**Changing Perspectives Through Research: An Exploration of How Research Can Enhance Local and Visitor Understanding of the Mummified Remains in the Capuchin Catacombs, Palermo (Sicily)**

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The Capuchin Catacombs are located two kilometres to the west of historic Palermo (Sicily). This site was inaugurated in 1599 CE and was used until the early twentieth century to display the mummified remains of friars belonging to the Capuchin order and the middle classes. Previously, family members of the dead would visit their relatives in the catacombs, but since the post-war era the site has become popular with non-local visitors. The catacombs may be described as an ‘experience-based’ dark heritage site, containing corridors lined with mummies with few educational panels and limited context about mummification and the individuals on display. Consequently, the cultural and societal importance of mummification in late modern (1787-1880 CE) Palermo society is not fully understood by visitors. In the context of a project focusing on juvenile mummies, this presentation will explore how interdisciplinary research has the ability to improve visitor experience and insight into heritage sites that are significant at a local, national, and international level. In turn, it will show the potential that research has for transforming public attitudes while simultaneously enhancing knowledge and understanding of past populations, beliefs, and funerary practices.

Please note, this presentation will contain images of human remains.

This research was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AH/V0143311/1).