed by “Maren i myra”, so one has to “wonder what the educational potential of the exhibition is”. He believes that there an educational and a pedagogical component must outweigh any re-burial of “Maren i myra”. In hindsight, Bagle reflected, the decision to exhibit human remains should be done with a lot of care and consideration. “Maren i myra” was not just thrown in the exhibition without any purpose or reason; she is there “dramatize” a historical event. Right beside “Maren i myra” there is a diorama. There are mannequins dressed in the clothing of 1800 and reflecting the living conditions of the time. On the other side of “Maren i myra”, one can observe water pipes. It was believed that these objects would tell a powerful story, not of the person “Maren i myra”, but about the devastating effects and ultimate defeat of cholera (Bagle 2017).

I asked Lange what if anything would she do differently now that the museum has had such a long-running exhibition with “Maren i myra”. Lange stated that the museum is now planning to redo the exhibition where “Maren i myra” is displayed. Lange thinks that “Maren i myra” is “one of the rarest, most interesting and important objects we have in our collection and we would like to explore more”. She explained how the museum would like to explore and discuss more aspects of “Maren i myra”. Lange describes the current display of “Maren i myra” as an illustration of cholera and its impact in the 1850s. But she thinks that this

portrayal is a bit constricted; she would like to open up for questions, like: “How was this object found? Why is she so well preserved? What do we know about where she comes from?” Lange would also like to use DNA analysis and disseminate its uses and results. She would like to raise other questions about “Maren i myra”: “Do we know that she had cholera? And how could we know and not know? What is her age and how do we know how old she is?” (Lange 2017).

Lange has noticed that museums refrain from displaying human remains because of a lack of information about the specimen or poor conservation. Lange believes this to be a shame; she sees it as a disservice to these types of historical artefacts (Lange 2017).

4.7.2 Interview with Anne Håbu on 24 February 2017 on the ancient Egyptian mummy Dismutenibtes

At the beginning of the interview, Anne Håbu presented herself. She has been a conservator of the ethnographic and classical antiquities collections at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo since 2003 (Håbu 2017).

Thereafter I asked Håbu to present Dismutenibtes and to explain what was known about her before the start of the conservation project and what was the connection between the museum and the mummy. Dismutenibtes was a woman who lived in Thebes in Egypt 2,700 years ago. She was made into a mummy, and the mummy is now on display at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo. Håbu explains how Dismutenibtes was opened twice in the 1800s. There are two articles about this mummy, one from 1865 written by Egyptologist Lieblein and another from 1875 written by Daa. Daa studied the mummy and then wrote an article about his results (Håbu 2017).

Continuing on the subject of Dismutenibtes’s story, I asked Håbu in what context and year was the ancient Egyptian exhibition made? Dismutenibtes has been displayed several times through the history of the museum; unfortunately not all have been documented. Håbu recalled how Dismutenibtes was on display for a short time in 2001. However, Håbu was involved with the exhibition of 2003 called “The mummy lives: Eternal life in Ancient Egypt”. Here she conserved the museum’s other mummy “Nofret”. She remembers from the exhibition in 2003 that Dismutenibtes was in a bad condition due to her treatment during

investigations in the 1800s. She was aware that they had cut the textiles wrapped around her. Her wrappings were disorderly and crumbled together. Håbu also described how there was plant material spread all over her. In 2003, a shroud was placed over Dismutenibtes to cover this up before she was placed in the exhibition. For the permanent exhibition, her body was covered so as not to expose her entire body to the public, but her face remained un-covered. During the un-rolling of the mummy in 1875, the textiles covering her head were taken off. One side of her face some of the textiles were still attached to her face, however on the other side Dismutenibtes' skin was removed when they in 1875 tried to remove the textiles wrapped around her head. Moreover, Håbu also knew from handling Dismutenibtes in 2003 that her feet were lacking and that her head had been severed from her body. Due to the condition of Dismutenibtes, Håbu had promised herself that one day she "will do a job on her"(Håbu 2017).

Many scholars were involved in the study and analysis of Dismutenibtes. Håbu explained how she needed to involve people not only from the Museum of Cultural History but also people from outside the museum to ensure access to different specialized expertise. Moreover, Håbu explained, that the Museum of Cultural History is a University museum, which means that competent people in various disciplines work there. Furthermore, she explained, because of the nature of her project, "examining a mummy, people find it very interesting and unusual, so people do not say no". Kristian Fosså, a radiologist at Rikshospitalet, and his colleagues were recommended to Håbu. They did the X-rays and CT-scans and with this created a 3D image of Dismutenibtes. On a mummy conference in Germany, Håbu connected with Robert Loynes of the Manchester Museum. He offered to help analyse the scans of Dismutenibtes and detail how the mummy was created. Many different people were involved in the analysis of the textiles. Eivind Bratlie made a sketch of his interpretations of the layering of the linen (Håbu 2017).

I asked if any practical procedures had to be implemented before starting the work on the human remains. Håbu explained that the only practical procedure was acquiring a suitable room for the conservation task. Håbu said that she did not contact any official institution other than the Museum of Cultural History before starting on the project. However, she clarified that she contacted and informed the media about the project. I inquired why she felt it necessary to do that. She answered that Egyptology and mummies are topics that are very popular with the public, and a project of this magnitude and topic does not often take place in

Norway. The Museum of Cultural History in Bergen had a big mummy project 13 years ago where they scanned their mummies. Dismutenibtes is therefore the last Egyptian mummy located in Norway at the present time that has not been scanned or thoroughly investigated. Moreover, Håbu explained, since the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo is a University Museum it is obligated to perform research and to disseminate their findings to the general public, as well as keep the collections in a good condition. The museum often reaches out to the public to ensure a constant flow of visitors (Håbu 2017).

When I asked Håbu to discuss her role in opening the mummy, she clarified that she did not open or unroll or unwrap it because she did not open anything that had not been previously opened during the investigations of the 1800s. Rather, Håbu “unveiled” Dismutenibtes. Before beginning work, she documented the mummy through scans, X-rays, and photographs “to show all the layers of what I did because it is very easy to forget what you saw and did” (Håbu 2017). A-magasinet was present when Håbu opened Dismutenibtes. After the last study of Dismutenibtes in 1875 the mummy was left in a terrible mess. There were textile fragments all over the body, and the linen was disarrayed, tucked in places like under the hands and between the legs. Håbu also observed bone fragments and resin and plant material lying all over the body (Håbu 2017).

Håbu makes a conscious distinction between the mummy Dismutenibtes and the human remains of Dismutenibtes. According to her, the mummy is the finished result of funerary ritual, so a “mummy is the fully wrapped package and the coffin”. Håbu explains that when she took Dismutenibtes out of the display to study her, she was a body lying in the destroyed remains of a mummy. She “tends to say that it is not Dismutenibtes who is laying in the exhibition it is the mummy of Dismutenibtes. There is a difference.” The human remains of Dismutenibtes were in a very good condition, however the cultural context of her burial was not, due to the two investigations in 1800s (Håbu 2017).

The conversation then moved to national and international institutions, many of which call for the display of human remains to be dignified and respectful. I asked Håbu how she understands these terms in relation to the mummy Dismutenibtes. She replied that the terms of ICOM of the treatment of human remains are “very vague terms and open for personal interpretation”. She continued, “Oh! I think that is respectful”, you can say and other people

would say that it is not.” Håbu says that she strives to be very respectful as the “dignity of human remains is forefront in my mind when I work” (Håbu 2017).

Moreover, I asked Håbu how the current museum display of Dismutenibtes is different than the previous one. She replied that, as her work progressed, she realized that she could re-wrap the mummy. Dismutenibtes could be displayed as a complete mummy, without exposing her face and head. Since Håbu had all the linen at her disposal, she felt that it would be unnatural for her not wrap the body of Dismutenibtes. She knew that a mummy is supposed to be “a closed sacred secluded entity”. Håbu understood that viewing a human body can be a rewarding experience for the public, but ultimately, she saw other ways to create this connection. She suggested that the museum tell the story of Dismutenibtes in other ways, without having her body exposed. For instant, she has contemplated the possibility of having a touchscreen in the exhibition in 2017. The touchscreen would make it possible to learn about all the layers and themes around the mummy and its restoration. According to Håbu, “You can learn about the coffin, you can learn about the scans, you can see scans; we can show all the things we know now without doing the old fashioned way by leaving it unwrapped” (Håbu 2017). Håbu referred to a statement made by the Keeper of the Collection of Egyptian antiquities, that “the museum shall display cultural history, not anatomy” (Håbu 2017).

There is now a plan to place a touchscreen beside Dismutenibtes, as well as to display her with her inner and outer coffins. Håbu explained that “The Egyptian mummies” exhibition at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo is supposed to have a sombre atmosphere to it, with dimmed lighting and the four different coffins in each corner of the room. The idea is to encourage respect for the two female mummies in the exhibition. The museum does not want to spoil the affect by displaying big posters, but a touchscreen might give people a great deal of information without ruining the atmosphere in the exhibition. With a touchscreen, the visitors can also choose what they want to learn more about. Håbu does not know yet how many layers of the mummy will be available on the touchscreen. At the time of my interview with Håbu there was still some discussion on whether the public should be allowed to see the body of Dismutenibtes, because it might “compromise the dignity” of Dismutenibtes (Håbu 2017).

How did Håbu's personal reflections affect her decision not to display the human remains of Dismutenibtes? She explained that she connects the dignity of a mummy to its wrappings because, without these, it is no longer a mummy. Håbu continues to explain that studying human remains can be emotional. This might contradict ideas of academic objectivity, but one cannot help but think, "What if this was my grandmother? What if it was me? Would I want to be displayed that way?" According to Håbu, "Egyptian mummies were really meant to be wrapped in layers and layers". They were made to appear beautiful and not seen unwrapped (Håbu 2017).

What sorts of efforts were implemented to uphold the dignity of Dismutenibtes? Håbu aimed to uphold the mummy's dignity by replacing her linen wrapping. She wanted Dismutenibtes to be a "cultural object instead of a dead body". Håbu reflected on her decision, musing, "I can be the one person who is taking future generations away from a special museum experience. Would they have a better experience seeing the mummy with her curly grey hair? Did I steal that away from the public?" Moreover, she pointed out, her decision is reversible. Future generations may decide to re-open Dismutenibtes's wrappings (Håbu 2017).

One element of the project upset Håbu, and that was a picture taken in 1999 that depicts Dismutenibtes lying uncovered in a coffin with no lid and the linen was ripped open (Håbu 2017).

4.8 Summary

This chapter presents the data analysis done on different types of data. First, newspaper articles and blog written about Dismutenibtes and "Maren i myra". Second, a picture taken from the conservation rapport of Dismutenibtes and written by Håbu. Third, also taken out of the conservation rapport, is an internal discussion in the format of emails. Fourth, exhibition analysis of the displays of "Maren i myra" and Dismutenibtes. Fifth, making a 3D model of the mummy Dismutenibtes. Finally, the three interviews of Eyvind Bagle, Ellen Lange and Anne Håbu.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.0 Introduction

This chapter compares and discusses the data gathered during this project to examine if there is a more appropriate way of displaying human remains, and how this might be achieved. Many issues and questions arise in a study of human remains. Several of these themes emerged during my investigation of “Dismutenibtes” and “Maren i myra”. These are:

Old sins cast long shadows
Legislation: providing respect and dignity?
The living decide over the dead
Experiencing human remains
Is photogrammetry a solution?

5.1 Discussing human remains

“Nobody’s dead”

(Balachandran 2009:200)

This quote conveys some of the emotions and struggles that surround studying, managing and displaying human remains. Human remains, like other archaeological finds, have a biography and can have second or third lives; hence they never stop being part of society. Human remains are part of memory and knowledge. They provide information on specific periods of history, parts of museums’ histories or medical research. Human remains are the past embodied and death personified. The way we treat the dead is deeply rooted in humanity and reflects society’s values.

On 28 August 2017, BBC World Service featured a programme on human remains in museums, illustrating how the issue of harbouring human remains in museums affects modern society. This subject provokes discussion and reactions all over the world because humanity is invested in the story and fate of human remains. Cassman, Odegaard and Powell (2007) point out the power of human remains, charged with political, scientific and emotional meaning. However, some human remains, such as classroom anatomical study collections, have been treated and continue to be treated as mundane artefacts (Cassman, Odegaard, and Powell 2007:1). Human remains are seen as standard material for museums to curate and as the “property” of curators and researchers (Cassman, Odegaard, and Powell 2007:2). The study and curation of human remains has become in recent years more political and socially complex. Moreover, new unwritten rules of order governing this practice are slowly developing into standard practice (Cassman, Odegaard, and Powell 2007:1).

Questions about the ethical treatment of human remains have in recent years become part of the conversation within museums. Ethics describes a system of values concerned with moral aspects of human conduct. Scientists have a duty to consider the moral implications of the ways in which they conduct their research. Consequently, ethical principles have become useful in providing a basis for moral decisions concerning the treatment of human remains (Mays 2010:331).

5.2 Old sins cast long shadows

This title illustrates the current attitude towards human remains in museums. Human remains are conditioned by their ancient and recent pasts. They have biographies that explain how and why they ended up where they are today. The story of human beings is linked to our surroundings, and this remains unchanged after death. The fates of Dismutenibtes and “Maren i myra”, like those of other human remains in museum collections, are deeply intertwined with global and national political events, and developments within the academic world.

5.2.1 Egyptian mummies

Rediscovering ancient Egypt at the beginning of the nineteenth century was a significant event in intellectual history, motivated primarily by global political events and not scholarship. Britain was at war with the French Republic in 1798. Because the French army was unable to strike directly at its adversary, the French government chose another approach. It seized Egypt, consequently breaking Britain's overland communication with India (Thompson 2015:97). The French presence in Egypt developed into more than just a political move against Britain. On 22 August 1798, Napoleon established the "Institut d'Egypte", charged with developing and spreading science throughout the country. The "Institut d'Egypte" also researched, studied and published work on natural, industrial and historical Egyptian data (Thompson 2015:97-99).

The French presence in Egypt intensified Europe's interest in ancient Egyptian antiquities (Moshenska 2014). One of the principal figures in the promotion and practice of Egyptology during the early nineteenth century was Henry Salt, the British Consul in Egypt, a collector of numerous antiquities. One of Salt's colleagues was Giovanni Anastasi, a successful merchant who also served as Swedish-Norwegian Consul-General in Egypt and a keen antiquities collector. Anastasi and other European collectors employed agents to buy antiquities from residents of Thebes and Saqqara (Thompson 2015:215).

Anastasi eventually sold his enormous collection to several museums in Europe. In 1818, Caspar Jacob Christiaan Reuvers was appointed director of the Leiden Museum of Antiquities in the Netherlands. Aiming to expand its classical collection into one of the best in Europe, Reuvers bought a collection of 5,600 pieces from Anastasi (Thompson 2015:214-215). The Museum of Cultural History in Oslo, also received parts of the Anastasi collection. Dismutenibtes, it appears, was a gift from Anastasi to the University of Christiania (Bettum 2010). Furthermore, through his study of the Egyptian collection at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo, Anders Bettum uncovered a connection between the Musée Curtius in Liege and the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo. During his investigation, Bettum came into contact with Belgian Egyptologist Bart Hellinckx, in whose published catalogue was recorded the name of Dismutenibtes as the mother mentioned on the coffin of Osirmose, another mummy display. Osirmose's coffin can be traced back to Anastasi's collection. It appears that

Anastasi's agents emptied a Theban family tomb, the contents of which are now spread across various European museums (Bettum 2010).

This historical review indicates that politics and the ancient past are connected (Riggs 2014:34). Egyptology was at its origin a cultural discipline of empires. Dismutenibtes played a role in global political events that still haunts the reputation of European museums. Early archaeological excavations and the formation of museum collections reflected not only these imperial endeavours but also the continuous process of colonization, as Egypt was subject to the political, economical and cultural domination of others (Riggs 2014:42). Most European museums were built to display a sense of grandeur that encouraged the continuous plundering of cultural heritage from countries like Egypt. When these artefacts arrived in Europe, their degrading treatment continued, especially when it came to that of ancient Egyptian mummies.

The commoditization of ancient Egyptian mummies fuelled Egyptomania and the numerous unrollings of mummies. Mummy unrolling became a popular spectacle, especially in Britain and France. It enabled characters like Thomas "Mummy" Pettigrew to become successful. Pettigrew (1791–1865) was an anatomist and surgeon. He became interested in the technique of mummification and consequently sought every possible opportunity to unroll mummies (Dawson 1934). During his career, Pettigrew performed a considerable number of mummy unrollings in various venues. Some of his unrollings were private events for groups of personal friends; others were open to the public, with tickets advertised and sold (Moshenska 2014).

Gabriel Moshenska (2014) argues that the mummy unrollings were complex and multifaceted events that offer insight into the connection between science, culture and society in nineteenth-century Britain. Moreover, one's place in the audience illustrates one's social capital. Mummy unrollings were used to reinforce networks of friendship and obligation. At many of these events, the best seats were reserved for aristocrats and other members of the social elite. However, at other unrollings, the top scholars of British Egyptology would sit in the front rows. Mummy unrollings were a prestigious and fashionable form of entertainment and education (Moshenska 2014). During these unrollings, mummy fragments and pieces of linen were touched, smelt and tasted as part of the event (Moshenska 2014).

There were unrollings of mummies in Norway, but they were done by scholars from the university and were not open to the public. As presented in Chapter 2 and Chapter 4 of this thesis, Dismutenibtes was unrolled twice in the 1800s. Although she was not used as entertainment for the general public, she was cut out of her protective layers of linen. Håbu explained that these unrollings were performed according to the scientific methodology at that time. However, the two investigations of the 1800s left the mummy Dismutenibtes in a terrible state (Håbu 2017). During the most recent project, four foreign objects were found on Dismutenibtes. The four objects were, remains of a burnt matchstick, a cigar, etiquette and a shoelace. Håbu assessed that these objects are left over from one of the investigations that took place in the 1800s (Håbu 2016b).

5.2.2 Crimes for anatomy

The fate of “Maren i myra”, as those of Dismutenibtes and so many other human remains in museum collections, is linked to national political events and developments in scholarship.

The story of “Maren i myra” involves more recent national political concerns. As presented in Chapter 4, a medical collection, holding the body of the woman who would become known as “Maren i myra”, was once part of the old Rikshospitalet, one of the university hospitals in Oslo. The Norwegian Minister of Health, Dagfinn Bråten (1997-2004), wanted to move the medical history collection into an already well-established museum as part of his government’s consolidation project, which sought to integrate already existing museums, leaving fewer overall. After some negotiation, it was decided that the medical collection from Rikshospitalet should be moved to an already existing museum, the Museum of Science and Technology. Consequently, in 2002 exhibition space was put aside for a Norwegian Medical Museum. All types of medical equipment had to be moved from the old hospital to the Museum of Science and Technology (Bagle 2017). The exhibition, displaying “Maren i myra”, opened in June 2003 as part of the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Norwegian Health Care system (Lange 2017).

In the eighteenth century, John and William Hunter created “preparations” of organs, like limbs, skin, and the circulatory and lymph node systems. John Hunter was the first to discover and thereafter map the lymph node system. He has been called the father of modern surgery. These “preparations” helped teach students to prepare for surgery. Before this the internal

system was a mystery. A caesarean section was often a death sentence (Alberti, Bienkowski, and Chapman 2009). As for human remains, “preparations” of organs were also used for teaching purposes, however, their origins were often questionable. “Maren i myra” was part of a medical collection before she was moved to the Norwegian Medical Museum. Eyvind Bagle sat with doctor Kjell Elgjo and went through the whole medical collection. The collection has organ “preparations”, tissue samples and foetuses (Bagle 2017). These organ preparation are now being displayed in a new exhibition called “Skjelletter i skapet” - Skeletons in the closet. This new exhibition is located right besides the exhibition displaying “Maren i myra” (see appendix).

As previously shown with Egyptian mummies, other human remains were not only used for teaching purposes; they were also used as a form of entertainment. This is rendered in Emil Zola’s book, *Therese Raquin*, written in 1867. The book describes a Paris morgue in the nineteenth century as a place people visited for free amusement. The morgue is within the reach of everyone, and the rich and poor alike would treat themselves to this free show (Jones and Whitaker 2012). Eyvind Bagle recalled that he had been told that “Maren i myra” was used as a practical joke on people visiting the Forensic Department. They hung her from her neck in a cupboard to scare people. Bagle explained that he never witnessed this practice, although he did find “Maren i myra” hanging by her neck in a cupboard. “Maren i myra” still has a hole in the back of her neck (Bagle 2017).

There are similarities between “Maren i myra” and Dismutenibtes biographies. Both have been part of political events and developments in the academic world, even though they are from different cultural and historic periods. The rather ruthless treatment in history explains current efforts to manage human remains more appropriately in museums. Past investigations of human remains were not as strict or methodological as they are today. Codes of ethics were not put in place to protect human remains. Thus, the past treatment and management of human remains underlines the importance of establishing and maintaining strict ethical guidelines.

5.3 Legislation: providing respect and dignity?

Institutions and legal texts now exist for the protection of human remains. These institutions and legal texts contain and advocate codes of ethics implemented by the scientific community and the general public to safeguard the protection and management of human remains. These guidelines help maintain a productive relationship between the scientific community and the public. Norway follows national, as well as international, laws to ensure the protection and proper management of human remains. These texts call for the respectful and dignified treatment of human remains.

5.3.1 Protected or not

The vast majority of human remains in Norwegian skeletal collections come from the recent past. There is a pressing need for the protection of post-Reformation human remains if they are to have a future as an archaeological source material (Yilmaz 2014:313). According to the Norwegian Cultural Heritage Act, all skeletal material predating 1537 is automatically protected. In addition, Norwegian law automatically protects human remains of Sami origin older than 100 years. This being said, the Burial Act protects all burials in cemeteries still in use. With the exception of cemeteries on Spitsbergen, post-Reformation remains from discontinued or abandoned cemeteries are without any legal protection, (Yilmaz 2014:313).

The treatment and management of human remains in Norway depends on whether or not the remains have legal protection. The management of human remains that do not have legal protection have varied over the years (Sellevoid 2011:323). For instance, up to the 1960s, archaeologists would rebury human remains from Christian backgrounds in modern cemeteries out of respect for Christian beliefs in the importance of being buried in consecrated ground. However, prehistoric remains ended up in museum collections (Yilmaz 2014:314). At present, archaeological museums are not required to excavate or store legally unprotected finds. The exhumed, legally unprotected remains can be reburied without documentation. They may also be excavated, documented and reburied in a churchyard. Hence, the treatment and management of legally unprotected human remains is decided by the institution in charge of the investigation (Sellevoid 2011:323).

It is difficult to know whether or not “Maren i myra” is automatically protected by Norwegian law. There is no certitude of which period of history she belongs to, due to the lack of information about her. At the Norwegian Medical Museum, “Maren i myra” is presented as one of the victims of the cholera epidemic of the 1850s. With this information one can deduce that “Maren i myra” dates to post-Reformation. By this logic “Maren i myra” is not automatically protected by law. Sellevold (2011) states that there is an absence of guidelines for the treatment and management of legally unprotected human remains in Norway. This constitutes an ethical and practical problem, both for the scientific community as well as for the authorities. Sellevold (2011) argues that there is a fundamental need for guidelines for the treatment, management and curation of legally unprotected human remains (Sellevold 2011:324).

As stated above, Norway follows international as well as national laws and guidelines concerning human remains. Both international and national texts call for the protection of and respect and dignity for human remains regardless of historical context, age and sex, because these human remains were once living human being with families, belief systems, cultures and social standings. Consequently, it is paradoxical that Norwegian law does not automatically protect post-Reformation human remains, when these remains might still have living relatives. The older human remains are, the more invested we are in them.

Since, Dismutenibtes was once taken out of Egypt, it is interesting to see what the current legislation in Egypt stipulates about human remains. As presented in Chapter 2, Egypt has no set legislation concerning the excavation of human remains. However, there are strict rules regarding archaeological excavation. Permits must be acquired through the Supreme Council of Antiquities. Moreover, if a cemetery is being excavated, physical anthropologists must be part of the project (Ikram 2011:497). Furthermore, under current Egyptian law, no human remains can leave the country (Ikram 2011:497).

5.3.2 Respect and dignity

All legislation, codes of conduct and guidelines for the protection of human remains demand respect for the subject matter. The general public request and require the respectful treatment and management of the dead. However, is it possible to achieve respect and dignity by

continuing to use dead bodies as museum objects in an exhibition (Alberti, Bienkowski, and Chapman 2009)?

During our interview, Håbu said that the terms of ICOM when it comes to the treatment of human remains are “very vague” and “open for personal interpretation”. She pointed out that what one individual might find respectful, another might not. She also explained how there are a lot of personal feelings involved when studying human remains. “This might be wrong, but one is forced to think, ‘what if this was my grandmother? What if it was me? Would I like to be displayed that way?’” The question of human dignity is often raised. As Håbu pointed out, respect, as well as human dignity, can be understood and interpreted in different ways (Håbu 2017).

For some, respect is to study and tell stories and thus, to remember past populations and their societies (Sayer 2010a:17). Bagle specified that “Maren i myra” was placed in the exhibition “Healthy mind, in a healthy body” to “dramatize” a historical event. Still others would ask that the rituals and ceremonies around the burial context stay intact for the afterlife. Håbu argued that a mummy’s dignity is connected to its linen wrappings, because if you take away the wrappings it is no longer a mummy. Others believe that one should not disturb or display the dead. Bagle defended that “Maren i myra” might have been given a “kind of resting place” in her custom-made ventilated glass case because she is no longer hanging from her neck in a wooden cupboard. Yet, he is fully aware that some people would object to this definition, since she is being displayed in a museum exhibition and not buried. However, he advised that one way of returning her dignity could be to cover some parts of her body, as she is now naked. This said, Lange argued that one way to afford human remains dignity and respect is to show them as much attention as possible. She disagrees with the idea that only by burying the remains will the dignity of the deceased be restored. She quoted the Bible, Genesis 3:19, “Till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return”.

Geoffrey Scarre (2007) has discussed that it is not possible to accord needs to the dead; therefore, it is impossible to respect those needs since we cannot cause them any type of pain, mental anguish, disappointment or embarrassment as we can with the living. Yet, we can affect the esteem in which they are held or how they are remembered within living society (Sayer 2010a:17). By this logic it cannot be relatives or emotions that drive the decision on

why the human remains should be displayed. It is the societal value of the human remains that decides its fate, but who and how can one decide what set of human remains has greater value?

What does displaying and viewing human remains in museums say about society, viewers or culture? This question relates to the idea of how we value different people. In our twenty-first-century culture, some people are accorded dignity and are buried. However, others are not and are displayed. How does society choose what happens to whom? Those who are distanced from us in time, race or place are often not accorded the same respect. Consequently, they are treated as museum objects. If the body of Princess Diana was to be exhumed and put on display, there would almost certainly be huge uproar, accusations of disrespect and indecency (Alberti, Bienkowski, and Chapman 2009).

5.4 The living decide for the dead

As human beings, we attach our humanity to how we treat our fellow humans at their most vulnerable, at death. Numerous scholars argue that the characteristic that makes the Neanderthals “more human” is the evidence found of their death rituals. Modern humans can understand and relate to this element of their existence even though it is abstract and not linked to something practical like technology. Modern human beings seem to understand and read the Neanderthals’ feeling-based actions (Kus 2013:63).

There is a universal human instinct to care for the dead body. Human beings have developed rituals to mark and memorialize the passing of an individual. Archaeologists and anthropologists explain the complexities of past societies by studying their treatment of death and the dead. This type of investigation offers insight into how human beings perceived life (Alberti, Bienkowski, and Chapman 2009). Many contemporary beliefs systems may revolve around non-disturbance of the dead. However, what did the deceased themselves believe? Is it inappropriate to speak for them? To assign religious belief to someone long dead whose way of life can only be surmised by studying his or her burial and human remains (Alberti, Bienkowski, and Chapman 2009). However, archaeological theory points out that it is the living that bury the dead not vice versa. Suggesting that it is the living that implement their belief system in the ritual of burial. Parker Pearson (1982) argues that the living could

manipulate the dead for their own interest (Chapman 2013). Could this be said in the case of Dismutenibtes or “Maren i myra”?

5.4.1 Belief

Political, scientific, social and personal beliefs can all be equally influential on our way of understanding the world. All can explain particular mortuary practices. A belief is a way of understanding the world (Tarlow 2013:617). Death is often seen as a significant moment for religion. A belief is often used as a way to deal with the nature of human life, the fate of the body, and the self (“soul” or “person”). Belief helps counter fear, grief and disruption. Death, decay and separation are eased by the burial treatments that allow those grieving to think of the deceased as sleeping, undertaking a journey or still present in some altered form among the living (Tarlow 2013:620).

Western culture increasingly commodifies the human body. Human remains have long been “used” for religious veneration and political purposes. For instance, relics still remain a significant element in Christian practice. They inspire piety. In Catholic canon law, relics are defined as “the remains of honourable objects, or of saints, or beatified persons...such as their body, head, arm, forearm, heart, tongue or leg” (Brooks and Rumsey 2007:262). Relics have religious value but they also have a commercial role in bringing pilgrims to monasteries and churches, thus, generating income (Brooks and Rumsey 2007:262). Religion and politics alike can influence the afterlife of human remains and objectify them. For instance, the display of Lenin’s embalmed body is nicknamed “the smoked fish”. His embalmed body is deeply linked with Russian political development and Russian identity. Furthermore, Eva Peron’s embalmed body functions as a political and saintly relic. Concerns about political status and financial benefit derived from the possession and display of human remains also influence museums. There was some controversy over the final resting place of the human remains of Otzi, the iceman. He was found in a glacier on the border between Austria and South Tyrol, thus, fuelling concerns for local status and financial benefits (Brooks and Rumsey 2007:262).

What do we know about Dismutenibtes’s beliefs? What did the ancient Egyptians believe? Ancient Egyptians believed that in addition to the physical body, a person was composed of different parts. Together, these components constituted an entire individual. The different components were; *ren*, the name; *shuyet*, the shadow; *ka*, the double or life-force; *ba*, the

personality or soul; *akh*, the spirit. A significant part of Egyptian funerary religion is devoted to ensuring the survival of the physical body and all of these components (Balachandran 2009). Hubert (1989) cites evidence from Egyptian texts that Egyptians wished their bodies remain undisturbed and buried in their own tombs and own country. The physical body was never intended to leave the tomb. The ancient Egyptian wish to be buried in their homeland resembles the wishes of indigenous peoples, whose beliefs require a connection in death with their ancestral soil (Balachandran 2009). The evidence gathered on the ancient Egyptians beliefs system indicates that they would have regarded the excavation, investigation, transport overseas and display of mummies as a desecration of their wish for their bodies to remain undisturbed and in Egypt (Alberti, Bienkowski, and Chapman 2009).

Many museums have tried to compromise between displaying Egyptian mummies and removing them from display. For instance, in 2008, the University of Manchester covered up three mummies, including a child that had been unwrapped in the nineteenth century, in an effort to explore respectful treatment of the remains (Jones and Whitaker 2012). However, covering up the mummies elicited a negative response from the public, for whom mummies are a popular museum attraction. Due to the public negative reaction, the museum decided to partially uncover some of the mummies (Jones and Whitaker 2012).

Moreover, the Bristol Museum now keeps its unwrapped mummies in storage, thus choosing to display only originally wrapped mummies (Jones and Whitaker 2012). At the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo, the same dilemma arose when it was time for Dismutenibtes to return to the exhibition. Håbu wanted to put Dismutenibtes back into a cultural context. So she chose to cover her up and, as she put it, make her into a mummy again. She understands that the public has a good museum experience when it is possible to see and connect with ancient human remains. However, she believes that there are different types of stories one can narrate when displaying a mummy. For example, what is a mummy supposed to look like? During the interview, Håbu clarified that the mummy was destroyed when it was moved from its grave and opened but that to rewrap it would provide amends. Thus, by wrapping the mummy in all her linen would help uphold Dismutenibtes's dignity. Håbu wants Dismutenibtes to be a "cultural object instead of a dead body" (Håbu 2017).

Bagle agrees that the dignity of "Maren i myra" should be further discussed "because she is not really resting" (Bagle 2017). "Maren i myra" is presented in the exhibition "Healthy mind,

in a healthy body” as having died in the 1850s. Hence, she might have been Christian and believed in the Christian scripture, “till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Lange 2017). Being displayed in a museum exhibition might run counter to the beliefs and wishes she held when alive. However, it is difficult to say anything about what her beliefs could have been because we know nothing about her. As Bagle stated about the information on “Maren i myra”, everything is circumstantial. There has not been a comprehensive study on “Maren i myra”. Due to the lack of information about her, it is important to be careful with interpretations.

In this respect, the situation of “Maren i myra” and Dismutenibtes differ, because there is sufficient information and knowledge about Dismutenibtes to say that being displayed at a museum run counter to the belief system she held when alive. This cannot be stated with equal certitude in “Maren i myra” case. For the simple reason that there is not sufficient information about her.

5.4.2 Social status

The processualist approach believes that an individual social role will be mirrored in the energy invested and spend in the treatment of the body. The social status is thus shown through the location of the grave and the goods that are place in the grave to follow the deceased in the afterlife (Kus 2013:64). Peebles (1971) suggests that people treated differently in life will likely be treated differently in death (Chapman 2013:50). Is this the case of “Maren i myra” and Dismutenibtes? Should we, for example, assume that “Maren i myra” died of cholera because she was found on the same site as a mass grave of cholera victims? Did Dismutenibtes belong to the elite since she was mummified? Lewis Binford argues that when an individual dies, the living determine the deceased treatment by deciding on their “social persona” (Chapman 2013:49).

The text of her display explains that Dismutenibtes’s sarcophagus is from the 25th dynasty (747-664 B.C) and that she was probably of Theban origin. The text also offers detailed information about her. It explains that the hieroglyphics on her bottom coffin indicate her social title, “nebet-fer”, which means housewife. She was thus responsible for running the household. The exhibition also offers information about her family tree: Dismutenibtes’s

father, Hotepamon, was a foreman of the treasury at the Amon temple, a social position he inherited from his father, Patjenef. Dismutenibtes belong to a family of priests, a venerated social position in ancient Egypt. Should her living social status influence her treatment at death?

Contrary to Dismutenibtes, “Maren i myra” is presented in the exhibition “Healthy mind in a healthy body” as one of many. The main theme for the exhibition is public health, and the exhibit addresses major diseases from 1850 to the present day. The ambition behind the exhibition, Neiheim explains, is to show the connection between societal and health development. The exhibition’s cholera section portrays a reenactment of a fairly common poor household in the capital, Christiania, in 1850. The museum shows one of these rooms: A boy wearing a confirmation outfit lies in his sickbed with his siblings and mother by his side. In the space of just a few months, 2,500 people died of cholera (Forskning.no 10.06.2003 08:41). The Medical Museum does not know who “Maren i myra” was. However Bagle suggested that “Maren i myra” probably did not belong high on the social ladder (Bagle 2017). There is no information about her as an individual with her own biography. Even the name “Maren i myra” is a nickname, derived from a twentieth-century song. Yet, it is not known who actually gave her that name. There is not even a specific date on record of when she was found or when she was brought to the hospital, Rikshospitalet (Bagle 2017).

5.5 Experiencing human remains

The display of the dead in museums is a current academic and public debate. The public is an important voice in these debates, and decisions on whether or not museums should display human remains is usually based on the public’s opinion and reaction. The public is one of the three elements, along with the collections and the staff that make up the dynamic of museums (Swain 2007:195).

5.5.1 The Public and museums

The public’s reactions to the display of human remains has resulted in many institutions in the United Kingdom removing the ancient dead from display (Sayer 2010b). During my interview with Lange, she pointed out that many museums have shied away from displaying human

remains for fear of being criticised (Lange 2017). Yet, the Manchester Museum conducted a study where visitors to the Lindow Man (Iron Age bog body) exhibition were questioned about that specific display on feedback forms. The result of this questionnaire showed that 91 percent of those who gave feedback were in favour of the display. Other similar types of questionnaires have reported positively on displaying human remains. A small survey done by Cambridge Archaeology showed that 79 percent of people asked “expect to see human skeletons on display in museums”. Moreover, the British Museum circulated a similar survey and found that 83 percent said that “mummies should be displayed” (Sayer 2010b). Skeletons, bones and human remains have been displayed in countless locations around the world, and their sight causes little distress and reaction. The bodies of ancient Egyptian mummies, Northern European Iron-age bog bodies, or indeed, the mummified body of the 5,300-year-old “Ice Man” from Austria’s Tyrolean Alps, are regarded with great fascination (Beit-Hallahmi 2012).

In Chapter 4, there is presentation of an internal discussion at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo about whether or not the mummy Dismutenibtes should be covered. The discussion highlighted an agreement that the management of human remains requires ethical thought even though the museum will probably never find a definitive answer to the question of how to display human remains appropriately. Moreover, there was an understanding that the discussion about displaying Dismutenibtes must be part of the museum’s dissemination of the ancient Egyptian collection in the museum. That said, there were two opposing arguments raised during this discussion. On one hand, the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo does not want to compromise the cultural context of the ancient Egyptian mummy Dismutenibtes. On the other hand, the museum believes that it is important to make the visit of the public as memorable and educational as possible. Displaying the mummy uncovered and exposing the body helps ensure this. This discussion shows that museums still search for answers to questions about the appropriate display of human remains. Each case is unique and must be considered separately. This discussion points to the fact that the debate continues and that museums take this issue seriously (Håbu 2016b).

During my interview with Bagle, he stated that there had been internal discussions at the Museum of Science and Technology in Oslo on whether or not the museum should display “Maren i myra”. Bagle explained how he had been uncertain at the time whether or not she should be displayed due to the lack of information about her. Still, the management of the

museum was convinced that she should be displayed. Forsking.no cites Director Neirheim saying that he expected the number of visitors to increase dramatically. Furthermore, he also believed that the National Medical Museum would become a popular destination, especially for school children. The museum management anticipated 140,000 visitors annually, including 90,000 under the age of 18 (Forskning.no 10.06.2003 08:41). A spokesman from the Friends of Pitt Rivers Museum also defended displaying human remains, pointing to their popularity, especially with the young. The spokesman is quoted saying that “the children love them- they like being scared- and if they were removed the children would miss them” (Jenkins 2016:294).

Both “Maren i myra” and Dismutenibtes have been written about in various newspaper articles over the years. It is important to note that it has become increasingly more difficult to control how research and human remains are presented in media and thus to the public (Redfern and Clegg 2017). Håbu expressed her disapproval over a picture taken in 1999 where Dismutenibtes is lying in a coffin with no lid, her body completely exposed (Håbu 2017). These types of photographs and articles testify to the general public’s interest in human remains. It also affirms the public’s strong reactions and opinions on the treatment of these remains and highlights a desire for them to be treated with dignity and respect. Moreover, from my own experience as a disseminator, I agree that the public, across generations, is drawn to human remains and want to know about them: Who are they? What is their name? How old were they when they died? How did they die?

5.5.2 Displaying human remains: educational or promotional?

Is displaying human remains educational or purely promotional? Alberti, Bienkowski and Chapman (2009) argue that nothing that can be said about the past or another culture through the mere display of human remains. That said, visitors often claim to have learned something new when seeing human remains. Nevertheless, visitors and staff are increasingly reacting negatively to exhibitions that display human remains. Many ask that the exhibition displaying human remains should be contextual, respectful and informative. Sarah Tarlow (2006) questions if there are details of past people too intimate to display. A display can show the diseases from which an individual suffered, that they had lice, worms or syphilis, a third nipple or any other deformity. Does it make any difference whether that individual is anonymous or not? Is it necessary for the public to know these things, and do we need to

display them? However, it is important to point out that privacy and dignity are cultural constructs and not universal values. Nevertheless, is it ever necessary, for instance, to reveal a person's naked body to the public without consent (Alberti, Bienkowski, and Chapman 2009).

Director Neiheim stated that if "Maren i myra" grave had not been humid and poorly oxygenated, the Norwegian Medical Museum would truly be less enriching (Forskning.no 10.06.2003 08:41). On 4 October 2003, the remains of "Maren i myra" were brought into the studio of a Saturday television program called "Klisterhjerne". Ingebrigtsen raises a number of ethical issues, including the use of human remains for entertainment and marketing purposes. Ingebrigtsen draws comparisons to circuses and fairs that once displayed so-called "freaks" as deformed human remains. Ingebrigtsen expressed hope that the Medical Museum would present the human remains of "Maren i myra" with more respect and dignity than what was shown in the promotional television program. To play on people's fascination with the macabre and the sensational and to draw numbers to the museum is not worthy of a medical history exhibition (Ingebrigtsen 10.10.2003). As previously mentioned, there is a new exhibition, "Skeletons in the closet" at the National Medical Museum is displaying organ preparations that were ones part of the medical collection that also included "Maren i myra". During my interview with Bagle he explained that when they were making the different exhibition for the new Medical Museum back in 2002, the museum decided to not exhibit some of the medical preparations, because they believe that the "freak-show aspect would be to apparent" (Bagle 2017).

Moreover, during my interview with Bagle, he described how he observed the public's repulsion by "Maren i myra", so one has to "wonder what the educational potential of the exhibition is". Furthermore, he agreed that the educational and pedagogical component must outweigh any re-burial of "Maren i myra". As previously shown, "Maren i myra" was not just placed in the exhibition without any purpose or reason; she is there to "dramatize" historical events. Right beside "Maren i myra" is a diorama of mannequins dressed in the clothing of 1800, mirroring the living conditions of the time. On the other side of "Maren i myra", it is possible to observe water pipes. It was believed that these artefacts would tell the story, not of the person "Maren i myra", but of the devastating effects and ultimate defeat of cholera, thus educating the public about life in the 1800s (Bagle 2017).

Should the discussion revolve around the way in which the deceased are displayed, and not around whether or not human remains should be displayed in the first place? In Duncan Sayer's (2010) opinion, this debate often misses a societal context. Where are we to see the dead if not in a controlled space such as a museum exhibition? Nowadays there are many ways to die and to prevent or postpone death, but not many ways to view the dead. Museums are an important space for collective and personal interaction with the dead in society (Sayer 2010b). Before the recent conservation project done on Dismutenibtes, her face had been exposed to the public for thirteen years. One of the arguments to leave her face exposed was that people will "come closer to the human being, Dismutenibtes, the woman from ancient Egypt", that it might "make for a stronger encounter with history if the deceased is visible" (Håbu 2016b). Sayer (2010) explains that seeing human remains allows for a personal journey through the scientific and philosophical realities of the human experience (Sayer 2010b). The awareness of death is a natural step to the development of self-awareness; it is a basic component of humankind (Kus 2013:63). When looking at a dead body from whatever culture or historical period, we are all looking at ourselves and at our own ends (Brooks and Rumsey 2008:261).

Sayer (2010) argues that death is not seen as taboo. It is experienced both in public and in private. It is visible in medical and academic institutions, and it is explored alongside science in anatomy museums. Death is also visible in popular publications and in scholarly studies. However, debate continues over the displaying of human remains in museums, and also about the retention and excavation of human remains. Despite this, death is not always a difficult social topic. The public does not need to be protected from the ancient dead. So is it more a question of being afraid of them (Sayer 2010b)? It is the physicality of a dead body that draw our interest. We recognize a human body as we recognize our own (Sofaer 2006:1).

5.5.3 Fascination with the dead

As previously presented, several museums have featured popular and successful exhibitions through the display of human remains. This begs the question: Why are the dead so popular? What is it about human remains that attract visitors? If repulsion were the only emotion involved in seeing human remains, museums would have a clear answer on whether or not human remains should be displayed. However, viewing human remains evokes several emotions. Two of the strongest are fascination and curiosity (Goodnow 2006:124). Indeed,

why are we as human beings so fascinated by the dead body? Many claim a connection of the past with the present, in addition to the dead with the living. This connection can provide a religious or emotional response; it can even offer some comfort. Others agree that human remains offer insight into the scientific and forensic. Moreover, it has been said that museums play a significant role in presenting the reality of death to the public (Alberti, Bienkowski, and Chapman 2009).

Modern popular culture also attests to the intense public interest in the dead. Many films and television series present stories about human remains, either of this world (such as, cadavers) or supernatural (such as, zombies). This fascination with dead bodies is not only reserved for popular culture but is also visible for example in the popularity of Gunther von Hagen's controversial Bodyworlds exhibition. This exhibition has now also come to Norway. In recent years, exhibits of corpses preserved using the plastination process, creating a lifelike appearance, have been successful all over the world. Displaying preserved skinless bodies has attracted tens of millions of visitors and hundreds of millions of dollars in profits. The reason for the controversy over this exhibition is that it defies norms and codes of late twentieth-century Western culture regarding art, anatomy and medicine. Bodyworlds challenges the boundaries between art and science, the artificial and the natural, and life and death. Parts of the public perceive Bodyworlds as a platform of education and veneration, while others regard the exhibition as mass entertainment, in the genre of the freak show (Barilan 2006).

Being able to see human remains in museums allows the public to see what is normally kept on the "other" side, that which is normally hidden or forbidden. However, there are different types of human remains, and therefore there are different reactions to them. For instance the cleansed skeleton is often less abject or scary than the "more human" mummy retaining hair and skin (Dismutenibtes) or a diseased human remain ("Maren i myra") (Goodnow 2006:125). Beit Hallahmi (2012) reasons that the psychological distance created by ancient mummification or embalming reduces aversion and facilitates close observation (Beit-Hallahmi 2012). The fact that "Maren i myra" is linked to a disease makes her more vulnerable. Her body has also been mutilated and is displayed naked. There is no form of boundary except for her glass case. This might explain why the public reaction to the exhibition and in particular to "Maren i myra" is one of disgust and fear. During my fieldwork, the most repeated reactions to "Maren i myra" I heard was, "Yuck", "What is that?" and "Is it real?" Perhaps, what visitors find most upsetting or revolting is that what is

usually considered “private” is put on display, in this case it is that “Maren i myra” is naked (Goodnow 2006:127).

However, Hallahmi (2012) argues that mummification provides psychological distance, while at the same time preserving the human aspect. It also hides the physical reality of death. Thus, the dry state of an ancient Egyptian mummy does reduce aversion significantly, even if some human shape is preserved (Beit-Hallahmi 2012). My experience as a disseminator has shown me that the public does not always understand that what it is observing is actual human remains. They often ask, “Is it real?” Many of them think that the mummies of the exhibition are made of wood. When I explain to them that it is in fact an authentic ancient Egyptian mummy, the reactions I sometimes get are disgust and fear (“Yuck” and “It is disgusting and scary”). However, most of the time the public seems impressed and leans closer to the glass case to see more of Dismutenibtes and Nofret (the other mummy of the exhibition “The Egyptian mummies”).

The public’s acceptance and support for the display of human remains is a phenomenon seen with the global success of exhibitions like Bodyworlds, or the displaying of mortuary theme such as Tutankhamen’s mask or the Terracotta Army exhibition, which have been among the most successful exhibits seen on a world stage (Sayer 2010b).

5.6 Is photogrammetry a solution?

The creation of digital cultural heritage, such as photogrammetry, has become relevant in the process of creating museum exhibitions for a modern high-technology audience (Maxwell, Gray, and Goldberg 2015).

5.6.1 Digitalising human remains

Modern digital technology provides tools to recreate the appearance of archaeological evidence (Rizvic, Okanovic, and Sadzak 2015). The main goal of digitalized cultural heritage is to offer insight into the past (Rizvic, Okanovic, and Sadzak 2015). The last decade has seen increased innovation within recording and documenting cultural heritage. The digitalization of objects, monuments or buildings is a technical tool that opens many doors. However, many

argue that it robs cultural heritage of its sanctity and authenticity (Warden 2009 , Loynes 2015). The creation of digital cultural heritage has, nonetheless, become part of creating museum exhibitions to teach visitors about past populations (Maxwell, Gray, and Goldberg 2015). Museums have started to educate and entertain the public with various animated display techniques. Therefore, 3D modelling has become fashionable and popular. Three-dimensional modelling originated with medical imaging, which gave way to the idea of a non-invasive alternative to studying ancient human remains, such as mummies. Since, all museum transport human remains from display to storage and to the conservator's quarters, the use of medical imaging techniques, such as X-rays, CAT scans, and 3D models, reduces the frequency with which an artefacts is moved from one location to the next. This helps prevent the rapid decay of these human remains (Loynes 2015:5).

As presented in Chapters 3 and 4, I made a 3D model of Dismutenibtes. During the process of making a 3D model, it is necessary to be within close proximity to the human remains. One often ends up taken more than a dozen photographs in order to render a successful 3D model. This is not a physically invasive process, because at no point is the artefact touched; however, at times it is necessary to get very close with the camera. So at some point, it is an invasive process because the artefact, in this case the human remains, must become available and, thus, handled. A successful 3D model is extremely precise. All the details of the artefacts are visible, and it is possible to zoom in on the human remains. This is also invasive in a way, since details that are not visible in an exhibition suddenly become visible on a screen with a 3D model. A mummy is an assemblage of several components; it has layers: the human remains, the linen and the coffin, to name some. If one makes a 3D model of a mummy, it quickly resembles an onion. One can peel off and observe each layer, either separately or together. I argue that even a fantastically detailed 3D model cannot replace an artefact, especially if this artefact is human remains. It is impossible to achieve the same connection with a computer 3D model as one can with real, physical human remains. This connection can be explained by using medicine as an example. A doctor can observe an X-rays or scans and offer a diagnosis, but the doctor will always prefer to see the patient, as well as the scans. The scans are not enough to understand the patients' situation. So it is with human remains; one must experience and connect to the human remains in order to understand and tell their story. Yet, some scholars, like Katherine Goodnow, argue that the prevalence of scans indicate that science no longer needs to be invasive and that those scientists, therefore, respect the dead, maintaining a border between the dead and ourselves (Goodnow 2006:128).

That said many museums actively used 3D modelling as part of their exhibitions. One of the most comprehensive and popular exhibition, called “Ancient lives, new discoveries”, was featured at the British Museum. This exhibition was the result of research that gave insight into the lives of eight individuals who lived along the river Nile between 3500 BC and AD 700. The research was achieved without unwrapping any of the mummies, an accomplishment facilitated by scanning and three-dimensional visualisation technology. The scans provided clearer images of the pelvis, offering an estimation of the ages at death. Moreover, this type of technology also revealed previously unseen faces and hairstyles. John H. Taylor and Daniel Antoine (2014) explain that this reminded them that these mummies were once people who once lived as members of vibrant communities. Applying new analytical techniques to human remains collections allows us to understand what it was like to live and die in past times (Taylor and Antoine 2014:186).

Scanning and 3D technologies have given way to the newest form of communication for cultural heritage, which is the method of interaction between museum visitors and exhibitions. The visitor is no longer a passive recipient of information but has become more active in the processes of exploring and learning. This approach has led to more museum exhibitions presenting their scientific and educational content in such a way as to be experienced. Due to the media and innovative forms of communication, museums have to present their material on several platforms, such as websites, blogs or Facebook (Empler and Fabrizi 2015). However, this raises ethical questions. Some museums have asked their visitors not to take “selfies” with the human remains and to delete the images. This has led to some negative feedback. It seems that although the public wishes to know that human remains are being curated in a respectful manner, this concern does not necessarily extend to the use of social media (Redfern and Clegg 2017).

5.6.2 Thoughts on future exhibitions

Photogrammetry is a superb tool for museum exhibitions trying to encourage a more social media indulgent society to be interested in past relics. However, I do not believe that it answers questions about how human remains should be displayed. Museums have constantly displayed human remains in attempts to portray particular historical social contexts. This is often done with restricted information that is carefully selected to interpret human remains

from our own modern Western worldview. Thus, curators turn human remains into social and political objects, things to be used for our own gain, for the purposes of the living. Yet, there is an increased awareness around the fact that human remains were ones living individuals (Alberti, Bienkowski, and Chapman 2009).

The data gathered for this thesis reveals that human remains are often divided into two parts. Numerous scholars describe this as the conflict between the social and the biological. One part is the physicality of the human body. The other is the person or personality, or even the belief system behind the body. Different religious and spiritual traditions believe that the deceased is an empty entity, without a soul. Therefore, it is a “thing”. Other traditions believe that there is no division between body and soul. The deceased should be treated and dealt with as a living person, as part of the community. Still, regardless of religious or spiritual traditions, the living would for the most part react to having a relative, a parent, a grandparent, a child or a close friend displayed (Alberti, Bienkowski, and Chapman 2009). Thus, human remains are not meant and should not be treated as another museum artefact.

Furthermore, I argue that Western museums do not have enough regard for the origins and recent histories of these displays. One of the reasons for our fascination, and also our strong reactions to the display and management of the dead, is that museums used to aim to “create surprise rather than... instruction”, especially in the case of anatomical and Egyptian mummy collections. By the eighteenth century, museums displaying human remains emphasized anatomical peculiarities that were viewed for entertainment. However, in the nineteenth century, human remains were displayed as representatives of different types of “race”, giving way to racist evolution theories. The most exposed to this was indigenous populations and colonised populations (Alberti, Bienkowski, and Chapman 2009:142).

However, most museums, and museums professionals at present appreciate that human remains must be treated with respect. Moreover, they also understand the importance of human remains for learning about past populations. The dissemination of information gathered from human remains research is educational, and museum programmes can be a positive benefit to the general public. Museums have a responsibility to display all types of human remains in a manner that informs and involves visitors rather than sensationalizes the subject matter. However, whenever museums professionals put human remains on display, they are faced with questions of respect and dignity (Alberti, Bienkowski, and Chapman

2009). Is there a more appropriate way of displaying the dead? If so, what is it? I argue that a museum exhibition, with the use of digital imaging like photogrammetry, should narrate the whole biography of a person. Furthermore, 3D models cannot and should not replace human remains in museum exhibitions. The greatest strength and uniqueness of museums is that they present the public with authentic artefacts. Three-dimensional models can assist in telling different aspects of someone's life story. A good exhibition, like a good story, has a beginning, middle, and an end; without these parts it is not a complete or well-composed story. One way to show someone respect is to allow him or her to tell his or her story. Thus, stopping the modernity trend of compartmentalise our lives, the personal and the social or professional, that have spread to the exhibitions displaying the dead (Sayer 2010a:130).

I would argue that as it is today the two museums exhibition that display "Maren i myra" and Dismutenibtes, follow this trend of compartmentalising. In the case of the "The Egyptian mummies" exhibition, there is no clear narrative. Visitors may understand that there is some connection to the Egyptian mythology. Due to the statuettes of Osiris on either side of Dismutenibtes and the stars painted on the wall behind Dismutenibtes representing the goddess Nut. The text on the display case of Dismutenibtes does give some social and individual information. However, other than this, the design of the exhibition does not tell a story about the social context or individual biography. On the contrary, the exhibition "Healthy mind in a healthy body" offers a lot of social context. It is very well presented and explained in the design of the exhibitions. One gets a sense of the social medical situation of the 1800s. However, this exhibition does not offer enough information about "Maren i myra". There is no individual biography, making her into a prop. She is not necessary for the narrative of the exhibition.

During my interview with Ellen Lange, she informed me that the museum is planning in changing the "Healthy mind in a healthy body" exhibition. This has emerged as a new development since I first met with her and some of her colleagues to present my project and ask if they had any additional information on "Maren i myra". At that time, the museum had no plans to redo the exhibition. However, during my interview with Lange she explained that one of the reasons why they want to redo the exhibition is because "Maren i myra" is "one of the rarest, most interesting and important objects we have in our collection and we will like to explore more" (Lange 2017). The museum would like to explore and discuss more aspects of "Maren i myra". Lange describes the display of "Maren i myra" as an illustration of cholera

and how it spread and affected people's lives in the 1850s. But Lange thinks that this is a bit constricted; she would like to open the exhibit up to questions, like, "How was this object found? Why is she so well preserved? What do we know about where she comes from?" Lange would also like to use DNA analysis and disseminate its uses and results. Raising other questions about "Maren i myra", Lange asks, "Do we know she had cholera? And how could we know and not know? What is her age, and how do we know how old she is?" (Lange 2017). This approach would make the human remain as main "feature" of the exhibition and use other object as support.

Håbu agreed that museums must disseminate their research findings to the public. Consequently, there is a plan to re-organise the display of Dimutenibtes. Håbu has contemplated the possibility of offering a touchscreen in the exhibition in 2017. The touchscreen would make it possible to learn about all the layers and themes around this particular mummy. It might give people a lot of different types of information without ruining the atmosphere in the exhibition. With a touchscreen, the public can choose what they want to learn more about. They can choose the information they want to read. Håbu explains how "you can learn about the coffin, you can learn about the scans, you can see scans; we can show all the things we know now without doing the old fashioned way by leaving it unwrapped" (Håbu 2017). She does not know yet how many layers of the mummy will be possible to see on the touchscreen. At the time of my interview with Håbu, there was still some discussion on whether the public should be allowed to see the body of Dismutenibtes, because it might "compromise the dignity" of the mummy (Håbu 2017).

5.7 Summary

In the past, human remains were commodified as objects. They often developed into political symbols or were reduced to functional medical equipment or museum objects. This has enabled Western museums to continue to display human remains as museum objects.

Scholars in recent years have started to question this development. The responsibility of recently deceased usually lies with surviving relatives. The same cannot be said for ancient

remains. They may become public property. Human remains have often become central to religious beliefs, national identity or scientific research (Brooks and Rumsey 2007:264).

Human remains are unlike any other artefacts, they are past living people. The way in which we care and manage human remains seems to depend on the degree of distancing or connection that we feel towards them. Moreover, archaeologists, museum practitioners, government agencies and the general public often disagree over the subject of human remains. Questions of how to store, treat, manage, display and interpret human remains are being challenged. Moreover, debates of ownership have begun to place the subject into political, legal, cultural and educational arenas (Giesen 2013:1). The fascination with the dead may of course also be fuelled by intellectual, scientific, forensic, religious or emotional curiosity (Brooks and Rumsey 2008:261).

The creation of visual technologies such as photogrammetry have been extremely important and useful in the process of creating museum exhibitions for a high-technology public (Maxwell, Gray, and Goldberg 2015).

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This thesis is a comparative study of Dimutenibtes and “Maren i myra”, two sets of human remains displayed in Norwegian museums, but from two different historical periods and cultural contexts. Through these case studies, my study investigates the appropriate and inappropriate display methods of human remains. I chose the cases of Dimutenibtes and “Maren i myra” because I wanted to investigate whether there are more appropriate way of displaying human remains and how this might be achieved.

Through mixed research methods, I gathered different types of data from different sources. This information provided an overview of how these two sets of human remains have been treated and managed through the years. The data also point out that human beings have a biography that continues beyond death, a fact often overlooked. These people remain part of society, even in death. Both case studies represent connections between specific national and global political events, and academic developments. Museum exhibitions communicate selective information about human remains on display.

During the last two decades we see a growing interest and awareness, both within academia and the general public, about the “respect” and “dignity” of human remains. Legal texts and guidelines have been put in place just for this purpose. Still, terms like “respect” and “dignity” are vague and open to personal interpretation. Both recently deceased and more ancient human remains have become topics of intense debates. The idea of keeping anatomical collections and displaying Egyptian mummies in Europe are questioned. Many, within academia and the general public, feel that the ways in which the dead are displayed highlight their commodification and their depersonalisation. Some are troubled by the fact that these bodies have been removed from their original burial ground (Weiss-Krejci 2013:291). Yet, when asked, a large segment of the public still wants and expects to see human remains in museum exhibitions.

Museums follow scientific developments within the discipline of archaeology. Visual technology is being incorporated into archaeology and in museum exhibitions. Photogrammetry, which turns two-dimensional, photographs into a three-dimensional model,

allow museums to reach out to an ever more technologically advanced audience. These developments suggest that, perhaps, three-dimensional models can replace authentic human remains in museum exhibitions. This type of exchange might relieve some of these ethical quandaries. However, while photogrammetry is a useful tool for museum exhibitions, it alone cannot resolve these educational, logistical, and ethical issues. Museums have consistently displayed human remains as a way to portray particular historical social contexts, but this is no longer sufficient (Alberti, Bienkowski, and Chapman 2009). Museums, I think, should endeavour to take a more holistic and less compartmentalised approach to this process.

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Appendix

Experiencing ”Skeletter i skapet” 26 September 2017

When I interviewed Ellen Lange in January 2017, she mentioned the National Medical Museums newest exhibition project. It is called ”Skeletter i Skapet” which translate to ”Skeletons in the Closet” in English. I was invited to the exhibition opening. I thought it was a good opportunity to see another exhibition about human remains. This new exhibition, ”Skeletons in the Closet” is now next to the exhibition ”Healthy mind in a healthy body” displaying ”Maren i myra”. This small exhibition of eighteen artefacts is a part of the bigger project called ”Tingenes metode” (”the method of things”) and is founded by the Norwegian Art Council (”Kulturrådet”). The purpose with the exhibition is to not give the public all the answers, but to make the public aware of the process behind displaying human remains.

When walking into the exhibition the lighting is very dimmed, there is a sombre atmosphere. At a first glance you get a feeling of walking into someone’s living room. The first thing that greets the visitor is a long table with three rather small glass casings. The photograph below shows the table with the three glass casings.



Photograph taken by Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg 26
September 2017

Each of the glass casing there are a couple of medical organ preparations. The first casing had different types of preparations from different parts of human remains. The second casing had foetus and child skeletons. The third casing had the different phases of development of a foetus in the uterus. The photographs below show the different glass casings and their content.



Photograph taken by Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg 26 September 2017



Photograph taken by Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg 26 September 2017



Photograph taken by Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg 26 September 2017

To the left of the long table there is a little section with an archive cabinet, a reading lamp and an armchair. The archive cabinet contains files with information on the different artefacts displayed. The photograph below shows the section of the exhibition with the archive cabinet.



At the end of the room there is a little secluded section. It is separated from the rest of the exhibition with a curtain. In this room there is a telephone receiver that is attached to the wall. From this telephone it is possible to listen to a tape recoding of a conversation between the conservator involved with this exhibition and Ellen Lange. The recording introduces the point of view and perspective on the medical collection and the artefact displayed in the exhibition. She states that medical artefacts such as these organ preparations are a challenge to conserve. The reason is that the nature of the liquid inside the container is not always known. The preparations are also very sensitive to light. Moreover, these medical preparations are unlike any other museum artefacts. The conservator states that the medical preparations are more emotionally charged than for example human skeleton, because skeletons are “not as bodily”. The photograph below shows the little secluded section of the exhibition.



During the opening of the exhibition there was a discussion held where all the visitors participated. Some reacted to a lack of “story” in the exhibition. There was no explanation on the table and besides each of the artefacts. Thus, many of the visitors felt that the exhibition lacked context. This being said, the archive cabinet does offer context and background information on each of the artefacts. For some visitors the exhibition seemed to “naked and to clinical”. However, other believed it to be a very good display because it normalises these types of artefacts, making them less obscure. It was appreciated that by displaying the artefacts one makes them part of the conversation as well as making them available for teaching purposes for school children visiting the museum. This is an important point, because many of these preparations were made for teaching medical students.

Signed consent form by Eivind Bagle



Request for participation in research study

Title: "Ethical consideration connected to displaying the dead in museum exhibitions"

Background and Objective

The interviews are a part of data gathering for the master thesis of Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg. The topic of this thesis is human remains in museums. The objective of this thesis is to analyse, study and compare two different Norwegian museum exhibitions. One set of human remains is a female Egyptian mummy from the 25th dynasty. The other set of human remains is a female victim of the cholera epidemic in Oslo in 1850.

The research question is thus, should museums display human remains?

The interview subjects are Anne Håbu, Conservator in charge of the Dismutenibtes project of 2016 at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo. In addition, Eivind Bagle, Assistant Director at the Norwegian Maritime Museum. In 2003 he was one of the people responsible for the creation of the "Sunn sjel i et sunt legeme" exhibition that includes the human remains of "Maren i Myra". Finally, Ellen Lange, conservator at the Norwegian Museum of Science and Technology.

Description of the Study Procedures

Participating in this study entail an in-depth interview about the exhibitions mentioned above. The answers will be used as part of the data collecting for this comparative study. The interview will be accomplished with a tape recorder and hand written notes.

What happens with your personal information?

The participant's names and work place details will be written in the master thesis.

The thesis will be handed in Spring 2017. The interview notes and recordings will only be listened to and seen by, Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg and my two supervisors Ramona Harrison and Nils Anfinset. However, the data collected during the interview will be used as part of the master thesis.

Consent

Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep along with any other printed materials deemed necessary by the study investigators.

 13/1-2017

(Signature and date)

Signed consent form by Ellen Lange



Request for participation in research study

Title: "Ethical consideration connected to displaying the dead in museum exhibitions"

Background and Objective

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Ellen Lange, 16/1 - 2017
(Signature and date)

Signed consent form by Anne Håbu



Request for participation in research study

Title: "Ethical consideration connected to displaying the dead in museum exhibitions"

Background and Objective

The interviews are a part of data gathering for the master thesis of Anissa G. Naguib Leerberg. The topic of this thesis is human remains in museums. The objective of this thesis is to analyse, study and compare two different Norwegian museum exhibitions. One set of human remains is a female Egyptian mummy from the 25th dynasty. The other set of human remains is a female victim of the cholera epidemic in Oslo in 1850.

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24.2.17 Anne Håbu

(Signature and date)

Interviews

Interview with Eyvind Bagle in his office at the Norwegian Maritime Museum in Oslo.

The date is the 13th of January 2017 and I'm here with Eyvind Bagle.

So we'll start the interview. First could you present yourself? Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

All right. You said my name. I am presently the assistant manager here at the Maritime Museum. I've worked here since 2008 that's not really what's so interesting, I think more relevant is that I was from the year 2000 until 2005 I worked at the Museum of Science and Technology which also has the National Medical Museum.

Yeah

So I've been working as a museum professional since 1998 and since I was done with my MA in History and I've also worked at a Art museum "Kistefos" as a director I have a various background in cultural history and museums. I am trained as a historian, I am not trained as a conservator or an artefact, object specialist, I am not a chemist, that's not really my field. I work with typically rapports and historical essays and stuff like that, so that's my take on this. From the year 2000 to 2005 I said I worked at the "Teknisk Museum"¹ from 2003 I was so called "object responsible", "gjenstandsansvalig"². So they reorganized it. The manager of the museum at that time was Mister Gunnar Nerheim. I am going to talk a little bit about him and the management in view of your questions here. So it was Gunnar Nerheim and the museum, "Teknisk Museum" at the time was organized very much as a Director and then they also had Liv Ramskjær who is presently the head of the "Norsk Museums Forbund"³ the "Norwegian Museum Organisation" she was also my boss at the Teknisk Museum the Norwegian Museum for Science and Teknology as it is in English, that's basically me. I'm close to 50 years now and at the time I was a little bit younger and a little bit more

¹The Norwegian Museum of Science and Technology

² Object responsible

³ Norwegian Museum Association

inexperienced and I was a was middle management at “Norsk Teknisk Museum”. I’m still middle management but I’m a little bit more close to the director here at the “Norsk Folkemuseum”⁴ and “Maritimt Museum”⁵ where I’ve worked now. The Norwegian Maritime Museum where we’re sitting here today is also part of “Norsk Folkemuseum” the Norwegian cultural history...

Oh, I didn’t know that.

It’s been that way since 2015

So it’s rather new.

It’s a new thing, it’s two years old, and it’s part of that “konsolidering”⁶ as we call it in Norwegian, the consolidation of the museums sector in the Norwegian.

Okay.

So I’m presently employed by “Norsk Folkemuseum” but I work here at the department for “Norsk Maritimt Museum”. I’m here also, my present job is also to be the head of research and exhibitions here at the museum so I think this is a very interesting project you have.

Thank you very much.

Do you feel like I’ve answered who I am?

That’s great. Thank you. Then you were a part of the “Sunn sjel i et sunt legeme”⁷ exhibition. In what year and context was that made.

The context, I can answer that because the context for Medisinsk Museum or “Sunn sjel i et sunt legeme” in 2003, it opened in June 2003. The context for this was that there was a

⁴ Norwegian Folkemuseum

⁵ Maritime Museum

⁶ Consolidation

⁷ Mens sana in corpore sano, Healthy mind in a healthy body

considerable museum collection or an artefact collection that had been dissimilated over the years at Rikshospitalet the Norwegian Central Hospital. I don't know, what's Rikshospitalet in English

It's the University Hospital isn't it?

Yeah, well it's the University Hospital as well but Rikshospitalet is the central hospital in Norway. It goes above the University Hospitals. Ullevål is a University Hospital. Of course Rikshospitalet has various University functions as well, that's not the issue here. The thing was that, Rikshospitalet was closing down in the centre of Oslo; previously it was located in Pilestredet and then built the new Rikshospitalet up at Gaustad. This is what happened 15-16-20 years ago. In the old Rikshospitalet there was a medical history collection, sort of a museum, a medical museum. So what they wanted was to, there were a number of professors, I don't really have the names and all the details of that. But there was a block of people that wanted to establish a museum downtown in Oslo in Pilestredet. That's where the Pilestredet Park is today. Due to various reasons, one the cost, the health department, this is the Norwegian government decided that they wouldn't have a hospital at Pilestredet, because, the vision of some of these professors was to have a separate medical huge museum in downtown Oslo, more medical history in Norway. But instead the then government I think it was, minister for health Dagfinn Bråten and Kjell-Magne Bondevik government. They decided, perhaps we can look at you know some form of coexisting with an already established museum for this collection. Instead of establishing a brand new museum, because already at that time they started up consolidation thinking to have fewer museum in Norway. Instead of establishing newer museums they wanted to consolidate, so this is perhaps a little bit of a pre-warning of that, but what transpired was that, the ministry took contact with a number of museums. I don't know exactly which museums, but the one that were in the negotiation that really came to a conclusion and to a successful conclusion was with Norsk Teknisk Museum, the Norwegian Museum of Science and Technology. Because everyone thought, well not everyone but some at least the management at "Norsk Teknisk Museum", Gunnar Nerheim, was the manager and the board of "Norsk Teknisk Museum" thought this was a brilliant idea. To use parts of the museum building and floors and exhibition space to also have a historical and pedagogical exhibition of Norwegian Medical history, history of medicine in modern Norway, so that's the context for this exhibition. There was a big collection and a huge number of artefacts and I think the agreement was made in 2002 sort of in midyear 2002. This

became a rather hectic project for everyone involved because the whole thing was to empty the storages and all the places they had stored this collection. It ran all the way from obstetrics instruments, preparations, furniture, surgical instruments, you know that whole range of historical artefacts from the hospitals history. Especially I seem to remember that the gynaecologists were really, everything connected to childbirth and all that. Those instruments had been well taken care of. There was also a large collection of “preparations”, “preparater altså”⁸, tissue, various foetuses in various stages of development.

Yes, I’ve seen that.

And encephalitic embryos, that had been given, still birth. You know “Maren i myra” that’s one thing but there we also a large collection of “preparations” and especially those small foetuses, where Siamese twins.

Oh, okay

Stuff like that, because in the old days these would be given the whole pregnancy, they wouldn’t be aborted like, this things usually happen today. This was a large collection and I was actually in charge of registration that collection together with that a real know pathologist at the University of Oslo, Professor Kjell Elgjo, is no longer with us, I think he died in 2011-12. He was like one of the expert pathologist in Norway. So together with him I went through the whole collection. He was also an informant to “Maren i myra” and the...

Who is “Maren i myra”? Can you tell me a little bit about her?

Ok. Now we skipped. Have we done question 3 and now going back to?

Going back to number 2.

So the context was of course establishing a National Medical History Museum within the Norwegian Museum for Science and Technology, this was in 2002-2003. The context was hectic! That’s what I’m trying to say, because we had to move the whole collection, we had to

⁸ Preparations

register the whole collection, go through the whole collection and we weren't a lot of people doing this. So we were under a very tight schedule, and also a tight budget, actually. So you know we had to make compromises all the way through, typical of museums establishment.

Typical of museum establishments in Norway.

It was thought of as a very good addition and very relevant addition to the scope and field of what the Norwegian Museum for Science and Technology should be all about. Because traditionally that museum was very much about power generation, transportation, cars and locomotives and airplanes and stuff like that, giving it a more medical museum was seen to be a very good and healthy move to expanding the museum and also this is something that the museum took good advantage of in the later years, so incorporate a much more medical stuff into there.

So who is "Maren i myra" well that's the object that you are, it is a women, she was a women. I think they, in all likelihood she perished in one of the epidemics in Oslo in the 19 century, either it be the one in 1830s or the 1840s or the 1850s we really don't know. We don't have any, we don't know how she was, we don't know her name, we don't know exactly when she was born or when she died. The answer to your question is that she is to this day a body that is since 2003 displayed to the public at large, but before that she was we don't know.

So there is no sort of information available about "Maren i myra"?

Nope. Well not that anyone so far has been able to find out. I mean there is no record of a specific burial, a specific person. You have the question number 7: why is she called "Maren i myra".

Yes.

But we can take that later

No, you can answer that when you want, that's ok.

So “Maren i myra”, so number 7 and 4 and 5. So “Maren i myra” is a term of endearment, it’s a nickname, it’s a sort of like a, it’s a name she was given, today in America she would be called Jane Do she is unknown. But “Maren i myra” is an old song from the 20th century. And probably the ones that started to give her that name were professors or professionals at the forensic department of the Rikshospitalet the “Rettsmedisinsk”⁹, that’s what we think. Probably either they or the ones that actually unearthed her, which is something, that probably also happened in the early 20th century. We don’t have a date even of that. There was no exhumation data into how that body came into the collection of the Rikshospitalet. There was no catalogue card saying that this is an object that come into our hospital not museum but hospital, such and such date, you know, 1920 or 10 or. She was called “Maren i myra” probably something to do with the song, “Maren i myra”, but who actually gave her that name I don’t know, but we think it was, that it might have been forensic people at the Rikshospitalet.

So there has been no conservation work on her? No rapport, in maybe later years, before the exhibition maybe?

No, what happened was that, what sort of information was available and about “Maren i myra” at the time? And when you say at the time you mean, when the exhibition was made in 2003 right?

Yes in 2003.

Yeah. Because I’ve been thinking about that question a bit. I seem to remember that, this is just by memory so this is not really a good source. I talked with pathologist Professor Kjell Elgjo, I don’t know how much you need to mention his name in this. But he was one of our main informant, because he’d been student at the university in the 1930s and he has seen the “preparations” he’d seen “Maren i myra”, he’s seen all this. The information that was available and known about “Maren i myra” was much about what I’m saying now. What we knew about “Maren i myra” there was a note, when we collected her from Nordals Bruns gate where the storage was she was hanging, like that...

⁹ Forensic

Hanging from what?

She was hanging from a peg and there is a hole in her neck. Which is not really that visible right now.

No because you can't see her neck.

Actually what happened, this is what I've been told. I think Kjell Elgjo was one of my sources for this was that...

Is that the man who passed?

He is no longer with us I'm sorry. He was my main sort of "faglig"¹⁰, "professional informant". Because he had been a student and he had also been a professor at the Rikshospitalet and various places working with both "preparation", and he also know about "Maren i" Myra". So the information we had at the time was that she'd been stored informally at the forensic department "Rettsmedisinsk" at Rikshospitalet and what we were told. There was a note saying that this is "Maren i myra" probably found all that information I gave you. Probably found early 20th century in conjunction with new building projects where they took up the old cholera. The cholera churchyards, because they were mass graves.

Yes

Yes, they were

Dumped in there.

Yeah, well perhaps given a coffin, but they were dumped really deep.

So it was shallow?

No, came under the ground waters, so they way beyond six feet.

¹⁰ Professional

Oh ok.

Under the ground, that's why, the mummification process went one, the fat tissues in their bodies turned into wax. This happened because there was no oxygen allowed into these coffins. Apparently, there had been plenty of complaints about when they did some of these new building projects in town in the early 20th century and when they came to Ankerløkken, Sofienberg those places where they've been these cholera churchyards. The builders were like you know wading in bodies "vassa I lik"¹¹. I think I lost my track here a little bit. But what we knew at the time, in 2003 was, and I think Kjell Elgjo collaborated this was that, this is what happened, for many years, I don't know for how many years but for many, many years. The people at the forensic department had had "Maren i myra" hanging on a door with a hook or a peg or some kind of fastening device in her neck, so, I'm just demonstrating now. She just been placed on the inside of a door like so, in a cupboard in a closet. So every time they wanted to display her, people would go into the closet and they could get her. Apparently this was something, I've never seen it, I've only heard about it, but apparently this was a little bit of a joke that the people at the forensic department had. I don't know who exactly and if you really want to dig into the pre-history of this I think you have to talk to other people. Then you have to talk to retired forensic professors and stuff like that.

Do you have any names?

Not right now. I will have to dig that up. I don't really have any time.

Do you know where I could find the names?

Of how is displayed or kept in the old hospital.

No these people that might have had more contact with her?

¹¹ Waded in corpses

Well you'll have to look up the Rikshospitalet archives or you could find an old catalogue of the old Rikshospitalet perhaps one from 1990-1995. Find out who work in the Rettsmedisinsk. As I've been saying, this was what we were told.

There was no paperwork.

There was really not that much documentation on "Maren i myra" there was, I remember a piece of paper that's been apparently been a sort of exhibition text. In this context, but where that is now, I don't know.

But you have observed the whole?

There is definitely a whole there, because I also observed that she was vertical. She was vertical when we found her I think it was in the storage in Nordalsbrun gate. Because Rikshospitalet had stored away much of there historical collections at the Nordalsbrun gate which is closed by Kathedralskolen. So that 's the place where we took it out from we took it out and brought it to the storage at Kjelsås and to Gjerdrum where the Museum also has a large storage with the bigger objects like the big operation theatres and stuff like that. Back to "Maren i myra" so really when you say, the short answer to question 4: what sort of information was known and available about "Maren i myra" at the time, not really very much in the form of documentation very much anecdotal and none really formalised.

So when you did the exhibition did you do any paperwork about her, any conservation work?

I think we did, we had a conservator at the time I think he was from Scotland, and he worked on this project. What we did was, he came up with the idea, first of all...

I'm on question 9.

The conservation work that was done on "Maren i myra" at the time as preparation for the exhibition wasn't that much really. I think it was more arresting sort of the some of the less fortunate developments that could take place.

Yeah

I know that there was cleaning. What condition was “Maren i myra” in before she was displayed to the public. Not that different from later.

From now, the way she looks now.

She looks quite the same. She was cleaned and she was laid down.

Yes

And that’s, that’s one of my questions to your, one of my answers to your, upholding the dignity of “Maren i myra”. Instead of just having her hanging on a peg through her neck.

Yes, that would be question 12: What sort of efforts were put in place to uphold that dignity of “Maren i myra”.

Or 14 in my, but never mind. We cleaned her we also did a bit of I think a very slight chemical treatment to stop any rotting processes that could take place. But she’d been in the ground without oxygen for many years and then she was taken out and then the whole you know chemical environment that she lived in with oxygen, I mean everything had just stopped. I think she is lacking one foot.

Yes she is, she is actually lacking both.

Oh really, I think it was part of only one. Ok, she is lacking both. Oh yes that right because someone thought that perhaps some of the old coffins. They started to rot

Yes they cut off the feet, I wrote that in my project description. Because I’ve heard about this, that when the body was too big for the coffin they would cut off the feet. So I was wondering if.

I have no documentation on.

No, but is that a viable theory.

Sounds like it. I mean. Perhaps we can do that when we come to question 12, about the cholera epidemics, because if she was in the 1852-1859 or the one that came before that there was one in the 1830s as well.

Yes.

If she died in any of those, I mean, the conditions and terms in which people were buried, you know this happened really fast and without to forms of process. But I think it's viable, I think your point is viable, it might have happened or it might have been rotting process took place and then some of these coffins started to deteriorate or disintegrate and then something might have happened. It is kind of strange because the rest of her body is kind of kept quite well preserved. She's also been flattened or there's also been some kind of pressure there. We cleaned her and what we also did was, this was a, I'm not really coming to your main questions, because who took the decisions and what kind of deliberations were made when it came to actually.

Who was involved in the creation of the exhibition? Why and how?

Yes, why and how. But first the cleaning and also we manage to persuade the management that she needed a really good display case. I think that was one of the of costly if not the costly item on the whole exhibition was the display cases that we bought from Germany.

I've heard about that.

I think it was the 18-19 000 Kr at the time, 15 years ago.

Why was that necessary?

Well to keep her, the body stable and to give it a, I don't know if you've seen the museum buildings up at Kjelsås, but there are much like the museum buildings I have here, they are vast open spaces, impossible to control locally the micro-climate, the environment, the environment that you want to have. For and object like that, I say an object. First of all there

was a bit of discussion internally which I don't know if have been put down in any minutes or any rapports, but there was a little bit of discussion on should we really exhibit "Maren i myra"?

That's really interesting.

Yeah. I don't want to speak for anybody else, I can only speak for myself. I wasn't really certain if this was a good idea, because I remember thinking at the time that, we know to little about the circumstances about in which, I was persuaded by the former professor Elgjo that this is a recovered body, and the process of which this had happened, she is very anonymous, I was really not sure but, the manager of the museum Gunnar Nerheim was absolutely certain that we need to exhibit "maren i myra" because we needed something, a centre piece for the exhibition and we didn't have that much time to think of all kinds of, I think she was viewed as an object that could really bring life through death to the main context, the main narrative of the exhibition, this is a "Sunn sjel, i et sunt legeme", deals very much with public health.

Yes, it's the...

It tries to, now we are getting back to the context, but I will have to walk this path anyway, because the exhibition tries to show that there other forces at work then just the professionalization of doctors or the fact that you get more and more doctors. The other factors of society responsible for public health and for the development...

She is displayed besides plumbing; it shows how the change in plumbing changed public health.

By a fluke really or by change, because by my estimable then colleague, Thor Are Johannesson showed the municipal authorities did really plan to do anything for health purposes when it came to the plumbing it was just an fortunate by side affect, which really helped. "Maren i myra" there were different takes on it, but manager decides and given the decision we did everything we could to preserved and conserve her, and also to get a good display case which has lasted for I know since 2003 until now, 14 years. So it has done its job, I don't know the stat of that now because, others that have to follow that up now, the people working at the museum, but this was, we really went over, we didn't find any suppliers of that

kind of display case here in Norway or in Sweden. We had to go to Germany to find it. There were means to, or investments made to ensure that she was put in a stable and also a good micro-climate that sort of protect her and any arrest any unfortunate developments going on chemically.

So would you say that she was displayed to also bring more public in? Raise interest in the museum was that a factor?

It was a factor; I think that was a factor. Well this is a print out that I found from one of the forsking.no in 2003. You can look at that.

Thank you.

“Med mindre fuktig oxygenfattig graven for “Maren” ville Norsk medisinsk museum trolig vært ett trekkplaster fattigere”¹².

That’s interesting, thank you!

So, where was I?

A factor.

Of course we wanted to, since the collection were they way they were, as I started innately, they were very varied, you had everything form a lot electoral furniture, which is not that very interesting in a museum perspective, which took up a lot of space and a lot of man power to shift the move. So we had a lot of that, but we also had a lot of object that we tried to put into the context of this and I, given the level of information and documentation on “Maren i myra”, which was not really rock solid, but still there was a core to this story that we felt, I think that I can, I mean I stand behind the decision, but I wasn’t really certain at the time. I can remember thinking that maybe this is a bit to vague, maybe we should have known exactly why she was exhumed, exactly when she was buried preferable when she was born, or

¹² If the grave of “Maren” had not been humid and poorly oxygenated, the Norwegian Medical Museum would truly be less popular.

who she was. I started, I tried to just look at, I had a friend working at the “byarkivet”¹³ at the time, Bård Alsvik I talked to him about this, maybe we could try to find out who this person actually is in detail. But he said that, the research that we had to do to start looking for that, I mean you had to, I mean half a year, I don’t know how long it would take. So it would be a project.

In itself.

It would be a huge detective project and the likelihood of the success is very tiny. So she was displayed as a representative of.

Of the victims?

Of the victims of her time and of course one can not totally look away from the aspect of giving the exhibition a attraction or something that people would; oh look there’s a body there, this was also criticized afterwards I seem to remember some, but I don’t have those anymore but there were a couple of newspaper articles, but I think there were some opinions voiced in forsknings.no. I should have had them here, but I don’t, I don’t keep a personal file of this.

So now you explained why you and your team chose to display “Maren i myra”?

Well I wasn’t really the one who chose to do it.

But you were part of the team?

I was part of the team, and I was middle management, and the top manager Gunnar Nerheim was the one responsible and active in the decision.

Ok. But did you have any evidence that point to the fact that “Maren i myra” had died of cholera, of the disease itself?

¹³ City Archives

That is a good question, and of course no, we cannot really be sure of that. She could have been someone who died from other reasons, I mean there hasn't been any bacteriological or DNA sort of research into her, to specify exactly her cause of death, but it was assumed that since she was buried apparently in very deep ground under the ground water level, that she was one of the victims of the cholera epidemics. This was a, it's all a bit, as they say in American justice, it is a bit circumstantial.

Was she found with other bodies or alone?

Not really sure, this was one of mine...

Objections?

Nagging, objections, we don't really know exactly where she was exhumed. There are some stories even on "digitalmuseum"¹⁴, I just looked at "digitalmuseum" to see what "Teknisk Museum" write about this themselves, and they say that it was in conjunction with reconstruction of Ankerløggen kirkegård, I'm not sure.

Now you are talking about a more personal level, how you reflect over...

I thought it was weird, I thought the whole, I have not really, because the whole process of emptying that storage was really hurried, it was hectic and we had a lot to do and we had to do it really fast. We were 4 or 5 people in charge of all this. We had trucks, we had stuff we just needed to ship the whole thing, and we didn't really have time to, I mean ideally one would have some time to sit already at Nordahls Bruns gate and go through the objects and maybe think that we can bring this, maybe we can de-access that to carefully select, we just didn't really have the time. So the whole deal was that you "Teknisk Museum" take responsibility for this collection and then we can also give you some means to establish a National Medical Museum. That was the deal with the government. So then we just had to take the whole thing lock, stock and barrel and just shift the whole thing from that storage to the storages of the museum, and then work through the collection at the museum. I sat with

¹⁴ Digital museum

doctor Kjell Elgjo, which is unfortunately no longer with us, I sat with him and we went through all those “preparations”, the tissue samples and the old foetuses and all that. So we did that, one to one and he just told me what they were, and what context they come in. The registration of the “preparations” was on a whole different level of quality than what goes for “Maren i myra”. Remember we also exhibited other human remains.

Ok

Tuberculosis lungs, pieces of that was also displayed.

Yes.

Because there was Cholera and then Tuberculosis.

I believe it is still displayed.

Yeah, so these were the big scourges of the 19th century and of course the story is that with bacteriology we know with the medicine and later on with the, you know with the antibiotics the whole different.

Public health.

Public health level.

So ok, many and National and international institutions call for the display of human remains with respect and dignity. Now I'm wondering, how do you understand these terms? Because they are quite vague.

Every solution raises from the situation where it is...we

In relation to “Maren i myra”?

I'm thinking of “Maren i myra” especially now, because I've said that, this is what I started and didn't really finish. When we came to that storage in Nordahls Bruns gate, I remember

seeing “Maren i myra” standing among various other objects, in a closet. She was in a closet that was standing up and you open the door and apparently she’d been sitting there and she’d been some kind of a freak show attraction for these forensic professors. And we thought that we can’t really de-accession. Anyway this is something for the collection of the museum, it is not to be de-accessed. So it had to be either kept in storage or kept as a display item. Given the decision by the museum management and also that we were given means to display her in a more, I’m going around the question, but I’m coming to it soon. I think that we felt at the time, this is what I mean by the situational factor, we felt at the time that taking her down from that rotten wooden closet, that the old forensic professors had used and all that, and her hanging on the door and “haha! Oh look at this” and all that. We felt that what we did was to supply her with a, putting her in a custom built design and managed environment, we also, not really gave it a sacred sort of, but we sobered the atmosphere of the exhibition of “Maren i myra”, because if you noticed we put her into the recess of the wall.

I have some pictures.

Yeah, ok but, so we sort of, what we did is that we felt like we gave her, I don’t know, some kind of a resting place, I’m sure that some people would object very hard to that this is not a resting place at all, because she is not really resting she is displayed for the public at large to watch. But we felt that the circumstances and the way we displayed her and also as a representative or as a silent but still, I don’t know, as a bridge, or a testimony or a witness from that time, even though her exponential or exhibition power is not that hard given the fact that we did not know specifically about who she was. She was probably not one of the more well to do from the western side of town. One can infer a lot of thing, but you don’t have any evidence, you can think that basically she would be from the poor regions of the town.

Most likely.

When it comes to dignity. I think we did, at least we took as many steps as we could, sort of, you know, we felt that the way we situated her here was to...

In the exhibition.

Was to at least make it obvious to, you didn't just by any chance just wonder by "Maren i myra" you had to sort of seek her out a bit.

Yes, she is a bit hidden.

She is retracted.

She is not in the middle of the exhibition, that's true.

So that's one-step, we felt that this was a vast improvement from hanging from a peg in her neck, as a freak show as I've said again and again for the forensic people. Now 14 years later I think perhaps her dignity is something to be discussed because she is not really resting. I can see that point she has not been given that rest, when people come to look at her.

That's one opinion.

All in all, this is a question of ethics as well you can see it as sort of an utilitarian question. This is something I really don't know because I've just seen people respond to her then and there on the spot.

So have I

For instant, school children and people like that, like they say in America, they are a bit grossed out. So one might wonder what the educational...

Aspect?

Or potential of the exhibition is. I think at least to do a utilitarian sort of analyses of it you at least have to, you must sort of, there must be an educational and a pedagogical or a informational component of to this which outweigh any, I don't know, any idea, I don't know, not leaving her to rest in peace.

Yeah.

That's the dignity and that also goes a bit for the respect part. I don't know. She's nude, she's...I went to see the mummy exhibition at the British museum, which was last year or two years ago.

The one with the 3D?

They also, it's known and it's used that you don't really leave people to rest, I mean those really old mummies, it's the same issues. It's human beings.

And that's where the ethics comes in.

I think that perhaps with hindsight I think decision like these they need to be really careful, and really need to take into account all kinds of aspect, both ethical and especially ethical. And they sort of require that the museum management, the ones responsible, because in this position here I was middle management, but I was responsible for carrying out and doing the best that I could with the means that I had at my disposal, but I think that it requires a very a, I think we felt with the research we did.

INTERRUPTION, STARTED ON NEW RECORDING.

So we resume the interview, if I understood you correctly, by taking her down from the cupboard and laying her down, so that we was laying and protecting her with this glass protection. That was one way to give her some of her dignity back, is that correct?

Yes. There is text here. I think I wrote it. It's been a long time I haven't read it, that's the kind of context and informational environment that we could supply her with. We feel was respectful. I mean she not just thrown her without any purpose or any reason. She is there

To tell a story

To perhaps dramatize a little bit more, even still then we are talking 2003. Even still then I think the exhibition for to some extent went back to that old 1990s-1980s sort of exhibition technic of having dioramas have you seen that?

No

Right next to “Maren i myra” I think there is a family sitting

Yes. To her left, when you come in.

That’s what I call a diorama with dolls or mannequins.

And they’re dressed in the costume of the time.

There meant to give a stage to this kind of living conditions that people had at the time, of course. Then you have the pipelines that you talked about, the water pipes, and the historical artefacts, but this object here, or this person here, we felt that when it comes to, we had those pipelines they’re original, they are from the municipal water works ministry.

That’s to her right.

Exactly, we in 2003 we felt that this had, you know a power to say more about the cholera epidemic per say but not about “Maren i myra” in her own right.

So it was to tell the story about the social context.

Yes

Not about the person.

Not about this person. We did not have enough information to do that.

Yes ok.

One could think that a way of getting her a little bit of dignity was perhaps is to cover some parts of her body, which is possible.

Yes. There are couple of questions here that you might not be able to answer. So I'm thinking about, are there any plans to re-examine of re-organise the exhibition?

You have to ask Ellen Lange about that.

Because, you don't work there anymore, so you won't have that kind of information. Do you have any plan to disseminate your research findings?

I don't really do research on this. No not really.

Is there any method of working that you have established working on human remains? Is that something you can answer?

I can answer indirectly and say, I didn't really, we didn't have the time unfortunately, to develop a method for this in my time at the medical museum. Other people taking it over, Olav Havelang, Ellen Lange, those people started working on the medical museum. They were hired to work for the medical museum right after we opened the exhibition. Ellen was really in this part of the exhibition part, but no, no we didn't establish a method. For my own part I was saying that it was a very, especially now reflected over this over the years later. I have not really come into the situation after that. Not here at the museum, we haven't had any human remains. So, I would only say that, if I were to do it again or to be involved in such a process again, I think I would be more, having done it ones makes it sort of, at least it should sharpen you ethical sense, what kind of issues are at stack. So, this what we did here, we felt that gave her more dignity that she had.

Yes

The more respect that she had, but also we bereaved her of rest, we knew that. She would be a museum object displayed, and it's strange because she has also been a person.

Yes

But we tried to put her in the context of a narrative, of a story.

Now you answering, what if anything would you do differently now that the museum has had such a long running exhibition? Would you have covered her up now?

Perhaps. I don't know.

It's difficult to answer.

It is difficult to answer, because she is naked.

She is naked, yes.

But, I mean her shapes and the forms and the outlines of her body are squashed and sort of vague. I don't think that this is obscene.

No.

I think it's, I'm not that squeamish about it either. I mean what's a nude person, you see nude statues all the time, I don't know. I don't think we've been disrespectful to her. We withdrew her a bit, we gave her a sort of a more you know, I said not really religious, sacred kind of space but still a retracted space in the exhibition. What would I do differently now, I mean, I don't know. I've come over since that time. This is almost 15 years ago. People change, if you put the same people in charge of done the same exhibition ones again, I mean perhaps you come to a whole different conclusion. Because people, I don't know.

Evolve?

Your life, experiences change.

You get older and you've worked more, with museums.

I've worked more with museums and exhibitions, but as I said, from my personal point of view I'm not come across these types of issues later. But mind you the "Teknisk Museum" have been, the second leg of the exhibition opened a few years later. One you enter and go

into the right and further on, I mean they have used a lot of those old “preparations” and they taken a lot of those and put them in the exhibition.

There is still a foetus displayed.

Exactly, and we decided not to display foetuses in this exhibition.

Interesting. Do you know why you decided not to do that?

We feel that it had a place.

In the narrative, it didn't fit in.

It was to weird. I think that were we felt that the freak show aspect would be a bit to apparent. Maybe we felt that this was enough. I'm just speculating, I have to talk to some of my old colleagues. I'm sorry I haven't had time to that, Dag or Liv or any of those.

Is there anyone in particular you have been inspired by in your field or elsewhere? Especially working with “Maren”? Anybody you listen to?

Yeah. When it came to this process here, when it came to both “Maren” and tissue samples and all the “preparations” from the “Rikshospitalet samling”¹⁵, I was very much inspired by the, that was on a whole other level from myself, because that was the old pathologist doctor Kjell Elgjo. He is unfortunately no longer with us, but he was, it was very interesting to work with him. He was so knowledgeable and he knew so much. I seem to remember one thing that really impressed me, we had that one sample, this tiny piece of tissue. Like that big, fit within a glass, and he just looked at it and just, “oh yeah, that's, I remember that one, that is cancer in the cervix”, he could just tell, like that. That was inspiring in this field here. He wasn't an historian, he wasn't a museum professional, but he was a medical professional which helped the, except for “Maren i myra” of course but the other items from the collection, he secured a lot of information. That was really good. Perhaps in hindsight we should have done more work and you know perhaps even, I or one of the other researchers should been set to work 1

¹⁵ Rikshospitalet's collection

or 3 months just on “Maren i myra” just to write a full report and see how much we can find out about the specifics you know. Because there is a piece of detective work here, where she was exhumed from because I’m not sure it was Ankerløkken, I’m not really sure where it was.

Ok

But that might be my bad memory. It’s not really registered in “digitaltmuseum” or anywhere else.

What is a piece of advice you would give someone interested in entering the field of studying human remains?

I don’t know. To go at it as you are doing with a methodology and also with seriousness and of course with respect and kind of consideration of who they were. I think that is my piece of advice.

Thank you! That is the end of the interview.

Interview with Ellen Lange in her office at the Medical Museum located at the Norwegian Museum of Science and Technology.

It's the 16th of January 2017 and I'm here with Ellen Lange, so could you start by presenting yourself? Who are you?

Yeah, my name is Ellen Lange I work here as a curator in Medical history, I work at the, there is kind of in a museum within a museum, which is called National Medical Museum of Norway. We were established in 2002. That was before I worked here, I started in October 2002. There had been an initiative taking by a "miljø"¹⁶ from Rikshospitalet, I think it was connected to the fact that Rikshospitalet was going to move from Pilestredet, central Oslo up close to the University, Gaustad, and then, this is how I've been imagining it, a lot of stuff needed to be transported anyway, and some people history interested doctor mainly and some medical historians took this initiative and wanted to create a National Medical Museum in Norway. After there were several ideas, they very much wanted it to be at "Kvinne Klinikken"¹⁷, in the old Rikshospitalet but then they ended up here. Then there were discussions going on with "Helsedepartementet"¹⁸, so it was decided that it should be part of, or driven by "Teknisk museum"¹⁹, so "Helsedepartementet" gives over "Statsbudgetet bevilger"²⁰ money each year to "National Medisinsk Museum"²¹. It is the only state founded Medical History Museum in Norway.

That's interesting.

That's why it has been called National Museum, so, I work here. Almost all the time we have been three persons working with that Museum, "National Medisinsk Museum".

Ok, you are only three?

¹⁶ Group

¹⁷ Women's Clinic

¹⁸ Health Ministry

¹⁹ The Norwegian Museum of Science and Technology

²⁰ The State budget grants

²¹ Norwegian Medical Museum

“Ja”²², but who are curators.

Who are curators, I understand. Can you tell me a little bit about the context and the year of “Sunn sjel, i et sunt legeme”²³ exhibition?

Yeah, that was the first exhibition that was made. That was the opening exhibition, that was the start, and when that exhibition opened that was the opening of the Museum, I mean the museum within the Museum. I didn’t work here then, but I had the impression that it was really in a hurry.

Hurried?

Yeah, it also opened 2003, but the decision that the National Medical Museum should open was mad in 2002 and then the exhibition.

So 2003...

Yeah, but I got the impression that it was made in a hurry, they wanted to open it quite early in 2002 when there was this anniversary from “helsevesende”²⁴. It was decided that it was 400 years, of course that can be seen many different ways. I am just looking for this book about “helsevesende”. I don’t have it here now. So that was celebrated by several events, in 2003, it was “offentlig helsevesen”²⁵, public health care had existed in Norway for 400 years. So this first exhibition in medical history “Sunn sjel i et sunt legeme”, was part if that celebration, or it opened as part of that, but then it is a permit exhibition, we are playing to take it down or to change it, because it has been there for quite a long time, that’s the context.

When was the decision to take it down or to change it?

Yeah, that’s taken by us, now this year, we still haven’t...

²² Yes

²³ Mens sana in corpore sano, Healthy mind in a healthy body

²⁴ Health Care

²⁵ Public Health Care

The three curators or the director of the museum?

“Teknisk Museum”, we have suggested it and we also will lead the process and also lead the process of changing it.

So it is just altering it or is it taking the whole thing and putting something new?

We actually haven't decided, but closer to your second alternative, but I don't think we will move “Maren i myra”, but I think we will, maybe I am foreshadowing things now. This object is one of the things that we will like to, we think is one of the rarest, most interesting and important object we have in our collection and we will like to explore more. If we will have this object exhibited we will like to like open up for more, discussion of more aspects of her. Right now she is in that object, human remain is used mostly to tell, as an illustration of the illness cholera and how that, how that disease work and what they used to think in the 1850s about how that is infected or how this is spread that disease and I think that is a bit narrow minded, that's one of the stories, I'd like to tell a lot more about, or open up for questions about how is this, how was this object found, why is she so well preserved, what do we know about where she comes from and stuff. And if there are things we don't know that is totally fine, just to say it, I'd like to use it, to tell about this modern DNA analyses and the possibilities and how that works. Like in detail or in “praksis”²⁶, so that's...

You said you come to the decision this year, do you mean 2017 or 2016?

No, no, no, 2016. We will plan it in 2017 and maybe in 2018 and then.

You mentioned her name or the name she was given “Maren i myra” can you tell me about her, who is she?

“Ja, ja” what I have heard, as you probably noticed there is to little thing, what I've heard and what it says in the exhibition is that she was found, or it, she was found during “veiarbeid

²⁶ Practice

eller utgravningsarbeid”²⁷ in central Oslo in a churchyard and that was during the 1930s. That is what is said down...

Yes, I saw that.

I think the people that found her or maybe the people at the institution where she was given namely this...

“Retts medisinerne”²⁸?

“Retts medisinsk institutt”²⁹, that they named her “Maren i myra”, that’s after this lyrics from Alf Prøysen, the only point with that was that it was kind of a “myr”³⁰, “jeg vet ikke hva det er”³¹

Bog

Yeah bog, that she was found in, and that there was a lot of “kalk”³² that’s why is so well preserved. So that just her nickname.

So that’s just a nickname, what sort of information was available and known at the time, so just before she got put in the exhibition and is there any exhibition rapport on her? Is there any written rapport?

I have asked people who worked with it that question. It has been mumbled about the conservation rapport there is this guy Steven Newman who worked as a conservator with her, but we have not been able to find it, the girl who, that was the one I was looking for, who worked as a conservator on this object and other human remains we have now, she has, I’m sorry I am actually not sure whether the story was that she hasn’t been able to find him or it was just that he didn’t give her any answer. I can check that out.

²⁷ Roadwork or excavation work

²⁸ Judicial coroner

²⁹ Forensic institute

³⁰ Bog

³¹ I don’t know what that is

³² Lime material

So there is nothing in the archives.

No, there is nothing that we can find, but I was reminded today, what exist is there are some chronicles who I think are harsh and quite critical. About especially about this guy Steven and also Eyvind that they...

Eyvind what?

Bagle that they took "Maren" and had her on a TV show on TV2, I think it was as part of a promotion, that is was a new history museum opening in Oslo, but the fact that this women should be used in TV entertainment, so there has been written at least one chronicle about that, so you can probably find it in Atekst³³.

Ok, Atekst I'll look for it. Do you know what newspaper?

No I don't know.

And it was TV2 and the year was 2003?

Yeah.

Thank you

Then I think that this was given from this "Retts medisinsk institutt" and the thing I just told you, it must come from there because we haven't invented it, but I have not seen the actually sources and I have been curious about that myself. Did they talk to someone, or did they get some written text, that they know that this was found in the 30s. What I'm told that what we have said sometimes when we have given talks in the exhibition is that she used to hang in a closet.

³³ Retriever Norge

Can you give me an idea, because you are a curator, right, the process of preparing for such a project and exhibition?

To prepare for an exhibition?

Yes, with human remains, how would you do that?

How I would do that now, thank you, that's an interesting question, because I am now dealing with that right now, we have this project going on that is called skeletons in the closet the idea is based on, the ideas and believes that is based on is that it is difficult dealing with human remains, and we often, we wait...

Or scared?

We are, it is important for us to do it right ethically, and we don't really know and we have in this cases, I think this case...

"Maren i myra" case?

Yes, shows this quite good that there are often some bad conscious, like we should have more reports we should have known more, it should have been conserved better, and the result is that at least in this museum and I have seen among colleagues in other museum institutions the result is often that nothing happens. We just do other projects and then, that doesn't help the human remains, so this skeletal in the closet that was to do like be open about that and to use that as a...

Expression of knowledge or something like that?

Lets open up the closets and to see what we have and invite other actors that would have interest and some belonging to this remains and invite them into this institution and discuss and get like the relevant perspectives and questions to these remains. What kind of settings can, or contexts to they, and stories, do they get into or are a part of. So, we have done that, we have like, I don't remember the number, it's like, less then 200 more then a 100 human remains here. Some of them are in really like poor conditions so we found one skeleton just in

parts in this plastic bag with “gladmat”³⁴ on it. When we were just tidying up the “magasin”³⁵ we have out in Gjerdrum, and like there could be, it could still be more not like 100 but, and then we have like this specimen, and that we know, it probably comes from Rikshospitalet and have been used in teaching, but we don’t know much more. The fact that it’s used for teaching, I think that is interesting, it’s made for being seen, and used as a source for gaining more knowledge. So that’s what we will like to do again but it is hard to say, but that’s kind of that, that’s an example of preparing an exhibition and the task for this skeleton in the closet is to exhibit some of it and exhibit the processes as well and show how we are gaining more and more different kind of perspectives and knowledge and reflection and new questions that would lead us to new information.

Can you give me an idea of what kind of practical procedures had to be implemented before starting the work on human remains like “Maren i myra”, like you’re doing now?

I don’t think I understand the question.

The practical procedures like do you have to tell the authorities are there forms or things you have to do before you’re allowed to...

No.

Exhibit human remains?

No...”ja.ja” we actually made this workshop “Skeletons in the closet” was part of, I participated on this conference at the this ethical committee, “Skjellettutvalget”³⁶ that we, the people working here are members of that, we participated on that conference and...

So is my “veileder”³⁷.

³⁴ Soul food

³⁵ Magazine

³⁶ The National Committee for Research Ethics on Human Remains

³⁷ Supervisor

“Ja Nils Anfinset, han var med der. Han og Vidar som jobbet her før, han er sånn sekretær for de”³⁸, and then, one of the starting points form this “Skjellett i skapet”³⁹ was also we wrote a letter to “skjellett utvalget” because we have gotten this request for one of the remains that are quite well preserved and that we exhibit, that someone wanted to use it, it’s...

“Du kan si det på Norsk...”⁴⁰

“Det er et preparat av et, det er pannelappen til Edvard Rustad som ble myrdet på 30 tallet , so det er 4 sånne kulehull, også ble vi kontaktet av en som trodde han kunne være i slekt med Rustad så han har lyst til å ta sånn DNA analyse om å kunne få litte grann og da kontaktet jeg skjellettutvalget, dette er flere år siden, for å høre om det, hva de syntes om det, også fikk vi tusen takk for henvendelsen og dette ønsket de å, det er ikke noe, i motsetning til arkeologiske materialet så forliker det ikke noe klare retningslinjer, eller reguleringer av det human materialet som kommer fra bio medisinsk da”⁴¹ ...

I have a question about that, because you said it is not that difficult as archaeological human remains...

I don’t mean difficult, but it is not that regulated...

Regulated, I’m sorry you’re right, it is not as regulated as archaeological human remains, because that quite strictly regulated, except for “Maren i myra” because she is after...

She is archaeological, I don’t know what happened in that case, I think it is interesting. There could be that there are other remains that are also found in the earth, but we don’t know that

³⁸ Yes, Nils Anfinset was there. Him and Vidar, who worked here before, he is a sort of secretary for them

³⁹ Skeletons in the closet

⁴⁰ You can say it in Norwegian

⁴¹ It is a preparation of a, it is the frontal lobe of Edward Rustad who was murdered in the 30s, so there are 4 bullet holes, also we were approached by someone who thought he could be related with Rustad so he wants to take like DNA analysis to be able to get little bit and then I The National Committee for Research Ethics on Human Remains, this is several years ago, to hear about it, what they thought about it, we also received many thanks for your inquiry and this they wanted to, there’s nothing, as opposed to archaeological material that reconciles it no clear guidelines or regulations of the human material that comes from bio medical

for sure, at least what we have traced is from Rikshospitalet, but still we will like to open that discussion that was what, we have already started that on that workshop that we got really many different perspectives and discussions. It was about really many different aspects and some of them like existential concerning like and death and like what is the most ethical like burring, letting someone die, or just like, let them have further life in a way. So we had a discussion.

Are you referring to the biography of things? It's that a thing has a story in itself, so the person, like a human remains may have died but when it comes to a museum that biography continues?

Yeah... for example or that exhibiting this remains instead of burying them that could have a lot of impact for many different things, that it could, seeing this human remains it could give like new kind of knowledge and reflection and this workshop we had showed that we...

INTERRUPTION!

We resume the interview. So I know this was before your time but do you know who was involve in the creation of the exhibition with "Maren i myra"? And how and why?

I'll try, I have some kind of picture. There were several curators involved it was, there was a guy who used to lead it, his name was Thor Arve, I think. I got his name on my computer, and then he quit, Thor Are Johanneson, he has changed his name to Thor Are Arbark he was the project leader then he quit and then Liv Ramkjær who is know the leader of "museums forbundet" took over and then there were other people on the project group, the director by that time, Gunnar Nerheim, and Anne Marit Karlsen.

Who was she?

I think she is still, then she was a curator, now she is what is it called "administrasjonsjef"⁴² here, and Frode Veihum who worked as a curator and still is and then Tone Racsh she was

⁴² Administration manager

“billedredaktør”⁴³ and I think also Eyvind and also Dag Andreassen I think he was kind of a curator also and Steve Newman was “gjenstandskonservator”⁴⁴, and then...

Why were they involved in this project?

I said, didn't I?

Yeah. Do you know if there has been any conservation work done on “Maren i myra”?

You mean...

Ever.

Yeah, absolutely, that is, I am not sure if that is the conservation work, but Tone she just told me today...

Tone Rasch?

Yeah, R, a, s, c, h, because I've been trying to gather some information on this. So, she told me that they had this discussion and they decided they wanted to have her face turned towards, like not staring, but on the side, they thought that was more respectful, in a way, so they had this kind of ethical discussions. When it comes to conservation, I don't know that much, but I know they had this, it was conserved when it, I have the impression that they did that, that was one of the reasons Steve was so involved was that they had to work closely on this object...

Do you know why?

What do you mean?

Why they had to do conservation work?

⁴³ Picture editor

⁴⁴ Object conservator

Oh, yeah, no, just to check that, what I was told at least was that they did was very in order and no smell or anything like that, they just had to make sure that it was put in right conditions so they did some kind of cooling mechanisms in the box...

To keep her well preserved?

Yeah, to keep her cold enough.

Do you know how many degrees it is?

I think you can check I think there is this thermometer or maybe that is “luftfuktighet”⁴⁵, that could be, I don’t know that, but that the right persons to answer that are the conservators.

Who don’t work here anymore?

We have conservators, we just don’t have Steven Newman.

Ok, but he was the main conservator on this project?

Yeah, but now we have several conservators and the one working remains, Marianne Kjølzig, that was the one I was looking for, but I don’t think she was here today, but she is the one that has been trying to contact Steven, she is holding her eye on “Maren”.

Ok. Many national and international institutions call for the display of human remains with dignity and respect. How do you understand this terms in relation to the mummy “Maren i myra”?

Yeah, I think that is really interesting discussion, and what is it to display in dignity and respect and then one of mine personal answers is to like show them as much as attention and interest as possible, like I think to, the alternative is to all the time to bury it to have in, “fra jorda er du kommet, til jord skal du bli”⁴⁶ and then when we chose not to and to display it, I

⁴⁵ Humidity

⁴⁶ Till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return (Genesis 3:19)

think that is fine, but then it has to be for a reason and that reason should be that it will give people more, it will...

Information?

Yeah, or that it will, or reflection, that it should contribute to better society, we should get more knowledge, being able to like, to know more and think more, and it's, very often it is considered this kind of human remain, for example "Maren i myra" it is very strong object it is very, I think every one who sees it gets really interested, that means that they are like, it opens up for so many new questions and feelings and it is easy to, so it is a very good way of getting to know more things, but then I think we owe "Maren I myra" to pay it huge amount of interested and attention and then try for example, find out more, not only illustrate cholera but like open up for very broad discussion, who also could be ethical, is it ok? What does it, what makes it ok and not ok, how do you do it? I think that there is no ready made answer for this question, for me is like have some intentions, have some thought, have done some work, yeah, have a plan and change it if you like, don't be like, it is fine to tell to the audience this we don't know, but we should have tried, there is no, like for example using it only like an example of cholera...

Now you're talking about "Maren i myra" right?

Because there is a lot of insecurity that is actually quite fascinating, I think it is a good opportunity to talk about this and security, do we know she had cholera? And how could we know and not know? And how is her age, how do we know how old she is?

Are you now talking about the new project, what you want to do?

Yeah, I think these are questions that could be raised to "Maren", this is how I will like to exhibit her, that's what I think is more that's more...

Respectful?

Respectful and that's is dignity, but then of course, I don't think like having her on this broadcast on the television program, I don't see the point of that. Yeah, I think it is many

good reasons for displaying human remains because they do things that could never be achieved without them.

True.

They have some natural, like, but of course it is important not to use it as, not to be speculative or...

Sensational...

Yeah, just to gain visitors, that is terrible, to do it, to get into serious questions and discussions with society.

But isn't that the main aim of a museum get the public to come and visit it?

But not just to visit, I mean why should they visit, it is not only to visit, they should, you should, get the public to be an arena for "offentlig ordskiftet"⁴⁷...

Yeah

That's the main reason, not just to come and pay tickets.

That's very interesting.

Yeah, that is a very important distinction.

Yes it is. What sort of efforts were put in place to uphold the dignity of "Maren i myra"? Do you know anything about that?

That's what I've just said...

Turning her head, anything else?

⁴⁷ Public debate

I think they, this is what I've been told, yes, I think they thought quite carefully about for example this, there is not very much lightning...

Yes it is a bit dimmed

I think that has to do with the conservation things as well, or preservation, that it wouldn't be good for her, conservators are generally very careful about light and especially, I think that anyway, but also that they wanted it to be a bit like respectful and also like it's behind a corner in a way so it's kind of...

Hidden...

Yeah you have to...

It's not in your face?

No it's not in your face, exactly.

It's not in the middle of the exhibition, it is on the side when you come in. Anything else?

No, and of course that it should be conserved and in order.

The next question you might not be able to answer because you weren't employed at the time, why did you and your team chose to display "Maren i myra" in the exhibition "Sunn sjel i et sunt legeme"? But you might have an idea of why the museum chose to do it. Can you tell me a little bit about that?

Yeah, of course, and this is like I was not a part of the discussion at all so then I, well I think I would have chosen it because I think that it is a very interesting and important part of the collective memory so I think it would have been a crime in a way or very disrespectful not to exhibit it, if there were questions of repatriation of course we should do that, but as long as

that wasn't as far as I know at least there wasn't anyone who wanted it repatriated. So then I think it was very obvious.

Do you know why they chose...?

No, but of course I have my...

Theories?

Small theories, also was about getting publicity.

That's all museums, isn't it?

Yeah, I think it is really important what comes first, I mean that you want to get people to know, you do things because it is important, not because you want people to come. Do you see the distinction?

Yes I see the distinction.

I think that they considered it being one of the most interesting and important objects in that new collection that the museum gained.

Since you work here and you've talked to several people who work here as the curators and conservators, which evidence points to "Maren i myra" died of cholera or because of the cholera epidemic of 1852-1859?

I'm not sure those evidences are very good, but were I'm told was that she was found in the part of the churchyards. There were taken some DNA analyses that she is approximately 150 years old.

This would be written in the conservation rapport that you haven't found?

No I think that was from Rikshospitalet.

That was from Rikshospitalet.

I think so and then that where she was found was in a churchyard on the part of that churchyard that was used for burying people that died from cholera during that epidemic. We know that...

How do we know that? How do we know that she was found in that part of the churchyard?

I don't know that, but it says that down in the exhibition, and I have been thinking that was the people that found her told to...

Rikshospitalet?

Rikshospitalet or "Rettsmedisinsk institutt".

So it is not written down anywhere.

Yes, in the exhibition.

Yes but it is not written down any rapport.

I thought that maybe there was some rapport from Rikshospitalet, but Eyvind would be able to tell about this I think, maybe Liv Ramkjær.

You mentioned the text downstairs; do you know who wrote it?

No, only that it was part of this group.

Back to the question, you said that you think that she died of cholera because...

Because of DNA analysis, that she was found in the part of the churchyard where they used to burry people who died from cholera during that epidemic in the 1850s and also that she was

buried really deep and that is also why she is well preserved, and who was used as one explanation for the this epidemic but that...

Pipelines?

It spread through miasma there was some kind of “avgasser på en måte”⁴⁸ it was important to get it as deep as possible so that “det ikke spredde seg, så det var et smittevern tiltak”⁴⁹.

“Ok, jeg skjønner”⁵⁰. You said the DNA test.

I think so as well...

At Rikshospitalet, do you know what year it was taken?

Not at all...

You just heard that there was a DNA test.

Because I've been thinking to myself how did they know that

She died of cholera...

No it can't say that, it can say her age.

No it can't, it can say her age and her lineage but it can't say anything about what she died of.

But I have never told, so please don't write that anyplace, I have never said or been told that DNA analysis was used to say what she died of, but it was used to say that she died during the 1850s.

⁴⁸ Waste gas in a way

⁴⁹ It didn't spread, so it was an infection control measure

⁵⁰ Ok, I understand

Yes

And then we know that there was this epidemic, and then when she was buried in this corner of the churchyard and very deep that leads us to think that she died from cholera.

That she might have died from cholera, so there is no medical evidence pointing that she died of cholera, that you've seen?

No.

On a more personal level, we've talked a little bit about this what do you reflect over before deciding to display human remains.

Why, I think there should be reason.

If you had been on the team of "Maren i myra" or might be displaying her again, what would you be thinking about? So you said why,

I think there are many good reasons, but when it comes to this or human remains I think you should have, in a way I always think that, for any kind of object, you just don't exhibit them, you have an idea of why you do it. Is that an answer?

That is an answer. You want a reason behind exhibiting something.

Yeah.

So we...

That's a curators main job in a way to find what to exhibit and how and then when you find that you of course these ideas about why and that could be several but you should be able to give them. I don't think you should be getting more money for example.

Are there any plans to re-examine or to re-organise the exhibition?

Yeah, I've already answered that.

You've discussed this in 2016 or have you decided that it is going to happen?

Oh my goodness, we have decided that we will change "Sunn sjel i et sunt legeme" probably re-examine, re-organise it we will do that, we will start that planning to decided what to do in 2017 and probably in 2018 and then build in 2019.

And you also said that you would want to keep "Maren i myra"?

Yeah, but contextualise her differently.

How?

We will decided, we don't know that, as I have said now several times, I think to like open up more, to take in more perspectives and like show different context that she is part of and different knowledge and discussions that she could be a part of.

Do you think that in that process you would re-examine the body in itself?

We have been discussing it but we don't know, and to like take this DNA analysis.

To se if you can get more information?

And also to learn more, that could be interesting, we are also working with another project called, "blod bones..."

What's the name in Norwegian?

"blod, ben og DNA også er det identitet, etnisitet og røtter, eller noe sånt"⁵¹ and it's about "race forskning og rase forståelser, før og nå, liksom, vitenskapshistorie, også moderne

⁵¹ Blood, bones and DNA also is the identity, ethnicity and roots, or something like that

forskning som DNA analyse og bruk av det til å bestemme herkomst og sånt er en del av det vi skal undersøke, så det kunne være gøy å kunne se hvordan det gjøres i praksis.”⁵²

Do you have any plans to disseminate, “formidle”⁵³ your research findings to the general public?

Yeah, this project, “skjelette i skapet” is a very experiment, it is part of what we call “thingenes metode”⁵⁴ and it is founded from “kulturrådet”⁵⁵ on the “Samfunnsrolle programme”⁵⁶ and very in the core of that idea is that dissemination and research and “forvaltning”⁵⁷ is like very tightly...

Linked?

And we wanted to do all those processes together in a way.

Would the new re-organisation of “Maren i myra” exhibition be a continuation of that project?

Yeah, I think so, it would at least be based on things we have learned and found out during that process.

Is there a method of working that you have established when working with human remains?

No, I think that is what we are developing, that’s about conservation and how to treat these remains with maximum with respect, and that’s by not misusing, like taking serious and show as much interest and attention as possible.

⁵² Race research and racial understandings, before and now, somehow, science history, also modern research such as DNA analysis and using it to determine parentage and stuff is part of what we are investigating, so it might be fun to see how it's done in practice.

⁵³ Outreach or Disseminate

⁵⁴ Objects method or methodology

⁵⁵ Cultural Council

⁵⁶ Corporate Citizenship Program

⁵⁷ Management

We have talked a little bit about this, what if anything would you do differently now that the museum has had such a long running exhibition with “Maren i myra”?

I think it is time to like use her like the main, now she is part of a bigger story of the infectious diseases and how that has been thought against “bekjempa”⁵⁸ and I think that now it is time to start with her, like this is a human remain and let that be the starting point and try find out different stories starting from there. Infectious diseases could be one of the traces.

Do you think will be the other traces?

Why she is so well preserved, how to find out more about her so more about this modern technological method like DNA analysis like her biography, her object biography, what we know about that and who are the parts about that biography and these people who found her, it's the institute, and then it's us and trying to find out more about that story and why wasn't she exhibited before? They used to exhibit things in “Pathologiske institutt”⁵⁹ many of the other things we have from there have this, it shows that it has been in an exhibition, labels and stuff, so things like that. Other mummies like mummy studies and compare her to other mummies and how like, she was buried.

Is there any one in particular you have been inspired by in your field or else where, with this new project or human remains or what you're going to work with “Maren i myra”?

There are several persons that I have been really inspired by, institutions, I haven't work that long with the skeletons in the closet but the first one I was thinking about when you asked this question was a girl I met on this “skjelett utvalget” conference in December because there was this, she is Swedish, working at the Nordiska museet Lotten Guftanson, she used to conduct this study that they did in Sweden the museums did it to find out how many human remains are in museums and how they think about it and like her view was fantastic resources and really like opportunities that was really inspiring. I think it was really fantastic working at that workshop people where there as individuals and also representing their profession the had some role there was an artist, a priest, there were medical, the one in Norway working with

⁵⁸ Fought

⁵⁹ Pathology Institute

the “testator, eller noe sånt”⁶⁰ that when you want to donate yourself to research then you talk with her and she also, when medical students are to learn to explore bodies because they do then she, she was one of the participants and other researches within humanistic field, musicologists and several historians, many different biologist and perspectives that was really inspiring. Then I felt that the collection got a lot of value more then it had now it means so much more to me and it is much more a stage to treat it properly.

What is a piece of advice you would give someone interested in entering the field of studying human remains?

That’s a bit difficult to answer, but just to pay attention and to be interested and show respect and like, I don’t think there is any given answer whether it should be exhibited or not but it should be done, it is an important and strong object and should be done, it is good to have them because them, it is a good museum object because they are very “komprimerte”⁶¹ there is many different kind of knowledge that could lead us into, it is really a privilege and then we should take that seriously.

This is the end of the interview.

⁶⁰ Testator or something like that

⁶¹ Compressed

Interview with Anne Håbu in her office at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo.

It is the 24th February 2017 and I'm here with Anne Håbu. Now could we start with you presenting yourself, who are you?

I am conservator at the ethnographic collection and collection of classical antiquities as well at the Museum of Cultural History.

In Oslo.

In Oslo, I have been employed here since 2003 I think.

Can you tell me a little bit about Dismutenibtes, who is she?

INTERRUPTION. STARTED ON NEW RECORDING.

We resume the interview, so who is Dismutenibtes?

She was a woman who lived in Thebes in Egypt, 2700 years ago in the 25th dynasty. When she died she was made into a mummy and the mummy is here at the museum. The mummy of Dismutenibtes is on display here.

What is the connection between the museum and her?

She was given to the museum in 1838 by Giovanni Anastasi he was the Norwegian-Swedish consul in Alexandria. He was also a collector and he collected antiquities from Egypt and mummies and he sold two big collections. One to Leiden and one to the British museum he also gave this museum the mummy of Dismutenibtes and the two coffins that belong to her.

In what context and year was the exhibition downstairs, the Ancient Egyptian exhibition made, the first time?

The mummy has been on display several times through the history of the museum. They are not all documented, but I know she was on display a short time in 2001 and then we made an exhibition in 2003 called “The Mummy Lives: Eternal Life in Ancient Egypt”, but we took down that exhibition and made a permanent exhibition.

And she was in the permanent exhibition?

She was in the permanent exhibition as well.

So, why the new project of last year, when was that decided and why was it decided?

When I was here in 2003 I conserved the other mummy, which we call “Nofret” she was going on display as well and was in a rather bad condition, so I did a job on that mummy and I also knew from handling Dismutenibtes I knew she was in a very bad condition as well I told myself at the time that one day “I will do a job on her”. About thirteen years later, the time was right and I decided to do it, but I have always when passing by thought that “one-day”.

So what sort of information did you have about her? You had when she came to Norway and why she came to Norway, but did you have any specific information about her?

Just to be precise, I did not know when she came to Norway.

You didn't.

No because nobody did then, but I knew the condition of the mummy by handling, I know the feet were lacking and I knew that the head was separated from the body so when we moved her out of the coffin we had to take the head separately so I knew the condition, and I was also partaking in preparing her for the exhibition, but also I had an article from, because the mummy was opened twice in the 1800 and there were two articles on the mummy one 1865 about the coffins written by the Egyptologist Lieblein and we had an article from 1875 written by Daa who did a scientific investigation on the mummy and wrote an article about it. I also had an article from 2010 written by Anders Bettum on the coffins, but all we knew about the mummy was from the 1875.

Can you give me an idea of the process of preparing for such a project and exhibition, your process?

Yes. About the process, there were a lot of people that had to be involved.

Why?

Because, I can not, or I can, usually if I want to do a conservation job on an artefact I just inform the one in charge for the collection and I'd do it, but this was a bigger project and complex project and who would involve lots of people so I contacted different people from the museum, like my leader of course if I could spend time, much time on this object, and I contacted the people in charge for the collection managers and I had to contact photographers to help me document.

So they were involved in this decision? Was it only your decision?

I suggested it to my leader, she said fine go ahead and I discussed it with the leader of the collection and the collection, "Magasinforvalter og samlingsansvarlig"⁶² and then I started. Then I had to talk to other, if they could help me to take the photographs and if they could plan it in their schedule and I had to prepare a room to do the work in. We have a lab here in the museum, but now it is kind of a temporary lab because we have changed locations to another place and we are building new conservation facilities, but I found a room that was more secluded to work in. I didn't want the mummy to be lying open and I had to buy equipment and think through the process, what can I expect to find? And how can I meet the needs? So I had to go through the process in a way before I could start.

And how did you do that?

I have to think about what is a mummy, what is it made of? And what kind of problem can I encounter? Many things...

⁶² Magazine manager and collection responsible

What kind of equipment was needed? That is not usually needed? Was it because it was such an old artefact or was it because it was human remains?

The choice of room to work that was decided because it was a human remain. I wanted a more secluded to protect the mummy from people walking by, walking through the lab to get things. So I did the job in a special room.

Now you talked a little bit about who was involved before you started the project, I am interested in who was involved during the project. Who was involved in the study and analysis of the mummy Dismutenibtes? How and why?

Again I had to think, what would I like to know and how can I get that knowledge and what kind of people would be able to give me that. We are in lucky position, we are in a university museum so that means, of course, that we are a part of the university and at the university we have a lot of competent people in many fields, so it was easy to contact people. Also, examining a mummy, people find it very interesting and unusual, so people do not say no, when you ask them to participate. So I contacted the hospital, the university hospital, Rikshospitalet. First of all I actually contacted a friend of mine, who is the leader of the “Allmennlegeforening”⁶³ he is very interested in mummies. I asked him, do you know any people I can ask to participate, so he recommended that I contact Kristian Fosso at Rikshospitalet, he is a radiologist. He had equipment, so he scanned the mummy in a CT-scan and X-ray. He had a colleague who is a radiographer, he can make 3D images, then the radiologist Fosso could analyse the results, what we saw, diseases.

Was that before you started your work or after or during?

This was before I started I had them all in place, except one. He is a dentist he is a professor in...

Odontology?

He is a specialist in the jaw.

⁶³ General Practitioner (GP) Association

What is his name?

Bjørn Ødegaard. I am not an Egyptologist, so I contacted the two Egyptologists I know which are Saphinaz Amal Naguib and Anders Bettum. I wanted them to be there when I sort of unveiled the mummy for the first time. I wanted to have them, to discuss if I saw things I wanted to know more about to have them on my team, which I got of course.

So you started with the “fastlege”⁶⁴, the doctor, he gave you the name of the radiologist at Rikshospitalet, you also got a dentist but that was later in the process. You also got two Egyptologists, one from the university and one from another museum. Who else did you need?

I talked to a colleague here at the museum, she is an archaeologist with special competence in human osteology her name is Helene Russ. I work with her on an excavation in Turkey some sessions. I contacted her and I contacted Per Holck, he is from the university, he is an anatomist, professor emeritus.

Oh yes he is professor Emeritus now.

Yes he has a lot of competence on human remains and was in charge of the collection of human remains at the “anatomisksamling”⁶⁵ he has been in charge for that for many, many years. He helped me with the investigations and Helene Russ could not really add anything, so she did not participate.

As much as the others?

No, not at all she couldn't say much at the time. During the work I went to a conference in Germany, a mummy conference, and there I came in contact with Robert Loynes he is connected to Manchester University they have quite a few mummies and he helped me to read the scans, because Fossø the radiographer at Rikshospitalet he could look at the diseases and different health conditions but he has done this many many times so he could look at details so she was mummified, how she was made a mummy and Fossø did not have that competence

⁶⁴ General Practitioner (GP)

⁶⁵ Anatomical Collection

of course. It was the first time he had scanned a mummy so it was an unusual thing in Norway. And also because of some plant material, which was used as part of the mummification process, I took some plant material to the Museum of Natural History “Naturhistorisk museum” to Anneleen Kool she is a botanist, she looked at that. During the process I found some insect remains so I contacted Geir Sørli at the same museum and he did a job on analysing the insect remains.

What did they say? Did it give you any new information?

Absolutely, I found from the skin of the stomach, I found some insect remains and he could analyse them and found they belonged to “spyflue”⁶⁶ and from a kind that is common in Mediterranean area so he was very surprised to find that it was so well preserved after so many years. But that little, I don’t remember the name in English, “puppeskall”⁶⁷ it told us that she, Dismutenibtes, probably died during the spring or summer because they are active during the summertime, they are making eggs in the summertime.

So it gave you a rather precise time of death?

Yes, more then what we had before, because he had no idea of course, we don’t know the year but at least we know we know that she died in the summer.

If we can go back a little bit and talk about the practical procedures that had to be implemented before starting the work on the human remains. Are there any practical things that have to be done before you’re allowed to study human remains?

Not before I am allowed to do it, so for me the practical things were to prepare a room which was special since I wanted to take extra majors because it was human remains, so we got a special room, and to contact people and to contact media.

Why did you have to do that?

⁶⁶ Bluebottle or Blowfly

⁶⁷ Cocoon

I wanted to, because this is a kind of research that people are interested in, people are always interested in Egyptology and mummies and it is not very often that these things take place in Norway. It did when I did the other mummy 13 years, and in Bergen they had a project where they scanned the mummies and this is the last Egyptian mummy in Norway that has not been scanned or investigated. I thought it was, we are an University Museum and it is a responsibility to do research and to keep the collections in a good...

Condition.

But also to share with the public “formidle”⁶⁸.

So it was to “formidle” a sort of outreach.

It was to outreach to the public, which is part of our goals for the museum.

Was it also to get people more interested in the museum not only the project, but the museum?

Yes of course.

That is always part of the job?

Yes absolutely.

Did you have to contact for example, “Skjelettutvalget”⁶⁹ or any other organisation that work with the conservation of human remains?

No.

Or the protection of them?

No. I have not heard anything that says that I should do it, so that was not in my thoughts.

⁶⁸ Disseminate or outreach

⁶⁹ The National Committee for Research Ethics on Human Remains

Did you read up on legislation or anything like that?

Yes, did have look at the ICOM⁷⁰...

We'll come back to ICOM. When you opened her up for the first time what condition was she in? Do you remember the date you opened her up?

I have it written down. First of all I must stress that I did not open anything that was not opened from before.

No, but it was the first time you did it.

Yes, but first before I did that, this is important because the process, before I started to move anything I documented the mummy by doing the scan and X-ray and having a photographer taking pictures from all sides.

But then she had been taken out of the bottom coffin?

Yes, so I wanted to take lots of pictures before I started to anything, and as I moved things I took pictures all the time to show all the layers of what I did because it is very easy to forget what you seen and what you do. So then I support myself by camera, by taking pictures all the time. I can give you the date I opened also then I had Anders Bettum and Saphinaz Naguib and I had A-Magasinet because they wanted to follow the process and they wanted exclusive rights. So they were there when I opened, or unveiled the mummy, but I knew a lit bit what to expect because I had seen her in 2003 when we put her on display and she was in a very bad state from the opening from the 19th century all the textiles were cut open, they were crumbled, they were in a very disorderly state and there was all this plant material inside that was spread all over the place and when we put her on display at the time, then we had one big piece of textile, which we just put on top. When I say we, it is conservator Eyvind Bratlie and I that worked together.

⁷⁰ The International Council of Museums

What kind of textile?

It was a big shroud, which was folded and we didn't really know where it belonged so we just put it on top to cover up the mummy as well as we could, because she was going to be displayed open coffin and I vacuum-cleaned the textile and I tried to make her look clean and decent before the exhibition.

That was not this one but the one before the project, in 2003?

Yes, when we made the permanent exhibition, first "the Mummy Lives" and then the permanent one.

But in the permanent one, you covered up her legs and her upper body but not her face?

Not the face, I think for the temporary exhibition, but I don't think I did it for the permanent exhibition.

No.

I quite remember that.

Her ear and her jaw were visible.

Yes, her head, but when you put her on permanent display, as I said we put the shroud, the textiles up to her neck covering her body and we tried to pull textiles that were stuck between the body and the coffin. We tried to pull some of it put on the side, which faced the public to cover up as good as we could and we turned her the way so that the most complete side of the body was facing the public, because during the opening in 1875 her cover on the head was taken off and the textiles and everything on one side of the face came off so on one side there is the cranium that show on the other side it is more complete. So we showed her with the more complete side facing the public.

When you say complete side, you mean there are bits of textile left covering her face?

Not covering...

Attached to...

Attached to her face and when they tried to remove it 1875 the whole skin and everything came on that side on the other side.

Ok, so when you opened her up, you opened her up for the 3rd time would that be correct or the second time?

I don't want to say opened up, because she was...

Unwrapped her again, unrolled her?

Not unrolled, unveil her in a way. I didn't go in and open anything that had not been open before.

No, but it was you who did it.

Yes, I took the top shroud off...

What did you find?

I found a terrible mess, I found the body was unveiled so I saw all of the body with thousands of textile fragments tucked around and spread, tucked between the neck and between the legs and under the head and there were so many things. I saw the body, the upper body; I saw fragments of bones that were broken off the upper body. I saw hundred of pieces of resin which had been coving the body in fragments now, they were thrown all over the place together with the plants material I saw the plant material and all the stuck in between layers of bandages. What I saw, which was the best thing and most surprising thing was that the mummy was more or less complete with the textiles. I had no idea, I would be able to re-wrapped the mummy again the way I could because I did not think that there was so much left because what I saw 13 years ago it didn't give the impression that there was much left.

So would you say that she was in a good condition when you took away some of her layers or was she in a bad condition?

The body was, I mean the mummification process has left the body in a very good condition, but the opening, the two openings in 1800s had left the mummy destroyed, they had not tidied up after their examination.

It is very interesting that you say the body and the mummy, because the mummy only happens after a mummification process, so what you mean when you say the mummy is the process itself that you can see on the body so the linen and the taking out of the organs and everything, but the skeleton was in a good condition.

Yes, the body because it is more than a skeleton, it is a skeleton but it has lots of soft tissues.

Ok, so the remains?

I do separate, because what we were displaying before I took her out of display, to me that was a body laying in the remains of all the textiles but the mummy was the finished result, which was made from treating the body and then in the different ways they did and the rituals which were just as important I believe and the rapping, so a mummy is the fully wrapped package.

Plus the coffins.

Plus the coffins, so I tend to say that it is not Dismutenibtes who is laying in the exhibition, it is the mummy of Dismutenibtes. There is a difference.

It is very interesting that you say that. So the human body was in a good condition but cultural context of her burial was not.

It was destroyed more or less and during the investigations in the 1800s some things happened to the body too. There were pieces of the breastbone had come off and I found

different remains, which were not in its place, like the organs, but if you think about the bones and the soft tissue they were in a good condition after the treatment the drying.

That's what you say was the most surprising and unexpected find for you?

For me the most unexpected find was not the condition of the body because I had seen that it was in a good condition, and I have seen other mummies too and it is very impressive the way the body can stay in such a condition for such a long time but it was the linen that surprised me the most, the amount linen, which was left and the condition of the linen, because once I got the mummy out of the coffin and on to the table I could start to sort the textiles. I have to explain, because when it was opened way back then, she was not, the body was not unrolled they didn't un-wrap all the textiles, but they cut all the way down the front, that I could see when I re-capped how she had been made. I could see that she had been cut all the way. Then the textiles had been put aside and all the bandages had been, and textiles were still attached underneath the body by the liquids from the body that had not been quite, not fully dry, when they started to wrap her. So the textiles that had been wrapped around they were still attached to the back so they were there and I could pull out all the bandage pieces but still stuck to the body but I could sort them out and see that it was all there.

How they had rolled her.

I could see how they had rolled her I could see all the layers I could see the different textiles that had been used, when I removed all the things that had come between the layers like all the fragments, resins, when I could pick them out so they were clean in-between layers, I could put it back on the body and they would meet in the middle, then I could see that they had used scissors.

You said that there were different types of textiles, not only linen?

No it was all linen...

But different colours?

Different qualities. They did use for mummification they used often what they had in the house, so when you had a body you took some linen from the house and you could deliver it to the people who wrapped and so it was re-used. I could see many examples of re-use on the bandages because I could see that they had repairs on the textiles and very nice technic. I could sort of imagine Dismutenibtes, herself had repaired some of her textiles from her house.

So the linen can say a little bit about the person? What type of person she was? I mean social status?

Not the linen in particular in this case I guess, but of course the finer the mummification the higher status. I guess in a way it was a status symbol to have fine funeral too, but it was a fairly common thing, from what I've read that they re-used textiles from what they had in the house so finding the textiles repaired, does not mean that they were poor and had to use bad linen. You could think that maybe she was thrifty and she made a nice job of taking care of what she had. I mean linen was a huge job to produce linen textiles, so you don't sort of through it away.

So when you were doing your work and you had the two Egyptologists in the room what did they offer you, what did they tell you that you couldn't see with you background?

Not much I'm afraid, we looked together, they are Egyptologists and they could say, it is not my field but of course before I started this and also when I did the other mummy I did study what a mummy is and what mummification process is. So I knew what to look for too and how to interpret things I could see.

Would you say that it was to difficult to see, because she was in such a mess that you needed to do the work you did first and then maybe it would be easier to analyse the finds afterwards not during?

Yes, because opening was in a way, we had invited A-Magasinet to come and so focus was a bit on pictures and article they were writing, so it was first when I had time to sit down alone in piece and quiet and study the mummy I could draw conclusions and then interpret what I saw. The opening situation was not a very good situation for proper examination because that lasts just a couple of hours.

You said you read the ICOM, not legislation but advice before one starts analysing humans remains, so my question to you is, many national and international, like ICOM, institutions call for the displaying of human remains with dignity and respect, quite vague terms...

Very vague!

How do you understand these terms in relation to mummy Dismutenibtes?

I think, as you said they are very vague terms and open for personal interpretation, “oh! I think that is respectful”, you can say, and other people would say that it is not. So it is very open, but I am more at the end of the scale where I am very respectful not just a little respectful, I am very, the dignity of the human remains is forefront in my mind when I work. Others may be a little bit more relaxed. We had a situation, as I progressed with my work, I realized that I had all the textiles left and I realized that I could actually wrap the mummy again, she did not need to be displayed again, with her face and head open, but I thought that we are a museum and we should have the public in mind too and as a conservator I work behind the scene I do not work much with the public. So I contacted the group who work with the public...

UPS?

UPS, “publikumseksjonen, utstillingsseksjonen”⁷¹ and I invited them for a discussion/information and we had a very lively discussion. They really know the value of the mummy being displayed open...

Uncovered.

Uncovered, so that you could see the head. They had seen all the children coming up and say “oh! Look at the hair, is it real?” so they knew that side of the story but for me it was very unnatural not to wrap the mummy because when I had all the textiles and if I were not to put

⁷¹ Department of Exhibitions, Education and Public Science (DEEP)

them back how could I explain that, should I wrap her up to the neck and leave the face open, why should I do that? And when a mummy is supposed to be a closed sacred and secluded entity, did I find it right to leave her open? So there were two parts in a way, with conflicting interests in a way, but the result was that they said that “you have to do what you find right as a conservator”. For me it was right to put the textiles back again and make her back into a mummy.

So you wanted to put her back in a cultural context?

Yes, that was what I wanted. She was not meant to be, the way she was displayed she was a dead body and now it is a mummy, of course the public can have a very good museum experience by seeing this old body and connecting with it, but I believe you can tell many stories about showing a mummy, what a mummy is supposed to, be sort of, it can never be a mummy until it has the lid is back on again, the coffin is put into the outer coffin and it is becoming a grave. There are other ways to tell the story; we can convey the results and the pictures in other ways, then showing it in the open.

For example?

Which we are thinking in making next year again, to upgrade the display by a touchscreen where you can go into different themes, you can learn about the coffin, you can learn about the scans, you can see scans; we can show all the things we know now without doing the old fashion way by leaving it un-wrapped.

So if we go to the question 16, since the museum has decided to re-examine one of the mummies are there any plans to re-examine or re-organise the Ancient Egyptian exhibition, and you just said that there is next year.

Yes, but only two things actually, one is this digital display.

Why do you want to do that?

First of all, the exhibition as it is now is made kind of as a grave chamber its roof is low you have coffins in four ends, three ends I mean. It's a quite atmosphere, quite dark to make

people, hopefully go in with a bit of respect. So we don't want to spoil that, I believe, by hanging up big posters, and of course you can put a lot of information into a touch screen then you can go many layers down and you can chose directions of what you want to learn.

You said that you could go many layers down, would you be able to go down to her human remains go past the mummy? Would that be an option?

Will see how far we get and how much we get and how mush we do, but in a way if you feel, that is a discussion too, because if you feel you compromise the dignity of a mummy by showing it, the dead body, don't you compromise the dignity by showing it almost nude in pictures, that is a discussion to of course.

You connect the mummies dignity with the wrapping; if you take away the wrapping you take away the mummies dignity, because it is no longer a mummy.

Yes, there are a lot of feelings in this, it is my personal feelings in this too, and maybe that is not right but that is how it is. I feel, what if this was my grandmother? What if it would be me? Would I wanted to be that way, would I like to be displayed that way, and especially, and this goes with all human remains I think, but in particular with mummies because they were really meant to be wrapped by layers and layers, many layers and they were made beautiful and they should not been seen un-wrapped, that is the opposite, they were really meant to be wrapped. The more layers the better in a way.

If we go a little bit back again, so the question 13 is, what sort of efforts were put in place to uphold the dignity of Dismutenibtes, and we talked a little bit about that. Your way of upholding Dismutenibtes dignity and the mummy Dismutenibtes was to cover her body with the linen that was available.

Yes, and the linen was already there, I didn't do any, it was all there. It was stuck all the way beneath the body and by closing it I returned it to a cultural object, instead of a dead body and I believe I gave her the dignity back, although, I think that way we did display her 13 years ago with the means we had at the time, the time we had to do this, which was not much, we did a good job in giving her dignity I think, but now when I had a chance to close her up I

found it natural to do it, but in a way it is a kind of responsibility for me because it was my decision basically, the way she is displayed now.

So this is something you reflect over before deciding how to display her?

Absolutely, and I thought also is it right, am I allowed, can I be the one person who is taking future generations away from special museum experience would they have a better experience in seeing the mummy with her curly grey hair with the face, would they have a stronger experience, did I steal that away from the public, so I did reflect on that, but of course I can say that I didn't do anything that was not reversible, of course in the future if they want to open her up again they can do it. I think that once she is wrapped up, it would feel like a "overgrip"⁷² to cut her open again.

I remember you once told me that you wanted to do this project, once and do it well and very detailed so one wouldn't need to do this again, and that is why you did all these...

Examinations.

And involved all these people.

Yes, because I did not want her to be moved around again or to be, because that is a strain on the object to of course to be moved and handled so the more she can be held in one place the better. I also wanted to, my job was also when I started the project was also as a conservator I wanted to I saw the textiles I could see were in a very bad condition, I wanted to un-curl them, they were crumbled underneath on the side I wanted to do a job on the textiles because they will degrade more when they are all curled. I did think about the process, one thing I did not really see coming was that it was all there and I would be in this situation where I could actually wrap the mummy again, I didn't see that coming I must say.

If we can go back to the exhibition, are all of Dismutenibtes artefacts displayed with her, if so why were they chosen, if not why did the museum decide exhibition the mummy Dismutenibtes without the artefacts belonging to her grave site?

⁷² Assault

All we know, I mean when we displayed her 13 years ago we displayed her in her coffin with her name Dismutenibtes written on it, but a few years later Anders Bettum started to do research on the coffin or another coffin we have. From the early records we have in the museum, it says that the mummy came with a coffin, with another coffin which could be the outer coffin, but when you read the hieroglyphs, it says another name, it says not Dismutenibtes but it says Aaiu and Anders Bettum started to do research on the coffin and he realized that it was the outer coffin of Dismutenibtes and that Aaiu probably was her pet name. He could prove that by other coffin in Belgium belonging to Dismutenibtes son, and there she is called Iuiu as a pet name. Then we could conform that the other the other coffin we have belongs to Dismutenibtes. So next year in 2018 when we will read you some of the display it is basically some of Dismutenibtes display we will change. We will do the touchscreen and we will put the outer coffin back again. That was a thing that I upped for when I had a discussion with UPS.

Why?

Because I wanted the mummy to be as discrete as possible, and of course it's very interesting to see both coffins together as an assemble and they are quite different, no of course we must show, now we know, the examination of Dismutenibtes last year also gives us a new reason to I think to display, to show all we know about her, and that means add the coffin.

Are there any other objects that are connect to her gravesite?

No, we wouldn't know.

Just the...

Just the out coffin and the coffin and the body or the mummy, the wrapped mummy.

So no other artefact in the exhibition are known to be connect to her?

No. In the permanent display, which was made in 2003, since she was showed in the open coffin and she was unwrapped the way she was, we wanted to protect her a little extra since

we were lacking the textiles, so we cut a board from a coloured “pepsiglass”⁷³ it is called something else in English.

I will look it up.

We cut it in the shape of a mummy and we put it over the body and we put different amulets on top of the board. The boarded was a nice way to show amulets and show how amulets could be placed over different parts of the body. These amulets were often put in the wrappings, when they wrapped a mummy, but we had not found any traces of it in this mummy. So the amulets were separate finds but we did it to tell a story about amulets, but also to protect her dignity more, but now that she is wrapped and we decided not to put the board back again because now there is not need, because now she is protected and it would be misleading to put them out there now.

So if I understood you correctly, you were just going to re-examine the section about Dismutenibtes, just her glass display. You are just going to add to more artefacts, the rest of the exhibition is not going to be redone.

No I believe not.

Was that ever a part of the discussion, to re-do the whole thing?

No, no we have many new exhibitions coming so it is no way we have time or resources to do that now.

Do you have plans to disseminate, outreach you research findings to the general public? And if you have plans, how are you going to do it?

I did some already during the process I had the A-Magasinet, which is the weekend magazine or the largest newspaper in Norway, I think...

I think so to, or is it VG.

⁷³ Plexiglass or perspex

Anyway...

One of the largest newspapers in Norway.

The serious one, the nice one, they had the main article that week and it's been some small things on television, not television, net TV, and I have been on the radio at the end of this project I took the mummy out, I think, I will check the date, think it was February and in July I put her back in display in November, or October we had a seminar in the museum open seminar with the different experts giving talks about the results. So that was a way of giving the results and also we are working with, I had a blog at Forskning.no at the museum and I have given some talks in different settings also a way out of Oslo, but that is more for the general public and I guess I should write an article.

So that would be the academic.

I will have to do that and also I will deliver the material, or most of the material for the display, for the touchscreen.

And your documentation of the process, will that be archived?

Yes, that will be archived, I have of course written a big rapport, conservation rapport over many pages, and I have collected the rapport form the experts and it will all be archived. So we keep the information for the future.

You said you had a talk on the radio, do you remember what program? Which radio station it was?

P3...

One of the Ps?

One of the Ps, I can find that out, it was just a short thing anyway. That had to do with Aftenposten, A-Magasinet they wanted it exclusive, because if I went out everywhere they would be using up their story.

Is there a method of working that you have established working of human remains, after this project? Have you established a method?

I think that I can only say that I used the same method as in any conservation job, which is to do a thorough documentation before you start touching anything. I must see the object in a cultural connection, what is it? What is it made of? Why is it here? How did it come here? All these things around the object, and I must have it clear for myself, what is it I want to do? If I want to do some actions, why do I do it? It I because of, it is to prevent further decay? Is it to stabilize it? Is it for aesthetical reasons? Or which comes in with human remains, for ethical reasons. That is an additional thing.

You have to have a goal?

Yes but sometimes you have to, like here, I didn't know what I would meet before I started, but I had to keep an open eye to see, I couldn't decide before I came there, because I couldn't foresee all the problems, I couldn't foresee what I would meet, when I came there. If I do some conservation actions I must find a good method and materials, but when I think about human remains there are some additional things to the normal method. As I said it is unethical to do something, the ethics comes inn and the dignity and the respect but also I will not remove anything from a body, I mean taking samples, I would not really wish to take samples from the tissue.

Like DNA?

We could do it of course, to take DNA, from mummies is very difficult, and we did take some samples because it was, we did a job on the, to investigate the organs, and I had a large piece of something that I assumed were the lounges, two pieces, we took a small sample to have it analysed, but otherwise, you don't sort of, but of course you don't do it with a other things either if you can help it. I did keep for the future; I have a box with different samples.

What type of samples?

Like a piece of the coffin, like a piece of the resin, a few hairs.

Would that be things you found that were loose?

They were all loose, they were all loose, I didn't break off a piece I didn't pull a thread out of a textile I didn't do these things, I took everything that was loose already and I took many many samples of different qualities of textiles so I hope maybe one day somebody wants to research the textiles can do a job on this.

So you did think during the process, not only about your research and the research now, or the museums research but did think about future research?

Yes when it came to the textiles, and the analysis of different elements, I forgot to say that I had a piece of the resin analysed by the Hartmut Kutzke at the museum, he works at the Viking Ship Museum, and the I had Margunn Veseth textile conservator, also at the ethnographic collection, she looked at the textiles and helped me there, and Eyvind Bratlie, he made drawings from all the different layers, the way he interpreted the layers. So I had many people.

I think I have a picture of that drawing, from the wall. He drew on the wall in the room...

Yes

I have a picture of that.

Based on that he made different, I think 14 different pictures.

What if anything would you do differently now that you have the results?

I maybe, when I put the mummy, when I wrapped the mummy again there were so many layers and I had all, in the tidying up process I had collected many of the fragments textile fragments, which had been used for padding around the neck and legs. The ones between the

legs I left them there, but when I put them back again I made some lose bags made out of silk crippling and I put them in there made like small cushions so like to do the wrapping I made one of the cushions and put it around the neck to make the body have a mummy form again. I think sometimes, that maybe I shouldn't have added this material, maybe I should have put them back, the easy, loosely again and not the cushions.

Why?

I don't know, maybe I shouldn't bring something foreign into the mummy.

You mean the bag?

The bag, in a way when I did it, my way of thinking was that if somebody in fifty years want to go inn and investigate the mummy again, because people are curious, I didn't want them to meet the same anarchy, the same mess, as I did, I wanted it to be easier to lift away this cushion, and then that cushion and the third. I think that was a thought and then one more thought, or not only thought but one more reason I did it. She was lacking her feet, they are taken, gone, during the investigation in 1875, if I had wrapped it the way it was, you could see the profile of the mummy, you could see the head and the chest, tapering down, ending at nothing, but when you have a mummy you have feet, it ends with feet and it would be quite disturbing to see, you would maybe notice, "where are the feet?" Instead of admiring a fine mummy, so I thought all the time that I would make feet by some foam material, I would make feet and add to make the mummy form back, I made them and sort of put on there and I sort of shock my head and said "no, I don't want to put in plastic in here, this looks strange", no it didn't function for me so instead I made around the foot area it was really, really messy, but I collected all the fragments and put them in a cushion and I made the foot area, the shape with the cushion with all the fragments. So when you see the mummy now you see feet, but the feet are only a bag of fragments from the feet area. So if I would do something different, I would maybe consider not to put the cushions in, just put the fragments as they were. With the cushions it was easy to form and to make the mummy again, so I hope it is excused from future generations.

Is there anything you can think about that has not been able to say, but you would like to say, and thoughts or ideas, anything that is important to you?

No, I don't think so, but when I talked about this wrapped mummy in a display now, versus the open a year ago I don't think, when people come in there, I don't think that they would say, "where is the head, I can't see the hair?" I think they will just see a fine mummy and not be missing out on anything and as it is now it is a more, it is a correct representation of a mummy instead of a dead body and as a museum it is a duty to take care of our collection, I think we are doing this now. I could talk a lot of about things I believe, but one thing that really hurt me, because I found a picture on the internet, it was taken in 1999 I think, when we were preparing Dismutenibtes I was not there, preparing the display and you see the picture and she is laying in a coffin with no lid and the body was not covered with a textile it is really ripped open and so untidy and what I know now is the heart was laying on top of it and what I know was that the intestines were laying on top all these things are back again now, the heart is in its place together with the two lungs the intestines are place the way they were supposed to be. It is a better situation now.

Isn't it a bit unusual that you would find the lungs and the intestines in the body, the heart is usual but the two others.

That changed from different periods sometimes they used the Canopic jars, but many periods they put them back in the mummy and then they are just, for your interest, when I put the things back again in the body I realised, the intestines, I realized that they don't fit and I couldn't fit them all inn, it wasn't possible because they couldn't have closed the mummy, but then since I was in contact with Robert Lonyes from Manchester University, he had scanned a mummy from the same period with the same outer shroud, the same red shroud the same white ribbons across, and he say on the scan that the intestines we put between the thighs. So the parts I could not fit into the body, the big part I put between the thighs. On a pieces of cloth that I didn't know where belonged originally I put it nicely between the thighs and I put it the intestines and I close it and then I could do the wrapping.

But looking at the way she was mummified and if the organs were present and if her body or not, that can help in finding out which dynasty she belongs to?

But we knew she was from the 25th dynasty.

But if we didn't know, would that help?

It would help yes, I was really crashing my head, how the hell did they fit everything in the stomach, and then I got this article from him.

Where they wrapped?

Yes, they have been wrapped slightly, not many layers, but they had been wrapped and one thing you asked, what was usual, what surprised me and that was my realisation how the head had become loose. I can tell you the story I know you know it but I can recap it, because the head as I said was unattached and my first, or my natural thought was that this happened during the opening in 1800s and then I got the anatomist Per Holck to help me to put the head back in its correct position, because I saw the head and I saw the neck was covered with the resin, the wax resin mix, I could see the break, the surface of the break, I adjusted the head he could, he helped me and then we could see now it fits, and then the head was in a tilting position slightly to the left and slightly up, so we could put some temporary support to keep it in that position, but when the head was in that position, which was correct due to the break surface I saw that the lid would not fit on the coffin so the people who made the mummy when they put her in the coffin, they must have seen that it didn't fit and they would break the head of the mummy, probably force it back into the coffin.

So they broke her neck?

So that's when it's when it broke. Otherwise the lid couldn't fit in, this was a very clumsy explanation.

You mentioned that she doesn't have any feet, do we know why she doesn't have any feet?

Yes, we know from the articles from 1875 that the professor, anatomist, they had an anatomist, he took one of the feet, to try to clean it, to de-skeletonize it, they called it, but it crumbles in his hands, but what they didn't write is that they probably took the other one too, because both front feet are missing, but it is not written down.

They crumbled into dust?

Yes, into powder, so they probably just through them away, because I haven't found any remains neither on the scans nor by visual examination.

Is there any one in particular you have been inspired by in your field or else where?

I think I must say, Christina Riggs, she was in charge of the mummies at Manchester Museum, and she did a really interesting study and book on the wrapping and wrapping of mummies and all the Egyptian artefacts, the meaning of wrapping and how we in the western world have done all the un-wrapping in recent times. She is, I think a bit controversial not everybody is following her view, but I found it very intelligently thought and written and inspiring.

Anyone else?

No.

What is a piece of advice you would give someone interested in entering the field of studying human remains? No it is not an easy question.

No it's not an easy question. Read all the legislations, contact the Skjelletutvalget to learn from them, to follow their discussions, because they are, things going on which I am not very informed about, so that could be a place to go and then just be gentle be kind, be respectful.

Ok, thank you very much.