MELA*Books

···

MUSEUMS
IN AN AGE OF
MIGRATIONS

···

Questions, Challenges, Perspectives

edited by
Luca Basso Peressut and Clelia Pozzi

Museums in an Age of Migrations

MeLa *Books

Museums
in an Age of Migrations

Questions, Challenges, Perspectives

edited by Luca Basso Peressut and Clelia Pozzi

MeLa *Books

Table of contents

Acknowledgments

This book grew out of the Kick Off Meeting that launched the research project *MeLa–European Museums in an age of migrations*, funded by the European Commission under the Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities programme (Seventh Framework Programme). The Kick off Meeting—organized by the MeLa research group of Politecnico di Milano—was conceived as an International Conference entitled "Reinterpreting Europe's Cultural Heritage: Towards the 21st Century Library and Museum?" The event was held at the Musei Capitolini in Rome on March 9th 2011, and it was open to the academic and research community, as well as to experts and practitioners from the museums and libraries communities. In addition to the representatives of the nine European partners involved in the MeLa project, a number of keynote speakers were invited to attend the meeting, participate in the discussion and submit papers to be published here.

The conference would not have been possible without the help of the institutions that supported and hosted the event and their representatives. Therefore, special thanks go to Claudio Parisi Presicce and Marina Mattei, respectively Director and Archaeological Curator at the Musei Capitolini in Rome, Romolo Martemucci at the Pennsylvania State University-Sede di Roma and President of the Accademia Adrianea di Architettura e Archeologia, and Margherita Guccione and Pippo Ciorra, respectively Director and Senior Curator at the MAXXI–Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo. Special thanks also to Wolfgang Bode, former MeLa EU Project Officer, who attended the three days meeting, and to Imma Forino for her editorial advice.

Introduction

* "Mela" is a Sanskrit word meaning "gathering" or "to meet." Today it is used for intercultural assemblies, intended as opportunities for community building that can perform a strong socially cohesive function.

This volume collects a series of essays that offer a starting point for the European research project *MeLa-European Museums in an age of migrations,* funded under the 7th Framework Programme.

MeLa is an interdisciplinary four-year project led by Politecnico di Milano that reflects on the role of museums and heritage in the forthcoming years. At the core of MeLa's investigation lies the notion of "age of migrations" as a paradigm of the contemporary globalized and multicultural world. Migration is here adopted as a key term for thinking through planetary processes that reveal the refashioning of the cultural and political spheres under the impact of the accelerated mobility and nomadism of people, goods, ideas and knowledge. This condition certainly affects the communities we live in: it leads up to the formation of pluralistic civic environments, characterized by fast-changing needs, multiethnicity, multiculturality, different individual and collective memories, and plural identities and citizenships. It's a critical transformation in the composition of society, one that affects the definition of geographical borders as we traditionally know them.

In order to respond to the complex cultural needs of such nomad and global society, museums clearly need to rethink their role, mission, exhibition and communication strategies—the same applies to other cultural institutions devoted to the conservation and transmission of knowledge, like libraries and archives. In this regard, debates have been raised about the importance of considering multivocal, multicultural and transnational perspectives to actually transform museums into institutions for the representation and construction of inclusive scenarios of pluralistic societies. In fact, as economy, society and culture become globalized, the issues of representation and inclusion become all the more crucial. Ethnic, religious, political minorities, marginalized groups, immigrants,

local communities—all these actors of our society claim representation in museums, for they perceive the museum as a powerful agent of memory representation and identity construction. One could claim that the museum is understood as the ultimate acknowledgement of everyone's right to "be in the world" and be recognized as a visible part of it.

The redefinition of the museum's role in contemporaneity, then, becomes a key component of the political agenda, because the museum makes us come to terms with the tensions between local and global, the dualism of "selfness" and "otherness," and issues of inclusion and exclusion. It is here that the complexity of our multicultural society acquires a visible form through the museum representation. This is especially true of those museums that focus on themes born out of our postmodern and postcolonial age, when great national narratives have given way to a multiplicity of stories, voices, and narratives. Yet as the consequences of migrations and globalization are so pervasive of all aspects of our life, the whole museum world seems to be called into question, involving different types of museums: history museums; ethnographical, archaeological, identitarian museums; art, science, local, and city museums, etc.

This is the breeding ground out of which the MeLa project develops to understand the extent and modalities of the museum's involvement in the construction of democratic and inclusive forms of European citizenship. To succeed in its aim, MeLa will bring together theoretical, methodological and operative contributions that overturn the long-established idea of the museum as a place for the consolidation and transmission of the identity of a dominant social group. This strategy emphasizes the key concepts of *multiplicity*—of voices, points of view, theories—and *hybridity*—of forms, identities, physical expressions—which operate in contemporary culture. Within the proposed multiple and hybrid frame of reference, however, the line between the differences that are accepted and welcomed, and those that merely stay "other," is not always clear-cut, and not everyone agrees on where this line lies. Hence MeLa's efforts are directed toward envisioning solutions and scenarios that could actually enable the construction of cultural integration and inclusion within the museum. It's a holistic endeavour that affects missions, curatorial practices, exhibition layouts, architectural spaces, networks with other cultural institutions, and use of information and communication technologies all at once.

Along this trajectory, MeLa will deal with issues of history, memory, identity and citizenship, and their effects on the organization, functioning, communication strategies, exhibition settings and architecture of museums. The contributions brought together in this volume engage these questions from different perspectives, and offer a panoramic view on some of the most recent debates and concerns of the museum field.

In the first section of the book—"Questions"—Luca Basso Peressut outlines the general frame of the MeLa project, focusing his attention on the complex phenomenology of contemporary museums (representations, exhibitions, architectures), and their relations with places, territories and communities. National, regional and local museums, public and private museums alike, are examined against the evolving notion of heritage to understand how they tackle the social and physical transformations of our territories and metropolitan areas. In the face of the current trend toward diversification of audience expectations and interpretations, between global and local identities, the need for a review of the roles and missions of museums is then put forward that reckons current political and cultural dynamics, but also historical values and consolidated experiences. Ultimately, for Basso Peressut "The challenge that museums face in this new millennium lies in the capacity to perform a transformational balance between the sensitivity of traditions and the necessary thrust of innovation."

In describing the structure of MeLa and its Consortium, Gennaro Postiglione and Francesca Lanz highlight the importance of its interdisciplinary approach to deal with the future perspectives of cultural institutions in a global and multicultural world. Crucial questions stem from their discourse: how do museums face the challenge of representing multiple cultures in contemporary society? How can museums engage their users in dialogic and participative narratives? How can museums play the role of mediators in cultural exchanges? Beyond discussing such theoretical and methodological issues, these first two essays also outline some of the key questions and actions pertaining to the MeLa research fields.

In the second section of the book—"Challenges"— scholars and researchers with different expertise give their perspective on the issues debated by MeLa.

Peter Aronsson compares the experience of EuNaMus—an ongoing research on European national museums—to the broader museum scenario that MeLa focuses on. In Aronsson's account implicit and explicit narratives, and conflicts and goals of cultural policies must balance both the traditional nation-based European identity and the complex perspectives opened by today's multicultural Europe. As he states in the conclusion of his essay, "MeLa reaches out to heritage institutions and a wide range of stakeholders and communication strategies, while EuNaMus focuses on the power of institutional trajectories and adopts comprehensive comparative perspectives on a more narrowly defined institution that we call 'national museum.' In combination, this might prove to make a difference in the making of cultural policy in Europe."

A sociological approach to museum studies is contributed by Gordon J. Fyfe. Proceeding from the concepts of "sociology of museums" and "museum sociology," he analyzes their development in Europe and the United States along the twentieth century, to then elaborate theoretical speculations and questions for the contemporary debate on museums and globalization. A large part of his essay is dedicated to the British Sociological Society and its commitments in museums missions, as well as to the Keele University archive that contains numerous reports related to the Society's interests. His conclusive claim confirms the "museum's potential as a fluid and fertile social space."

Sreten Ugričić discusses the issue of migration in terms of technology and socio-cultural movements. Centering his discourse on cultural polarities like materialization/dematerialization, migration/emulation, and differentiation/complementarity, Ugričić reflects on museums and libraries to acknowledge their inherent differences, complementary natures and purposes, and the conditions of their collaboration. Stressing the importance of Information and Communication Technologies and digitalization, he emphasizes an understanding of memory as production, and the role of cultural heritage as "work in progress." In this sense museums and libraries can co-operate "only if they build and produce on the immanent difference and complementarity."

The question of "sustainability" of contemporary museum trends is advanced by Massimo Negri, and analyzed with reference to the ongoing phenomena of proliferation of museums, multiplication of museum typologies, merging of different museum institutions, and contradiction

between energy saving needs and sophisticated yet energy consuming conservation equipment. Negri sees museum as institutions "under stress" that face an increasing lack of resources, thus making apparent the need for new models of organization and functioning. Maybe, as Negri provocatively says, we should focus on the keyword *less*: "less museums, less investments, less technology, even less collections."

Giovanni Pinna reflects on Mary Louise Pratt's renown concept of contact zones, and on James Clifford's assumption that this concept can be applied to museums as "agents of inclusion." Pinna's central reflection concerns the kind of museums that can rightfully be addressed as contact zones in Europe today. Such museums could be, for instance, the small local museums: they seem to assume a "genuine status of contact zones" by virtue of their being born "from the need for self-representation and self-interpretation of small communities, above all in non metropolitan areas," and, paradoxically, for their being born "in contrast to other cultures and ethnicities." As these reflections seem to be contradicted by the favour encountered today by major European museums like Louvre, Prado, etc., Pinna's final remarks address a series of recent questionable choices made by the European Union in matters of museum policies.

In the third section of the book—"Perspectives"—the partners of MeLa Consortium collaborating with Politecnico di Milano describe concerns, methodology and goals of their specific contribution to the MeLa research fields on the future developments of European cultural institutions.

In light of a postcolonial critique that focuses on histories, cultures and social groups that have been marginalized or excluded, Iain Chambers investigates the museum and the library as sites of cultural powers and traditions. Reading the postcolonial museum as a heterotopic space to house negated pasts, he traces a critical structure for the folding and unfolding of contemporary museum and library practices. Museum rooms are never "empty," never neutral—he claims: they are marked by difference and discrimination, they are politically imbued by the theories and practices of historiography and museology. For Chambers, only when the "logic of governing the past in order to discipline it and render it transparent to our will is subverted, there can emerge the perspective of the museum and the library as a complex, uncertain and fluid zone of contacts, frictions and contaminations."

Christopher Whitehead and Rhiannon Mason stress the importance of "place" in museums as a conceptual, epistemological and representational framework. For them, "museums inevitably articulate relations between people, cultures and places, be this through archaeological origin stories accounting for settlement patterns in relation to the morphology of places, through the journeys made by curators to map and collect parts of the world at home or abroad, or through the explicit institutional and political desire to present place (nation, region, city, colony, etc.) to audiences both local and non-local." Addressing the place-people(s)-culture relations, Whitehead and Mason thus comment on the ways that contemporary European museums manage to define places and their inhabitants through representational practices, while geo-political and social orders are changing per effect of EU legislation, migration and mobility.

Jamie Allen, David Gauthier and Kirsti Andersen focus their research on interaction design and read people's relationships with technology as both a framework for negotiating and a means for expressing identities. With regards to museums, the questions advanced by the authors discuss the benefits of understanding networked and social media technologies as Foucaultian "technologies of the self."

Perla Innocenti explains the ways Glasgow University's research group intends to investigate innovative coordination strategies between European museums, libraries and public cultural institutions for the benefit of multicultural audiences and towards integration in a globalised world. For Innocenti a theoretical framework to define such collaborative models for the transnational and multicultural European society still needs to be developed. Nevertheless, partnership between museums and libraries are increasingly important to their future sustainability.

Michel van Praët of the Musée de l'Homme in Paris discusses the relationship between natural environment and human societies. He also describes how the museum—closed for renovation in March 2009—aims to integrate its researches with the Musée d'Histoire Naturelle project on human evolution, thus extending the original role of the museum to incorporate environmental issues. The "aim is to turn the museum space into an 'agora'," to discover, to discuss, to share knowledge, to answer questions.

Mela Dávila Freire, of the MACBA—Museum of Contemporary Art

in Barcelona, examines the research tasks of the MACBA Study Centre and the open role that documentary collections and documentation centers play with regard to contemporary artistic practices. For Mela Davila the Study Centre is placed "in the interstices which open between traditional museums and traditional libraries," since its mission aims "to preserve and systematize (as in libraries) but also activate and disseminate (as in museums) collections which share, in their very physical materiality as well as in their relationships and resonances, conceptual and aesthetic features that are usually associated to library and museum materials, respectively."

Finally, Mark Nash and Jamie Gilham of the Royal College of Art discuss the aims of their research in relation to existing curatorial works and exhibitions on issues of migration, borders, fluid identities, etc. The stated objectives include research on artists and curators working on migration and related issues, as well as an inquiry into the role of museums and galleries showing and disseminating knowledge of these issues. As Nash and Gilham state, "The concept of migration has many meanings, but it is worth mentioning that both art and artists have also been mobile." Within the framework of MeLa, then, RCA will proceed to develop critical lessons, curatorial methodologies and exhibition practices that reflect the complexity of the issues at stake.

This volume is concluded by a selected bibliography of books on museum topics published in Europe and in the United States in the last two decades, which integrates the reference lists provided by the authors of the anthology. Most of the books listed here are related to the research issues investigated by MeLa, and represent a first step for the reader who wishes to further explore the different fields of the MeLa research.

LBP, CP

Questions

Envisioning 21st Century Museums for Transnational Societies

→ **LUCA BASSO PERESSUT**

Architect, PhD in Architectural Composition (IUAV, Istituto Universitario di Architettura, Venezia), he is Full Professor of Interior Architecture, Exhibition Design and Museography at the Politecnico di Milano, and member of the Academic Board of PhD in "Architecture of Interiors." He is co-founder and director of the Level II Master course "IDEA in Exhibition Design." He is Director of the International Workshop of Museography and Archaeology "Villa Adriana-Premio Piranesi" held in Tivoli and Rome since 2003. He is member of the Scientific Committee for the National Conference of Interiors 2005, 2007 and 2010, and member of the Scientific Board and co-organizer of the international conferences IFW-Interiors Forum World. He is member of the Scientific Board of *Museography* of Edifir Publisher and consultant for the architectural magazine *Area* since 1997.

→ **ABSTRACT**

Looking at European cultural heritage from the perspective of the twenty-first century, the question of its interpretation and reinterpretation is essential. This is especially the case regarding the different ways that societies and individuals use museums or other cultural institutions for the conservation and transmission of knowledge. The MeLa project brings a new concept to the core of this cultural problem. "Age of migrations" is a key term for thinking through planetary processes that not only reveal the transnational economic order of labour, but also the deep refashioning of cultural and political spheres under the impact of the accelerated mobility and nomadism of goods, people, ideas and knowledge. In this context, a careful reconfiguration of existing museums is needed, especially for museums that are devoted to new themes and topics emerging in the postcolonial, postindustrial, postmodern age, when the great narratives of the modernity have left a complex multiplicity of stories and voices.

PREVIOUS PAGE — *Cour Marly, Musée du Louvre, Paris. I. M. Pei, 1993. Glass cover and interior refurbishment.*

Le musée se situe à un carrefour: il perd
ses fonctions séculaires (sans fin) mais
ne cesse pas non plus de se moderniser
et de s'équiper (il recommence sur
d'autres base set on ne l'arrêtera pas)

François Dagognet

Museums have always been an expression of a particular time and place, and from time to time they are subject to reformulation of meaning and role. All museums are actually linked to the changing social, political and cultural development of a society. Their state refers both to public and private choices and enterprises, and is determined by the presence or lack of possibilities, resources, necessities and opportunities. Museums are created, they develop and grow, sometimes they decline, sometimes they disappear, and sometimes they mutate into something different. Such has been the case since the dawn of modernity.

Think to the history of the *Kunst– und Wunderkammern* [Img. 01]. They widely spread around Europe between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, and then they vanished, replaced by museums of natural history. The latter's methodological principles, based on scientific "neutrality," shadowed the cosmopolitanism and the culture of curiosity of the earlier collections.

Think also to the rise and decline of the European colonial museums: it's a trajectory that covers only five decades in the first half of past century [Img. 02]. Similarly, the ethnographical museums—one of the epitomes of nineteenth century cultural institutions because of their discourse on classification, evolutionism and racialism—are today questioned and in

IMG. 01 — *"Ritratto del Museo di Ferrante Imperato."* From *Ferrante Imperato,* Dell'historia naturale libri XXVIII nella quale ordinatamente si tratta della diversa condition di miniere e pietre. *Napoli 1599. Private collection.*

a deep process of renovation in curation and exhibition settings.[1] The discipline of ethnography is involved in the difficult duty of rewriting the history of contact between Western and non-Western cultures. It's a matter of solving the controversy about narrating the "self" and the "other" through collections built with objects taken from people that are now part of the European community. In this sense we talk about postcolonial museums or museums in a postcolonial era.

IMG. 02 — "Le tour du monde en un jour." Poster of the Colonial Exposition, Paris 1931. Private collection.

---

1   The trend of changing denomination from "museums of ethnography" to "museums of culture" (or "museums of the cultures of the world") is symptomatic of the necessity of a renewal of contents and image of collections whose colonial origins appear out of fashion or in dispute (see Taffin 2000).

Yet, museums do more than decline. In recent decades many museums have flourished as products of idiosyncratic contemporary issues. We now have museums devoted to advanced sciences, popular culture, and social issues like work and emigration (Baur 2009); hot topics like disabilities, sexuality, racial violence, drugs, terrorism, genetically modified foods, pandemics, and climate change (Cameron and Kelly 2010; Sandell, Dodd, and Garland-Thomson 2010); and "difficult" and "contested" topics about the history of twentieth century wars, atrocities, holocaust and dictatorships (Kurilo 2007; Kjeldbaek 2010; Holtschneider 2011). Moreover, ethnic, religious, marginalized, and other enclaves claim to be represented in museums because they have realized that museums are powerful instruments for creating a sense of belonging and an avowal of being in the world, and be represented as such (Karp, Mullen Kreamer, and Lavine 1992) [Imgs. 03-04].

Museums, as living cultural institutions and political subjects, must then be continuously framed in context, interrogated, monitored and queried in order to respond to the real needs and ideals of the social body which they express. At the same time, museums should be improved to become instruments for cultural development, representing both collective and individual memory and identity. The practices, representations, functions and interactions performed by museums continuously create and re-create the museums' very conditions of existence and functioning. In turn this determines the subsequent policies and actions in their missions and organizations.

While this all seems evident, the debate developing around the meaning and role of museums testifies to divergent and sometimes irreconcilable positions. Consider the recent controversy regarding the *Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums* and the repatriation of ancient artifacts,[2] or the ongoing discussions about historical museum displays: should we conserve or renovate? Many questions have also been raised about the use and abuse of heritage in the contemporary mass consumption of culture.

2   The 2002 *Declaration* opens with the following statements: "We should […] recognize that objects acquired in earlier times must be viewed in the light of different sensitivities and values, reflective of that earlier era. […] Over time, objects so acquired—whether by purchase, gift, or partage—have become part of the museums that have cared for them, and by extension part of the heritage of the nations which house them. Today we are especially sensitive to the subject of a work's original context, but we should not lose sight of the fact that museums too provide a valid and valuable context for objects that were long ago displaced from their original source." The *Declaration* was signed in 2002 by the Directors of eighteen of the most influential art museums in the world: The Art Institute of Chicago; Bavarian State Museum, Munich (Alte Pinakothek, Neue Pinakothek); State Museums, Berlin; Cleveland Museum of Art; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Louvre Museum, Paris; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Florence; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Prado Museum, Madrid; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg; Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (see ICOM 2004, 4).

IMG. 03 — *MoAD-Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco. Freelon Group Architects, 2005 . Glass façade with mosaic of faces representing the image of Hope.*

IMG. 04 — *MoAD-Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco. Freelon Group Architects, 2005 . "Adornment" display.*

It's no coincidence that the call of 2009 EU 7th Framework Programme ("Reinterpreting Europe's Cultural Heritage: Towards the 21st Century Library and Museum?") framed the future of European cultural institutions in terms of keywords and concepts like "ownership," "participation," "democratic governance," "diversities and commonalities," "citizenship," "identities" and "multiple coexisting cultures".[3] It is also no coincidence that the project *MeLa–European Museums in an age of migrations* is concerned with these terms.

The call to which the project MeLa refers grasps the necessity to deeply reconsider the connection between heritage and museums, archives and libraries. These institutions—which are devoted to conservation and transmission of knowledge, memory and identity—are indeed affected by the planetary economy and the mobility of people, goods and knowledge. This presupposes a vision that implies, first of all, a museum's awareness of periodic status-change, which is precisely what the French philosopher François Dagognet describes as a "re-start on new grounds" (Dagognet 1984, 11). This awareness of change reveals new perspectives, theories and practices commensurate with the cultural needs of multifaceted societies.

In his famous essay "Espaces Autres," Michel Foucault brings museums and libraries back to the category of "heterotopias of indefinitely accumulating time" (Foucault 1967, 26). Foucault explains that in these institutions we find "the idea of accumulating everything, of establishing a sort of general archive, the will to enclose in one place all times, all epochs, all forms, all tastes, the idea of constituting a place of all times that is itself outside of time and inaccessible to its ravages" (26). From this we recognize that the history of museums and libraries is European first, then Western, yet above all strictly accustomed to the Modernity epitomized by Enlightenment ideals of public institutions.[4] The history of museums is like the history of science and technology. It is reflected in concepts well-established since the industrial revolution: progress and universalism, dualism between culture and civilization, and the foundation of nation-states. In the course of time these concepts acted in a social and political way as part of a broader philosophy of history and in accordance with the primacy of reason. They have defined the theoretical-practical activities of the European institutions responsible for the preservation and transmission of knowledge, ending up establishing the ideas and power of dominant social groups.

In these last decades, social and cultural studies have moved a criticism to the role of heritage and museums in representing history and shaping identity, claiming that they have mostly contributed to the formation of national belongings and produced "historical myths." These myths elaborated on identities based on the ancestry and authenticity

---

3   In this regard, see European Commission 2009.

4   "Des bibliothèques et des musées, formés avec choix, sont en quelque sorte les ateliers de l'esprit humain" (Abbé Grégoire 1873, 28).

of the original communities—which are often "imagined" (Anderson 1983)—or on "ethno-nationalism and Romantic notions of attachment to place" (Ashworth, Graham, Tunbridge 2007, 4). This way, inclusions and exclusions have been arranged through physical and mental borders. These are barriers and frontiers that, in the conceptualization of a concrete and unitary past, found values shared only by those related by "descent," "genealogy," or "blood membership." It is not by chance, in fact, that in Italian and French "heritage"—*patrimonio, patrimoine*—has the same etymological latin root—*pater*: father—of the words *patria, patrie*: homeland.

Museums as conservative agents of social normalization remain places for power exchange. As such, dominant political and cultural groups define contents and narratives opposed to subjects excluded from the main social frame. In so doing, museums act as "dispensers of status" (Hein 2000, ix), creating different representations with processes of hierarchic inclusion or exclusion for establishing their cultural and educational domain. Ultimately, these agents of normalization emphasize the stereotypes of "selfness" against every "otherness," *l'ici face à l'ailleurs* (Somé 2003), as factors that reinforce national or local belongings and identities. Similarly, museums use the educational devices of moralism, pedagogism and paternalism to mark the difference between high culture and popular culture (museums and art galleries as an instrument of social distinction and reproduction: Bourdieu 1979).

SELVES	OTHERS	EXHIBITIONS/MUSEUMS
BEFORE		
National Imperial/Colonial Modern	(Foreign) Savage/Colonized (Traditional)	History, Art, Military, War Ethnography, Anthropology Art, Architecture, Design, Science, Technology, World Fairs
AFTER		
Local Regional Macroregional/Transnational Hybrid Global	Continental Hybrid Global	Community, Ecomuseums Folk Eco/Diffused museums Civilization Diaspora, Migration Cross-cultural Common concerns

IMG. 05 — *"Selves, others and museums before/after accelerated globalization." Adapted from Pietersee 2005.*

A postmodern point of view, which interprets the past as a system of contradictions rather than a linear narrative, significantly shifted the terms of the problem. According to Nick Merriman (2000, 300) "the apparent certainties of modern thought, such as origin, evolution, progress, traditions, and value become replaced by the concepts of transformation, discontinuity, rupture, disorder and chaos" (Merriman 2000, 300). These contradictions throw down the reassuring vision of the past as stated truth to be looked at with enchantment and nostalgia (and amnesia too).

Here we recognize our difficulties in agreeing on narratives concerning the recent past, the representation of which collides with different visions of events that belong to the last century. This was a time when the very idea of the past has suffered a terrible shock, subject as it was to the blows of a "natural history of destruction"— *Naturgeschichte der Zerstörung*—(Sebald 2001) that dismantled the idea of a teleologically oriented human progress. The concept of "dissonant heritage" proposed by Ashworth and Tunbridge then problematizes the operations of interpretation, reconstruction and representation of recent history (Ashworth and Tunbridge 1996): it offers an alternative to traditional consensual understanding of heritage as a unifying fact, which occurred when "the foundation of ideologies and nations [were] written in historical texts and stone" (Molyneaux 1994, 2).

This means that we are no longer able to find straight answers in history, that totalizing fictions cease to be accepted as univocal "truths," and that past assumptions remain subject to verification and eventual disrepute. With this awareness, we define the heritage conserved and displayed inside museums. It is a heritage that uses the past as a cultural, political, and economic resource for the present and the future, a heritage whose conditions for research and communication pose the problem as questions of plurality. As Brian Graham and Peter Howard note, "within a single society, pasts, heritages and identities should be considered as plurals. Not only do heritages have many uses but they also have multiple producers" (Graham and Howard 2008, 1).

→ MUSEUMS, PLACES, PEOPLE

Occasionally defined as "contact zones" (Pratt 1992; Clifford 1997), "contested terrains" (Karp and Lavine 1991), or "differencing machines" (Bennett 2006), museums are in the front line of the great cultural exchanges of our epoch. Museums are mediating between their mission as repositories of memories, their active role as knowledge disseminators, and their commitment to develop social relationships. National museums are especially relevant to this investigation due to their dual task of representing national histories and values, and engaging diversities and commonalities in the European (and not only) transnational situation.[5]

Museums and libraries, part of the "exhibitionary complex" (Bennett 1988), have always had, and still have, a special role in establishing the values of a public sphere that has evolved from an aristocracy first, to a nationalistic middle-class, then to the mass-society today. Ours is a condition that is progressively visible in the cultural and social melting pots recognizable in recent years.[6] In fact, museums do not represent a

---

5   The ongoing EU research project, Eunamus-European National Museums: Identity politics, the Uses of the Past and the European Citizen, is aimed "to form a conclusive account of the roles of national museums in a Europe that constantly negotiates its borders and internal complexion adopting ideas, traditions and communities from around the world" (EuNaMus 2012). See also Peter Aronsson's essay "National Museum Negotiating the Past for a Desired Future" on page 67 of this volume.

6   As Jan Nederveen Pietersee has stated: "National identity was constructed in history

unitary or monolithic reality. Rather, the museum systems find articulation in a wide range of types, missions, proposals, and properties (public, private, corporate, cooperative, etc.), thus reflecting today's multifaceted global structures. Museums have gone from being a *national, regional or local phenomenon* to being a *world-wide phenomenon,* with cultural crisscrossing and interferences in other initiatives.

The augmented importance of the culture-market, supported by travel and itinerancy for tourism, study, and research, has led to a proliferation of museums and heritage sites.[7] This proliferation brings the sharpening problem of memory-preservation (as a matter of knowledge, identity and citizenship) to the attention of social policies, thus enhancing the role of cultural institutions as strategic tools for future democratic development of societies. According to ICOM, today there are about 55,000

museums and national art galleries (and military and war museums); imperial identities were produced in colonial and ethnographic museums and displays; while modern identities have been staged in world exhibitions, science and modern art museums" (Pietersee 2005, 170). See Img. 05.

7   Even though "the very term 'museum' stems for a period of high art and auratic culture well before 'heritage' had been invented" (Urry 1991, 134), the two domains continue to be increasingly entwined and overlapped.

IMG. 07 — *Shelter and museum of Roman Archeological Excavations, Chur. Peter Zumthor, 1986.*

museums in 202 countries globally, whereas there were merely 35.000 in 1990—a growth of nearly 63%.[8] Not surprisingly, we now talk about the "'museumification' of seemingly every phenomenon known to humanity" (Newhouse 1988, 9). This condition is mirrored in the growing attitude toward the "materialization of memory" (Nora 1989), that is, the search for identification in artifacts and places whose steady historical configuration seems to guarantee secure rooted values [Img. 06]. In this way, musealization contrasts with the disorientation caused by the dynamics of transformative processes at a planetary scale. Natural and artificial landscapes, aspects of the built environment, archaeological

8   Museums, in the last three decades, have been a first rate interest for governments and communities, considered as profitable political and, sometimes, economical investment. The Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, in the first three years of life, increased the local GDP of 0.47% (140 million euro against 85 invested), and created 3,816 jobs and 54% of increase in tourism in the Basque country (Plaza 2000).

sites, monuments, and museum collections can all trigger, shape or intensify the collective and individual need for memories. As Marta Anico (2009, 63) explains, "In a global scenario of rapid movements, fluxes and changes, heritage arises as a particularly effective resource for asserting continuity and stability which enables societies to define and anchor their identity" (Anico 2009, 63).

This desire to search the past and its material embodiments for a more stable sense of belonging (to places, communities or social groups) corresponds to a will to stem the physical transformation of cities and territories. These transformations today are so rapid and harsh that memories of life are erased, habitats are distorted, and environments and cultures are impoverished. While the traditional sense of belonging to a nation-state is questioned, we oscillate between the increasing interest in local heritage as a means of territorial identification, and the participation in cross-cultural communities that are part of a transnational network

of knowledge, interests and cultural offers. We can refer to the latter as "virtual communities," like religions or ethnicities, that produce multiple and non-territorialized identity factors that can be found at a global scale.[9]

Movable and immovable heritage—defined by adjectives (cultural, political, archaeological, architectural, industrial, immaterial, etc.) that articulate sub-disciplinary definitions of "original inherited good"—is the focus of a redefinition of the polarity people/place, which shapes identities through appropriate memories and physical media. Collections of artifacts, documents, books, archives and libraries form the body of our cultural institutions. Yet, we also see developments in an idea of museum that breaks the boundaries described by the walls of the buildings, and involves people, places, populations, cities and territories in the representation of complex histories and memories [Imgs. 07-08]. Today, then, the term "museum" applies to a wide range of cases and places and testifies that the original concept of museum has shifted from a single minded locus of accumulation—a memory/identity repository and irradiator—to a widespread archipelago of experiences that work in an unstable equilibrium with communities and territories, cultures and identities. Small museums, site museums, local museums, and city museums—all these location-specific museums are continuously confronted with the changing social conditions and composition of the specific area, whose historical environment represents traditions and memories still belonging to the inhabitants of those places. Examples include the ecomuseums network (Varine 1991; Davis 2011) and the Italian practice of *museo diffuso*. The latter consists of territorial cultural routes punctuated by a system of micro-museums *in situ*: it's a system of historical buildings that become museums of themselves, participating in the narration of a local history as part of a widespread territorial dimension. Ecomuseums and the *museo diffuso* strategies are also active elements of redesign within comprehensive interventions to protect and valorize the environmental values of urban and territorial transformation (Emiliani 1974; Drugman 1982).[10]

Recently, it has been stated that "centralized institutions, including museums, will begin to reform into different arrangements. [...] institutions will become more distributed and diffuse; will adopt a horizontal, networked structure; and will fragment spatially into different locations" (Edwards and Bourbeau 2008, 138). Whereas renowned enterprises like

---

9   See the different definitions of "community," especially that of "virtual community," in Watson 2007.

10   For Fredi Drugman the *museum diffuso* recalls "the image of a widespread organization, a network of branched museum as a complex system of services primarily responsible for the conservation, but rooted to the origins and sources of cultural heritage [...]. A museum that can no longer run out the conservation-information cycle within the old walls of a few building types, but that establishes itself in the strongholds of the territory" (Drugman 1982, 24). The Italian contemporary debate is highlighted in Silvia Dell'Orso's book *Musei e territorio* (2009), where she lays out three observations: Italy is a huge "open-air museum," the museum system in Italy is primarily the product of an intense and continuous exchange with the territory, and the symbiosis between museum and territory is full of potentialities. See also Maggi 2009.

Guggenheim in Bilbao or Louvre in Dubai respond to precise strategies of cultural homologation at planetary scale, small and diffused museums enhance their unique qualities in relationship to the contexts where they operate.[11] The very character of these local (and often diffused) museums lies in the *differentiation* of experiences (e.g. contents, missions, architectures and displays) regardless of the relevance of topics and of the range of the audience, which can be local, regional, national or transnational.[12]

→ MUSEUMS IN AN AGE OF MIGRATIONS

Reinterpreting museums in terms of history, memory, identities, diversities, and their collective representation means to work at a scale not constrained by mental or physical borders [Imgs. 11-12]. It means to work for an even larger audience. This implies appropriating definitions and an overall reconsideration of how museum audiences evolve today within the "migration framework." In this respect, it must be noted that human and cultural migrations, and the consequent *layerization* of societies, aren't recent phenomena caused by international economy and globalization. Rather, as it is widely held, the problem of human and cultural migration is central in the formation of the modern Europe over the past five centuries. This deeply rooted continental feature transcends the boundaries of nation-states in every sense: geographical, scientific, economical, linguistic, religious, cultural, and so on. As Homi Bhabha, one of the most important scholars of postcolonialism, stated,

> The "locality" of national culture is neither unified nor unitary in relation to itself, nor must it be seen simply as "other" in relation to what is outside or beyond it. The boundary is Janus-faced and the problem of inside/outside must always be itself a process of hybridity, incorporating new "people" in relation to the body politic, generating other sites of meaning. (Bhabha 1990, 4)

This process of incorporating new people is pertinent when we consider that three million people migrate annually in the world. We also know that more than 180 million people live in countries different from where they were born in and that each year more than 900 million people travel for tourism (including cultural tourism).[13] In this situation, identities and differences—cultural, ethnic, religious, political—daily chal-

---

11   For the former director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation Thomas Krens, the receipt for a "successful museum in the twenty-first century" is: "great collections, great architecture, a great special exhibition, a great second exhibition, two shopping opportunities, two eating opportunities, a high-tech interface via the Internet, and economies of scale via a global network" (quoted in Barrett 2011, 5).

12   The small village of Mödlareuth, between Bavaria and Turingia, once cut through by the wall erected by DDR, is today an open-air museum which shows a large portion of that barrier. It is visited by a great number of people coming every year from all over the world (Museum Mödlareuth 2011) [Imgs. 09-10].

13   Museums used to be metonymies of the world, representing "surrogates of travels" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998, 132) for the cosmopolitan elite, are now among the most appealing *destinations* for a wide number of world travelers.

lenge the global context. Ours is a dynamic reality that continuously reshuffles social composition, economics, and politics—not to mention bodies of knowledge and cultural access.

The incursion of the "other" into our daily life has disrupted the positivist confidence offered by dialectic of opposition. The other undermines the self-same idea of "authenticity" and "original community" on which western culture organizes knowledge and builds traditions. This process challenges positivistic universalism on the one side, and regards national identity as a factor of discrimination on the other. It undermines the global structure of knowledge/power, which until recently was articulated in an autonomous and uncontested manner. This also means that the other overcomes the opposition between centre and periphery, and redefines the concept of "national identity" as "transnational identity," cultural identity as multicultural confrontation. And more, it introduces interdisciplinarity as an effective design method for museums in the public sphere.

This process results in unexpected hybrid forms. Rather than defending the "self" from the "other" to protect hypothetical purity and authen-

IMG. 09 — *View of the remains of the DDR wall. Deutsch-Deutsches Museum Mödlareuth.*

ticity, contemporary societies must be able to accept the invitation to reconsider our own position and repositioning in terms of space and time. The question of *diversity* and the acknowledgement of *differences* are leitmotifs of cultural confrontation and representation in museums (existing and yet to come). Diversity and differences afford the complex issues of confrontation with other histories and cultures. Museums should do this without any prejudice, giving way to many voices, ideas, proposals, and disputes too. Flora Kaplan has underlined just this:

> In the twenty-first century, more, rather than less, controversy can be expected in museums, with the fracturing of national identities and contention within nations. Some factors in these conflicts are old: religious extremism, intolerance, fundamentalist ideologies, economic deprivation, and ethnic conflicts. Other factors are old in new ways and degree: exponential population growth, environmental degradation, increasingly mobile populations (legal and illegal, and asylum seekers), instant and untrammeled worldwide communication, and a widening gulf in educational and economic opportunity, especially for women after decades of progress in many nations. (Kaplan 2006, 167)

IMG. 10 — *View of the museum exhibition space. Deutsch-Deutsches Museum Mödlareuth.*

Actually, interpretation of the term *migrations* is not only concerned with diasporic events, but it also represents a more complex condition of contemporaneity. Migration, itinerancy and nomadism have become significant terms for thinking through planetary processes that not only reveal the global economic order of labour, but also the deep refashioning of the cultural and political spheres impacted by the accelerated mobility of goods, bodies, ideas and knowledge. By looking at cultural institutions in the contemporary phase of globalization, we recognize the following key concepts:

→ Not only peoples migrate as a whole, but individuals themselves act nomadically for work, study, research or tourism. According to Martin Heidegger's philosophical concept of *Unheimlichkeit*—that is, the true existential condition of *Sein*—"being" means more and more "being in the world," in a condition of agitated and nomadic movement among different places and with different purposes (Heidegger 1977). In our state of mobility we must deal with progressively complex interactions that dissolve the original custom of *steady inhabiting*. Stasis is now overshadowed by *life in motion*; a transiency and an incapacity (or impossibility) to stand still.

The "new nomads"—families, individuals, students, professionals, workers, commuters, tourists, and different city users—each leave a mark that lasts as a trace across territories, thus contaminating the way people use public spaces and institutions. They underline or erase identity and absorb or reject differences. In this erratic way of life, the nomad is a space voyager who perceives the world as a possible field of action and, in turn, builds and dismantles spaces and the interpersonal relationships. In the life of travelers, and at stopping points (permanent or temporary), metropolitan and cosmopolitan passengers sometimes retrace paths blazed by others. Sometimes nomads find new paths and and sometimes they affirm their identity by listening to others and changing their ways. By changing the way they live in space, nomads can recuperate the pluralism and the multiplicity of "roots and routes" (Clifford 1997). At the same time, in the contemporary built territory, centre and periphery are losing their dichotomous nature. Territories are structured in nodes, intersections of mobility flows, temporariness and flexibility. These structures are in turn key concepts for human relations, economic enterprises, cultural organization and cultural management. Cities and metropolitan areas, "places of global culture and identity" (King 2004), are the privileged stages for the migrants' acting (and being) as generators of energy and people. Ultimately, cities implement the processes of production, reproduction and consumption of culture, which is one of the most dynamic and growing economic sectors at the beginning of this new millennium.

→ Migrations and vanishing of cultures (e.g. intangible cultures and heritage): these are critical concerns for future engagements of museums with other cultural institutions (libraries and archives). This engagement is pertinent especially in the forms of preserving, en-
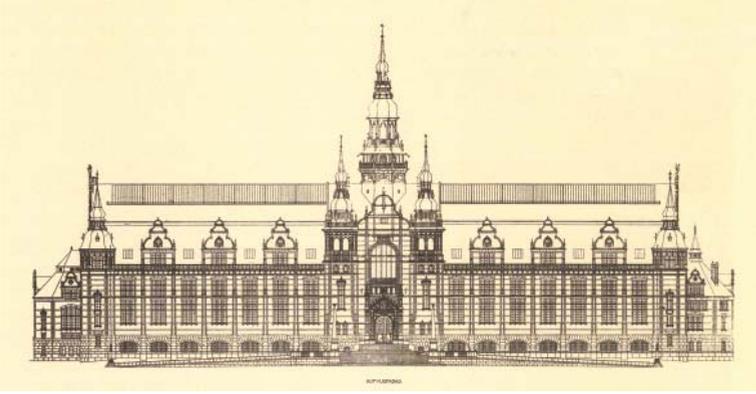
IMG. 11 — *Nordiska Museet,
Stockolm. Founded in 1873 by
Artur Hazelius (also founder of
the nearby open-air museum
Skansen), the building was
designed by Isak Gustaf Clason
in Danish Renaissance style and
completed in 1907. From Hans
Medelius, Bengt Nyström, and
Elisabet Stavenow-Hidemark,
eds. 1998. Nordiska Museet
under 125 år. Stockholm:
Nordiska Museets Förlag.*

IMG. 12 — *Iparmuvészeti
Múzeum (Museum of Applied
Arts), Budapest. Ödön Lechner
and Gyula Pártos, 1896.*

hancing and transmitting weak expressions of common heritage: words, talks, experiences, etc., which are all intangible. The development of advanced information and communication technologies (ICT) can play an innovative and central role as a tool for this kind of representation in museums.

→   Migrations of things (objects, relics, works of art: e.g. for temporary exhibitions). In the cultural market everything is put in a circle and quickly established as a *sine qua non* of the cultural offer made by museums.[14] This content is transient due to the continuous renewal of exhibitions—especially the temporary and traveling variety—and this transience affects the organization and the form of almost all museums today. It should be recognized that temporary exhibitions have been and continue to be a constituent source for renewing the idea of the museum. This is especially the case in the last century, where expressing values, ideologies and the aesthetics of art and knowledge has reshaped the museum in a modern sense (Basso Peressut 2005). Thus temporary exhibitions can be identified by the promotion of new approaches to museum representations, as well as by the search for public interest in media, to generate income, image and prestige. Today temporary exhibitions are also visible manifestations of an educational, informative or celebratory discourse characteristic of the rapid changeover in the communication rhetoric of contemporary society. And more, temporary exhibition models can also be expressed in dazzling experiences of cultural innovation, leaving to permanent displays the more accustomed role of keeping continuity with historical representations and settings.[15]

→   Migrations of knowledge and information. In the global space of information and communication—the "network society" envisioned by Manuel Castells (1996)—there are, using Martin Prösler's words, "perpetual streams of information, images and knowledge [that] generate relations of intensified exchange on a world-wide scale" (Prösler 2005, 21). As Tony Bennett recently asserted, "museums now seem self-evidently to be parts of more globalized flows of information, people, ideas." Even though they are "creations of national, municipal or local governments or private organizations, [they] reach out not only beyond their own walls but also beyond national boundaries through new practices of Web

---

14   In Francis Haskell's last book, dedicated to the history of temporary exhibitions, the incipit is illuminating: "Miles above us jets speed through the skies carrying their freight of Titians and Poussins, Van Dyks and Goyas. Below, meanwhile, curatorial staff in museums and galleries scattered over much of Europe and Unites States are supervising the transfer of pictures that usually hang on their walls to inaccessible or crowded storage rooms and are busy preparing large new explanatory labels. Accountants are checking the impact likely to be made on this year's budget deficit and are deploring the failure to settle for Monet or Van Gogh, while elsewhere printers work overtime to make sure that bulky catalogues are ready on schedule, hotel clerks eagerly accept bookings, and academics make the finishing touches on papers that they will shortly read at the inevitable symposium" (Haskell 2000, 1).

15   The fifty temporary exhibitions held since 2006 at the Musée de Quay Branly in Paris, exemplify how these initiatives implement and integrate the narratives of permanent collections, making the museum a place of inquiry and renovated mission over time.

curation" (Bennett 2006, 47). Networks between museums can be implemented by the use of the web. Online "museums" or exhibitions enable stakeholders to have a more articulated relation with collections and narrations, even browsing museum contents before or after the real visit. Digitized archives too can be shared, as it happens for the Paley Center for Media (Museum of Television and Radio), whose locations in New York and Los Angeles access the same computerized database. Suddenly, access to museums is widened and multiplied at a planetary scale.

→ MUSEUMS AND MULTIPLE CULTURES

In this contemporary age of migrations we detect the shifting paradigms of social memory, identity, citizenship, cultural plurality, interchange and diversity in museums. These transformations urge reconsideration of roles, organizations, and ways of communication. The age of migrations paradigm becomes for MeLa an interpretive tool to overturn the notion of the museum as a place for consolidation, conservation and transmission of a dominant identity, as well as the traditional relationship between these institutions and civil society. In a somewhat utopian manner, MeLa reconsiders museums as public venues for collaboration, shared control and complex translation. It sees museums as former places of power now turned into places of cultural integration, places for multi-cultural representation, places of meeting and understanding on the open grounds of cultural education. In this regard, MeLa affirms that, as a consequence of the intermingled condition of the contemporary way of life (multiethnic, multicultural and metropolitan), a historical-cultural revision of the ideas and forms of institutions in the public sphere is needed.[16] This is because every representation involves various visitors not just as users—but also as objects and subjects of knowledge.

Displaying a more open attitude towards diverse histories and cultures, museums need to reconsider the heritage they are charged to conserve and transmit, and have to rewrite their narratives in a way that is inclusive, shared and appreciated by different visitors. This rewriting must be able to renounce programmatic differences and be able to include rather than segregate. Thus, rewriting can cut the dominant culture down to size, and render the subjects homogeneous with respect to one another: it's a transformation that recognizes "museums as arenas of discourse and negotiation useful in defining new forms of public culture" (Szwaja, and Ybarra-Frausto 2006, xi-xii).

Selfness and otherness are always on the table when messages of acquaintance are communicated in the public domain of exhibitions. Narrations need multiplicity of voices, interpretations, and modes of representation; audiences ask for a pluralistic access to information and

---

16   According to statistics, in 2007 the urban population had for the first time exceeded 50% of the whole population of the world. Australia today has the highest rate, with 89% of its population living in urban areas.

learning; people need to leave behind their prejudices. Thus, to walk in the world of knowledge, museums must overcome the polarities of "inclusion" and "exclusion," "similarity" and "difference," "centre" and "periphery." As Fredi Drugman wrote in 1995,

> How can the visit to a museum or to an exhibition be transformed into a real journey into the other-than-self? What tips can an organizer and an exhibition designer draw from their own experience to make what they show talk to the visitor? How does a user fit with his/her culture? And what happens to the culture of a minority when it becomes part of the hegemonic cultural politics of an important museum? What is the relationship between the "universalistic vocation" and the contextual character of what we call, almost never agreeing on the definition, cultural heritage? (Drugman 2010, 200)

Museums are concerned with objects, spaces and communication devices. They are organized as formal and visual settings that visitors engage on their routes along halls, galleries and rooms in an immersive experience of seeing and learning from things. The physical relationship between the visitor and the artifact on display—whether a painting, a car, a sculpture by Richard Serra, or a video on the history of the holocaust—is physiologically repetitive. It always involves the five senses, it is always tied to the desire of curiosity, it corresponds to the need of understanding and learning, and it involves sensitivity and thought.

While today museums shift from object-centered institutions to more articulated places for reflective discourses, the tension between the sphere of the *visible* and the sphere of the *invisible* becomes apparent in the inevitable gap between what the visitor sees and what curators want to show. It's a problem of interpretation and communication, often marked by veiling and censorship. Concealing, revealing, making visible the invisible—all these acts entail the selection, organization and display of objects and narrations: these are never neutral acts. The medium of the exhibit—a medium with techniques derived from the disciplines of museography and scenography—is at the forefront of a dialectic of interchange [Imgs. 13-14]. In the best case, exhibitions approach two spheres: the sphere of the narrative and the sphere of listening. In the worst case, exhibitions accentuate the distance between the two.

When we think to museums as laboratories for enhancing experience, education, and cultural dialogue, the nature of these institutions in the new millennium lies in the altered, widened and diversified relationships they establish with their visitors. Today museum extend their catchment area beyond the narrow context of towns, university campuses, villages, regions and nations (as it used to be in the past), and expand to a supranational global scale [Img. 15]. This phenomenon takes place in an increasingly complex intersection of interests, languages, cultures, desires, and expectations, which affects the web of cultural connections, our comprehension of museum representations, our interaction with the narratives and objects on display. It's a continuous interrogation; it's a
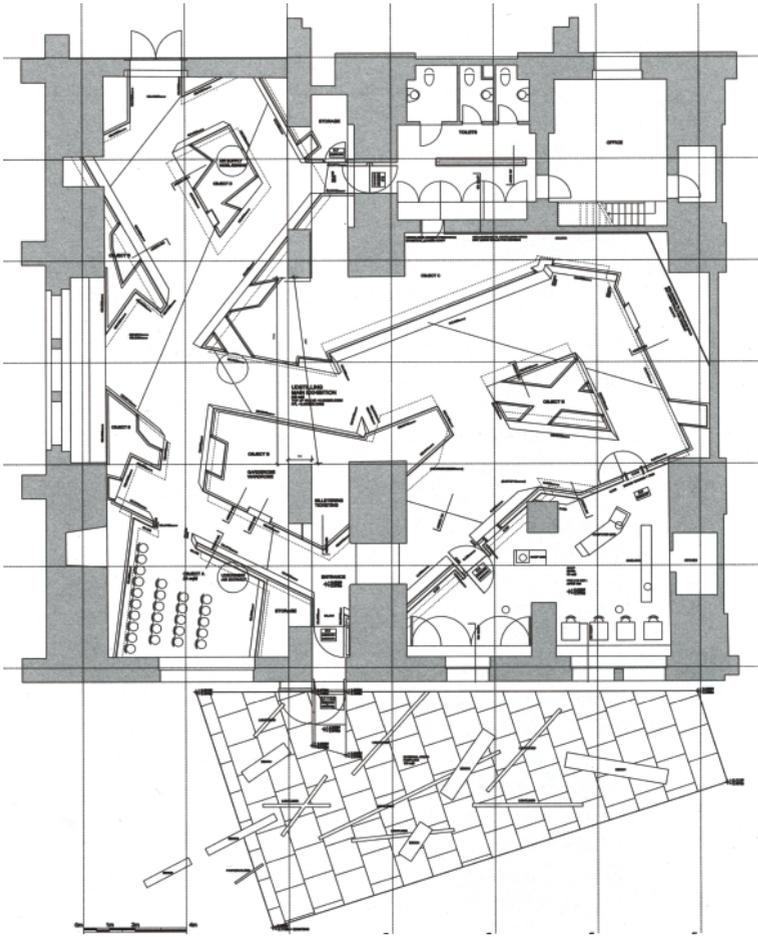
IMG. 13 — *Floor plan of the Dansk Jødisk Museum, Copenhagen. Daniel Libeskind, 2003. The museum is located in the basement of a 17th century structure built by King Christian the IV that houses the Royal Library.*
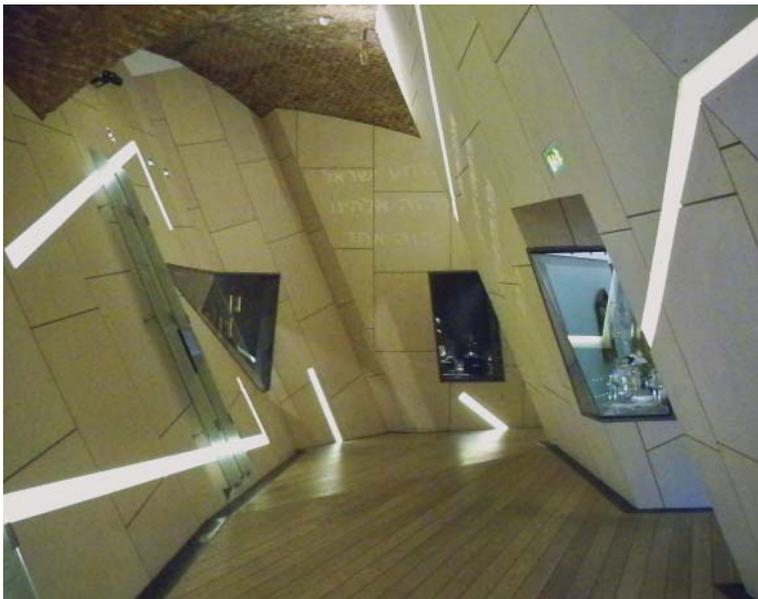
IMG. 14 — *Dansk Jødisk Museum, Copenhagen. Daniel Libeskind, 2003.*

phenomenon that involves both the "selves" and the "others" without social and cultural barriers.

Today museums are concerned with giving expression to a variety of ethnic, religious, and linguistic groups—that is, to diverse cultures— thus fostering a layerization and complexification of knowledge that leads to conscious and critical museum visits. This arouses debates, conflicts and negotiations about agency and museum mission and organization. In the background of this complexity, culture acts both in the individual and the collective domains, showing a growing care for subjectivity in selecting and organizing knowledge. It's a desire of freedom—peculiar in our age in every part of the world—in which access to culture and identity representations are entwined with the need for awareness, belonging and citizenship:

> "Culture" […] articulates the tension between two antithetical concepts of identity: it tells us to think of ourselves as being who we are because of what we have in common with all the other members of our society or community, but it also says we develop a distinctive particular identity by virtue of our efforts to know and fashion ourselves as individuals. In abstract terms, culture simultaneously connotes sameness and difference, shared habit and idiosyncratic style, collective reflex and particular endeavor. (Ray 2001, 3)

The relationship between people, spaces and exhibits, implicates the ways which different visitors move and interact with exhibition displays and narratives, and also with other visitors that participate in this collective experience. The multilayered society has shattered the concept of public, and also that of "publics." Today we have only visitors, single personalities, one different from the other. Each visitor is a public in himself. Each visitor sees the museum or the exhibition differently from the other, and each uses it in a personal way.[17] In this sense we can realize how the broad phenomenon of migration is determining the stratification and multiplication of cultural awareness both at the collective and individual scale. As Nicholas Serota (the director of London Tate since 1988) asserted, in making exhibitions "we can expect to create a matrix of changing relationships to be explored by visitors according to their particular interests and sensibilities" (Serota 1996, 55). This is to say that experiences in museums should be tailored to the interests and cultural needs of every visitor. But this is not an easy task!

Museums and libraries are similar in their function of conserving and safeguarding. They share the same possibility for public access, but the way they use their preserved heritage differs, especially in their modes of transmission/communication.[18] In museums, exhibitions belong to

---

17   "The plurality of the visitors—each with their own intellectual and aesthetic baggage, moods, knowledge, and expectations—makes any reference to the public impossible. We ought to speak of the innumerable individuals of whom it consists" (Bal 2011, 525).

18   The UNESCO Public Library Manifesto states: "The services of the public library are provided on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status" (UNESCO 1994).

the very discourse that the institution enunciates to visitors (and it can change according to shifts in the public policies, the curatorial hand, and so on). The fruition of librarian heritage is more notably related to individual research. Libraries entail personal constructions of surveys that are open to multiple interpretations and uses of cognitive heritage. The limits of this freedom result from binding factors: knowledge of the language, inaccessibility of some texts, or conservation issues of old books and manuscripts. However, computerization and digitalization are improving access to the contents of these documents: the Web makes closer the realization of an on-line universal library, with free or paid access. These technological developments are also part of a new approach to museum contents that enhances access to knowledge. The free attitude towards information, prompted by new communication technologies, actually raises some questions. Digitalization increases the possibility of

IMG. 15 — *Museum of Sydney, built on the site of the 1788 first Government House. Richard Johnson, 1995.*

access to documents and images of objects, but eliminates the physical contact with the objects. This condition offers the opportunity to create a world wide dissemination of information, and recalls the *Musée imaginaire* ("Museum without walls") envisioned by André Malraux (1947). But, quoting Michel Foucault, it also generates a distance between *les mots et le choses* (Foucault 1966), between the world of imagery and the actual world—provided that the physical contact with real things should be still regarded as important. The Internet has already made possible "libraries of libraries" and "museums of museums" as a global "network of networks." But, beyond the possibilities offered by digitized books and exhibitions, and by the Internet, the presence of real objects is still unavoidable in museum displays and temporary exhibitions. In museums, knowledge will always materialize as artifacts.

IMG. 16 — *MAXXI—Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Rome. Zaha Hadid, 2010.*

While audiences are deeply changing in social composition and expectations, the traditional character of museums lingers. According to ICOM (2007, 2), "A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment." This is a philosophical and social statement, and is quite agreeable, but what must now questioned is the way museum collections should be reorganized as evolving narratives. The representation of the changing social body and its cultural needs shapes memory and identity in a different way when conceived through a postnational and transcultural lens. After all, museums are about things, people and their relationships in an ever-changing reality.

IMG. 17 — *Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao. Frank O. Gehry, 1997.*

→ ON MUSEUM ARCHITECTURE

Every political, social, scientific, and cultural transformation comes from a question—or set of questions—which grows out of the conditions an epoch. These questions can be formulated in an explicit or implicit way. As it happened for the so called "scientific revolutions" that caused paradigm shifts (Kuhn 1962), the reconfiguration of knowledge can't occur everywhere at the same time. For example, few advanced museums lead the way to new arrangements, while other institutions move prudently and others remain anchored to traditional models. This is the result of a series of factors: differing political and cultural positions that admit or halt new models; abundance or lack of resources; but also the fact that museum buildings have a material solidity that hinders fast changes in exhibition settings. In spite of this, the reconfiguration of existing museums continues to appear in many political agendas, along with the construction of new museums in response to the complex requests of contemporary culture.

Architecture, with its iconic and symbolic values, has always had a peculiar role in shaping museum experience. Its forms and languages have characterized the civic identity of this institution: the classical style of the first art museums, the regional style of ethnographical museums in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Modern Style of museums in the mid-twentieth century, the architectural extravaganza of colonial museums, ending with the bombastic style of contemporary "global" museums designed by renowned archistars. Today, especially in the field of contemporary art, gigantism and glamour are used as architectural flywheels to publicize occasionally humdrum content (Basso Peressut 1999; Suma 2007). In this sense architecture reflects the values carried and communicated by the economic, political and cultural age in which museums are built. Iconicity is part of the strategy to identify and self-represent political powers during their lifetime, and even after their time the imaginative force of architecture can continue to act as a sort of stable identifier of special cultural values embodied in ever-changing social structures. The recent search for form, space and exhibition language in museum projects reveals the outposts of a relatively unprecedented trial, although some projects raise questions about the relationship between formal intentions and the capacity of realized buildings to function at their best as places for displaying [Imgs. 16-17].

The museum as a metropolitan collective place is increasingly consolidated in a context where cultural institutions belong to a global scale of social leisure and consumerism. Museum users are no longer limited to academics, clerics and amateurs, and since museum values have shifted from elitism to popularization, number of visitors and income are now a unit for evaluating public relevancy.[19] Museums are places of sociabil-

---

19   Frank Werner, talking about the first museum boom in Germany, wrote in 1987 of: "sixty million leisure-hungry visitors, kitted out with gym-shoes that assail the museums of the German Federal Republic every year in search of recreation amidst artistic and architectural scenery of increasing refinement" (Werner 1987, 38-39).

ity, the new "town-squares." They are sites of participation and cultural interchange for the curious, the tourist and the *flâneur*, who go to museums to browse in the bookshop, participate in conferences or other events and eventually—but not for sure—visit exhibition rooms. The museums are now meeting places like the urban arcades, theatres and cafés of the nineteenth century (Benjamin 1982).[20] They are real multi-purpose buildings that express values as a position in the domain of metropolitan public places and sites. Beyond architectural prominence, the way museums interact with urban and territorial networks of people makes them special part of the constructed scenery of everyday life. This scenery defines the space for inhabiting contemporary cities—a space that is no longer based on a homogenous experience of aggregated buildings (as in historical towns), for the city is now shaped as a network of relations. The city of today finds its meaning in a heterogeneous, discontinuous, reticular and punctiform morphology that participates in lifestyles, spaces, objects and new architectural configurations [Img. 18].

The possibility of personal mobility constantly redraws the metropolitan landscape of living, where moving from one place to another is now akin to the contiguity of pre-modern cities. The way we use urban space, as Michel de Certeau has explained, is part of people's everyday social habits (de Certeau 1984). These habits are first concerned with inhabiting places, and then concerned with the self-positioning in a social hierarchies. In everyday life, beside the "strategies" of institutions (which plan

---

20 In its first five years since opening in 2000, the Tate Modern in London, more than a million and one half of its 20,000,000 total visitors participated to conferences, lectures, films, musical performances and other events related to the exhibitions. The 56% visited the shops (among them 76% bought postcards and 56% books), 26% attended the cafeteria, 12% of visitors declared that they were attracted primarily by the architectural intervention by Herzog and de Meuron (Gayford et al. 2005, 47, 57).

IMG. 19 — *SFO Museum-San Francisco International Airport. Map of the terminals with the exhibition spaces marked by red dots.*
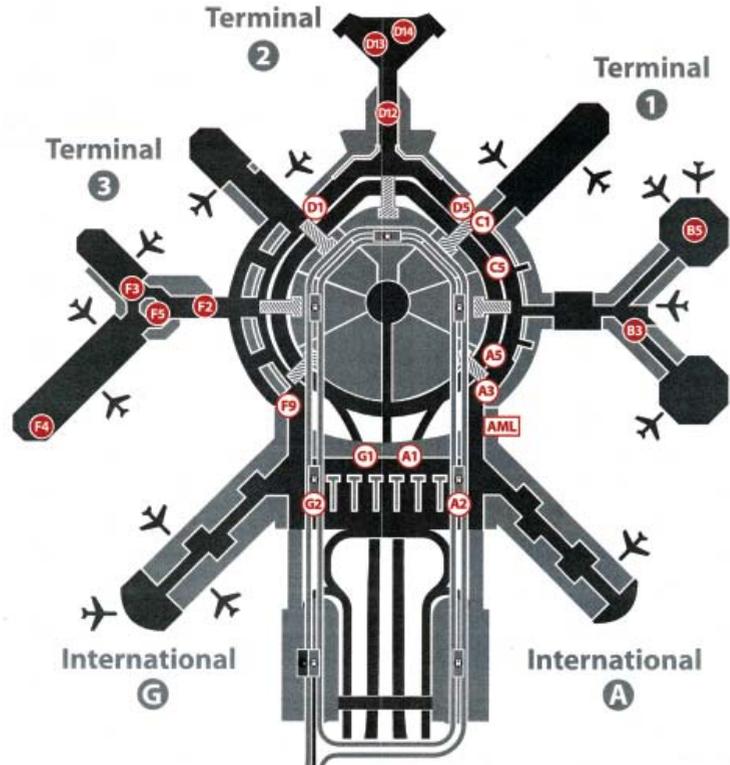
and manage architectures where people live), the "tactics" of individuals support "innumerable practices by means of which users reappropriate the space organized by techniques of sociocultural production" (xiv). The result of this reappropriation is the successful compositions of "a manifold story that has neither author nor spectator, shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of spaces" (93). Such practices consist in the creation and recreation of experiences in the different places people move through each day. Passing through mental and physical "thresholds" symbolizes a change of state as the sturdy occupation of space. This occupation is experienced by individuals as a continuously reformulated act of inhabiting between isolation and socialization. It is in these provisional places of gesture and action that itinerancy is redeemed. People integrate their perception of the environment to decide how to organize the complexity of the world around them. Museums are the "cultural nodes" of this network of "urban rituals:" they participate in the intensification of our experiences through the aesthetic values of aesthetic values of their architectures, interior spaces, collections and exhibition settings.

In the organization of our cities and territories museums historically play the role of *centre-builders*. Even despite the traditional location in the core of the city, many museums are now decentralized, in a wider transit system that creates new centers in a broader territory. Museums

are now positioned near or inside transportation interchanges like airports, highways and rail stations, where large flows of potential visitors travel daily. These broader horizons overturn the bureaucratic definitions of national, regional, municipal museums, for accessibility and catchment area are now determined by transnational mobility [Imgs. 19-20].[21]

As with contemporary art, museum exhibition spaces also transmigrate to different urban places to correlate and to explore relationships between "inside" and "outside." The historian Michael Levin identified the main social aspect of the modernization of the museum in its "having approached the road," as a process of democratization involving the visitors, as opposed to the museum "temple." The museum as "exhibition hall" replaces the monumental character with a spatially indifferent "frame" that defines the exhibition space as a place unstable and change-

21   Created in 1980, the San Francisco International Airport Museum (SFOM) is the first cultural institution to be located in an airport that is now used by more than forty million passengers annually. In 1999 the museum received accreditation from the American Association of Museums. Today, it features more than twenty galleries throughout the Airport terminals, displaying a rotating schedule of art, history, science, and cultural exhibitions, as well as the San Francisco Airport Commission Aviation Library and Louis A. Turpen Aviation Museum, which houses a permanent collection dedicated to preserving the history of commercial aviation. Among the 2011-2012 exhibitions are: "Threading the Needle: Sewing in the Machine Age," "A World Examined: Microscopes from the Age of Enlightenment to the Twentieth Century," "The Spirited Folk Arts of Mexico," "The Enduring Designs of Josef Frank," "Second Chances: Folk Art Made from Recycled Remnants." See SFO Museum 2011.
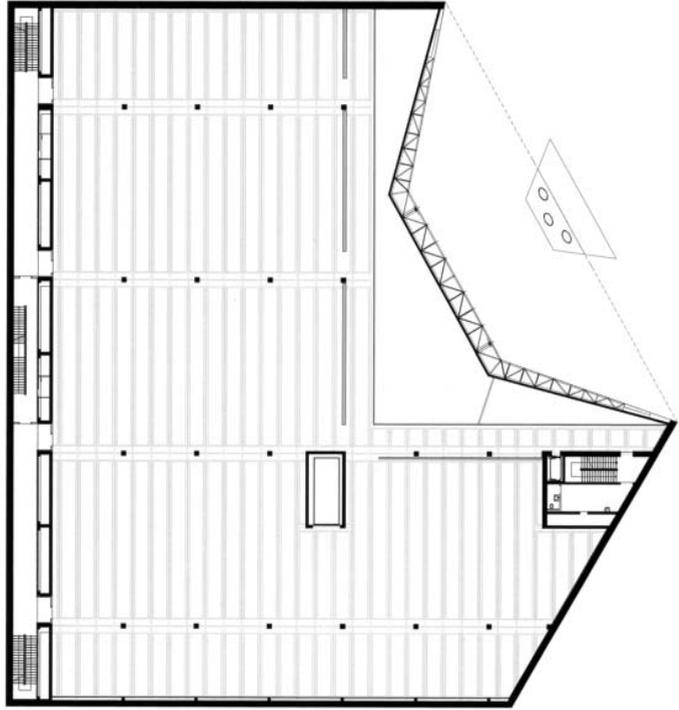
able (Levin 1983, 33-60). Moreover, the boundary between the forms and organizations of cultural institutions is blurred. We can easily agree with Elain Gurian's statement of more than a decade and a half ago: "In twenty-five years, museums will no longer be recognizable as they are now known. Many will have incorporated attributes associated with organizations that now are quite distinct from museums" (Gurian 1995, 31).

The functional hybridization between libraries, museums, art galleries, kunsthallen, cultural centres, and theatres is already a matter of fact. Performances are held in museums; museum curators and art dealers work together to evaluate art; cultural centers organize temporary exhibitions. Libraries, which in their process of cumulating and conserving books have always been a peculiar genre of museum, in the era of digitalization are becoming "museums of books" in every sense. In fact, libraries now display books in galleries and organize exhibitions, while many historical libraries are already organized and managed as actual museums. The traditional "exhibitionary complex" is less and less definable as clear and separated typologies. Instead, multiculturalism is mirrored by the multi-functionalism of many new cultural institutions.

As in today's culture market everything is part of a fast process of production and consumption, museum content is increasingly transient due to a continuous renewal of exhibitions, especially temporary and traveling. We foresee a type of museum organized with one or more great repositories, or a warehouse where it is possible to pick up, from time to time, objects for exhibitions in different places and spaces. This

would lead to consider museums as thematic repositories built around the world (dedicated to preserve works of art, science, applied arts, design, etc.), sorts of "libraries of objects" that could remotely supply all displays for various cross-cultural exhibitions in a sort of cosmogony of multicultural ever-changing "ephemeral museums" [Imgs. 21-22].[22]

A final remark. Migration means transition, movement, motion, flow, and circulation. It implies instability, lack of permanence, uncertainty, and continuously redefined mental (and philosophical) paradigms. Since buildings, exhibition spaces and displays are not easy to manipulate, we may ask: is there a new museum environment or exhibition space that can fundamentally alter the system object-person-place that historically defines the representation and communication in exhibitions? If this is a viable target for new projects and new buildings, then this transformation is even more difficult for existing museums. Such transformations could call into question the safeguard of historical architectural values within a single institution.

---

22   It already happens in the Schaulager in Basel. Designed by architects Herzog & de Meuron and built in 2002 to host the collection of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation, Schaulager is defined as "a new kind of space for art. It is neither museum nor a traditional warehouse. Schaulager is first and foremost a response to the old and new needs for the storage of works of the visual arts. […] It is a pilot programme that allows works of art to lead their own lives behind the curtains, a life that does not simply consist of an endless wait for public presentation. […] Schaulager is a unique place where art is seen and thought about differently" (Shaulager 2011). For the term "ephemeral museum" see note 13.

The re-evaluation of museum narratives and representations may conflicts with the physical assets of existing museums, which bring together history, tradition, and forms embodying the theories and policies of their initial construction. This means that not all museums can be deconstructed or refurbished, as opposed to what has happened in the last fifty years in the name of a misunderstood act of "modernization." Ancient museums have strong identities and they are often *Gesamtkunstwerken,* or museums of themselves. These museums testify for a specific culture in the museum field—a culture that is Western or euro-centric, colonial, evolutionary and historically oriented, but often well built and organized. It would be blameworthy to manipulate or destroy these beautiful places, for their architecture is a real "territory of memory." If we want to take care of these values, one thing we can do is introduce a new critical view for visitors—for example using mobile or reversible ICT devices that do not interfere with existing displays. This way, through individual creative journeys, we'll succeed in offering different and updated ways of looking at museum collections, while remaining aware of what historical museum buildings and exhibitions have represented—and still represent—for the history of culture.

The challenge that museums face in this new millennium then lies in the capacity to perform a transformational balance between the sensitivity of traditions and the necessary thrust of innovation. This is a thorough bold project.

→ **REFERENCES**

Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso.

Anico, Marta. 2009. "Representing Identities at Local Municipal Museums: Cultural Forums or Identity Bunkers?" In *Heritage and Identity: Engagement and Demission in the Contemporary World*, edited by Marta Anico, and Elsa Peralta, 63-75. London & New York: Routledge.

Ashworth, Gregory J., and John E. Tunbridge. 1996. *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict.* New York: Wiley.

Ashworth, Gregory J., Brian Graham, and John E. Tunbridge. 2007. *Pluralising Pasts: Heritage, Identity and Place in Multicultural Societies.* London & Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press.

Bal, Mieke. 2011. "Exposing the Public." In *A Companion to Museum Studies,* edited by Sharon Macdonald, 525-542. Malden, MA & Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Barrett, Jennifer. 2011. *Museums and the Public Sphere*. Malden, MA, Oxford & Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Basso Peressut, Luca. 1999. *Musées: Architectures 1990-2000.* Paris: Actes Sud.

———. 2005. *Il Museo Moderno.* Milan: Lybra Immagine.

Baur, Joachim. 2009. *Die Musealisierung der Migration: Einwanderungs-museen und die Inszenierung der multikulturellen Nation.* Bielefeld: Transcript.

Benjamin, Walter.1982. *Das Passagen-Werk.* Edited by Rolf Tiedemann. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag.

Bennett, Tony. 1988. "The Exhibitionary Complex." *New Formations* 4: 73-102.

———. 2006. "Exhibition, Difference, and the Logic of Culture." In *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*, edited by Ivan Karp, Corinne A. Kratz, Lynn Szwaja, and Tomás Ybarra-Frausto, 46-69. Durham, NC & London: Duke University Press.

Bhabha, Homi K. 1990. "Introduction: Narrating the Nation." In *Nation and Narration*, edited by Homi K. Bhabha, 1-8. London & New York: Routledge.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1979. *La Distinction: Critique sociale du jugement.* Paris: Les Éditions de Minuti.

Cameron, Fiona, and Linda Kelly, eds. 2010. *Hot Topics, Public Culture, Museums.* Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Castells, Manuel. 1996. *The Rise of the Network Society.* Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Clifford, James. 1997. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Dagognet, François. 1984. *Le musée sans fin.* Paris: Champ Vallon.

Davis, Peter. 2011. *Ecomuseums: A Sense of Place.* London: Continuum. First published 1999.

De Certeau, Michel. 1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life.* Berkeley-Los Angeles, CA & London: University of California Press.

Dell'Orso, Silvia. 2009. *Musei e territorio: Una scommessa italiana.* Milan: Mondadori Electa.

De Varine, Hugues. 1991. *L'Initiative communautaire.* Paris: Editions W/MNES.

Drugman, Fredi. 1982. "Il museo diffuso." *Hinterland* 21-22: 24-25.

———. 2010. "Una meravigliosa risonanza." In *Lo specchio dei desideri: Antologia sul museo*, edited by Mariella Brenna, 199-202. Bologna: Clueb. First published 1995.

Edwards, Geoffrey, and Marie Louise Bourbeau. 2008. "Defining a Research Agenda for City Museums in a Peripheralizing World." In *City Museums and City Development,* edited by Ian Jones, Robert R. MacDonald, and Darryl McIntyre, 136-154. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

Emiliani, Andrea. 1974. *Dal museo al territorio 1967-1974.* Bologna: Edizioni Alfa.

European Commission. 2009. "Research in Socio-economic Sciences

and Humanities: Indicative Strategic Research Roadmap 2011-2013." Accessed March 27, 2012. http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/roadmap-2011-2013-final_en.pdf.

EuNaMus. 2012. "Mid Project Key Observations." Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.eunamus.eu/firstpage/keyobservations2.pdf.

Foucault, Michel. 1966. *Les mots et les choses: Une archéologie des sciences humaines.* Paris: Gallimard.

———. 1986. "Of Other Places." Translated by Jay Miskowiec. *Diacritics* 16 (1): 22-27. First presented 1967.

Gayford, Martin, et al. 2005. *Tate Modern: The First Five Years*. London: Tate-Millbank.

Graham, Brian, and Peter Howard. 2008. "Heritage and Identity." In *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity,* edited by Brian Graham and Peter Howard, 1-15. Aldershot & Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Grégoire, Abbé Henri. 1873. *Rapport sur la bibliographie présenté à la Convention nationale, le 22 Germinal An II-1794.* Paris: McKean et C.ie. First published 1794. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.enssib.fr/bibliotheque-numerique/document-48780.

Gurian, Elaine Heumann. 1995. "A Blurring of the Boundaries." *Curator* 38 (1): 31-37.

Haskell, Francis. 2000. *The Ephemeral Museum: Old Master Paintings and the Rise of the Art Exhibition.* New Haven, CT & London: Yale University Press.

Heidegger, Martin. 1977. *Sein und Zeit: Gesamtausgabe*, vol 2. Edited by Walter Bröcker and Käte Bröcher-Oltmanns. Frankfurt: Klostermann. First published 1927.

Hein, Hilde S. 2000. *The Museum in Transition: A Philosophical Perspective.* Washington, DC & London: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Holtschneider, Hannah K. 2011. *The Holocaust and Representations of Jews: History and Identity in the Museum.* London & New York, NY: Routledge.

ICOM. 2004. "Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums," in "Universal Museums," special issue, *ICOM News* 57 (1): 4. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/ICOM_News/2004-1/ENG/p4_2004-1.pdf.

———. 2007. "ICOM Statutes." Accessed March 27, 2012. http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/Statuts/Statutes_eng.pdf.

Kaplan, Flora E. 2006. "Making and Remaking National Identities." In *A Companion to Museum Studies*, edited by Sharon Macdonald, 152-169. Malden, MA & Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Karp, Ivan, and Steven D. Lavine, eds. 1991. *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display.* Washington, DC & London:

Smithsonian Institution Press.

Karp, Ivan, Christine Mullen Kreamer, and Steven D. Lavine, eds. 1992. *Museums and Communities: The Politic of Public Culture.* Washington, DC & London: Smithsonian Institution Press.

King, Anthony D. 2004. *Spaces of Global Cultures: Architecture, Urbanism, Identity.* London & New York: Routledge.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara.1998. *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage.* Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press.

Kjeldbaek, Esben, ed. 2010. *The Power of the Object: Museums and World War II.* Edimburgh & New York: MuseumsEtc.

Kuhn, Thomas S. 1962. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kurilo, Olga, ed. 2007. *Der Zweite Weltkrieg im Museum: Kontinuität und Wandel.* Berlin: Avinus.

Levin, Michael D. 1983. *The Modern Museum: Temple or Showroom.* Tel Aviv: Dvir Publishing House.

Macdonald, Sharon. 2003. "Museums, National, Postnational and Transcultural Identities." *Museum and Society* 1: 1-16. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/museum-society/documents/volumes/mands1.pdf.

Maggi, Maurizio. 2009. *Musei alla frontiera: Continuità, divergenza, evoluzione nei territori della cultura.* Milan: Jaca Book.

Malraux, André. 1947. *Le Musée imaginaire.* Geneva: Albert Skira.

Merriman, Nick. 2000. "The Crisis of Representation in Archaeological Museums." In *Cultural Resource Management in Modern Society,* edited by Alf Hatton and Francis P. McManamon, 300-309. London & New York: Routledge.

Molyneaux, Brian L. 1994. "The Represented Past." In *The Presented Past: Heritage, Museums, Education*, edited by Brian L. Molyneaux and Peter G. Stone, 1-13. London & New York: Routledge.

Museum Mödlareuth. 2011. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.museum-moedlareuth.de.

Newhouse, Victoria. 1988. *Towards a New Museum.* New York: Monacelli Press.

Nora, Pierre. 1989. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire." In *Representations* 26: 7-24.

Pietersee, Jan Nederveen. 2005. "Multiculturalism and Museums: Discourse about Others in the Age of Globalization." In *Heritage, Museums and Galleries: An Introductory Reader*, edited by Gerard Corsane, 163-183. London & New York: Routledge. First published 1997.

Plaza, Beatriz. 2000. "Evaluating the Influence of a Large Cultural Artifact in the Attraction of Tourism: The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao

Case." *Urban Affairs Review* 36 (2): 264-274.

Pratt, May L. 1992. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation.* London & New York: Routledge.

Prösler, Martin. 2005. "Museums and Globalization." In *Theorizing Museums*, edited by Sharon Macdonald and Gordon Fyfe, 21-44. Oxford & Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers. First published 1996.

Ray, William. 2001. *The Logic of Culture: Authority and Identity in the Modern Era.* Oxford & Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Sandell, Richard, Jocelyn Dodd, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, eds. 2010. *Re-Presenting Disability: Activism and Agency in the Museum.* London & New York: Routledge.

Sebald, Winfried Georg. 2001. *Luftkrieg und Literatur.* Frankfurt: S. Fischer.

Serota, Nicholas. 1996. *Experience or Interpretation: The Dilemma of Museums of Modern Art.* London: Thames and Hudson.

SFO Museum, 2011. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.flysfo.com/web/page/sfo_museum/.

Shaulager. 2011. "Schaulager Concept." Accessed March 27, 2012. http://schaulager.org/en/index.php?pfad=schaulager/konzept.

Somé, Roger. 2003. *Le musée à l'ére de la mondialisation: Pour une anthropologie de l'altérité.* Paris: L'Harmattan.

Suma, Stefania. 2007. *Musées 2: Architectures 2000-2007.* Paris: Actes Sud.

Szwaja, Lynn, and Tomás Ybarra-Frausto, 2006. Foreword to *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*, edited by Ivan Karp, Corinne A. Kratz, Lynn Szwaja, Tomás Ybarra-Frausto, xi-xiv. Durham, NC & London: Duke University Press.

Taffin, Dominique, ed. 2000. *Du musée colonial au musée des cultures du monde: Actes du colloque organisé par le Musée national des arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie et le Centre Georges-Pompidou,* June 3-6, 1998. Paris: Musée national des arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie.

UNESCO. 1994. "UNESCO Public Library Manifesto." Accessed on March 27, 2012. http://www.unesco.org/webworld/libraries/manifestos/libraman.html.

Urry, John. 1991. *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure And Travel in Contemporary Societies.* London: Sage.

Watson, Sheila. 2007. "Museums and their Communities." In *Museums and their Communities,* edited by Sheila Watson, 1-31. London & New York: Routledge.

Werner, Frank. 1987. "Sulla tipologia dei musei negli anni ottanta: L'esperienza della Repubblica Federale Tedesca/On the Typology of Museums in the Eighties: The Experience of the German Federal Republic." *Lotus International* 55: 36-53.

The MeLa Project
Research Questions, Objectives and Tools

→ FRANCESCA LANZ, GENNARO POSTIGLIONE

Francesca Lanz is Post-doc Research Fellow in the Department of Architectural Design of Politecnico di Milano and Assistant of the Project Coordinator for MeLa. She holds a PhD in Interior Architecture and Exhibition Design, and she is currently Temporary Professor in Interior Design at the School of Architecture and Society of Politecnico di Milano. Since 2006 she has collaborated to several research projects and teaching activities in the field of interior architecture.

Gennaro Postiglione is Technical Manager of the MeLa project and one of its authors. He is Associate Professor of Interior Architecture and board member of the PhD in Interior Architecture and Exhibition Design at Politecnico di Milano. He seats in the editorial board of the *AREA* journal and in the advisory board of the *Interiors* journal. His researches focus mainly on the preservation of collective memory and cultural identity. He also has a particular interest in Nordic architecture.

→ ABSTRACT

Contemporary museums are currently facing a process of deep transformation of their missions, strategies, and modes of representation. As their role and purpose are being rethought, their spaces, tools and communication approaches need to be reformulated too. The MeLa project is located in this context. It assumes that one of the main challenges for a museum today lies in dealing with the conditions posed by what the project defines as "an age of migrations." The ongoing process of European unification, the growing phenomena of migration and mobility of people, goods, knowledge and ideas, the construction of a pluralistic civic community, and the consequent multiplicity of contemporary culture ask for a redefinition of the museums' organization and representation strategies in a more pluralistic and shared sense. The four-year interdisciplinary research MeLa aims at envisioning one such development of contemporary European museums.

→ **MUSEUMS IN "AN AGE OF MIGRATIONS:" RESEARCH RATIONALE**

The project *MeLa–European Museums in an age of migrations* has been funded by the European Commission 7th Framework Programme under the Socio-Economic Science and Humanities in 2011, and answers to the European call "Reinterpreting Europe's Cultural Heritage: Towards 21st century libraries and museums." In particular it is one of the research themes foreseen by the "Activity 5 group," whose program states:

> In the context of the future development of the EU, the aim is to improve understanding of, first, the issues involved in achieving a sense of democratic "ownership" and active participation by citizens as well as effective and democratic governance at all levels including innovative governance processes to enhance citizens' participation and the cooperation between public and private actors, and, second, Europe's diversities and commonalities in terms of culture, religion, institutions, law, history, languages and values. The research will address:
>
> → participation (including youth, minorities and gender aspects), representation, accountability and legitimacy; the European public sphere, media and democracy; various forms of governance in the EU including economic and legal governance and the role of the public and private sectors, policy processes and opportunities to shape policies; the role of civil society; citizenship and rights; the implications of enlargement; and related values of the population.
>
> → European diversities and commonalities, including their historical origins and evolution; differences in institutions (including norms, practices, laws); cultural heritage; various visions and perspectives for European integration and enlargement including the views of the populations; identities including European identity; approaches to multiple coexisting cultures; the role of language, the arts and religions; attitudes and values. (European Commission 2009)

MeLa moves from the conviction that the called-for reinterpretation of European cultural heritage in the twenty-first century is crucial for museums: it implies an in depth analysis of their role, modes of functioning and use in a globalized context that tends to be more and more characterized by a renewed communication of knowledge and by the continuous "migration" of people and ideas [Img. 01]. The cultural framework of MeLa is defined in the previous essay by Luca Basso Peressut, MeLa Project Coordinator. As he states, migration may be considered not only as a matter related to people, but as a complex condition of the contemporary society. The project thus assumes that one of the main challenges for a museum today lies in the need to deal with the conditions posed by what it defines as "an age of migrations." It is widely recognized that contemporaneity is deeply influenced by an ever-growing mobility of people, objects, information and ideas—a fluid "circulation [which] is at the basis of the exchange of goods; of migrations; of the diffusion of idea, techniques, or values […] a factor of change, of innovation, of freedom, of wealth [...] however, also […] a factor of destabilization and
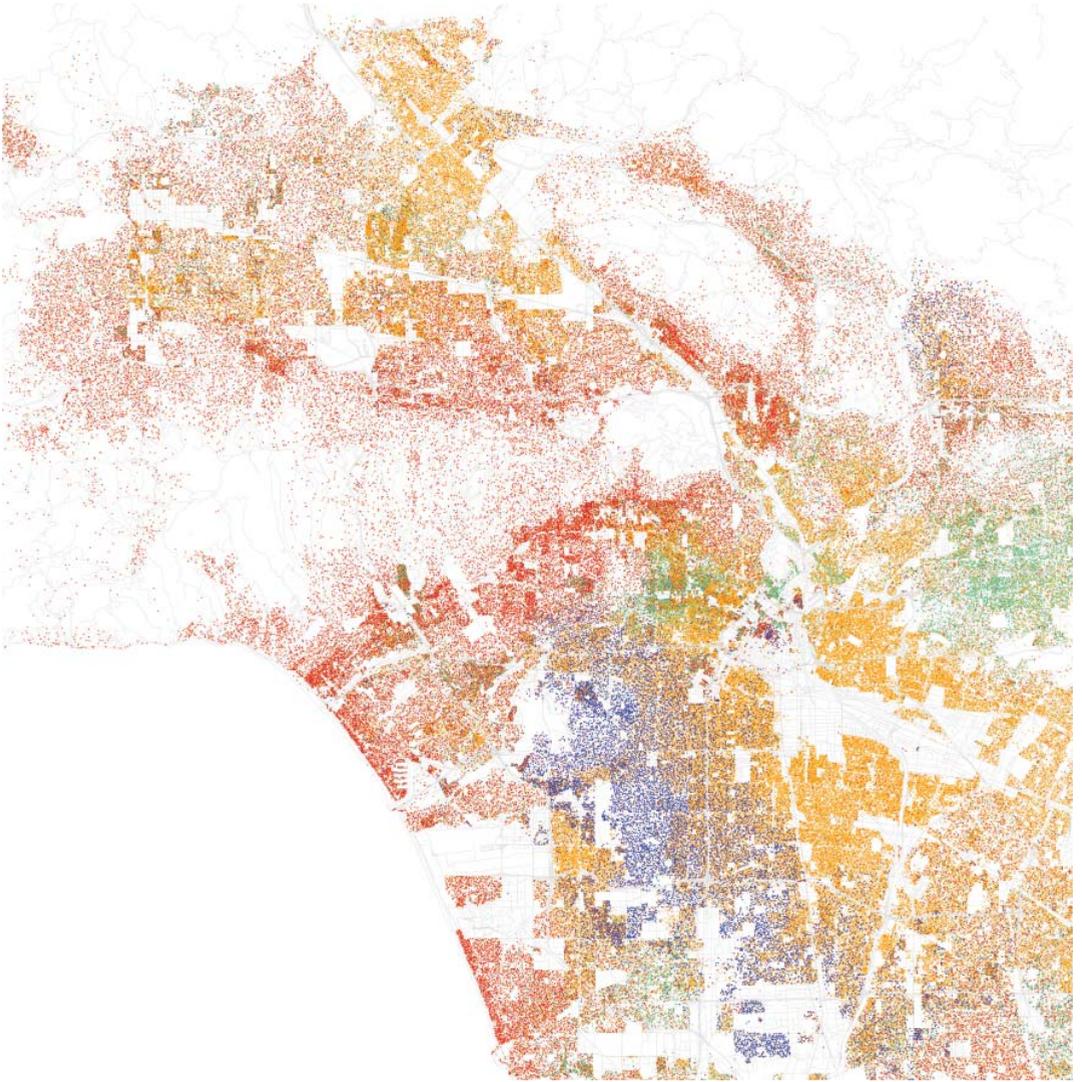
even of destruction" (Prevelakis 2008, 16). It's a factor that is affecting all the aspects of human life, including the very nature of "identity" and, consequently, its representation and narration in museums.

Yet if museums have historically been implicated in identity representation as well as in the definition of shared and common values, the dynamics of today's multiethnic and multicultural Europe ask for something different. Today we recognize the need for a shift in the organization, design and use of cultural institutions, from an approach focused on the formation of national identities to a new one based on complex multiplicity of voices and subjects involved, one that would be able to foster a rewriting of museums' narratives considering a more articulated postnational and transcultural scenario (Macdonald 2003). As a consequence, museums are currently in the middle of a process of deep

institutional transformations. Amongst these, the most important in recent times is probably the change of role of the museum itself, which is enhancing its possible role of "social agent" (Sandell 2007; Clifford 2007; Karp et al. 2006): from cultural institution to social, economic and urban fact, as well as "contact zones," "spaces of encounter," places of meeting and mutual understanding. An interdisciplinary, pluralistic and shared approach to cultural communication, the concept of "intercultural dialogue" (European Union 2006) and "cultural diversity" (UNESCO 2002) thus might become methods for museums to define and design new cultural proposals.

Thus, it is assumed that museum institutions should respond to the increasing complexity of contemporary culture and life by representing collective values, histories and memories at a scale not constrained by national borders, and for a large multifaceted audience with diversified cultural needs. MeLa therefore has at the core of its reflection issues such as "migration," "mobility" and "multiplicity"—of voices, points of view, theories, etc.—characterizing contemporary culture; "representation" and "hybridity"—of narratives and their expressions—distinguishing museums and exhibition spaces; "identity" of a variety of subjects—who could and should be represented and who experience museums—with their intellectual and cultural differences; as well as the acknowledgement of the pressing museums' need to display a multicultural shared knowledge enriched by multiple perspectives. These remarks are seen as cornerstones for rethinking European contemporary museums, and for enhancing their innovative and active role in citizenship building [Img. 02].

IMG. 02 — *MeLa project: topics and research perspectives.*
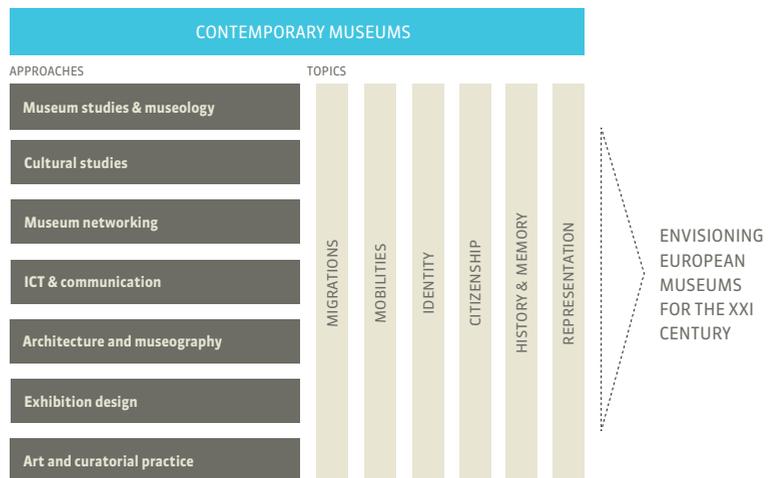
The question of how these changes and these new theories can influence in practice the design and the organization of museums is thus a crucial point. Therefore, the MeLa project objectives for the forthcoming four years therefore are on one hand to study and deepen the above

mentioned theoretical reflections, and on the other hand to evaluate their operational effectiveness and applications to museum architecture. With its objectives MeLa wants to reinterpret and improve the effectiveness of the European cultural heritage (tangible and intangible) as a promoter of a more effective and shared citizenship and identity in relation to the contemporary phenomenon of globalization that operate within the European Community (a phenomenon seen both as "Europanization" of Europe and its "colonization" by migratory fluxes). This condition implies more proper definitions and answers starting from the peculiarities of museums and galleries in the organization of their collections and contents established over the centuries, as a prerequisite to defining their possible evolution and adjustments, to fulfilling new demands and needs and to coping with the issues concerned with the transformations acting in present-day age of migrations.

→ UNFOLDING SOME CRUCIAL QUESTIONS: THE PROJECT RESEARCH FIELDS

Within this scenario, which represents the general theoretical framework of the research, some questions arise that urgently ask for an answer. How are cultural negotiation processes remapping museum and curatorial practices as sites, institutions, categories, organizations, and sets of social practices? How do museums face the challenge of representing multiple cultures in contemporary society? What can happen when the "peoples" and "places" implicated in, and at least to some extent constructed in, museum representation shift, change, multiply, fragment and/or move? How can museums engage their users in dialogic and participative ways that challenge authoritarian and monocentric narratives? How can a visit to an exhibition be transformed into a journey into the "other-than-self" and present a comparative vision or multi-vocal narration (Drugman 2010, 200)? How can museums represent memory and identity with an intercultural approach? How can museums play the role of mediators in cultural exchanges? Should museums' representational practices and design strategies change? If so, how?

These are some of the matters lying at the heart of the project. They will shape the project's research activities and drive its investigation towards the definition of innovative museum practices reflecting the challenges posed by the contemporary processes of globalization, mobility and migrations and by the new museum's roles. As people, objects, knowledge and information move at increasingly high speed rates, a sharper awareness of an inclusive European identity is needed to facilitate mutual understanding and social cohesion. MeLa's main objectives, then, are to empower museums spaces and practices with the task of building this identity, to respond to contemporary museums challenges, to reflect on the idea European citizenship, and to achieve an overall relevant advancement in terms of knowledge in the fields of the research.

In order to tackle such a complex research topic and fulfill its objectives, MeLa is articulated in detailed domains of study [Img. 03]. They represent the theoretical and thematic fields of investigation identified as
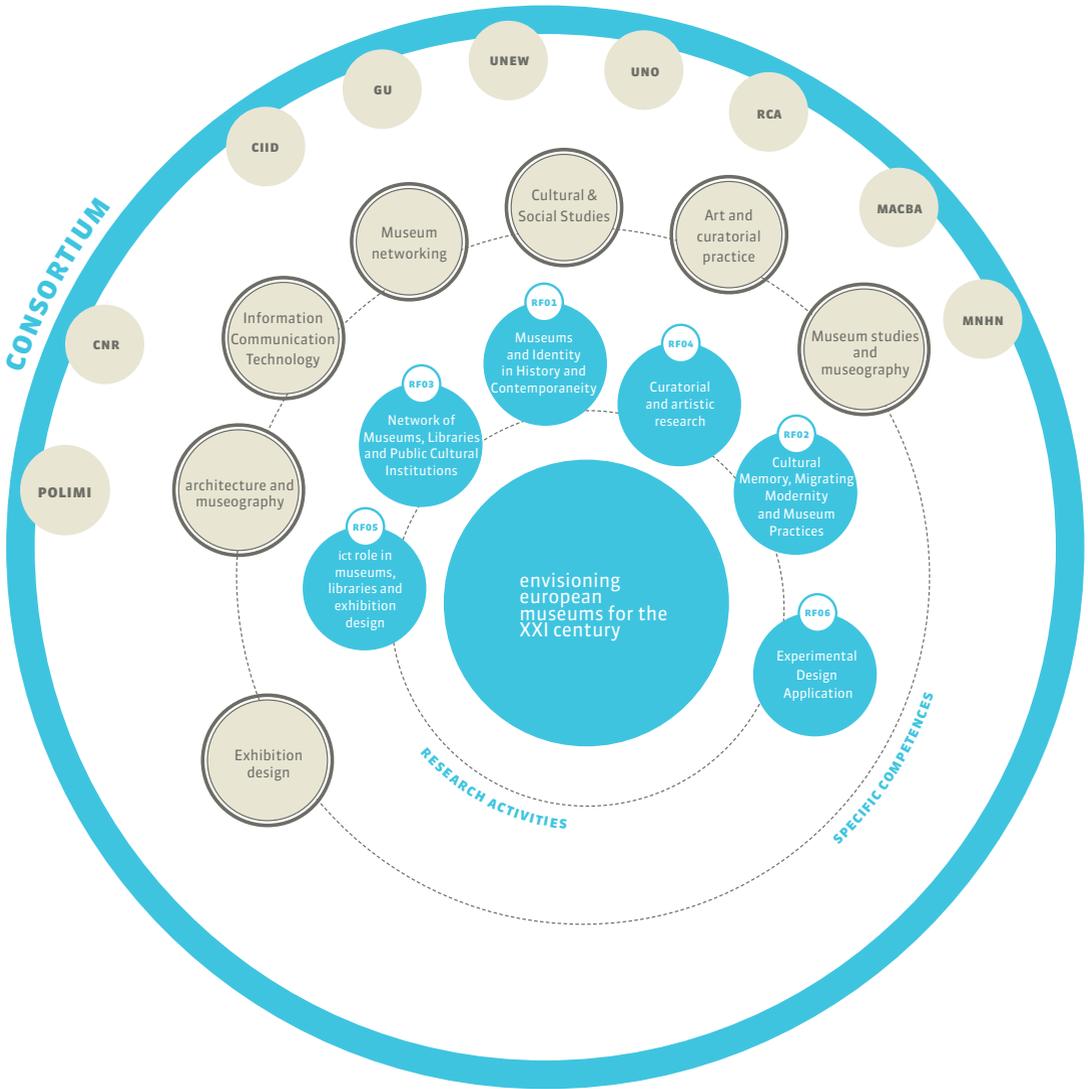
IMG. 03 — *MeLa Consortium: expertise and research fields.*

the most meaningful and promising for positioning emerging research questions. The first Research Field, "Museums & Identity in History and Contemporaneity," examines the historical and contemporary relationships between museums, places and identities in Europe and the effects of migrations on the museum practices. The second one, "Cultural Memory, Migrating Modernity and Museum Practices," transforms the question of memory into an unfolding cultural and historical problematic, in order to promote new critical and practical perspectives. The third one, "Network of Museums, Libraries and Public Cultural Institutions," broadens the scope of the research: it investigates coordination strategies between museums, libraries and public cultural institutions

in relation to European cultural and scientific heritage, migration and integration. Research Fields 04 and 05 propose some more innovative research tools and areas that contribute to providing the research with an interdisciplinary approach to project questions. On one hand, "Curatorial and Artistic Research"—also through a series of art exhibitions—explores the work of artists and curators on and with issues of migration, as well as the role of museums and galleries exhibiting this work and disseminating knowledge. On the other hand, Research Field 05, "Exhibition Design, Technology of Representation and Experimental Actions," investigates and experiments new communication tools, ICT potentialities, new user centered approaches, and innovative practices of "research by design" aimed at defining new tools and strategies for the design of the contemporary museum.

The described research activities and the related findings will produce an advancement of knowledge converging both in specific scientific publications and policy briefs, and in the sixth Research Field, "Envisioning Twenty-first Century Museums." On one hand this will develop specific investigation aimed at fostering theoretical, methodological and operative contributions to the interpretation of diversities and commonalities of European cultural heritage, and at proposing enhanced practices for the mission and the design of museums in the contemporary multicultural society. On the other hand, this Research Field, which will last throughout the project, has been designed as the project's backbone: it will direct the research and stimulate its development through a series of public discussions and workshops, it will involve the European community of scholars and the wide public, and it will finally elaborate a conclusive scientific publication that, together with a closing exhibition, will critically summarize the project findings and disseminate them.

→ THE RESEARCH INTO THE RESEARCH: INNOVATIVE METHODOLOGIES AND TOOLS

The MeLa working group consists of nine European organizations of recognized experience in the fields of the research at the international level. Project partners have been selected to combine appropriate knowledge and rooted research background, in order to efficiently cover all the expertise needed to implement and validate the scenarios presented and achieve the project objectives. The Consortium has been built mainly on a thematic structure, rather than a geographical one, to create a large interdisciplinary network specialized in the main research domains. It includes different universities, a research institute, and—unlikely most of the socio-humanities projects, especially in the field of museums studies—it also involves two museums and a small enterprise in order to foster not only academic research, but also "field" experience. Each partner will be responsible of one research field both from an organizational and scientific point of view, coordinating those activities that require the cooperation of all MeLa scholars and researchers. The project therefore is characterized by a strong interdisciplinary program that should guarantee an all-accomplished approach to the research topics in order to

provide the most comprehensive view possible of the questions at stake.

The quality of the whole project and of its results is also committed to its research tools and methodology. In fact, on one hand MeLa makes use of some standard research methodologies, which mainly are "desk research"—traditional secondary research to investigate the state of the art, such as bibliographical surveys, conference attendance, etc.—"field investigations"—aimed at analyzing and monitoring case studies—and "international conferences"—organized with call for papers in order to gather knowledge and widen the discussion. On the other hand, the project will use and implement other tools that are experimental in themselves and adopt an interdisciplinary approach. These will be developed to offer the opportunity to investigate the research themes through unconventional disciplines and thus provide new perspectives and ideas. We believe that an abreast topic such as the investigation of "European Contemporary Museums in an age of migrations" needs a new approach, and that academic research therefore needs to implement new research methods to investigate such emerging complex issues. These new tools include "brainstorming sessions—interdisciplinary closed workshops for MeLa researchers and invited guests focused on the core topics of each Research Field. These meetings involve external experts and practitioners, to foster connections and synergies and provide further stimuli to the research. Another innovative tool that will be implemented by the MeLa project is the "art-practice-based research," which starts from art or art practice and extends to issues of curating contemporary art to stress and investigate the relevance and strategic value of the curatorial and artistic research project for the advancement of knowledge in the area of the MeLa project themes. A further new research method will be the "research by design," consisting in the production of various experimental exhibition designs—either virtual or real—and prototypes. The experimental design applications are a tool to measure the operational effectiveness of the developed theoretical reflections and their applications. Thus, on the one hand they will be a test verification of the results connected with the first phases of the research, and, on the other hand, a further stimulus for the development of the subsequent phases.

→ HORIZONS

One of the MeLa objectives is to produce a relevant contribution to the discussion on the role and evolution of museums, also enhancing the raising of public awareness about identity complexity and its representation within the European cultural agenda. It aims at becoming a reference research project in the field of museum studies in relation with the issues of cultural identity and heritage complexification, stratification and hybridization ensuing from the contemporary growing phenomena of migration and mobility of people, goods, knowledge and ideas. Parallel to the process of Europanization, in fact, Europe is facing a consistent presence of large communities of migrants who live in Europe on a long term base: according to the Eurostat 2010 census, the 9,4% of

the twenty-seven European states' population comprises citizens born in a country different from the one in which they reside. Overall, there are 32.5 million "migrants," about two thirds of which were born in a non-European country (Eurostat 2011). These data confirm the general belief that we're living in a moment of profound changes, whose consequences are already visible in any domain of human life. Such changes transcend the political-economical sphere, and go so far as to affect art, culture and ordinary life, too. Hence, questions and concerns related to globalization, migration, and the growing ethnical-cultural mix that characterize contemporary society are identified by the project as some of the most pressing challenges for contemporary cultural institutions, and specifically museums.

MeLa, then, reflects from different points of view on the institutionalization of collective memory and its public representation in museums, and on the interdependency between this representation and cultural integration, with a specific focus on migration dynamics and mobility to, from and within the European Union. The purpose is to elaborate new theories, models, design practices and tools to rethink the roles of museums, and enhance their capability of building a truly democratic and inclusive European citizenship. And by understanding common heritage as something that encompasses both European established memory and traditions, and the identities and cultures of the less recognized and official European communities, MeLa will seek to envision European museums in "an age of migrations."

→ **REFERENCES**

Clifford, James. 1997. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Drugman, Fredi. 2010. "Una meravigliosa risonanza." In *Lo specchio dei desideri: Antologia sul museo*, edited by Mariella Brenna, 199-202. Bologna: Clueb. First published 1995.

European Union. 2006. *Official Journal of the European Union* (412): 44-50. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://cordis.europa.eu/documents/documentlibrary/90798681EN6.pdf.

European Commission. 2009. "Research in Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities: Indicative Strategic Research Roadmap 2011-2013." Accessed March 27, 2012. http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/roadmap-2011-2013-final_en.pdf.

Eurostat. 2011. "Foreign citizens made up 6.5% of the EU27 population in 2010." News release 105, July 14. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-14072011-BP/EN/3-14072011-BP-EN.PDF.

Karp, Ivan, Corinne A. Kratz, Lynn Szwaja, Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, eds. 2006. *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations.* Durham, NC & London: Duke University Press.

Macdonald, Sharon. 2003. "Museums, National, Postnational and Transcultural Identities." *Museum and society* 1(1): 1-16. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/museumsociety/documents/volumes/mands1.pdf.

Prevelakis, Georges. 2008. "City Museums and the Geopolitics of Globalization." In *City Museums and City Development,* edited by Ian Jones, Robert R. Macdonald, and Darryl McIntyre, 16-26. Plymouth: Altamira.

Sandell, Richard. 2007. *Museums, Prejudice and the Reframing of Difference*. London & New York: Routledge.

UNESCO. 2002. *Cultural Diversity: Common Heritage, Plural Identities.* Paris: UNESCO.

Challenges

National Museums Negotiating the Past for a Desired Future

→ **PETER ARONSSON**

PhD in History from Lunds University, he is Professor in Cultural Heritage and the Uses of History at Linköping University. He is the current Project Coordinator of the EU funded project *EuNaMus–European national museums: identity politics, the uses of the past and the European citizen*, where he directs an investigation on the development of the concept of Nordic culture in Nordic and Baltic museums in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Before coordinating EuNaMus, he has successfully coordinated the Marie Curie programme *NaMu–The Making of National Museums 2007–2008* aimed at comparing institutional arrangements, narrative scope and cultural integration of national museums.

→ **ABSTRACT**

National museums can be explored as processes of institutionalized negotiations, where material collections and display make claims and are recognized as articulating and representing national values and realities. Many of the negotiations and conflicts behind the scenes in the museums have long standing trajectories; they are indeed not mishaps but part of the value of the institutions in creating them as relevant cultural forces at play over the last two and a half centuries. The paper will outline the principal ground covered by these negotiations. It will also exemplify their consequences with some preliminary results from the EuNaMus-European National Museums: Identity politics, the uses of the past and the European citizen *research project, whose first study maps the interplay between institutional creation and nation making in Europe 1760–2010. Implicit and explicit narratives, conflicts and hopes and goals of cultural policies will be explored and contrasted to actual visitors experiences.*

PREVIOUS PAGE — *Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen. Created by the Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen to display his art collection, it was designed by Michael Gottlieb Bindesbøll, and built in 1838-48.*

The level of investments in national museums is high in contemporary society. The motives and hopes are often a mixture of a will to secure a scientific and relevant understanding of the national heritage, community integration, stimulating creativity and cultural dialogue and creating attractions for a burgeoning experience economy. The Netherlands is planning for a new national museum for communicating a stronger ethnic canon, a path also chosen in Denmark. Many other museums in Canada and New Zealand and also in Sweden hail a more multicultural approach, downplaying the traditional national aspect of narrative and inviting new citizens to a more diverse idea of society. Ethnographic museums open with a postcolonial invitation to dialogue all over the world in tension with strong demands for restituting objects ranging from the human remains of Samis, to the Elgin Marbles of Acropolis. It is a contested billion–dollar cultural industry creating, negotiating and reinforcing ideas of values, belonging and ownership.

The *EuNaMus–European National Museums: Identity politics, the uses of the past and the European citizen* research project explores the creation and power of the heritage created and presented by European national museums to the world, Europe and its states, as an unsurpassable institution in contemporary society. National museums are defined and explored as processes of institutionalized negotiations where material collections and displays make claims and are recognized as articulating and representing national values and realities. Questions asked on the project are why, by whom, when, with what material, with what result and future possibilities are these museums shaped.

Many of the negotiations and conflicts behind the scenes in museums have long standing trajectories, not by being mishaps but as part of the value of the institutions in making them into relevant cultural forces that have been at play over the last two and a half centuries. The ideas behind the creation of national museums developed slowly out of the practice of representing, ordering and exploring the world by making collections and displaying them. On one hand, a higher appreciation of the materiality of being and of values as a road to knowledge and prosperity challenged earlier religious and idealistic ideas of the futility of matter. On the other, an important role was played by historical event.

The shockwave of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars moved valuables across the continent. Although countries were later liberated from occupation, the need to represent themselves as nations to strengthen the subjects' will to defend their unity and sovereignty with arms, but also with pride, identification, community building and economic activity of a national dimension, had not been seen before. Then creation of national museums was one of the prestigious means of processing the urge for knowledge, education and grandeur, not only

through representing an existing world, but by their establishment presenting and creating new ideals and communities for the future [Img. 01]. Europe has since then seen industrialism, colonialism, two World Wars, the Cold War, the fall of the Soviet empire, migrations, globalization and environmental threats, while at the same time growing to tremendous affluence and prosperity. Trying to understand and handle tensions created by history and change is part of the cultural infrastructure of contemporary Europe and the world.

National museums are authoritative spaces for the display and negotiation of community and citizenship, and they have the scientific advantage for comparative exploration of being there over time and in all nation states, although shaped differently in interesting ways. Through collecting and creating repositories of scientific, historic and aesthetic objects, choices are made that protect and narrate ideas of virtues, uniqueness and place in the wider world. Hence, the first negotiation made by any museum is pointing to an object and arguing that it represents a unique or typical value. From this follows the authoritative and sometimes contested decision on what type of reality or value the object represents: the natural world, outstanding art, a craft tradition, a historic event or a foreign culture. The struggles of indigenous peoples to make the representation of their cultures travel from a natural history museum to other departments of the museum as a model of the world are part of that negotiation. This shows one of the dimensions where knowledge and politics interact explicitly, the second negotiation where different logics meet with mutual benefit, respect for autonomy but also deep rooted exchange of legitimacy. A political community in the making is in need of scientific support for its anciennity, its coherence and qualities over time.

It so happens that, through the museums, the quality and unity of the culture is composed to an orchestration of "unity in diversity." This involves the tempering of political controversies and the domestication of differences in favour of the aesthetic pleasure of high art, or the admiration and presentation of class and regional difference—in open-air museums like Skansen—as part of the stability and beautiful variation harboured in the culture of an allegedly stable, and even naturalized, national community [Imgs. 02-03]. This is the third negotiation, where difference is treated, silenced, domesticated or eventually recognized to play a decisive role in the orchestration of unity. The museum answers explicitly or quietly by interplaying voice and silences in dealing with old conflicts. The dissolution of the Swedish empire in 1809 and 1905 was celebrated in the early twenty-first century, but the victories of imperial Sweden in 1658 were passed by quietly. The role of the nation vis-à-vis its neighbors, as part of Europe, a Western tradition and the world community is communicated.

As fourth and overarching negotiation, museums are performing actions to handle societal change, both political—as in the case of war and occupation—and societal—as in the transformation from agricultural economy to industrial, to post-industrial. What part of the economy, after agriculture, is ready to be the next in line for ending up at a historical museum, and what parts point towards the future? The question is not always answered post facto, but established as an argument for where to place hopes and investments for the future. Utilizing national museums in competition between nations and metropolises as investments in the experience economy is a contemporary factor adding to older objectives of securing heritage. Another example of a will to change or adjust to changing political balances concerns the frequent conflicts about the restitution of objects and human remains.

The narrative of these issues treats questions of historical change in many ways. The European Union is troubled by disputes in many dimensions about democratic deficit, migration, territorial expansion, integration and weak performances. A free market as well as ideas of universal human rights are in fact localized, embedded and negotiated in institutions like cultural museums, too. The increased attention to cultural policy as a necessary political dimension to pursuing political goals is feeding into the Seventh Framework Programme for research, which asks for policy–relevant knowledge. Our answer to the call is a project on mapping how, and with what consequences, authoritative institutions such as national museums create long-standing values and identities in need of attention regardless of political preferences.

→ **EUNAMUS: A EUROPEAN PROJECT**

In order to shape a cultural policy for an expanding European Union, the understanding of one of its most enduring institutions for creating and contesting political identities is necessary. The focus is on understanding the conditions for using the past in negotiations that recreate

citizenship as well as the layers of territorial belonging beyond the actual nation-state. EuNaMus is one of the few humanities projects supported by the Seventh Framework Programme, run by the European Commission. The project has grown out of the collaboration between university partners connecting with a network of young and senior cultural researchers supported by the Marie Curie programme. For three years (2010-2013) EuNaMus will proceed through a series of investigations beyond the stereotypical ideas of museums as either a result of outstanding heroic individuals, exponents of a materialization of pure Enlightenment ideas, or outright ideological nationalistic constructs disciplining citizens into obedience.[1]

The research is pursued through multidisciplinary collaboration between eight leading institutions and a series of sub–projects (in EU-jargon: work packages or WPs) studying institutional path dependencies, the handling of conflicts, modes of representation, cultural policy and visitors' experiences in national museums. Understanding the cultural force of national museums will provide citizens, professionals and policy-makers with reflexive tools to better communicate and create an understanding of diversity and community in developing cultural underpinning for democratic governance.

The first endeavor of the project is called "Mapping and framing institutions 1750-2010: national museums interacting with nation–making." This overview of the most important museums established to serve as national museums in European countries (which, surprisingly, has never been done before) will try to achieve several objectives, all of them attainable through the comparative method. The first project gives us the general patterns of what museums were initiated and realized, by whom, with what agenda and with what consequences. In the first step the interaction with political state–making is analyzed covering all the states of the European Union. One hypothesis is that the actual history of state-making is of importance for the role played by museums,

---

1   Among the publications are several conference proceedings, also available on-line at LiU E-press, and a book linking to the new project. Amundsen, Arne B., and Andreas Nyblom, eds. 2008. *National museums in a global world: NaMu III: Department of culture studies and oriental languages, University of Oslo, Norway, 19-21 November 2007.* Linköping electronic conference proceedings 31. Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press; Aronsson, Peter, and Magdalena Hillström, eds. 2007. *NaMu, Making National Museums Program. Setting the frames, 26-28 February, Norrköping, Sweden.* Linköping electronic conference proceedings 22. Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press; Aronsson, Peter, and Andreas Nyblom, eds. 2008. *Comparing: national museums, territories, nation-building and change. NaMu IV, Linköping University, Norrköping, Sweden 18-20 February 2008: conference proceedings.* Linköping electronic conference proceedings 30. Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press; Knell, Simon J., Peter Aronsson, Arne B. Amundsen, Amy Barnes, Stuart Burch, Jennifer Carter, Viviane Gosselin, Sally Hughes, and Alan M. Kirwan, eds. 2010. *National Museums: New Studies from Around the World.* London & New York: Routledge; Aronsson, Peter and Gabriella Elgenius, eds. 2011. *Building National Museums in Europe 1750–2010. Conference proceedings from EuNaMus, European National Museums: Identity Politics, the Uses of the Past and the European Citizen, Bologna 28-30 April 2011. Report No. 1.* Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press. The earlier project was presented in Aronsson, Peter. 2007. "Making National Museums (NaMu) - ett internationellt program för jämförande studier rörande nationalmuseernas framväxt och funktion." *Nordisk Museologi* 1; Aronsson, Peter et al. 2008. "NaMu: EU Museum Project connects and educates scholars from around the world." *MUSE* 26 (6) and is still available at www.namu.se.

since empires, old well-established and unthreatened states did not have—and still do not have—the same needs as nations more recently struggling to form a nation–state. Finland and Norway show different patterns than Sweden and Denmark; Greece, Italy and Germany have partly other priorities than France or the UK. The role of empires in initiating colonial museums at home or abroad is also considered.

In the second project our research penetrates deeper into explicit narratives of the unity and destiny of the nation, as well as into the opposite treatment of conflict and "heritage wars" that exist in all nations. There is tension between striving towards a hegemonic representation of the cultural and political history of a country and oppositional voices of many kinds. These may come from other nations, minorities, regions classes and genders that demand representation in these prestigious arenas or even a whole new narrative assigning them a more prominent role. The conflicts over heritage range from a targeted destruction of heritage in war via international battles for the ownership of artefacts, to issues of how to represent or integrate minorities.

All narratives are, however, not explicit. In the third project the implicit message of architecture, city plans and the whole assemblage of national museums will be interpreted in a number of states. Art museums are especially interesting since they claim to stand for universal aesthetic values, but at the same time and in several dimensions they assess narratives on the grandeur of the host carried by the arrangement of collections and exhibitions. Another aspect of the spatial arrangement of national museums is the relationship between representations centralized in the capital and the existence of various "distributed" performances of the national, such as the Swedish Samdok. How is the national constructed in collecting and interacting with regional identities and marginalized communities? The third dimension, which is also a new form of distribution, is to interpret the impact of new assemblages of digital museums, like the representation of communities that goes beyond the individual museum.

National museums have from the start been utopian visionary projects carried out by politicians, intellectuals, scholars and citizens in the state and in civil society. The hopes of cultural politicians to use museums as tools for education, tourism and integration interplay with the formulation of the national museum professionals and directors themselves. In the fourth project this dynamic is explored for the last two decades on both national and European policy-making levels.

Now that we have a good view of the set-up, trajectories and the importance of the institutional framework, the explicit and implicit narratives that negotiate meaning, conflicts and directions, and the major actors' hopes for the future, the question remains: how does this matter to the audience? The fifth study concerns audiences in a set of European countries with the focus on mapping the experience of visiting by both quantitative and qualitative methods.
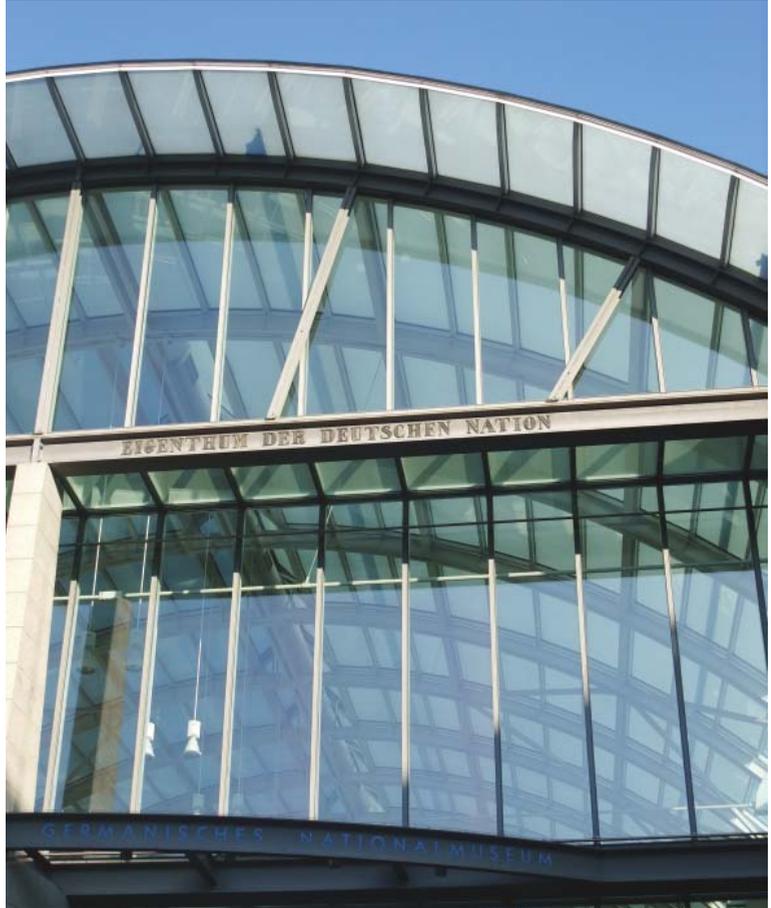
In projects financed by the Seventh Framework Programme a great deal of weight is put on communication. A communication plan is required to develop the identification of stakeholders and the means to communicate with them. Websites, newsletters, policy briefs, reference groups and material for exhibitions are some of the means used. The final project involves extracting the most relevant results and inserting them in a global context by exploring the working of national museums beyond Europe. Conferences are part of the running programme with the final one in Budapest in December 2012, aiming to focus on broad participation and on identifying the multidimensional relevance of the results. The major results will be available via Open Access, although a series of books on the work will also be published. The best way to keep up is to follow the website of the project (www.eunamus.eu).

To provide a taste of the comparative scope of the project I will hint at some reflections coming from the first study on how the institutional frameworks have evolved differently in different countries and how the comparative scope might help both to contextualize each case and generalize dynamics in a novel way.

Since the Renaissance Italy and Rome have been the archetype of Western heritage in the form of an art-historical legacy of a Golden Age. This year the state is celebrating 150 years as a united, autonomous and independent entity. In our project Italy is part of a large family of young states and nations united in the nineteenth century. It is also part of a smaller group of states that relate intensively with the heritage of the Classical period. The country bears witness to several grand plans for building national unity and representing it in national monuments and museums. It can also testify to the many struggles fought between ambitious cities and regions in this endeavour inside the nation. The right place to host artefacts is the cause of both demands on Italy and demands from Italy with high news-value in the international media.

In our project the theory of a close connection between museum and nation-making would suggest a strong investment in a comprehensive national museum to be one of the indispensable tools in the process of unifying a nation. These are at hand, for example in Finland and Hungary, and more so in Germany and Greece [Img. 04]—other states appearing in the same period. Firstly, we might anticipate the same to be the case for Italian unification. Many projects for musealizing both Antiquity and the national unification were launched, but did not receive recognition and position in many other similar countries. With the theoretic and comparative approach used in the project this becomes a problem in need of explanation.

Secondly, we can then gather a multitude of explanations to these divergences from a theoretical pattern: the excess and centrality of the classical open-air heritage musealized in situ; the consuming competition with the Vatican; the structure of secularization assigning religious heritage to local bodies; the establishment of several strong aristocratic collections before unification (Florence, Naples, Rome, Venice); the continuation of strong regional elites coupled with a low legitimacy for central government and unresolved legacies of fascism, just to mention a few.

Thirdly, we will be able to better assess the relative importance of these by systematically comparing with the forces at play in other European states. Why is the narrative of Greek continuity from 500 BC and state centralization acting so much more powerful? How important are the differences in dealing with legacies from Wold War II to explain the possible use of museums for contemporary dialogue on social issues?

And fourthly and most importantly, the project will help in understanding the role played and the possible one to be played by national museums in the context of wider heritage and cultural policies in Europe in the making of community. Is the establishment of a certain set of national museums a decisive step in the establishment of an effective national policy? Can it be substituted by other cultural means? Are museums today mainly an optional luxury, at best an asset for middle class tourists?

→ CONCLUSIONS

MeLa states that it

> intends to overturn the idea of museums and libraries as places for consoli-
> dation, conservation and transmission of the identity of a dominant social
> group, as well as the traditional relationship between these institutions and
> the society they represent as part of a nation. The project aims to define new
> strategies for the multi–inter–transcultural organization of the conserva-
> tion, exhibition and transmission of knowledge, in ways and forms that are
> capable of reflecting the conditions posed by the migration of people and
> ideas in the world and how this has influenced the European Union process
> over the last 30 years. (MeLa 2011)

With the long time perspective of EuNaMus, I would argue ongoing
renegotiation of meaning has been the case, to a varying degree and
with variable outcomes, during the last 200 years. The perspective of
EuNaMus on national institutions is that they still (legitimately or not)
aim at "consolidation, conservation and transmission of the identity" to
a considerable extent. This is not a static endeavour, but instead the out-
come of a dynamic negotiation of contradictory goals and logics work-
ing to create national museums. And precisely because of this reason
they are performing such dynamic negotiation and hide behind the face
of a stable and conservative rhetoric. Neither conservative or reformist
or revolutionary rhetorics should be taken at face value. They are often
persuasive and sometimes performative acts.

MeLa has a strong quest for expanding the ways academic research
communicates with society, museums, galleries, libraries and innovation
centres. Interestingly, these goals go beyond the outreach that is part
of the ambitious, yet more traditional, communication plan of EuNa-
Mus. My hope is that we might complement each other to the benefit
of both research and society. MeLa reaches out to heritage institutions
and a wide range of stakeholders and communication strategies, while
EuNaMus focuses on the power of institutional trajectories and adopts
comprehensive comparative perspectives on a more narrowly defined
institution that we call "national museum." In combination, this might
prove to make a difference in the making of cultural policy in Europe.

→ REFERENCE

MeLa-European Museums and Libraries in/of the Age of Migrations.
2011. *Annex I-Description of Work.* February 14th: 3.

Museums, the Sociological Imagination and the Imaginary Museum

→ GORDON J. FYFE

Gordon J. Fyfe is Honorary Senior Lecturer at Keele University, UK. His research interests have been primarily focused on the historical sociology of modern art institutions and museums as well as on visual sociology. He has been a Managing Editor of *The Sociological Review* (Britain's longest established journal of sociology) and has served on its board since 1975. He is a founding editor of Leicester University's online and open access museums research journal *Museum and Society,* and is a member of the board of *Museum History Journal.* He is currently writing an introductory textbook on the subject of museum studies.

→ ABSTRACT

MeLa brings an interdisciplinary perspective to the museum and places contact zones at the centre of its project. Perhaps, we might "bend the light" a little so that we can see the museum as a zone of interdisciplinary contact that includes sociologists. Yet, whilst some contemporary disciplines have organic relationships with museums, it is difficult to think of ways in which contemporary sociological thought and teaching is informed by, or indeed, draws on the museum. However, in the early twentieth century the idea of sociological museums was promoted in Europe and the USA. In Britain the now defunct Sociological Society, regarded the museum as part of its mission. Much influenced by the ecological perspective of Frédéric Le Play, the Society was interested in generating sociology through the medium of the museum and by means of visual depictions. In conducting numerous regional surveys across Europe the Society's members collected visual materials such as photographs and drawings as well as information about museums and exhibitions. The paper explores aspects of the Society's work and reflects on the significance of its archival legacy at Keele University for our ideas about both Europe and social theory.

MeLa is concerned with the role that the museum may come to play in promoting EU citizenship in "the age of migration."[1] There are, as the project's authors make clear, two things that are likely to condition its potential as a European institution. First, our great metropolitan museums developed as instruments of nation building; they played a key role in organizing national identities and in marking the boundary between established and outsider groups. Second, museums are, today, increasingly enmeshed in global networks of communication and migration along which real and virtual visitors travel. Two key questions are: to what extent may the nation any longer provide the ideal horizon of the most authoritative museums? To what extent, in mediating the contradictions between past and present, may the museum make itself anew for new publics?

Globalization has complicated the relationship between European museums and identity in a number of key respects:

→   the growth of tourism has fuelled the expansion of some national institutions which have become mega players within a global museum system;

→   the development, albeit unevenly, of a European awareness within the countries of the EU has invited speculation about the possibility of a European public sphere;

→   the combined effects of migration and of the fissioning of erstwhile unitary states mean that museums are confronted with peoples who are outsiders vis-à-vis established citizens.

What is at stake here is the subject of this conference, namely the possibility that with globalization, museum meanings may escape the authorship of the nations that sponsored them and come to form the basis for an emergent European identity.[2]

It is no doubt these considerations that have encouraged MeLa to favour the concept of contact zone as a way of theorizing museums. The concept, we might recall, derives from anthropology, from the work of Mary Louise Pratt and from James Clifford (Pratt 1992; Clifford 1997). Considered as contact zones museums are "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination" (Pratt 1992, 7). A contact zone perspective challenges the lopsided notion that museums are, a priori, no more than conduits for the interests of dominant classes. It captures the negotiated character of the collection as an ongoing "*relationship*—a power-charged set of exchanges, of push and pull" (Clifford 1997, 192).

---

1   *MeLa-European Museums in an age of migrations* is a four year long research project funded by the European Commission under the Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities Program (FP7th). www.mela-project.eu.

2   Brandon Taylor's observation about art exhibitions and audiences in twenty-first century London can be generalized to some national museums: they may be located in capital cities, but they are no longer *of* these places in the way that their founders imagined them to be (Taylor 1999, xv).

It alerts us to:

→   the need for caution in generalizing about museums and power;

→   the ways in which different balances of cultural power may be dramatized in the politics of owning, controlling, interpreting and visiting artefacts;

→   the dialogic nature of museums as spaces in which subjects are constituted in and through the medium of their social intercourse.

The concept has heuristic value. It illuminates the contested character of many of our Western museums as empires "strike back" and as curators grapple with new understandings of what public ownership means. It helps us to recover the contested origins of the museum in the border crossings of early modern travellers *and* to appreciate the unfinished business that comes with the new interdependencies and shifting balances of power associated with contemporary globalization. And it has the virtue of releasing our imaginations from the grip of determinism whilst answering the question: when do museums happen?

My reading of Clifford is that they happen when the encounter, between two communities, however exploitative, generates the need for collections that illuminate the relationship between what have become interdependent cultures. It follows from Pratt and Clifford that museums are internal to modernity and that they are a property of modernization. You can't stop museums, they just happen. They bubble up out of modernization just as does, for example, sport. Perhaps one might say that with modernity, museums are to collections as sport is to games.

Today I want to bend the light a little so that we focus on a zone of contact between sociology and the museum. My lens is an archive. The archive is held at Keele University in North Staffordshire (UK) and it contains papers and other materials associated with a largely forgotten group of early twentieth-century British sociologists, namely the members of The Sociological Society. The name of the archive is *The Foundations of British Sociology: the Sociological Review Archive* (FoBS).[3] It is the uniqueness of this sociology archive, in containing a blend of written and visual material, much of which is concerned with exhibitions and museums, which has prompted me to talk about it today. The archive is important because it invites reflection on the preferred relationship between sociology and museums. Most of my colleagues would, I think, construe that relationship as *sociology of museums.* Few would think to replace the preposition "of" with "through." That however is the possibility on offer at Keele and it is the idea that forms basis of this paper.

---

3   Keele's sociology archive also contains a collection of Karl Mannheim papers and the important Ray Pahl papers. The University is home to *The Sociological Review (SR)*. *SR,* which is Britain"s oldest sociology journal was first published in 1908. The Keele collection contains material relating both to SR and to the activities of the Sociological Society, which published *SR* until the end of WWII. On the 10th October 1952 the Academic Council of Keele (then the University College of North Staffordshire) took responsibility for the publication of *SR*. I am grateful to John Kolbert for providing me with this information from University Council Minutes.

Before I turn to the argument proper let me sketch the overall shape of the paper. First, I discuss globalization with a view to reminding you that, contrary to the stereotypical views of some artists, intellectuals and social scientists, the museum does not, *a priori,* lead to the death of meaning. Rather, the museum has exhibited generative powers in, for example, shaping global awareness and in firing the collective imaginations of modern peoples. Next I consider matters of discipline and the ways that my own discipline, sociology, has engaged with the museum. In the substantive part of the paper I turn to the Keele archive and its relevance both for MeLa and for the issues raised above. The argument is that the archive points to the possibility of conducting sociology through the medium of the museum and that, contrary to the mausoleum stereotype, the museum may be mid-wife to new meanings. Indeed, whilst sociologists have shown that the powerful may limit the vision of some its visitors, the museum may also enhance people"s imaginations including those of sociologists. Finally, it is suggested that the archive speaks to a range of contemporary sociological issues concerning matters of theory, imagination and identity.

→ GLOBALIZATION AND MUSEUMS

Globalization, that is the tendency of different parts of the world to become more integrated and connected with each other, did not begin in the late twentieth century; previous waves of globalization include the nineteenth century European imperial expansion that transformed the ways that peoples experienced time and space. Nor is globalization a purely economic process of integration; it is multidimensional in entailing, not only economic, political and cultural processes, but also as Robertson has argued, a *consciousness* of connectedness, i.e. globalization can be expressed as people's "frame-of-reference" (Robertson 1992, 8-9, 183).

The museum, understood as a contact zone, was a key institution in generating and transmitting a "global awareness" in the early modern period and especially so here in Italy (Findlen 1996). Thus, the fifteenth and sixteenth century European compulsion to collect, in the form of proto-museums such as cabinets of curiosity and *Wunderkammer,* was in part a response to the West's reconnection with the East and to the American discoveries of Portuguese and Spanish explorers. The great Renaissance collections arose from the need to make sense of the travellers' tales, plants, animals, minerals, artefacts and wonders that flowed to Europe in the wake of exploration, trade and conquest and which could not be readily assimilated by a medieval cosmology and its anagogic culture of collecting. However, whilst the contents of many western metropolitan museums might suggest that they were merely the effects or spoils of western economic domination, there has been a growing realization that there was a museum dimension to globalization. Museums were both an effect of globalization and a medium through which western power was globalized (Prösler 1996, 21-24).

Globalization, however, does not integrate fixed entities; the parts of the globe that were being connected by early modern European expansion were themselves in process. The dynamic of western imperial expansion was a competitive process of nation state formation that displaced traditional identities of estates, generated internal social bonds based on impersonal power and possession and shaped modern ideas concerning public spaces. Museum formation was interwoven with the collapse of estate societies and the emergence of a social order based on classes. There were, I suggest, two facets to this.

First, the museum was bound up with the transition from a pre-modern world of face-to-face associations and personalized power to one in which the bases of power and privilege were relatively opaque, based as they were on the impersonality of class and bureaucratic forms of domination. Some writers have argued that ideas of "imagined communities" and the notions of nation and public that we take for granted were conjured out of the complexity, impersonality and opacity of modern social life (Anderson 1983; Elias 1996; Macdonald 2003). Thus, it was that Europeans came to imagine that their nations were revealed in museum installations and that ethnically homogeneous populations of sovereign individuals represented the most civilized and normal way for people to associate and to bond with each other. As Macdonald argues the museum was not incidental to modernity; it had a special function in consecrating the public as the nation (Macdonald 2003).

Second, museums were "zones-of-contact" within the social envelopes that were emerging nation states with their distinctive patterns of social class as opposed to estate stratification. Pre-modern societies were cellular in that they were ordered according to self-enclosed ranks that functioned according to their own ways of life. As Zygmunt Bauman explains, estates or ranks "were seen as separate entities, to be prevented rather than encouraged to come into direct contact with each other—each being viable in its own right" (Bauman 1992, 7). Museums helped dissolve the boundaries between estates because they generated the principle that all ways of life might be judged from a single, pivotal and universal point of view. It is in that sense that we may, *pace* Foucault, speak of the museum as heterotopic, as a place beyond all particular places and from which all other time-spaces are judged (Foucault 1986, 26). Museums emerged as zones of contact between ways of life that had previously been incommensurable but which could henceforth be assembled into stories of peoples and of humanity as a whole. Museums developed as spaces in which the life worlds of different communities, both dynastic and ascending bourgeois elites as well as peasantries, working classes and colonial peoples, might be compared, contrasted and evaluated (however invidiously) as styles and cultures.

These considerations provide us with a mandate for emphasizing the generative powers of the museum. Museums gave birth to new ideas; eighteenth and nineteenth century collecting and museum building were bound up with "rediscoveries in art" (Haskell 1976) and with ro-

mantics and medievalists who in challenging the hegemonic and static classical cultures of European aristocracies and in interpreting the remnants of folk cultures, visualized the ethnic roots of nations. As Huyssen observes in relation to nineteenth century Germany: "the selectively organized past was recognized as indispensable for the construction of the future" (Huyssen 1955, 19). I am reminded of the observation made by the social geographer Lewis Mumford in the late 1930s when he argued that the museum provides the means of coping with the past "without confining our activities to the molds created by the past" (Mumford 1938, 446).

→ MUSEUMS AND SOCIOLOGY

There are three ways in which sociology relates to museums: as *sociology of museums*, as *museum sociology* and as sociological museums, only one of which really concerns me today. First, as *sociology of museums* the discipline has engaged with the museum from different theoretical perspectives such as structuralism and interactionism, by the lights of a variety of methods and across a range of empirical problems (Fyfe 2006). One of sociology's key concerns has been with inequality and more particularly with class differences in the social backgrounds of visitors. Some researchers have explored the tension between rhetoric and reality: between the museum's enlightened universalism and the reality of its selective visitor profiles. One strand of inquiry, historical sociology has been concerned with the way in which museums developed as bourgeois institutions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and with their role in the formation of national identities (see for example Prior 2002). Others have focused on what people *do* as museum visitors, as opposed to what they are invited to do or are expected to do by the museum's formal prescriptions (Heath 2004; Macdonald 2002).

Turning to *museum sociology* it should be noted that social methods of inquiry have long been visible in museum practice (especially in visitor research) whilst they have also informed museum market research and the collection of official statistics by governments. However, the relationship runs deeper than we might think and in a way that reflects wider patterns of twentieth century social change. In our time sociology has, in one form or another, penetrated more and more deeply into the very fabric of society so that people have acquired a sociological imagination, learning as Giddens puts it, "to think sociologically" (Giddens 1990, 43). In that respect the contemporary relationship between the museum and sociology expresses a novel association between museum and discipline (Fyfe 2006). The flow of social science to the museum, to museum research organizations and to the cultural state reflects new forms of power/knowledge of the kind identified by Foucault and generalized to museum studies by Hooper-Greenhill as the disciplinary museum (Foucault 1979; Hooper-Greenhill 1992). It is indicative of the radical reflexivity of an institution that must constantly adjust to change and which is required continuously to reflect on the outcomes of its actions.

Sociological museum, refers to museums in which there is some kind of internal and theoretical connection with the discipline. What is at stake here is the possibility that sociology might be conducted through the medium of the museum. The notion is that the sociology might *be* a museum discipline, that there might be a museum of sociology just as we have museums of art or natural history. Some academic disciplines are represented in museums and some emerged in close association with the museum itself (Bennett 1995). Yet it is difficult to think of examples, or even to imagine what a museum of sociology might be like. Indeed in 1954 the anthropologist A. L. Kroeber observed that there had never been a museum of sociology, that sociology lacked the museum affiliations characteristic of other university disciplines such as anthropology (Kroeber 1954, 764).

It is true that there has not been an enduring institution, national or local, public or private that has been dedicated to sociology in the same way as museums of art, ethnology, social history or the natural sciences.[4] Kroeber's observation, however, requires qualification for there is a forgotten and diverse history that links museums, sociology and visual representation. In recent years there has been a growing awareness of the creativity that informs the presentation of statistical data and of the pioneering work of social scientists, such as Charles Booth, in that respect. Thus, for example, Ekstrom points to the way in which pictorial methods, exhibitions and installations were used to display statistics and as a way of persuading early twentieth century audiences of the truth of social analysis (Ekstrom 2008).[5]

In the early twentieth century a number of museums in Europe and the USA were dedicated to teaching social science whilst public health programmes incorporated museum or exhibitionary dimensions and were promoted at International exhibitions; e.g. the Deutsches-Hygiene-Museum which grew out of the First International Hygiene Exhibition of 1911 (Monem 2011, 120-29). In the USA the Social Museum, established in 1903 at Harvard University, was linked to a teaching programme. The aim of the museum was to render the social problems generated by immigration both visible and amenable to scientific analysis and reform. An arrangement of photographs, charts and documents exhibited problems and policies from across the world, allowing students to think of themselves as travellers "through many lands, observing the material which contributes to an inductive study of society" (Peabody 1911, 6). Here, the museum represents the disciplinary and civilizing expansion of the state that some researchers have argued defined it as an agency of social control. It is perhaps these museums that correspond

---

4   Manchester's short-lived Urbis might seem to confirm Kroeber's point. It might be argued that university archives such as Mass Observation at Sussex and even the Keele FoBS do fulfil this function.

5   A recent UK exhibition, "Rank: Picturing the Social Order" (2009), exhibited historical and contemporary patterns of social stratification with a display of prints, diagrams, paintings and photos. These included, artists" representations past and present as well as social scientist's depictions that capture the complexities of inequality through visual methods of graphing and mapping (Dorling 2009, Fyfe 2009).

most closely to a dominant ideology model.

Today, an interest in the way that the public understanding of science entails an explanatory visualization of theory and data is commonplace in both the natural and the social sciences. Less well appreciated, however, are the visual and artistic dimensions of what Charles Wright Mills called the sociological imagination and the role that visual materials may have in inciting it in teaching and research (Wright Mills 1959). In the 1930s a museum was established by sociologist Francis McLennan Vreeland at Indiana's de Pauw University, for the teaching of undergraduates. The focus was on the needs of statistically challenged students whilst dramatizing social processes through graphic methods and dioramas (Vreeland 1938). Drawing on the authority of sociologist Charles Cooley (1864-1929), a major figure at the University of Chicago's influential School of Sociology, Vreeland argued:

> Truthful teaching cannot overlook this dramatic quality in social phenomena. Delinquent careers, gang habitats, interstitial areas, conflict situations, the process of invention, transitional culture forms, stranded communities, and many other phenomena are, through charts and pictures, given vitality and meaning. (Vreeland 1938, 33)

The Chicago reference is significant because the idea of a sociological museum had been circulating there a generation earlier with reports of a British sociological museum (Zueblin 1899). However, before following that up, it is necessary to make a few observations about words and images. One problem in museum studies concerns the way in which modes of representing the world such as writing, picturing, collecting and displaying are subject to technical changes which generate new possibilities for communication and spawn new specialists who do the communicating. What was at stake at Harvard and de Pauw was the *relationship* between words and images and between ideas and artefacts. In both cases images and artefacts were subordinated to ideas. Yet images and artefacts are never completely tamed so that they become mere illustrations of stories. There is always indeterminacy in their relationship to the telling (Hetherington 2011; Lord 2006; Hillis Miller 1992).

The significance of this aporia may be appreciated by reference to contact zones. If museums are contact zones between cultures then we can think of how contact may generate uncertainty by disrupting taken for granted relationships between words and artefacts, or between "saying and seeing" (Hetherington 2011, 457). And there is the question of *whose* ways of saying and seeing intersect at the museum, *how* they may be stabilized at the museum and on *whose* terms. For example, the formation of late nineteenth century Eastern Seaboard museums, including the Harvard Social Museum, was bound up with the ordering of new American identities in the face of mass migration from Europe. Their function was to generate healthy American identities. Here the museum was a contact zone in the sense that it arose out of the encoun-

ter between established WASPs[6] and Catholic outsiders and as a border territory between their conflicting status cultures.[7]
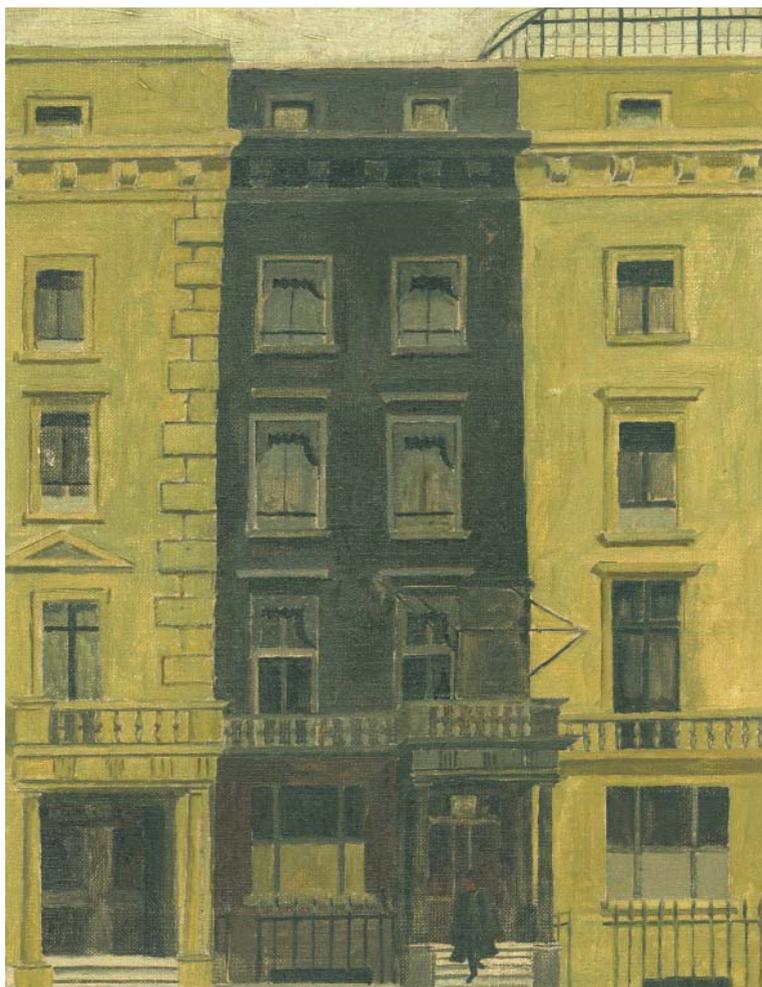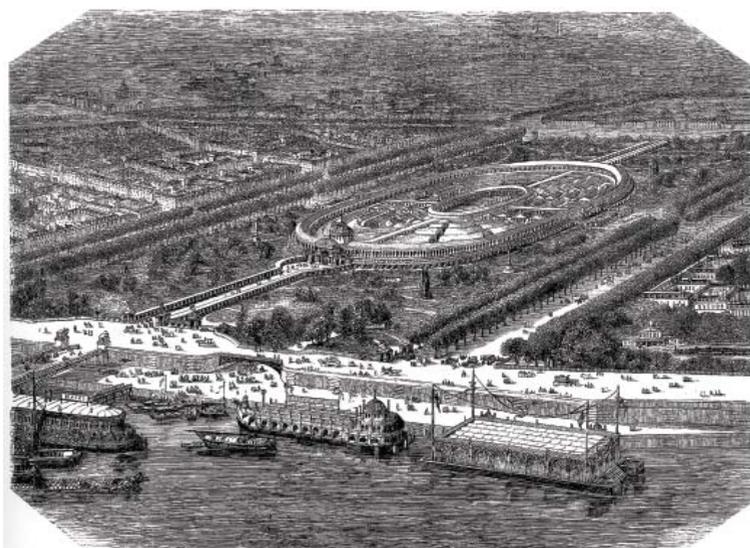
In noting the indeterminacy that resides at the heart of the museum we may also appreciate the force of Lewis Mumford's claim that the museum might bring something new into the world, that it may inaugurate new meaning. Mumford's thinking on the subject of museums was influenced by the ideas of British sociologist Patrick Geddes (1854-1932). Unusually, Geddes saw the museum as an ingredient, not only in presenting sociological ideas, but also in social investigation. His approach was quite different to that of Peabody in not subordinating image or artefact to text. I have noted that in 1899 Chicago School sociologist, Charles Zueblin reported on a sociological museum project, established by Geddes, in Edinburgh (Zueblin 1899). The links between this British museum activity and American social science warrant attention but have yet to be fully investigated.[8] However, today I want to focus on the British story and more particularly on the activities of the Sociological Society in London, of which Geddes was a key member.

In Britain, in the first half of the twentieth century the now defunct Sociological Society regarded the museum as part of its mission. Much influenced by the ecological perspective of Frédéric Le Play (1806-1882) the Society was less interested in illustrating research findings than in generating sociology through the medium of the museum. Its luminaries (especially Patrick Geddes and Victor Branford) pointed to the museum"s synthetic and exoteric potentials; the museum was a means of re-imagining the social and a way of promoting the public understanding of sociology. It is to the Sociological Society that I now turn.

→ THE SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Sociological Society was founded in London in 1903. Amongst it key members were Patrick Geddes, Victor Branford (1863-1930) and Alexander Farquharson (1882-1954). The Society emerged out of the nineteenth century debates about social change, evolution and reform, debates that were central to the making of late Victorian and Edwardian social science in Britain (Amigoni 2010). The two most significant influences on the Society were the legacies of Auguste Comte (1798-1857) and Le Play. The Society was inevitably concerned with the vexed question of how sociology related to biology, with the business of eugenics, the social problems of an industrial civilization and the politics of reform. The Society was a research centre at Le Play House [Img. 01] and it had several successive locations in London, including Chelsea.[9] It published a journal, *The Sociological Review* (see note 2). It held meet-

---

6   That is, White Anglo-Saxon Protestants.

7   See Collins (1971) for a discussion of the formation and relationship between status groups in twentieth century America.

8   They include Mumford himself who was briefly editor of *The Sociological Review*.

9   Other locations included Gordon Square, Malvern and Ledbury.

ings, lectures and discussions and it promoted sociology in universities and colleges at a time when the discipline was hardly represented in British Higher Education.

Le Play, the name of the headquarters, is significant: Frédéric Le Play, I should remind you, was an engineer, sociologist and exhibition organizer. It was he who, appointed by Napoleon III, organized the 1867 Paris Exposition [Img. 02]. The international exhibition was an institution of fundamental interest to both Geddes and Branford. Amongst the early articles published in *The Sociological Review* was one of 1914 on the topic of the Panama International Exposition (San Francisco) and it is clear from the archive collection that the Society was much interested in international and civic exhibitions [Imgs. 03-04]. For Geddes and Bran-

IMG. 03 — *Paris Exposition 1900.*
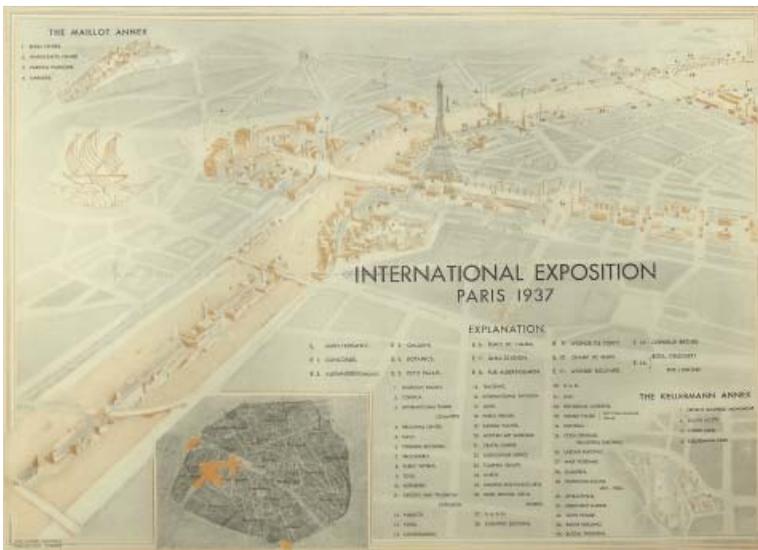
IMG. 04 — *International Paris Exposition 1937.*

ford they were sociologically significant because they could be seen as collective representations of the city; the Paris exhibitions of 1878, 1889 and 1900 were organic expressions of a growing consciousness of the city's "collective life" and a type of civic display that had been pioneered by Le Play in 1967 (Geddes 1915, 248-9).

The history of the Society is complex and not a subject for today.[10] Suffice it to say that it had overlapping interests with other closely affiliated groups in advancing the causes of sociology, social research and civic reform and that all of these groups warrant consideration for their contributions to twentieth century British social science (and especially the development of geography and sociology). In 1930 the Society amalgamated with one of them, Le Play House, to become the Institute of Sociology. Shortly after that time tensions between the Institute and others led to the formation of a second group, the Le Play Society, which took a distinctly "geographical" turn. In 1955 the more "sociological" Institute was dissolved and its archive was deposited at Keele. In 1960 the Le Play Society shut down with some of its papers also going to Keele. Most recently, the Institution's legacy has begun to be reassessed[11] and the archive is newly catalogued and open to researchers.

Between the two world wars the Le Play House groups conducted numerous sociological surveys across Europe. As it happens the Institute sent a team here to Italy in 1934, to Milan and Rome.[12] They were interested in the functioning of local government under fascism. The team consisted of twenty people (university academics as well as school teachers).[13] They met, amongst others, S. E. Achille Starace (secretary to the Fascist Party) and the political scientist Robert Michels (who had been a student of Max Weber). They surveyed political, educational and welfare institutions. They took in churches, museums and processions. They were also interested in youth and they attended a fascist meeting, returning with political ephemera [Imgs. 05-06]. Today, however, rather than focus on any one survey, I want to emphasize three general aspects of the work of the Society all of which are expressed in the contents of the archive: regional surveys, visual material and museums.

→ REGIONAL SURVEYS

The hallmark of the Sociological Society (and the other groups with which it was associated at Le Play House in London), the method of research that defined it, was the regional survey. The influence of Le

---

10   Evans (1986) is indispensable as an account of Le Play House, its several constituencies and their regional surveys and much more.

11   See *The Sociological Review*, 55 (3) and (4).

12   FoBS: LP/4/1/3/7/11/1. In Rome they were based at the Hassler Hotel. Unfortunately, the team members were prohibited from taking notes and resorted to retrospective reports from memory after returning to Britain.

13   The team, numbering 20, was headed up by Alexander Farquharson of the Sociological Society and included a wide range of educationalists. Amongst them was Vera Brittan's husband, the political scientist George Catlin from Cornell University. Catlin was involved in a pre-World War II attempt to found a Social Science Research Council.

Play was evident in the Society's regional focus and the distinctive geographical dimension of its sociological perspective (Matless 1992).[14] Le Play was a pioneer in the study of family and community and his key idea was that the problems of family and community that had been generated by industrialization were to be understood in their ecological contexts and theorized as the interplay between place, work and folk. Following Le Play, Geddes, Branford and other Society members understood the survey in a quite different way from the interview and questionnaire practice that is today the sociological norm.[15] The survey

14 Along with Evans (1986) Matless has played a key role in recovering and evaluating the work of this group of social scientists.

15 Reflecting on its instrumental aspects, Branford commented: "Survey—the word is not a blessed one" (Branford 1914, 63).

was as a synthetic practice that would, for example, draw on Ordnance maps, the work of sanitary inspectors and other official surveys, integrating and "socializing" these "fragments" (Branford 1914, 63-68). Such an approach transcended the disciplinary boundaries between sociology and geography partly because it was concerned with the way in which identity was interwoven with the physical environment and with place.

The Keele archive contains numerous reports of city and regional surveys and these relate to the Sociological Society's interest in civics and civic reform and to the members' conviction that the past of the city

IMG. 07 — *"Vacant space," Chelsea.*

IMG. 08 — *"Suggestion for the use of vacant space," Chelsea.*

was relevant for planning. Geddes and Branford did not work with a strongly classified sense of past and present; they believed that the past expressed in cityscapes such as Edinburgh or London resonated with the present and future. Thus, Branford argued that garden cities should not be confined to new towns—a sentiment that was reflected in the Society's work at Chelsea [Imgs. 07-08] and demonstrates the group's interests in both conservation and town planning.[16] For Geddes and Branford the survey was the crowning glory of civic life for it brought out the possibilities for change incipient in the present.

The archive contains a substantial and diverse body of visual material (photographs, paintings, drawings, visual ephemera of a "touristic" nature). It includes thousands of lantern-slide photographs taken all over pre-World War II Europe during the course of survey work. The Chester Survey is one of the best examples of the Society's work in integrating visual and written materials. Some of the papers published in early years of *The Sociological Review* are peppered with drawings and diagrams. Articles carried appendices listing images cited but not reproduced and offering them as lantern slides on loan for public lectures. A paper by Branford, exploring the consequences of war and social change for people's inner worlds, for their habits of mind and mental dispositions, saw the signs of what might be to come in the developing consumer culture (Branford 1920). A feature of this paper is the extent to which its author, drawing on urban visual material (e.g. travel posters, advertisements, war propaganda, disaster appeals) was able to develop a thesis about social change and the images that would shape the minds of postwar children. His analysis, which was drawn from the everyday world of entertainment and travel, referred readers to the official and commercial advertising that was to be found in London's Piccadilly Underground Station. These images were thought of as an approximation to a cinematic presentation.[17] Moreover, they did not figure passively as mere illustrations of surveys for they were a part of what was being surveyed. They were social facts in the Durkheimian sense of the term. For example, the Piccadilly materials were described as *collective representations*; that is they formed part of the shared symbolic order that constituted the life of the modern city and its people (Branford 1920, 115-17).

The visual faculty and visual methods were also important for this group as a way of generating sociological ideas. Branford and Geddes wanted to think the unthought and they used maps and diagrams as a means to this end. They thought critically, long before post-modern geographers, about the ways in which conventional maps constrained imagination by transmitting a nation-centred and imperial view of the globe. For example, Branford invited his readers to think of the English south coast,

---

16   The Chelsea images must relate to a number of publications by Geddes and Branford including the former's "Chelsea, Past and Possible" (1906).

17   A list was given at the end of the paper indicating that they are available for use.

not as a national frontier marking off the "foreigner" but as part of a map of the ferry towns of a narrow sea: "[a] new unity thus appears [Img. 09]. The common *regional life* of the Ferry Towns on the two sides of the channel is a very real thing" (Branford 1918, 2; emphasis mine) [18]

The Society promoted visual awareness amongst young people and, for this purpose during the mid 1920s it published *Observation* [Img. 10]. With its Le Playist subtitle—observations on people, activities and place—the editors invited children to submit their own observations with maps, photographs, pictures and drawings. These sociologists were concerned not only with their own visual faculties; they were committed to the diffusion of a sociological habitus and a civic imagination to a wider audience. Indeed, there was a marked exoteric aspect to the thought of Geddes and other members of the Society.[19] This helps to explain the "amateur" quality to some of the material contained in the archive—such as the crude and eugenicist survey of the town of Warwick based on observations in the street and on tramcars.[20]

Last, but not least we have the archive's collection of over 4000 lanternslide photographs of people and places from the surveys conducted by the Society. This visual record includes many images [e.g. Imgs. 11-12-13][21] from a number of regions and countries that are, today, either "new accession countries" of the EU or candidates for EU membership (e.g. Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Montenegro, Poland, Romania).

The activities of the Sociological Society coincided with the aftermath of World War I and with the last gasp of the dynastic empires that were Germany, Austria and the Ottomans. The regional surveys of The Sociological Society documented people who were caught up in the process of nation state formation and globalization: regions and peoples who were about to be engulfed by the violence of nation state formation and some of whom would find themselves refugees, folk without place, stranded as imperial borders were transformed into national ones.

18 Branford"s map is derived from the influential geographer Halford Mackinder.

19 Branford we should note wrote at length of "The Citizen as Sociologist," chapter II of his *Interpretations* (1914).

20 FoBS, LP/4/1/1/1/16378 iv.

21 FoBS LP/4/2/2/3/6 xvi Pazardjik, gipsy woman with hemp, 1935; FoBS LP/4/2/2/3/6 xxxiii Rila village, melon seller, pannier and pony, 1935; FoBS LP/4/2/2/3/20 xvii Zabljack, peasant girl making shoe, 1934.

The archive contains a variety of materials on museums and museum relevant aspects of social life:

→ survey reports which incorporate museum material including London's Kensington and Chelsea, the city of Chester and some Danish material;

→ a report on Cheshire Museums;

→ correspondence and jottings about museums and their role in sociological analysis.

The Cheshire report makes clear the Society's ambitions for museums: museum curators were more than guardians, they were to be consultants on matters of scientific work, historical and social studies and artistic appreciation. The report recommended integration of museums within the region and within a complex that would include universities. They saw local museums as crucial to the work of civic and regional surveys. Such surveys, they insisted were not matters of scholarly or academic amusement, they had a "vital practical bearing upon the future life of a community" (Farquharson 1925, 23).[22]

The most famous demonstration of their ambitions was the Outlook Tower in Edinburgh, which was masterminded by Patrick Geddes and which Zueblin described to American sociologists in 1899 (Zueblin 1899). Here, was an old tower with its several floors topped out with a *camera obscura* that afforded a panorama of the city. Geddes's museum was set up so that descending floor by floor from the top, the visitor made the transition from the city, to the region, Scotland, Europe and the World. It is clear from this and from the published works of the Society that they thought of the museum in two related ways:

→ as a synthetic space in which there could be a complete and interdisciplinary understanding of the City in its regional context;

→ as a space that would enhance people's civic understanding and identity.

So my question is: what can we learn about museums from these British sociologists that is of interest to MeLa? The answer cannot be straightforward because in matters of sociological theory the past and the present are strongly classified and for two reasons:

→ in Britain and elsewhere after 1945 there were good reasons for putting a cordon *sanitaire* around evolutionary thought with its racist and eugenics associations;

→ again, in the postwar period, the conventional wisdom has tended to be that early British sociology was a failed project; that in lack-

---

22 FoBS, LP/4/1/1/1/1/4/2/4.

ing a totalizing theory of society and in being too closely allied with social policy it was backward. For that reason, contemporary British sociologists tend to be ignorant of their early twentieth century predecessors.

These issues, which are not in themselves subjects for today, have recently been debated in the pages of *The Sociological Review*[23] where, amongst other things, it has been argued that the Geddes's approach to sociology speaks directly to contemporary concerns about nature, society and social change (Studholme 2007). What may be of interest for MeLa is that which tends to be ignored in assessments of the Society's legacy, *viz* the museum. Contemporary sociologists have, as I have pointed out, demonstrated a growing interest in the museum. Any textbook will of course register a range of topics that demonstrate current thinking about the nature of society and social processes. However, some topics spring into life at moments of paradigmatic change because their special significance for developing and testing new ideas about society becomes apparent. The museum I suggest is, one such example, largely missing from the textbooks, but emerging as a significant site for the sociological inquiry (Fyfe 2006, 44-46).

I propose to answer the question raised above under three headings: *theory, imagination and identity* and *globalization.*

→ **THEORY**

The museum is sociologically significant because it resonates with contemporary debates about the theoretical core of the discipline. These debates concern a loss of certainty about the position of human subjects within nature and reflect a growing interest in the *relationship* between non-human animals and people and between people and machines. Developments in genetic engineering blur the boundaries between nature and culture and challenge the taken-for-granted sovereignties of individuals over their own bodies. At the same time political pressures such as those emanating from ecological crises have undermined the established authority of disciplines as isolated endeavours.

It is useful to place these considerations in the wider context of postwar changes in capitalist societies that have been variously theorized as post-industrialization, postmodernity and globalization. These changes put in doubt the old certainties upon which disciplines and institutions, sociology and the museum, were built. What is partly at stake here is the durability of the deep structures of twentieth century museological *and* sociological thought in so far as they shared a common code of methodological nationalism that defined space and time in national terms (Fyfe 2006).[24] The symptoms of these changes can be detected in the

---

23   See the following: Goldman (2007), Studholme (2007), Scott and Husbands (2007), Fuller (2007) and Studholme, Scott and Husbands (2007).

24   A recent assessment of the state of and prospects for a public sociology judges that sociology is a prisoner of the nation-state and that its public forms are in danger of becoming museum pieces. Beck argues that in an age of globalization the imagination of

IMG. 11 — *"Zabljack, peasant girl making shoe,"* 1934.

IMG. 12 — *"Rila village, melon seller, pannier and pony,"* 1935.

changing politics of knowledge and in a decentering of the European, male professionals who composed the Old Museology and who orchestrated the classical museum. Both the museum and sociology exhibit the signs of that decentering. On the one hand the New Museology with its critical focus on practitioners, visitors and museum meanings has, *pace* Macdonald (2002), transformed curators from legislators to interpreters. And on the other we have sociology's cultural turn away from the functional requirements of systems and structures and towards the social construction of reality and the transmission of meaning. Thus, some sociologists have returned to classical and much neglected questions concerning fundamental categories such as time and space and to ontological questions concerning the body and its relationship to society.

sociologists who investigate social inequality has been limited by its methodological nationalism, by a frame-of-reference that conflates the social with the nation (Beck 2005). It is that frame-of-reference which should be confined to the museum on the grounds that it is outdated in no longer reflecting reality. For earlier critical considerations of the conflation of nation and society see Elias 1978 and Martins 1974.

The body is important because so much of political consequence flows from the way in which it is theorized in relation to class, ethnicity and gender. Recently the British sociologist Chris Shilling has identified the body as an opportunity for interdisciplinary dialogue between sociology, psychology and biology (Shilling 2003). One might add history to his list for, as Shilling's work demonstrates an aspect of the cultural turn has been a growing interest in the historical character of the body and in the work of Norbert Elias (131-151).

Norbert Elias (1897-1989) was one of the few twentieth century sociologists to maintain an interest in the body as a site at which identity, culture and biology intersected. His key contribution was to our understanding of identity as a historical process of personality formation and to the way that this was interwoven with changing demands of social structures and the formation of nation states. With his concept of civilizing processes he famously studied the conversion of medieval European warrior classes into seventeenth century courtiers who were in turn displaced by bourgeois capitalists as the dominant class. The lives of these different upper classes were, as we know, predicated on quite different attitudes to the body and to consumption and display. Indeed bourgeois ways of living the body developed partly in opposition to the conspicuous waste of aristocratic conspicuous consumption. But however different were bourgeois attitudes there were, he argued, courtly antecedents to bourgeois civilization, which had been missed by most sociologists. Indeed, Elias argued that courtly physiognomy was selectively incorporated by bourgeois societies, "partly as a heritage and partly as antithesis and preserved in this way was further developed" as an aspect of bourgeois conduct (Elias 1983, 40).

Now Elias hardly mentioned museums but they are significant for appreciating the scope of his argument. His analysis helps us to understand the peculiarly ambivalent character of museums as places that exhibit the past with an eye to the future. On the one hand they displayed the nation's courtly heritage but for the improving purposes of production, education and national identity. And on the other, as public spaces they were important, as Tony Bennett shows, for the diffusion of civilized conduct and for the formation of the self-regulating behaviors appropriate within crowds of strangers (Bennett 1995).

I want to suggest that contemporary museums may also illuminate the complex interdisciplinary issues of culture, biology and psychology to which Shilling refers. Anyone seeking to understand the way in which power was exercised over and through bodies in aristocratic societies might usefully visit the period rooms and palaces of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: Hampton Court, Versailles and the stately homes of England are reminders of the way in which cultures organize human capacities through the medium of their material culture. One might also add that such installations are of interest for us today because they contain the residues of a long lost pan-European upper class culture that was destroyed by the process of nation state formation.

Geddes, Branford and other members of the Sociological Society thought of the museum as a space of imagination that would allow citizens to interpret their world for themselves. It was an imaginary museum in the sense that citizens might be encouraged to see their place, for example their own city, as a museum, but not as museal pieces merely contained by the museum. André Malraux (1901-1976) famously spoke of the museum without walls in the sense that photographic and photomechanical methods of reproduction had released art from the confines of the built museum (Malraux 1954). For Malraux the museum without walls was an imaginary museum in that modern methods of reproduction had emancipated artefacts from particular physical spaces and enabled people to compose their own museum.

Now, as Hetherington remarks, this process was not confined to art museums. It can be observed in the development of the twentieth century heritage industry and in the way that cities acquired a museum character (Hetherington 1999). The Sociological Society was interested in places of heritage as aspects of a civic and sociological imagination. In 1917, we find Victor Branford imagining London as out door or open-air museum that might be shown to a convalescent soldier or sailor returning from the battlefield. District by district, Branford reads the built environment as a text and goes on to argue that, just as with conventional museums: "the more we regard it [London], the more it pleases as a good museum should."[25]

MeLa is concerned with the role that museums might play in rendering visible new European identities. It is characteristic of modernity that identities are in flux, that they are continually being generated and shaped. Geddes was concerned with the survey as a way identifying and realizing the possibilities for civic society, with "gathering the best seed of past flowerings" and raising and tending the "seedlings of coming summers" (Geddes 1979, 158). Whilst this is not the language of contemporary social science and cultural studies the ideas themselves are not so alien if we think, for example, of Raymond Williams's influential distinctions between residual, dominant and emergent aspects of cultural forms (Williams 1977, 120-27). Geddes and Branford were interested in residues.

Just how faint might the residues be? W. I. Thomas criticized Geddes on the grounds that he had failed to take account of rapid population growth of the kind experienced by Chicago and implied that it was a city without memory: "The first permanent white settler came […] one hundred years ago" (Thomas 1979, 110). Geddes responded that even where a city had yesterday been prairie "it was no mere vacant site, but was at once enriched and encumbered by the surviving traditions of the past" (Geddes 1979, 159). What interested Geddes and also Branford was the possibility that the museum might render visible the possibili-

---

25   FoBS, VB 69.

ties emergent in the present. Exhibitions and museums were a means of articulating the latent possibilities of city life.

I have noted that the FoBS archive contains a body of survey reports, documents and images relating to Central Europe and the Balkans. In recent years there has been an interest in the ways that twentieth century travel writing along with survey and photographic expeditions performed a symbolic geography of east and west: "[t]he very concept of Europe emerged in a long process of repudiation and 'mirroring,' directed not only against the Orient, America, and overseas colonies, but also against nearer or internal others" (Bracewell and Drace-Francis 2008, viii). During the Cold War the diversity of Eastern European identities was submerged by a geo-political discourse that isolated East from the West. There was a tendency for these "eastern" places to be rendered less "European" whilst Western historians conflated their own place with Europe (Wydra 1999). As Wydra explains strong classification between West and East rendered the heterogeneity of eastern Europe invisible whilst at the same time sealing off the life worlds of these Europes.[26]

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and communist Eastern Europe, the Balkan Wars and the admission of new states to the EU, there has been a growing interest in the history of travel writing and in the ways that its different forms (touristic, literary and social scientific) mediate the geography of Europe. This is the context in which archives such as those at Keele and at the Albert Kahn Museum[27] have acquired new significance and their contents re-evaluated. The Keele archive is, I suggest, a contact zone between West and East and it has resurfaced at a moment when the meaning of these spatial categories is under debate, when there is a growing interest in how east and west have represented each other and when disciplines are reconnecting across frontiers.

The Keele legacy of pre-war British social scientists and their students, many of who were school teachers, who travelled in Britain, Continental Europe and elsewhere, forms part of a wider picture of travel and "anthropological tourism" (Anterič and Clarke 2009). The Central European and Balkan surveys are particularly significant for two reasons. First, they had an analytical weight in relation to the pursuit of sociology and especially to the Le Playist trinity of folk/work/place. As P. M. Roxby explained in a Le Play Society survey report, many of the Society's studies had "been concerned with the critical *zone of contact* between West-

26   Indeed, during the 1950s, the strength of cultural classification generated Eastern and Western sociologies whose problems tended to be defined by short term national interests (Elias 1987, Gouldner 1971).

27   Albert Kahn (1869-1942) was a successful French financier and philanthropist who, with a team of photographers, set out to "archive" the world in photographs and film during the first decades of the last century (see Okuefuna 2008). Kahn's legacy is the museum in Paris where the collection runs to tens of thousands of coloured photographs along with a large film archive. Kahn must surely have been aware of Le Play and of his categories of people, place and work and both archives.

ern Industrial and Eastern Agrarian Europe" (Roxby 1939, 5; emphasis mine). Secondly, they contributed to a global awareness that was rooted in the experience of the Great War and which informed the aspirations of the middle class academics and teachers who participated in the survey tours (Meston 1936, 6).

Finally, globalization is, as I have noted, a multi-dimensional and differential process. It is reversible and it does not advance at the same rate on all of its fronts (e.g. economic, political, intellectual, etc.). Globalized conflict and global war inevitably shut down international survey work in the war years and Keele's FoBS archive is, therefore, a portal into a lost intellectual world. It documents pre-war international associations that were severed by fascism and the outbreak of World War Two. There is material relating to Tomas Garriigue Masaryk (1850-1937) a sociologist who was also first President of Czechoslovakia. It documents a Hungarian survey of peasant culture conducted in association with Szeged University and involving George Buday[28] and Bela Bartok (one member of the group, joining the team from Cologne University, turned out to be Nazi spy).[29] There is correspondence with the sociologist Karl Mannheim (1893-1947) and others relating to efforts by the Institute on behalf of Jewish intellectuals and professionals who needed to escape the Nazis: e.g. Kathe Leichter (1895-1942), Paul Ignotus (1901-1978) and Gutav Ichheiser (1897-1969). The Institute's Library also contains a rare early edition of Norbert Elias's *The Civilizing Process* (published in Prague, 1937, and signed as presented to Alexander Farquharson).

→ CONCLUSION

There are, as we know, deeply rooted stereotypes that tend to obscure the museum's potential as a fluid and fertile social space. Huyssen observes that museum critiques have often contained unexamined normative assumptions that are rooted in modernizing agendas about the past and have no room for the museum. It may very well be that the museum connotes an antiquarianism that jarred with twentieth century sociologists—confirming the status of the Le Play people as an "evolutionary blind alley" in British intellectual life. One thing is clear: Geddes and Branford would have had little use for the museum metaphors with which sociologists (and others) sometimes stereotype outmoded ways of life. They did not harbour the antipathy to the museum that prevailed amongst twentieth-century avant-garde artists, modernizers and intellectuals—"museumphobics" as Huyssen dubs them (Huyssen 1995, 18-19). The museum perspective of the Sociological Society, and particularly its Le Playist interest in international exhibitions, was at odds with methodological nationalism's tendency to restrict global awareness. It is with these concerns that the kind of synthetic museum perspective proposed by Geddes, Branford and the others is so relevant today.

28   The archive includes a folder designed by the engraver George Buday for the purpose of containing Hungarian survey materials.

29   Willy Gierlichs (1900-1945).

We don't, I think, need to buy into their evolutionism and utopianism to recognize that their museum perspective on social and sociological problems has something to offer us today. It is their interest in museums and the visual faculty that speaks to our concerns today. And, as we have seen Geddes and Branford approached the museum as much more than a topic to which sociological rules are applied for they saw it as a means of generating knowledge.

→ **REFERENCES**

Amigoni, David. 2010. "Narrating Darwinian Inheritances: Fields, Life Stories and the Literature-Science Relation." In "Science, Literature, and the Darwin Legacy," edited by Carolyn Burdett, Ana Parejo Vadillo, and Paul White, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* (11): art.4. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://19.bbk.ac.uk/index.php/19/article/view/573.

Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso.

Anterič, Marija, and Richard Clarke. 2009. "(British) Anthropological Tourism in Slovenia 1932-2007." *Anthropological Notebooks* 15 (1): 5-25.

Bauman, Zygmunt. 1992. *Intimations of Postmodernity.* London: Routledge.

Beaver, S. H. 1962. "The Le Play Society and Fieldwork." *Geography* 47: 225-40.

Beck, Ulrich. 2005. "How Not to Become a Museum Piece." *The British Journal of Sociology* 56 (3): 335-43.

Bennett, Tony. 1995. *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics.* London & New York: Routledge.

Bracewell, Wendy, and Alex Drace-Francis. 2008. *Under Eastern Eyes: A Comparative Introduction to East European Travel Writing on Europe.* New York: Central University Press.

Branford, Victor. 1914. "The Citizen as Sociologist." In *Interpretations and Forecasts: A Study of Survivals and Tendencies in Contemporary Society,* 63-98. New York & London: Mitchell Kennerley.

———. 1918. "A Rustic View of War and Peace." *The Sociological Review* 10 (1): 1-24.

———. 1920. "The War-Mind, the Business-Mind and a Third Alternative." *The Sociological Review* 12 (2): 113-36.

Clifford, James. 1997. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century.* Cambridge, MA & London: Harvard University Press.

Collins, Randall. 1971. "Functional and Conflict Theories of Educational Stratification." *The American Sociological Review* 36 (6): 1002-9.

Dorling, Danny. 2009. "Understanding Global Inequalities." In *Rank: Picturing the Social Order 1516–2009,* edited by Polly Toynbee, Daniel Dorling, Keith Wrightson. Sunderland: Northern Art Gallery.

Ekstrom, Anders. 2008. "'Showing at One View:' Ferdinand Boberg's 'Statistical Machinery and the Visual Pedagogy of Early Twentieth-Century Visual Display'." *Early Popular Visual Culture* 6 (1): 35-50.

Elias, Norbert. 1978. *The History of Manners: The Civilizing Process,* vol. 1. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. First published 1939.

———. 1983. *The Court Society.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

———. 1987. "The Retreat of Sociologists into the Present." *Theory Culture and Society* 4 (2-3): 223-47.

———. 1996. *The Germans.* Oxford: Polity Press.

Evans, David. 1986. *Le Play House and the Regional Survey Movement in British Sociology 1920–1955,* MPhil diss., CNNA, City of Birmingham Polytechnic. Accessed March 27, 2012. www.dfte.co.uk/ios/DFTEMPhil.pdf.

Farquharson, Alexander. 1925. *A Report on Museums in Cheshire and the Adjacent Regions.* National Council of Social Services.

Findlen, Paula. 1996. *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Fleure, Herbert J. 1953. "Patrick Geddes (1854-1932)." *The Sociological Review* 1 (2): 5-13.

Foucault, Michel. 1979. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

———. 1986. "Of Other Places." Translated by Jay Miskowiec. *Diacritics* 16 (1): 22-27. First presented 1967.

Fuller, Steve. 2007. "A Path Better not to have Been Taken." *The Sociological Review* 55 (4): 807–15

Fyfe, Gordon. 2006. "Sociology and the Social Aspects of Museums." In *A Companion to Museum Studies,* edited by Sharon Macdonald, 33-49. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

———. 2009. "Matters of Rank." In *Rank: Picturing the Social Order 1516–2009.* Sunderland: Northern Art Gallery.

Geddes, Patrick. 1915. "Town Planning and Civic Exhibitions." In *Cities in Evolution, an Introduction to the Town Planning Movement and to the Study Of Civics,* 246-294. London: Williams and Norgate.

———. 1979. "Civics as Applied Sociology." In *The Ideal City,* edited by Helen E. Meller, 67-183. Leicester: Leicester University Press. First published 1905.

Giddens, Anthony. 1990. *The Consequences of Modernity.* Oxford: Polity Press.

Goldman, Lawrence. 2007. "Foundations of British Sociology 1880-1930: Contexts and Biographies." *The Sociological Review* 55 (3): 431-40.

Gouldner, Alvn. 1971. *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology.* London: Heinemann.

Haskell, Francis. 1976. *Rediscoveries in Art: Some Aspects of Taste, Fashion and Collecting in England and France.* Oxford: Phaidon.

Heath, Christian, and Dirk vom Lehn. 2004. "Configuring Reception: (Dis-) Regarding the 'Spectator' in Museums and Galleries." In *Theory, Culture and Society* 21 (6): 43-65.

Hetherington, Kevin. 1999. "From Blindness to Blindness: Museums, Heterogeneity and the Subject." In *Actor Network Theory and After,* edited by John Law and John Hassard, 51-73. Oxford: Blackwell.

———. 2011. "Foucault, the Museum and the Diagram." *The Sociological Review* 59 (3): 457-475. doi:10.1111/j.1467-954X.2011.02016.x.

Hillis Miller, Joseph. 1992. *Illustration.* London: Reaktion Books.

Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. 1992. *Museums and the Construction of Knowledge.* Leicester, London & New York: Leicester University Press.

Huyssen, Andreas. 1995. *Twilight Memories.* London & New York: Routledge.

Kroeber, Alfred L. 1954. "The Place of Anthropology in Universities." *American Anthropologist* 56: 764-7.

Lord, Beth. 2006. "Foucault's Museum: Difference, Representation and Genealogy." *Museum and Society* 4 (1): 1-14.

Macdonald, Sharon. 2002. *Behind the Scenes at the Science Museum.* Oxford & New York: Berg.

———. 2003. "Museums, National, Postnational and Transcultural Identities." *Museum and Society* 1 (1): 1-16.

Malraux, Andre. 1954. *The Voices of Silence.* London: Secker and Warburg.

Martins, Herminio. 1974. "Time and Theory in Sociology." In *Approaches to Sociology: An Introduction to Major Trends in British Sociology,* edited by John Rex, 246-294. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Matless, David. 1992. "Regional Surveys and Local Knowledges: the Geographical Imagination in Britain, 1918-39." *Transactions of the*

Institute of British Geographers (New Series) 17 (4): 464-80.

Meller, Helen E. 1993. *Patrick Geddes: Social Evolutionist and City Planner.* London: Routledge

Meston, Lord James. 1936. Foreward to *Roumania: Easter Carpathian Studies,* edited by Herbert J. Fleure and R. A. Pelham. London: Le Play Society.

Monem, Nadine. 2011. *Dirt: The Filthy Reality of Everyday Life.* London: Profile Books.

Mumford, Lewis. 1938. *The Culture of Cities.* London: Secker & Warburg.

Okuefuna, David. 2008. *The Wonderful World of Albert Kahn: Colour Photographs from a Lost Age.* London: BBC Books.

Peabody, Francis G. 1911. *The Social Museum as an Instrument of Teaching.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

Pratt, Mary L. 1992. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation.* London & New York: Routledge.

Prior, Nick. 2002. *Museums and Modernity.* London: Berg.

Prösler, Martin. 1996. "Museums and Globalization." In *Theorizing Museums,* edited by Sharon Macdonald, and Gordon Fyfe, 21-44. Oxford: Blackwell.

Robertson, Roland. 1992. *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture.* London: Sage.

Roxby, Percy M. 1939. Forward to *Roumania II: South Carpathian Studies,* edited by Herbert J. Fleure and Evans Estyn Williams. London: Le Play Society.

Scott, John and Christopher T. Husbands. 2007. "Victor Branford and the Building of British Sociology." *The Sociological Review* 55 (3): 460-84.

Shilling, Chris. 2003. *The Body and Society,* 2nd edition. London: Sage Publications. First published 1993.

Studholme, Maggie. 2007. ""Patrick Geddes: Founder of Environmental Sociology." *The Sociological Review* 55 (3): 441-59.

Studholme, Maggie, John Scott, and Christopher T. Husbands. 2007. "Doppelgängers and Racists: on Inhabiting Alternative Universes. A Reply to Steve Fuller's 'A Path Better not to Have Been Taken'." *The Sociological Review* 55 (4): 816-22.

Taylor, Brandon. 1999. *Art for the Nation: Exhibitions and the London Public 1747-2001.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Thomas, William I. 1979. "From Professor W. I. Thomas." In *The Ideal City*, edited by Helen E. Meller, 110-11. Leicester: Leicester University Press. First published 1905.

Vreeland, Francis M. 1938. "The Teaching Uses of a Sociology

Museum." *American Sociological Review* 3 (1): 32-8.

Williams, Raymond. 1977. *Marxism and Literature.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wright Mills, Charles. 1959. *The Sociological Imagination.* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Wydra, Harald. 1999. "Democracy in Eastern Europe as a Civilising Process." In *Whose Europe? The Turn towards Democracy,* edited by Dennis Smith, and Sue Wright, 288-310. Oxford: Blackwell.

Zueblin, Charles. 1899. "The World's First Sociological Laboratory." *The American Journal of Sociology* 4 (5): 577-92.

Materialization and Dematerialization, Migration and Emulation, Museum and Library

→ SRETEN UGRICIC

He is a novelist, essayist, conceptual artist, astronomer and philosopher. He is Initiator and manager of the progressive and complete institutional professional and programming reform of the National Library of Serbia, which he has directed since 2001. Ugričić is a member of the Serbian P.E.N., the Executive Board of The European Library (TEL), and he received an award from the Borislav Pekić Foundation. He was a member of the UNESCO Commission for Serbia and Montenegro from 2002 to 2008. In 2010 he was appointed co-chairman of the Selection Committee for World Digital Library (WDL).

→ ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the issue of migrations in terms of technology and in terms of socio-cultural movements, interactions and conversions. The thesis is constructed in a five-part structure: dematerialization; adaptation–evolution–revolution; emulation; postnationality; complementarity. The argument is then unfolded through eleven intentionally polemic, paradoxical statements and arguments, discussing the epochal u-turn that characterizes the contemporary age and civilization and how it manifests itself in libraries. The sequence of propositions is concluded by a critical thesis, describing the conditions for establishing constructive collaborations between museums and libraries: they both must acknowledge their immanent difference, complementary nature and purpose.

The paper deals with the issue of migrations in terms of technology and in terms of socio-cultural movements, interactions and conversions. The paper consists of 5 parts:

1. dematerialization
2. a-e-r (adaptation–evolution–revolution)
3. emulation
4. postnationality
5. complementarity

The paper elaborates the issue through eleven intentionally polemic, paradoxical statements and arguments in opposition towards stereotypes. Here is the list of 11 propositions—like Marx's—an invitation for our debate:

1. Technology is real—institution is virtual.
2. Memory is not reproduction but production.
3. Revolution is library driven.
4. Nomad does not migrate but emulates.
5. Book is from museum—not from library.
6. The thing is not the information but the information is the thing.
7. The code is not 01 combination.
8. Multiculturalism is an ideology of hidden disintegration.
9. Only legitimate identity is identity of responsibility.
10. Only different things can be similar.
11. We must be free.

Take for example the last one. It is paradoxical: how can anything which is "must" support something which is free? I will try to explain how this is connected with imagination and responsibility, because imagination and responsibility are crucial for resolving our issues of migrations, identities, our vision of functions and models for museums and libraries, today and in the near future.

→ 1. DEMATERIALIZATION

In introduction, let me debate some aspects of materialization and dematerialization in the process of cultural production and reproduction.

Thesis 1. Technology is real—the institution is virtual.

Nowadays, most people think it is exactly the opposite: that technology is virtual, while institutions (libraries, museums) are real. Well, it is not like that at all. Because institutions do not transform technology, but technology transforms institutions. Because the institution is a set of rules and hierarchies, established by social engineering and language performative powers, while technology is an engineering of natural and social relations with concrete, certain and predictable results. Because

the institution has a mission to, above all, justify itself, while the mission of technology is to perform, to serve, to deliver.

The second aspect I would like to emphasize, is articulated in:

Thesis 2. Memory is production (not reproduction).

I learned about that from museum projects I have been impressed by. They say libraries and museums are institutions of memory. If they are, I must repeat: memory is production—not reproduction. Memory is mission, task, inspiration, responsibility, interaction, interplay…

Cultural heritage is not in the past but in the present. It is not given to us, as a gift, it is our assignment, it is our task. It is very much like work in progress. Like a work of art. Cultural heritage must be created, it must be taken out from the layers of the past, negligence and taking things for granted, it must be reanimated, presented and contextualized in a proper way. This procedure does not differ from the current cultural and artistic production of completely new works, texts, objects, performances, etc. As a newly-created work looks for and takes its status within the scene, interpretation and institutional system, and of course within the market, so it must be with the cultural heritage artefact, since the perseverance only in the fact and status of the past cultural patrimony is not enough; this is a mere starting point for the creation, establishment and interaction with the context. And the context can be varied:

→ local, regional, international;

→ historical, educational, artistic, religious;

→ political, economic, touristic;

→ institutional, alternative (non-institutional);

→ media, technological, etc.

In connection with that, the functional application of ICT and digitalization promises considerable advantages. It is an open domain for a multidimensional creation and distribution of the cultural heritage as active and interactive contents in all contexts. ICT and digitalization are at the moment an "empty" technology and medium, which means they are "hungry" for content. Thus, from that point of view the appropriate and relevant approach to cultural heritage requires content production (not only reproduction, or memory, or interpretation). Each artefact has two lives, as two equally relevant forms of being: physical (analog) and virtual (digital). Both forms are content, so they should be treated in the same way that new (contemporary) cultural content has been produced. Otherwise, the heritage will fade away, or will be marginalized, or become "dead." If we do not accept that challenge, we will find ourselves in a situation where we cover irrefutable values with another veil and redundant noise, instead of using the advantages of discovering and animating. The time in which the thing that was not in the papers and on television was considered as non-existent is behind us. The time has come when non-existent is, above all, that which is not digital and on the network. And in relation to the previous technological paradigms,

this one looks incomparably more potent; it looks immense. There, you may not dig out buried values, but there, you may only generate values. It is an opportunity one can hardly resist.

Third point, and the most obvious and omnipresent aspect I want to emphasize, is the fundamental U-turn in the civilization process. For thousands of years culture has been established, maintained and developed through materialization. Now the direction of this process has been reversed—culture is produced and reproduced, the culture becomes real and transformed and distributed, through *dematerialization,* in the form of information-communication technologies and digital media, networks, domains, fields, spaces, algorithms…

As, after Gutenberg, technology driven culture prevailed over the oral-ritual paradigm, thus becoming immeasurably more powerful, now ICT driven culture prevails over the written paradigm, becoming, as

IMG. 01 — *Book of Genesis, Gutenberg Bible, 1454. Staatsbibliothek Berlin.*

a digital culture, more powerful than the written one to the same extent the written one was more powerful than the spoken one [Img. 01]. Culture has realized and accepted that the virtual is more real than the physical, that the digital is more real than the analogue, that the electronic is more real that the tangible—according to efficiency, according to performance ability. Since efficiency is the only real standard. Since a sign, data, idea, value, knowledge are faster, more available, more penetrating, and, at the same time, more precise, more abundant, of higher quality—if they are presented in the dematerialized form of a numerical code, combination of imperceptible electric impulses, abstract code, mental procedure…

Culture has always been but a prevailing of the imaginary over the given, of the spiritual over the material, of the intangible over the temporal. The output of the material one is limited; the output of the immaterial one is unlimited. Thus a code record is mightier and more far-reaching than its tangible, physical correlative. Of course, limitation is a code's inherent characteristic, too—a code is limited in its kind and can be cancelled by another code or anticode. One should take that into account. The technical protocols of the software, hardware and interface format migration and emulation are to provide us with the continuity of easy and safe access and use, in spite of the innate transience of the digital forms which are in a continual immanent transformation and conversion.

The code is put into operation logically. The matter is ruled by the laws of nature, the code by the laws of logic, the laws of thoughts. The natural laws cannot affect the mental laws. No external factor can transform a correct deduction into an incorrect one, or an incorrect conclusion into a correct one. Two plus two makes four both in war and in peace, both in youth and in old age, both at the freezing point and at the melting point, both at the bottom of the sea and at the top of the Himalayas, both on a stone and on paper, both on a screen and in an optical cable.

In an optical cable a thought is traveling at the speed of light. In the culture of dematerialization one applies an equation related to Einstein's one: $E=mc^2$. Energy is equivalent to the result of the multiplication of information and the square of the speed of light. One could say the formula means that if you accelerate enough the information, it turns into energy. We can conclude that in the culture of materialization the change of the state of things and of the world depended primarily on the mass, on the acceleration of the critical quantity, while in the culture of dematerialization the change of the state of things and of the world depends on information, more precisely on a code, mental and logical processing—on the acceleration of the critical quality.

The culture of dematerialization includes:

→   Dematerialized forms of identity and authorship;

→   Dematerialized forms of realization and research, knowledge and education;

→ Dematerialized forms of creativity and art;

→ Dematerialized forms of conflicts and security;

→ Dematerialized forms of power, repression and control;

→ Dematerialized forms of irrationality, madness, illness;

→ Dematerialized forms of communication;

→ Dematerialized forms of capability, skills, competencies;

→ Dematerialized forms of goods, services, capital, work;

→ Dematerialized forms of publicity and sociability;

→ Dematerialized forms of politics;

→ Dematerialized forms of events (history).

The culture of dematerialization includes the dematerialized way of establishing and reproducing social relations and social hierarchy (order). The culture of dematerialization includes the re-realized notion of contemporariness, which does not mean simply now, today or in accordance with the current moment, but: a simultaneous duration of many independent time orders. Maybe you believe it is dangerous and alienated, but I believe it is challenging and emacipatory, because it expands and deepens and accelerates the intangible but only real domain of our freedom.

→ 2. A-E-R (ADAPTATION–EVOLUTION–REVOLUTION)

Now, let's debate how this epochal trend, this U-turn in civilization demonstrates itself in libraries. Let me recognize three phases of the process of dematerialization in libraries: Adaptation–Evolution–Revolution. A-E-R. What I have in mind?

Towards the end of the twentieth century, the libraries and librarians successfully adapted to demands and challenges of the new technologies. However, the unstoppable penetration and continued impact of modern information and communication technologies which continually colonize all aspects and domains of our daily life are forcing the libraries of the twenty-first century to move on up from the stage of adaptation to the stage of evolution—that is, an internal generic transformation. The libraries have changed for good and librarianship will never be the same.

The strong impact of the ever expanding and all-pervasive ICT and digitization applications in our daily work makes this evolution so fundamental and far-reaching that it should be described as revolutionary. I am not saying this for a rhetoric effect. What I have in mind is the fact that through this ongoing evolution the libraries of today are redefining not only the tasks, work procedures and ambitions of the libraries, but also some of the key categories of civilization, such as: property, culture, economic relations, creativity, space and time, general public, and so on. The impact from transformed libraries is so deep that in accordance it

gives grounds to prove my:

Thesis 3. Revolution is library driven.

For example, the ongoing negotiations between the publishers, authors, libraries and Google are changing the way we see publishing, distribution and libraries, and most importantly the definition of intellectual property and the boundary dividing the public and private sector. The libraries of today have achieved a momentum which is lifting them from the domain of loyalty and management of the authorial and other private rights into a domain which is characterized by the expansion of a non-profit, open, universally accessible and public mode of ownership resulting in publicity of the cultural assets, knowledge, information, content and values.

The virtual has become more real than the physical in respect of efficiency, speed and range. Civilization is on the verge of a major shift that is expected to maximize the effects of this unprecedented accessibility and connectedness. In the area of economic relations the classic distinction between production and consumption is becoming outdated. The libraries, for example, with their data bases, digital collections and interactive services are gradually moving away from the status of a cultural liability, that is, the domain of demand and consumption, towards the status of a cultural asset, that is, the domain of production and supply.

Also, close examination of the concept of creativity as a part of the production process reveals that libraries are taking an active part in the redefinition of the classic distinction between the original and a copy and the concepts of authority and dissemination. The idea of the original will lose meaning in the digital age, as distribution and production gradually overlap and become inseparable.

As regards time and space, the library is no longer just a physical building which requires certain time and means of transport to be accessed within the limited time-frame of daily working hours, but an aggregation of services and resources that are available at any time, at any place and for every need, that is, in a classroom, at home, at work, in a conference room, in your pocket on a mobile device, in your bed, in your rest room, if you like, and so on [Imgs. 02-03]. Also, bear in mind that libraries of today are providing services not only to human readers, but also to robots. Maybe you have not heard of it? Yet, this is happening as we speak. These are so called web-bots or crawlers, software robots which keep harvesting data from all over the web to generate indexes and make their findings available to all users, linking found data with other available information, data bases, web sites, portals, etc. One of the secrets of success of the National Library of Serbia and the highest global ratings it has achieved is in the fact that early on we recognized the need to work for and with these robots, because they provide a shortcut to the widest audience of end users. Is this not a revolutionary step?

In conclusion to my A-E-R justification, we rest assured that libraries will continue to play an active role in the latest shift in the history of

civilization, the relevance of which is not limited to domains of culture and technology, but transverses the fields of economy, society, politics, gnoseology, anthropology and even ontology. Shifts of this magnitude have no precedent in the history of civilization, and this is what makes them most radical—in a word, revolutionary.

→ 3. EMULATION

Thesis 4. Nomad does not migrate but emulates.

Obvious fact and the stated question of nomadism, i.e. migrations of people, objects, knowledge, information, values, cultures, I would like to address through the binary opposition of the concepts of migration and emulation:

> Migration is endless wandering. Imagine Odysseus as a model
>
> *versus*
>
> Emulation is code rooted in the abundance of metamorphoses. Imagine Ovid as a model

My point here would be: the one who migrates changes only decorum, but immanently remains the same. The one who emulates evolves, with the purpose of preserving the core more adeptly. I would like to try to defend the thesis that the omnipresent mobility is just a delusion or just a variation of the one and same essence, at least when one talks about books and journals, i.e. about typical library material.

Books are a world with no difference between words and objects, since in books words are objects and objects are words, which is the only substance of each book. If that is not the case, then there is no book in front of us, but something else. The basic code of communication in our civilization is no ink on the parchment; neither is it lead on the paper, nor pixels on the display—but some thirty letters, nine figures, eight notes of the music scale. This is the point in thesis 6, which soon follows. Letters, figures and notes remain the set and unsurpassable code and medium of the human spirit and civilization which we convey via books and libraries.

That is why all these migrations and accelerations that we witness are after all nothing but a delusion. The moving and differences are real in space and time, in the medium of transfer and expansion and multiplication; but that which moves faster and more penetrating than ever before is the same that once moved slower and within a limited scope, and even slower and more limited before that. At the same time, that which seems to be an expression and identity of a uniquely specific environment and origin gets expressed and articulated in some other environment—either far or close in time and space and in the cultural code. So, it is not about migrations and complete differences, but about emulation, i.e. metamorphoses of the same spirit, same content, same human experience.

IMG. 02 — *National Library of Serbia, 2007. Ivo Kurtovic, 1973*

IMG. 03 — *British Library. Colin St John Wilson, 1997. The statue of Isaac Newton is by Edoardo Paolozzi.*

I will point to the difference in that regard between libraries and museums: a museum is primarily to point out even more radically its function of cognitive, evaluative and ontological exclusivity, as well as the irreplaceability and invaluableness of direct insight. And a library is primarily to throw away exactly that role and to irretrievably set out into the domain of the omnipresent virtuality, in which there is no difference between the content and the medium (Marshall McLuhan was right), between the original and the copy—no cognitive, no evaluative, no ontological one.

Thesis 5. Book is from museum—not from library.

The printed book today, according to the very act of production, belongs to the museum, not to the library. The book in its core has already mutated and integrated itself in the digital medium. Last year, Amazon.com—the biggest bookseller on the globe—sold more digital copies then printed copies for the first time in history. Or look what is happening with academic journals—90 percent of them have all canceled their printed version and are issued regularly online only. What we are holding in our hands while leafing through a book is a sort of a living fossil, a nice shell from an epoch that faded out [Img. 04].

And that is exactly the opposite from a museum artefact: its digital version is a nice screen shell from the epoch that unrestrainedly rushes and dictatorially occupies the entire domain of culture, communication and the public domain. And no matter how determined the domination of the digital is, it will not be able, even after a series of upgrades, to achieve the mutation like the one with books and journals, since that would be similar to the extinction of the species in biology.

Thesis 6. The thing is not the information but the information is the thing.

The substance of library material is information. Information is abstract, it is a notion, it is abstract, it is mental, it is logical—non-tangible and non-emotional per se. It initiates interpretations, including emotional ones, of course, but immanently it may be reduced and processed by the mind only. On the other side, the substance of museum material is not information, but artefact—"real," "concrete" and tangible. Some information may be attached to it, but it is in a way "before" per se. In the library, basically there is no discrepancy between the thing and the information, or the word, because in the library, the word is the thing. But in the museum, there is substantial discrepancy between the thing and the information about it. And that difference makes all the difference doesn't it?

Of course, there are many intermediary cases ranging among these two ultimately defined notions of library versus museum material, but let us keep aware of what is substantial and what is accidental for both sides, and think constructively about it.

Thesis 7. The code is not 01 combination.

As for this proposition, talking from the library perspective, I can justify it very elementarily: the code is a combination, but also the combina-

tion of something else: a combination of thirty letters, or nine figures, or eight notes. And the code remains the same, untouched by technological shifts. The code does not migrate, does not go anywhere—it emulates, it only continuously and miraculously transforms itself.

So, as you can see, real nomadism is not migration, but emulation. One migrates in order to remain the same, but one emulates in order to transform. The one who emulates evolves, with the purpose of preserving the core more adeptly. Now, keeping that in mind, and regarding the context of postnational Europe and its cultural and civil infrastructure, I will suggest that we—professionals from museums and from libraries—look through the often opaque veil of the national and linguistic ideologies of standards and identities, together with looking through

IMG. 04 — *The British Museum Reading Room. Sydney Smirke, 1857. Restored by Sir Norman Foster in 2000, today it hosts a library on world cultures.*

the often opaque veil of technological and professional standards, identities and ideologies.

In this part of my presentation I would like to justify these four propositions:

→ multiculturalism is an ideology of hidden disintegration;

→ only legitimate identity is responsibility;

→ only different things can be similar;

→ we must be free.

First, let me debate about nowadays trendy issue of multiculturalism and its discontents.

Thesis 8. Multiculturalism is an ideology of hidden disintegration.

Multiculturalism is based on the ideology of identities. But the concept of identity is the concept of exclusion, not of inclusion. So, it is self-contradictory. So, it does not work. What we need instead is an ideology shift—to establish ideology and value matrix based on similarities.

Insisting on differences instead of similarities makes lots of problems, we all recognize that. In the course of decades of failed practice of multiculturalism, it represented itself only as an ideological veil over growing discrepancies between social and class misbalances, geo-strategic misbalances, political and legal misbalances, public and private misbalances, knowledge and technology misbalances, bio-medical and bio-ecological misbalances, etc.

The problem with multiculturalism is in its intrinsic contradiction: it insists on differences, and at the same time implies that to be different, one has to be identical—to belong to a group where everyone is the same. The identity is always socially and culturally constructed, it is not a fact given by nature or by blood of our predecessors, and it is not authentically, unprecedented, unique, generic or anything like that—but artificial and instrumental and collateral. The cause and the reason for this is the fact that identity always is and can be explained as the function of the system.

Let me give one illustrative example. Twenty years ago, in Yugoslavia, the USSR, and other socialist countries, 90 percent of the population identified themselves as atheists. Nowadays, 90 percent of the same population declares themselves religious. And the majority of those people are ready to defend their identity with all means necessary. And they will be truly offended if you should question this core aspect of their identity. And the total change happened so quickly and so radically. And it looks to me that no one has any problem with all of this. Why is it so? Because the system has changed. The previous system required one type of identity for its sustainability and reproduction, and the new system requires a new type of identity for its sustainability and reproduction. Who cares if

its people have to accept and perform a totally opposite form of identity.

The example proves that identity is only the function of the system: if the system is changed, identity automatically follows. Identity is part of the problem, not the solution. Coexistence, interaction and integration must come out of mutual benefit; they must be productive—not in spite of the differences, but exactly because of differences. My alternative would be this motto:

Thesis 10. Only different things can be similar.

What do I have in mind when I say that only different things, people, cultures, phenomena, events, ideas—can be similar? Well, it is only logical. If things are the same, they may not be similar. So, only different things may and can be similar. Only similarity preserves difference, not the identity. Identity only deletes differences. And the perception or notion of similarity is crucial for culture, for creativity, for growth and sophistication of the arts and knowledge. Similarity may be discovered and achieved only by imagination.

Here is the formula for an attempt of integration based on imagination: only different things, people, cultures, phenomena, events, ideas —can be similar. And the similarity is in the exclusive domain and in the competence of imagination. By discovering similarities, one creates a new imaginarium. And via a new imaginaruim, one creates a new value matrix. By discovering similarities, one creates kinship. By discovering similarities, integration takes place.

We have two invincible allies, two invincible weapons, or two magnificent tools that can never misfire: imagination and responsibility. Imagination and responsibility are the guarantees of our fearlessness. Imagination and responsibility are the two sides of the same invaluable coin, and the name of that invaluable coin is freedom. He who has no imagination is not free; he remains confined by the given.

Simultaneously, he who is not responsible is not free. Because only a free man can be a responsible man. If we do not have freedom—we cannot be responsible. And most importantly: if we act irresponsibly, we cancel our own freedom. That is why our readiness and availability for responsibility is our guarantee and measure of our freedom. Being responsible is the crucial difference between the subject and the citizen. By persevering in responsibility, one creates kinship. By persevering in responsibility, integration takes place.

The rule of law is not enough. Today, we are entering into the rule of imagination and responsibility. If not, we are destined to regress a civilization level below the rule of law. And if I may remind you: we have been there once upon a time and it was neither nice, nor comfortable nor safe there.

To be free: to be able to imagine a community based on responsibility. And to be able to respond to that idea regarding the understanding of oneself and the others and the world—in each choice, in each decision, in each act, in each word and notion, in each relation with the world,

with others and with oneself. It is not difficult—on the contrary, it is exciting and exalted, since the feeling of freedom makes everything become real. There is not anything that can be compared to that feeling.

This would be my basic justification for:

Thesis 9. Only legitimate identity is the identity of responsibility.

And, in connection with that, the last proposition from my list stands firmly:

Thesis 11. We must be free.

Obviously, the rule of law is not enough. Postnational Europe must reach a different, upgraded integration basis. Instead of the rule of law and formal equality before the law, based and framed inside strict national borders and identity limitations, we must step into the domain of the rule of responsibility and substantial equality of imagination.

Imagination and responsibility are core aspects of freedom. The importance and vital functionality of imagination and responsibility prove to us that there is no alternative. So, we must be free. What a wonderful and awesome paradox!

→ 5. COMPLEMENTARITY

Let me finish my presentation with the thesis that in our times the library and the museum are able to constructively and with a spectacular effect learn from one another and co-operate with each other, but only if libraries and museums have no dilemmas and misunderstandings concerning their own complementary nature and purpose, only if they build and produce on the immanent difference and complementarity.

Sustainability in Contemporary Museums

→ MASSIMO NEGRI

He is Director of the European Museum Academy and Scientific Director of the Executive Master in European Museology at the IULM Università di Comunicazione e Lingue. He teaches postgraduate Master courses in Industrial Heritage and Erasmus Mundus courses on Industrial Heritage for the History Program at the School of Literature and Philosophy of the Università degli Studi di Padova. He also serves as a consultant for the courses of the Centre of Higher Education in Cultural Heritage of the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. He is the former Director of the European Museum Forum (1999-2009) and jury member of the European Museum of the Year Award (1983-2009). In 1993 he was conferred the Cross of Officer of the Orden de Isabel la Catòlica by the King of Spain.

→ ABSTRACT

The first point raised is based on a quantitative factor: in the last decades we have witnessed a constant growth in the number of museums in every European country. Is this trend destined to change? A second question: we have seen an impressive proliferation of museum typologies and the emergence of new types of museum (one for all, ecomuseums) with broader thematic scopes and more complex environments. Is this process destined to long term evolution too? A third point of strategic relevance: in which terms will the contemporary museum—with its high technological content, with its contradiction between energy saving needs and sophisticated yet energy consuming conservation equipment and communication devices—be compatible with sustainability goals? The final point deals with the cooperation or possible integration among museums, libraries and archives. What is certain is that accessibility is a crucial issue, which could profit greatly from the exploitment of the Web, although with many problems in terms of interoperability among different databases and digital archives.

It is usual that a few weeks or months after a conference the speaker is invited to put in a written form what he/she (in my case he) had the occasion to share orally with the audience. And this is also happening in the present occasion, a few months after the kick off conference of the MeLa project held in Rome, to which I had been kindly invited in the context of a sort of roundtable about the future of museums in Europe.

What is the usual procedure in these cases? One is given the chance to listen to his recorded speech, and with the aid of notes taken during the debate and the abstract of what one had the intention to deal with, you put on paper a more (hopefully, as sometimes the first version is the best or certainly the most spontaneous) structured sequence of thoughts. But in this very case, things are more complicated. Since the meeting was held in March, I have witnessed a great acceleration of some of the processes evoked in our discussion and, if looking at the future was already very hazardous at that time, now the challenge seems even greater and associated with a strong sense of instability which goes far beyond the museum sphere. Why? Of course because of the global financial crisis, the political changes in relevant parts of our planet and the consequences that the economic aspects are showing more directly also in the museum sector in most European countries.

I recently had a similar feeling when editing the proceedings of a one day seminar held last November in the town of Volterra (thanks to the cooperation between the Scuola Normale di Pisa and the European Museum Academy) on the occasion of the second Kenneth Hudson Seminar entitled "European Museums and the global economic crisis: impact, problems and reaction." At the time it had the intention of being a sort of small "instant book" that seems now, not quite outdated, as it luckily also offered some pioneering visions on the possible developments of the situation, more a document of a specific moment of the debate than something fully reflecting changes happening in the realm of museums.

In other terms the rapidity of changes and their scale suggests a careful approach to any forecast and determines a solid inclination to general considerations not too linked to data available at the moment, which are subject to a very rapid and unpredictable evolution almost day by day. Consequently, I feel obliged to ask the reader for a certain degree of benevolence in evaluating my reflections, which probably will be soon subject to radical revision and would be easily considered a bit naive.

Once said so, I have tried to summarize my reactions to the discussion in a few points. The MeLa project comes in a very special moment, and being destined to last the next three years, if I am not wrong, at the end of its story many of the elements from which it has started will appear rather obsolete or at least far in time more than the calendar suggests. But whatever will be the path followed, a few points will have to be faced and searched for an answer or at least for the identification and definition of some trends.

The first point I want to raise here is simply based on a quantitative

factor. In the last decades (say thirty-forty years) we have witnessed a constant growth in the number of museums in every European country [Img. 01]. If the French Encyclopaedia Universalis reported about 17,000 museums in the world (Bazin, Desvallées, Moulin 1979), the European Museum Forum at the beginning of the new century estimated 38,000 museums in European countries belonging to the Council of Europe. A few months ago the website of ICOM (2012) mentioned the existence of around 55,000 museum all over the world. This proliferation of museums has not witnessed any end, irrespectively of political changes due to the fall of the Berlin wall, or the economic difficulties of individual countries: many countries have doubled their number of museums in a few decades and radically renovated their structures; this meant renovation of exhibitions, of form of organizations, and of languages adopted in their communicative strategies. Thus, a first question which arises instinctively is: is this trend destined to change and will this growth stop, or will this development follow a stop-and-go format, or will even the number of museums be reduced and if so, following which criteria?

IMG. 01 — *Kunsten Museum of Modern Art, Aalborg. Alvar Aalto, 1972.*

A second question strictly linked to the first one is about qualitative factors: along with a quantitative growth we have seen an impressive enlargement of scope of the museum typologies with the emergence of a totally new type of museum (one for all, ecomuseums) and with wider and wider thematic scopes (for example, the recently established Museum of Psychiatry in Holland, or the Museum of Abortion in Austria or the Museum of Broken Relationships, etc.) [Img. 02]. Also, a growing complexity of the museum environment emerged due to the impact of new media, as well as to the availability of new technological devices (one for all: the LED lighting technology which is rapidly replacing all forms of lightbulbs of the past, including the halogen lamps till yesterday state-of-the-art). Is this process also destined to a further long term evolution? How will this be compatible with the emerging trends? (Very quickly emerging, as only three-four years ago sustainability in the museum world meant a sort of campaign for a "greener" attitude in staff and visitors' behavior.)

The term "sustainability" brings us to a third point of strategic relevance: in which terms will the contemporary museum, with its high technological content, with its contradiction between energy saving needs and sophisticated (but energy consuming) conservation equipment and communication devices, be compatible with sustainability goals? (More computers means more effective communication in most cases, but also the need for more air conditioning; theatrical effects means more light or at least more complex lighting systems, frequently with more consuming devices; although LED will help a lot in this regard, etc.)

In its promotional newsletter, Domoticware, which is a producer of museum display cases, writes as their first statement: "Museums often need to balance the exhibition of works of art with the conservation issue of reducing photo-chemical damage to light-sensitive materials. This dilemma is further constrained by the World Green Building Council requirements to increase the usage of natural light in buildings in order to improve sustainability and health" (Domoticware 2012). And then, of course, tries to give some practical solutions [Img. 03].

And what about the financial sustainability in a more and more difficult economic climate? It is enough to look at the constant evolution of the official definition of the word "museum" in ICOM Statutes, as well as in many local museum association documents of the last fifty years to understand that this process has been determined by two different, but in some sense converging, elements: one is simply the need to enlarge the basis for membership (i.e. to confer the status of museums to a larger number of entities so that they could find in museum organizations an adequate umbrella being eligible for membership); the other one is more complex and important to say, that is the growing personal and collective needs that a museum is asked to satisfy [Img. 04]. To the original key elements of the museum's mission "to study, record, preserve, possibly and when needed restore, make accessible and communicate to the public a collection," museums have been asked to be driving forces

IMG. 02 — *Harley-Davidson Museum, Milwaukee. Pentagram Architects, 2008. View of the historical display.*

IMG. 03 — *CNAM-Musée des Arts et Métiers, Paris. Restoration and new exhibition setting. Andrea Bruno 1991.*

for the economy, for social development in general terms, for cultural integration of the most diversified groups of users, for the building of new forms of citizenship (sometimes even before their clear definition). Not only, but museums must feed their public, entertain them and not "simply" educate them, offer the most comfort in terms of physical environment, be safe in a more and more dangerous world, be ethically perfect, an example for society in a more and more uncertain cultural, political and moral context. And the list could go on easily. There is no other cultural institution which has been more "under stress" like museums in the last half a century, in some sense. The reaction of museums in many countries and in many cases has been extraordinary. The museum landscape in Europe has radically changed in quantity and quality, and the range of services offered to the public has become wider and wider. This is undeniable.

But how long can this go on and in which terms? Is it legitimate to ask the question: are museums destined to face all these challenges forever or will there be a moment when some aspects have to be revised? Once said that, the enlarging of the social responsibility of museums has reached (luckily) a no return point. In which terms will this be compatible with the growing lack of resources? Is it likely that new actors will appear on stage in Europe as creators and managers of a new breed of museums?

Two years ago the European Museum Academy published together with the Carisbo Foundation (the Foundation of the Savings Bank of Bologna) a book entitled *Banks and Museums Beyond Sponsorships*, which gathered a series of presentations dealing with an interesting European phenomenon: the establishment of a network of museums (or individual museums) conceived, built and run by non profit bank Foundations (Campanini and Negri 2010). The book comprises three examples. First, the Genus Bononiae cultural trail, which includes eight historic buildings in the heart of the town of Bologna, fully restored, made accessible to the public with definite cultural objectives and managed by the Carisbo Foundation: a museum of the history of the city—Palazzo Pepoli [Img. 05]—, an art and history library in the former church of San Giorgio in Poggiale, an auditorium for concerts at the church of Santa Cristina, a temporary exhibition gallery at Palazzo Fava, a museum with the collection of antique musical instrument at San Colombano, two monumental complexes, Santa Maria della Vita and San Michele in Bosco, places full of works of art and, finally, another venue for temporary exhibitions at Casa Saraceni. Second, the group of museums created and run over the years by the Caixa de Pensiones Foundation in Catalunya, which includes the science museums Cosmo Caixa Barcelona and Cosmo Caixa Madrid, and several cultural venues used as conference centres or exhibition places as Caixa Forum Barcelona, Caixa Forum Madrid, Caixa Forum Palma, Caixa Forum Lleida, Caixa Forum Tarragona, Caixa Forum Girona.

And third, the Piraeus Bank Cultural Foundation network of thematic museums—a network that aims at promoting Greece's heritage and cultural identity. This network comprises seven institutions conceived, built and run by the Foundation in the last ten years of activity: the Museum of Industrial Olive Oil Production (Lesvos Island), the Museum of Marble Crafts (Tinos Island), the Silk Museum (Soufli), the Environment Museum of Stymphalia (Stymphalia Lake), Museum of Olive and Greek Olive Oil (Sparta), the Rooftile and Brickworks museum (Tsalapata) and the Open Air Water Power Museum (Dimitsana).

I am not saying that the future of European museums is in the banks' hands—although in some sense this is true for the all of us at the moment. I'm simply saying that this an interesting trend which is appearing in several European countries—last but not least the joint venture Guggenheim-Deutsche Bank, although focused on temporary exhibitions and not on a museum; or the Italian Museum of Modern Art in front of La Scala Theatre in Milan, which will show the large collection of twentieth century works of art belonging to the Intesa San Paolo Bank Group. It's a phenomenon that was unforeseen only five-six years ago and that is now blooming.

These three questions may insinuate the doubt that a selection process could sooner or later start and that the museum "stock" as it is today could be very different in, say, thirty years, and not necessarily in terms of growth. Of course, I have no answer for the moment, but MeLa should keep an eye on quantitative and qualitative growth in the coming years as a meaningful aspect of the definition of the future of European museums. Perhaps MeLa will offer some new visions at the end of its experience. Certainly a global vision of these phenomena as they appear to us now offers us a contradictory panorama: if it is true that museums are starting to be closed in Europe, and that several projects for new museums or for the renovation of existing museums have been stopped or postponed (to a vague future), it also true that the Chinese Government seems intentioned on maintaining its promise to open about a thousand new museums in the next few years, without even mentioning the renovation of the old ones. But it will take a long time before this will mean something concrete, directly concrete to Europeans for instance. In a global world, museums (apart from a selected although important number from the Louvre to the MET in New York, from the Uffizi to the Tate) remain a hybrid between local and international realities. They represent an essential part of the sense of belonging, in a period when the idea of belonging in itself is put under discussion by the necessity to deal with identity and difference, specialism and generalism at the same time. And if the number of museums should decrease in our continent in the next future, this would mean something in cultural terms after such a long uninterrupted period of growth.

The explosion of the Internet and the fast evolution of social networks also seems to put in a new perspective the relationship between real

objects and virtual objects. What was perceived as a sort of "competition" is becoming simply the coexistence of different cultural, psychological and practical dimensions. The same notion of virtual museum is changing: while before it was just being present on the web, possibly in the form of an "augmented" reality, now it is moving towards a more complex set of tools that one can use at the operational level—a web dimension at the basis of which lie digital collections. Digital collections do not mean only digitised pictures of the tangible collection, but a spectrum of materials to potentially (only potentially in most cases, for the moment) integrate in a package of services and experiences offered to a world wide community of users.

The fact that the accent is quickly moving from the notion of museum visitors to the notion of museum users is not only philosophical, but very practically determined by the impact of the Internet on the profile and the "way of being" of museums. Is it likely that a new generation of virtual museums—where a certain, and for the moment already unknown, mix of tangible and intangible will gives form to a new kind of organization—is written in our future? Certainly a new generation of users is already on the scene, and its main feature is the so called "multitasking man," whose profile very much depends on the technological development which has proved much faster than expected, in a certain sense. Is the era of contemplation over forever ? Not necessarily. Probably it is the paradigm of the perception of reality which is changing, and this will also involve visual experiences, which have always been at the basis of the museum experience and which right now are also the overwhelming feature of contemporary civilization. The development of social networking also frames in a different dimension the problem of social duties of museums, giving more chances but also more responsibilities to cultural institutions in general. But what will be the specific role of museums in this rapidly changing context is not clear yet.

The last point I want to quote here has to do with MLA (acronym for Museum Libraries and Archives), a sort of mantra of the last ten years—the cooperation or possible integration among museums, libraries and archives. It is the typical question which sounds well, but it remains a rather difficult question. It is one thing to have under the same roof a library, an archive and a permanent exhibition, as happens to different extents in various museums. But it is another thing to find concrete ways to establish a permanent and effective form of cooperation and service integration among one museum, one library, one archive, or even among a network of museums, library systems and archives. One of the critical points is the question of accessibility which varies a lot in practical terms, and that of course could greatly profit from the web, although still with many problems in terms of interoperability among different databases and digital archives. The experiment of Europeana (of which we are partner) seems to have attracted an interesting level of attention from the international public opinion, which for the moment is the

IMG. 04 — *MUSIL-Museo dell'Industria e del Lavoro, Fondazione Micheletti, Rodengo Saiano, Brescia. Kleihues + Schuwerk, Giampiero Lagnese, 2009.*

IMG. 05 — *Palazzo Pepoli. Museo della storia di Bologna. Mario Bellini, Italo Lupi, 2012.*

most promising project in operation.[1] MeLa has the potential for giving impulse to a methodological reflection about the interconnections among these three kinds of institutions and the possible evolutionary ways of "using" their resources.

A new model adequate to the new cultural, social and economic environment has not yet assumed shape for us. It is probably too soon for that. However the temptation to say that a key word will be "less" is strong: less museums, less investments, less technology, even less collections. And all this would not necessarily mean less influence. But personally I do not think that this will be the final output. Certainly, we are at the beginning of a transition period that will be characterized by a reduction in several fields of the museum sector.

Firstly the financial one, but the physical dimension of collections, their cultural dimension in the new digital communicative network, the know-how built year after year by museums in dealing with "physical materials" as well as with "human materials"—all these fields are there and represent a resource that cannot be ignored, one that our society cannot renounce to.

→ REFERENCES

Bazin, Germain, André Desvallées, and Raymonde Moulin. 1979. "Muséologie." *Encyclopaedia Universalis.* Paris: Éditeur à Paris.

Campanini, Graziano, and Massimo Negri, eds. 2010. *Banche e Musei oltre la sponsorizzazione: Una panoramica sui musei europei creati da fondazioni bancarie./Banks and Museums Beyond Sponsorship: An Overview of European Museums Created by Bank Foundations.* Bologna: Bononia University Press.

Domoticware. 2011. "Smart Display Cases for Museums. Protecting Your Investment in Art." Advertising brochure. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.domoticware.com/media/Domoticware_DMu_2011.pdf.

ICOM. 2011. "Frequently Asked Questions: How Many Museums Are There in the World?" Accessed March 27, 2012. http://icom.museum/what-we-do/resources/frequently-asked-questions.html.

1 Europeana is an internet portal that enables people to explore the digital resources of Europe's museums, libraries, archives and audio-visual collections.

European Museums as Agents of Inclusion

→ GIOVANNI PINNA

He is a Professor in Paleontology and a museologist. Regarding his activity in the field of museum studies, worthy of note is his book *Museo. Storia di una macchina culturale dal cinquecento ad oggi,* co-authored with Lanfranco Binni and published in 1980. This can be considered the first manual of museology published in Italy during the postwar period. Today he has turned his attention to the social aspect of museums, to the intellectual organization and the mechanisms for the production of culture within these institutions, to the relations existing between museums and society, between museums and power. He is editor and director of the six-monthly journal *Nuova Museologia* on museum studies, which he founded in 1999. Giovanni Pinna have been actively involved in the non-governmental organization International Council of Museums (ICOM).

→ ABSTRACT

This paper reflects on the renown concept of contact zones by Mary Louise Pratt, and on James Clifford's assumption that this concept can be extended to the museum field. A careful analysis of Pratt's and Clifford's words results in observing that one of the requirements for the museum to be a contact zone is the possibility of developing reciprocity and related systems of cultural exchange among subjects who meet, along with the ability for self–interpretation of the community of reference. This leads to a discussion on the kinds of museums that can be rightfully addressed as contact zones, to end up with polemic remarks on the recent choices of the European Union in matters of museum policies.

The commendable initiative of the European Union to finance an international research group on the role museums and libraries can have in the age of migrations—in a period in which vast movements of migrants have brought different cultures, ethnic groups and beliefs to the various countries of the European Union—has started the revision of traditional identities of the Nation-States through reworking and cultural hybridization. In Europe this clashes with a consolidated reality which witnesses in its museums, both at the national and small community level, reference points of national identity based more on exclusion than on inclusion, more on the maintenance of power by the dominant ethnic classes and groups than on sharing and social participation [Imgs. 01-02].

This consolidated European reality induces us to reflect on the theorizations of Mary Louise Pratt on the contact zones and on the assumption by James Clifford that this concept can be extended to a particular typology of cultural institutions (Pratt 1991; Clifford 1997). Both Pratt and Clifford in their discussions on the contact zones were referring to socio-cultural realities that were very different from the European reality—diversities which remain even when the European Union is crossed by internal migrations and also those from outside the Union. In particular, Pratt in her concept of contact zone was referring to colonial or postcolonial situations in which the contact between populations was characterized by a high level of conflict (Pratt 1991). To better understand this reference to particular hostile situations, let me quote the definition that Pratt gave to her contact zones. She wrote that they are the

> space of imperial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict. (…) It invokes the space and time where subjects previously separated by geography and history are co-present, the point at which their trajectories now intersect. The term "contact" foregrounds the interactive, improvisational dimensions of imperial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by accounts of conquest and domination told from the invader's perspective. A "contact" perspective emphasizes how subjects get constituted in and by their relations to each other. It treats the relations among colonizers and colonized, or travellers and "travelees," not in terms of separateness, but in terms of co-presence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, and often within radically asymmetrical relations of power. (Pratt 1992, 6-7)

In this definition the reference to colonial or postcolonial conflicts is evident when she mentions "imperial encounters, invader's perspective and relations among colonizers and colonized." The contact zones are therefore seen as areas in which the meeting of cultures takes place in a subaltern relationship, in which phenomena of critique, collaborations, mediations and denunciations take form; bilingualism and vernacular expressions are developed, parodies and imaginary dialogues are created, but also phenomena of miscomprehension and incomprehension, dead

letters, unread masterpieces and absolute heterogeneity of meaning. In the contact zones, Pratt observes, autoethnographic texts are developed, that is texts through which a particular ethnic group begins to narrate themselves from a point of view which confronts with the representations others have given them, and transculturation processes that members of subaltern or marginalized groups select and invent starting from materials appropriated from the dominant or metropolitan culture. The contact zones are therefore areas of creation of culture, which are developed through the mediation between the culture of the conquerors and the conquered, but above all these last ones are those who are forced to make the greatest renunciations.

Clifford, on his part, tried to apply the concept of Pratt's contact zone to indigenous cultural centres such as the Kwagiulth Museum and Cultural Centre and the U'mista Cultural Centre, which we can extend by analogy to numerous cultural centres afferent to indigenous communities in Australia (where they are called *keeping places*), in the US (Alaska and Hawaii included), in New Zealand, but also in smaller places like in Martinique and New Caledonia (Tjibaou Cultural Centre in Noumèa) (Clifford 1997) [Img. 03]. The common characteristic is to be multipurpose centres where activities such as language immersion programs and artistic and traditional artisan training takes place, archives are conserved, libraries are created, research programmes are organized, cultural heritage is collected and interpreted, the meaning of which is also transmitted in the form of traditional narrations along with traditional cultural heritage. Everything is done with the strong will to conserve or to renew identities through the interpretation, and conservation of traditional cultural heritage.

These cultural centres, which Clifford now calls tribal museums, now community museums, now cultural centres, are the materialization in the museal field of the contact zone concept theorized by Mary Louise

Pratt, in the sense that they are above all places for debate, for reflection on one's identity, for the interpretation of one's culture and means to communicate to the outside world, from the point of view of the community, of one's identity and one's culture. Above all, it seems at least problematic to be able to insert certain cultural centres in the category of museums. Clifford, when referring to two Canadian institutes, put limits between the museum and the non-museum in the sense that they

> do and do not function on the terms of the dominant, majority culture. They are, in important aspects of their existence, minority or oppositional projects within a comparative museological context. But in other crucial aspects they are not museums at all: they are continuations of indigenous traditions of storytelling, collections and display. (Clifford 1997, 110)

IMG. 02 — *Galeries de Paléontologie et d'Anatomie comparée, Paris. Charles-Louis-Ferdinand Dutert, 1898.*
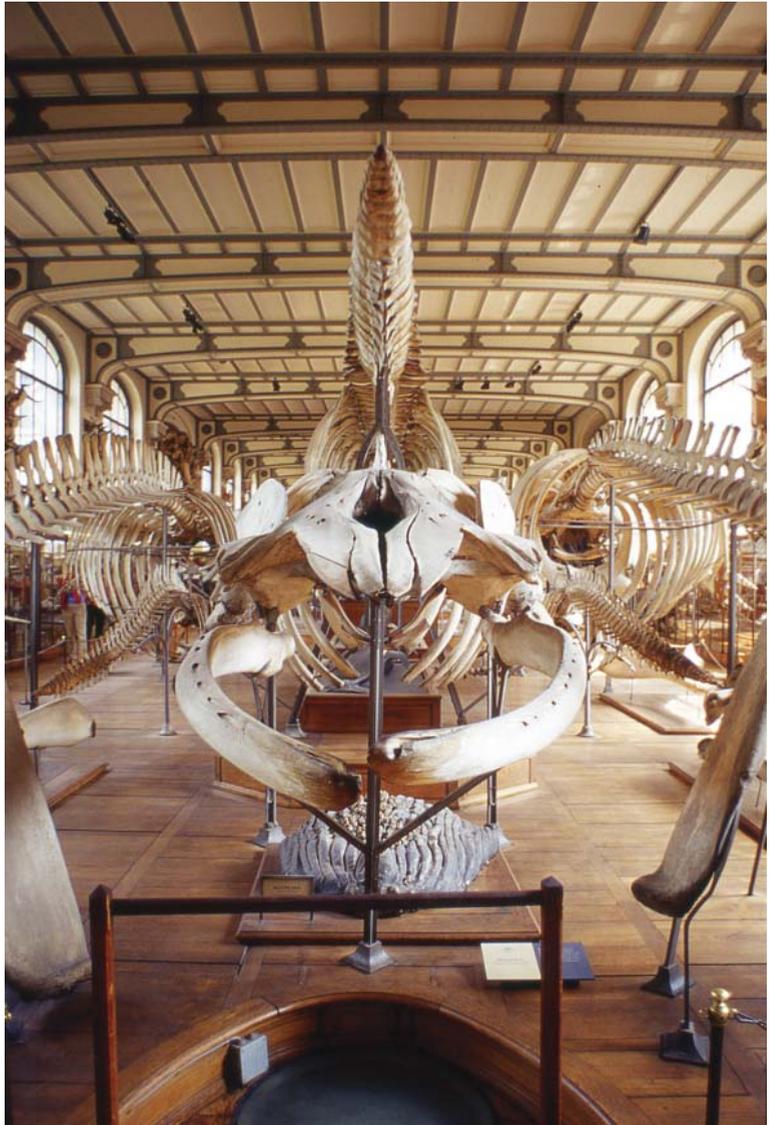
Clifford schematized the differences that in his opinion distinguish the western model of traditional ethnographic museums (which he calls majority museums in that they express culture, science, art and cosmopolitan humanism) from tribal museums (which express local culture, oppositional politics, kinship, ethnicity and tradition). He wrote that the majority museums must have some of these characteristics:

> (1) the search for the "best" art or most "authentic" cultural forms; (2) the interest in exemplary or representative objects; (3) the sense of owning a collection that is a treasure for the city, for the national patrimony, and for humanity; and (4) the tendency to separate (fine) art from (ethnographic) culture. (121)

IMG. 03 — *Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. Sir Thomas Deane, 1885.*

On the contrary, the tribal museum has different agendas:

> (1) its stance is to some degree oppositional with exhibits reflecting excluded experiences, colonial pasts, and current struggles; (2) the art/culture distinction is often irrelevant, or positively subverted; (3) the notion of a unified or linear History (whether of the nation, of humanity, or of art) is challenged by local, community histories; and (4) the collections do not aspire to be included in the patrimony of the nation, of a great art, and so on) but aim to be inscribed within different traditions and practices, free of national, cosmopolitan patrimonies. (122)

Considering the definitions of Clifford and the original concept of Pratt, one is led to ask if in Europe (and the entire western world), and therefore outside the colonial and postcolonial reality, there are museums which satisfy the requirements to be considered contact zones. The answer is not easy if we consider that, as we have seen before, one of the requirements of the museum as contact zone is the possibility to develop reciprocity and related systems of cultural exchange among subjects who meet, and the ability for self-interpretation of the community of reference. This presupposes a non political use of the museum by the dominating subjects. This would exclude, for example, most museums on immigration, whose realization is almost always linked to the national politics of the ruling class.

The definition of ecomuseum proposed by Rivière seems to show a vocation of the ecomuseum to be a contact zone (Rivière 1989). In any case, as I pointed out in 1997, the process of collectivization which is at the basis of the original concept of ecomuseum denies this institution the freedom of expression, along the confrontation and the self determination that are prerequisites of the contact zones (Pinna 1997). Furthermore, in both cases the political actions through which modern Nation-States construct "imagined communities" (Anderson 1983) to give full "nationality" to social groups other than the official ones, demand that these groups become integral part of the national collectivity.

On the other hand, many community museums dedicated to geographically and ethnically limited local cultures seem to assume a more genuine status of contact zones. These are museums that are born from the need for self-representation and self-interpretation of small communities, above all in non metropolitan areas, but that are born in contrast to other cultures and ethnicities.

Beyond these micro-realities, which receive political and economic support only in relation to more general autonomist politics, the current development of museal practices in Europe shows a tendency towards the emphasis of majority museums, as in Clifford's concept; that they are assuming greater relevance in national and local politics aimed at internal agreement and the authority towards outside, in the emphasis of the nationalisms and limited identities in front of a colonial style hierarchical multiculturalism and of a marginalization of the smaller communities. It is not incidental that six of the most important European museums at

the national level (Louvre, Hermitage, Berlin Museums, Rijksmuseum, Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum and Prado) signed the now famous *Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums* (2002) without political approval, assuming an imperialistic representative role of all world cultures and establishing the legitimacy of the possession of artefacts of these cultures, two actions which are perfectly in line with the cultural politics of the relative Nation-States (ICOM 2004, 4).

Regarding the Community horizon it is impossible not to note the apparently schizophrenic behavior of the European Union, which on one hand finances studies on museums as inclusion agents, while on the other it follows a policy of consolidation of the major museums through the granting of funds aimed at restructuring museums at the regional

level, as in Spain, Portugal and Greece. This ambivalence is a consequence of the framework in which the European Union is operating, which cannot come out of its economic-commercial logic, and makes no effort to propose a cultural policy which is able to give a uniform image of European culture.

I am convinced that a community based on money, above all if this is intended as capital and not as production of goods, has no future as community and that it separates instead of unites, since at the level of its citizens, it creates conflicts which are not calmed by the awareness of belonging to one common place. The protests against the production restrictions of this or that product imposed by commercial logics of the trade off between countries of the EU should show the European Union that economic or political communities cannot exist without a cultural foundation.

This does not mean that a European thought cannot be elaborated, as witnessed by authoritative men of culture; George Steiner for example (Steiner 2006)! But the road is long and complicated, and the task of a workgroup on museums and libraries as integration agents is truly difficult.

→ **REFERENCES**

Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso.

Clifford, James. 1997. *Routes. Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

ICOM. 2004. "Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums." *ICOM News* 57 (1): 4. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/ICOM_News/2004-1/ENG/p4_2004-1.pdf.

Pinna, Giovanni. 1997. *Fondamenti teorici per un museo di storia naturale.* Milan: Jaca Book.

Pratt, Mary L. 1991. "Arts of the Contact Zone." *Profession* 91:33-40.

———. 1992. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation.* London & New York: Routledge.

Steiner, George. 2006. *Una certa idea di Europa.* Milan: Garzanti.

Rivière, Georges-Henri. 1989. *La Muséologie selon Georges Henri Rivière.* Paris: Dunond.

Perspectives
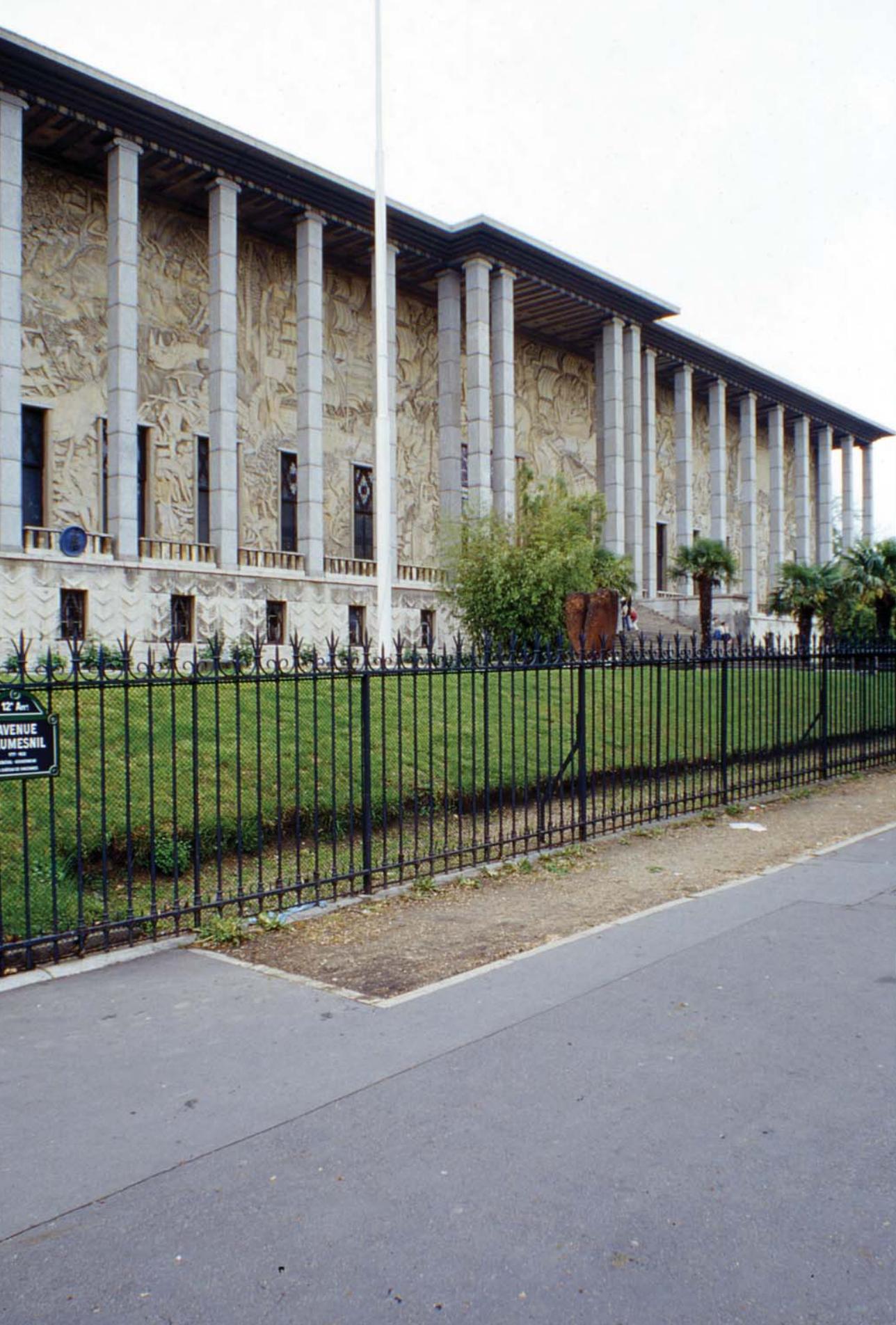
Cultural Memories, Museum Spaces and Archiving

→ **IAIN CHAMBERS**

He is Full Professor of Cultural and Postcolonial studies at the Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale," where he has been Director of the Centre for Postcolonial Studies, and presently coordinates the PhD programme in Cultural and Postcolonial Studies of the Anglophone world. He was a member of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, and he is particularly known for his interdisciplinary and intercultural work on music, popular and metropolitan cultures. More recently he has extended his work on interdisciplinary and intercultural analyses to the formation of the modern Mediterranean. He is leader of the MeLa Research Field "Cultural Memory, Migrating Modernity and Museum Practices."

→ **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this article is to investigate the museum as a site of cultural powers and traditions in the light of a postcolonial critique that highlights the histories, cultures and bodies that have been structurally repressed in order that a particular representation of modernity—that of the West—passes as the unique measure of the temporal and cultural coordinates of today's world. Going on to argue that the past is never really past, and that memories and archives are not the site of dead matters, a radical reconfiguration of the museum and its institutional configuration of knowledge is proposed. Turning time around, the prospect of a past—negated, refused and repressed—that comes to meet us from the future takes up residence in the critical, heterotopic space projected by the postcolonial museum; here it traces the possible undoing and redoing of contemporary museum perspectives and practices.

PREVIOUS PAGE — *The former Musée des Colonies, Paris. Albert Laprade, 1931. Today the building hosts the CNHI-Cité nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration. Refurbishment and new exhibition design by Patrick Bouchain and Loïc Julienne, 2007.*

I believe that the question of memory can in
no way be separated from the question of desire.

Georges Didi-Huberman

How to conceive and conceptualize museum spaces and practices in the
light of the histories, cultures and lives that such institutions have struc-
turally excluded in the course of their formation? This is the challenge
of the postcolonial museum and the accompanying practices that lead to
a diverse elaboration of identifying, cataloguing and exhibiting materi-
als, themselves the physical presence of often hidden histories, opaque
cultures and clandestine lives. If the museum, in both its national and
more local and specific variants, is very much about a particular nar-
ration of the past that seeks to establish a consensual understanding
of the present, then our proposal inevitably begins from the necessity
of re-routing and re-working that heritage in a continual elaboration
of new beginnings. The languages and lexicons we have inherited are
inevitably subject to interrogation, exposed to questions and concerns
they would never have authorized. It is certainly not simply a question
of extending existing practices and spaces to include the once excluded
and denied. What emerges at this point, proposing a radical dissassem-
bling of the inherited structures of exhibiting, displaying and catalogu-
ing, is the undoing of a particular historical and cultural formation of
thought. In this sense, as Jacques Derrida has so forcibly reminded us,
it is the past—negated, repressed, denied—that comes to meet us from
the future (Derrida 1996).

Working with this altogether wider map, we immediately have to con-
front the asymmetrical relations of power that provide the cartographi-
cal tools we draw upon in orientating ourselves before these wider and
interleaved horizons. Critical transit in this unfolding space—the map
is neither definitive nor stable—is always an act of translation. Who gets
to translate, and travel, here is never a neutral question. Who gets to
speak and define the route, is hardly a question of "science" or academic
"neutrality" (the concepts themselves are designed and defined by the
interested parties). Against the interests of our immediate cultural in-
heritance, we have to shift the question to consider the assembling and
governing of apparatuses of power. It is there, beyond any arrest in local
historical, cultural and ideological justification, that the question of the
postcolonial museum and library is worlded without immediate redress
to "my" history or "their" culture. This is initially an interrogative, blank
space: the space of a museum yet to come. Yet, at the same time, we are
not talking of reducing today's museum to zero. In seeking a critical
space, we are proposing a cut or interruption in the existing language
and lexicon of collecting and cataloguing that would permit another
orientation to emerge.

The power of the museum to narrate individual and collective belonging,
not simply to the nation (or humanity's communality), but also to more
local and specialized concerns, needs to be recognized precisely in such

terms [Img. 01]. This power is neither simply institutional nor passively received in a unilateral manner. It is a profoundly affective power that sustains adherence, allegiance and a complex willingness to be subjected to the cultural promises of its historical agenda. It can hardly be destroyed or cancelled. It can, however, be reworked and redefined. Beyond the charged concerns of cataloguing and defining (that is constructing an apparatus that recognizes and responds in varying degrees to the unfolding complexities occuring beyond its walls), museums are, above all, custom houses of memory. It is here where a critical cut needs to be most sharply applied. Accustomed, as we are, to consider memory, and with it, museums, histories and lives lived, as a "thing" of the past, we avoid and evade the more radical and disturbing idea that memory (and history) is forever present. As a set of practices, a discursive arrangement of knowledge, a physical institution and cultural presence, the museum is a contemporary configuration of the past. It takes into custody and seeks to represent what has occurred; but what occurred is also what has been forgotten, marginalized, obscured, hidden and negated. In this sense, the authority of the museum is somehow also forced to take responsibility for what it cannot represent. This brings us to the brink of another understanding of potential museum spaces: ones to be filled by future recognitions.

In *The Predicament of Culture,* James Clifford writes that for "the West collecting has long been a strategy for the deployment of a possessive self, culture and authenticity" (Clifford 1988, 218). The proposal of a postcolonial museum clearly puts such an arrangement in question. The very nature of the self, and its associated culture, is necessarily challenged. Both memory—whose, where and how?—and its institutional realization in the archive, needs to be rethought. If the objects that are collected and collated in the museum betray a precise political and psychic economy that orbits around the presumed sovereignty of the individual, then we must now also recognize that "the very things that form the core and basis of our individuality, our subjectivity, sensations, language, and habits, by definition cannot be unique to us as individuals" (Virno 2003, 137). This might perhaps encourage us to shift attention from the distinct objects of the liberal political economy to the historical and cultural configuring of archives as assemblages of flows, connections and networking. Further, and in the context of the art museum, it could lead to shifting the focus from the individual artist and author of the object and the "art work" to the pre- and post-individual scene of what Bracha Ettinger calls "artworking" in the context of a working memory (Ettinger 2006).

Again, this is to insist on the idea that memory is not a lost object, wrapped up and conserved in the folds of the past, but is rather the instigator of present practices promoting futures. This is to render deeply problematic those versions of both individual and collective memory that have been consigned to the modern museum and the library. This is to step, for a moment, outside those versions of memory proposed by the Freudian inheritance—the unconscious repression of the past—

in order to broach understandings of memory that are incorporated in past, present and future bodies, materialities, practices and affectivities. Opposed to the object to be reclaimed or negated, we might consider memory as an ongoing dynamic whose conscious and unconscious pulsations continually raises questions of property, power and violence: whose and what memory is to be recognized, collated, and claimed? The violence of the conceptual force that exercises sovereignty over memories, thereby establishing and authorizing the past (and present), is invariably exposed in a series of dynamics that overflow any categorical arrest. Memory here becomes a passage, or site of transit, conjoining pasts, presents and futures in an unfolding configuration that stymies a single or unique point of view. Here the idea of memory proposes less the idea of recuperation and more that of an assignment to be undertaken. This underlines both the continual reworkings of modernity and its profoundly migratory status as it is continually forced into movement by other histories, cultures and narratives and their claims on the modern world. The trauma of memory is here less about what floods in from the past as what disturbs and invests us in the present.

Memory, at this point, provokes the contemporary scenario of a dispossessed modernity. There clearly exist other zones, repressed and rebellious territories that are not simply ours to define, analyze and manage. Here in the inevitable interaction and interfacing of multiple pasts and presents, the powers of representation also encounter subaltern claims to opacity and invisibility; that is, the refusal to appear or be represented in our terms. Here to register the insistence of the unsaid and the unheard is critically to provoke the injunction of the interval, the cut, the interruption. These mark a particular and hegemonic accounting of time with other times, other lives and archives yet to be narrated.

In this deliberate passage from the museum as a national crypt and cemetery of commemoration to a migrating network of traces and memories, the archive opens on to "a question of the future itself, the question of a response, of a promise and of a responsibility for tomorrow" (Deridda 1996, 36). In this sense, and recalling Georges Didi-Huberman's observation with which this essay begins, the archive becomes a desiring machine. As such, the archive is no longer the instance of infinite accumulation that points back to disappearance in the past, but rather the site of the ongoing *redistribution* of memories and their instigation of futures.

Such concerns may initially seem distant from the everyday concerns of collecting, collating and curating objects that stand in for historical testimony and/or aesthetic injunctions. We can already appreciate, however, that this radical shift in terms and definition, most obviously challenges and deviates the accustomed security of the disciplinary protocols and practices of historiography, museology and art history. The rooms waiting to be filled are never "empty;" they are already filled and inscribed with cultural credential. The presumed "neutrality" of their practices—from selection to explanation—draw upon a semantic machinery whose powers pass largely unremarked and unobserved, safely secured in the universal presumptions of a presumed "scientificity" of method and approach. These rooms, invariably white in their authorized "neutrality," are not simply where the pedagogy of power is performed through the objects and bodies of socialized publics and artefacts. Their whiteness is the declaration of a blank universalism [Img. 02]. It is also the smooth surface of a racializing disposition in which color as distinction, difference, discrimination and specificity is hierarchly organized into seemingly inobtrusive, but very powerful, bio-political environs.

The museum remains in control of memory, allocating the bodies and spaces in which it is to be incorporated, transforming the ruts, gaps, warts and the unspeakable into the seamless passage of a guided tour.

The museum as the West, its history and memory, is also the unconscious, and largely silent, site of the histories and memories of the rest of the world. Today, in being worlded, it invariably encounters itself in a space that is no longer merely of its own making. Museums are springing up everywhere. Whether to narrate the nation or to collate more precise desires, the logics of museology, art collections and accompanying *biennale*, lend themselves to migratory apparatuses with flexible archives. If the Occidental museum remains the model to be imitated and emulated, we can still glimpse in its passage elsewhere something that is less rooted in the national, geopolitical and institutional immediacies of the West, and altogether more routed through planetary complexities that exceed its initial mandate.

The presence of the past sustained in the contemporary skein of memory is today extended and reinforced by its technological support: the analyst's writing pad is now supplemented by an expansive media of memory: from writing and cinema to photography, sounds and the digital file. We could say, following Chris Marker in *Sans Soleil*, that there is no memory without a medium (Marker 1983). To conceive of memory and archives in these terms is to register technologies of transmission that sustain a multiplication of networking and artworking in increasingly flexible and fluid spaces. Here, if "communities" are constructed, the right to opacity is also sustained. Despite the ubiquity of the media there is no unique representation, no exhibitory force able to contain all. The retina is cracked by the passage of unauthorized movement across the field of vision, the room is filled with strange sounds. The representation grinds to a halt within its limited locality; but then it travels, and in the transit it is of course transformed and translated. As modernity's assured stability is folded back upon itself there emerges an interference between representational and non-representational practices. The representation is increasingly grounded in socialities without guarantees.

If we are engaged with translating the museum and the library from an abstract space and seemingly neutral archive into a lived one, then such sites and institutions become less the place of conservation and rather one of interrogation. They come less to propose an assumed continuity and more a potential interruption and interval, where rituals of knowledge and power, and their scripting of authority, come under scrutiny. As the curator and critic Richard Sandell has pointed out, the museum conceived in this manner can provide and provoke democratic experiments in social, cultural and historical justice (Sandell 2002). Once again, negated pasts come to meet us from the future.

With such considerations in mind, let us now extend our attention to the postcolonial library. What exactly constitutes such a library, what is considered legitimate and what is to be excluded? If here we are dealing most obviously with questions of confines, authority and discipline, an

eventual postcolonial library and the bibliographies it might sustain, is further problematized by the unavoidable interrogations of how, why, where and who for? In other words, the library space, like that of the museum, or the classroom and the syllabus, is never neutral. Given that we have been taught to consider such institutions as sites of learning and knowledge and, precisely for those reasons, to be impartial in their languages and neutral in their practices, this immediately produces an unexpected critical and structural dissension.

If nothing else, postcoloniality has taught us that there are no impartial or disinterested venues available: all is worlded in complex and often unforeseen ways. The books and articles we may choose to consult are located not merely in a particular physical environment and geographical place; they are also located in a specific historical formation and cultural constellation. Why some writings, why do only certain authorities and perspectives, tend to prevail rather than others? The choice is not necessarily conscious nor malignant, but it is disciplined by social, cultural and historical criteria that constitute an ongoing critical problematic.

Further, if we wish to identify some key postcolonial texts in order to begin building a critical archive and library, we cannot avoid situating our own desires and recognize that a postcolonial library simultaneously proposes an interrogation of both terms; that is, of both the "library" and the "postcolonial," and of the political and historical desires that conjugate them. In seeking to respond to these terms we need necessarily break away from the abstract humanism of the universal and acknowledge a series of specificities that paradoxically both limit and deepen our understanding of the question. The library, however much it may wish to gesture towards universal concerns, is circumscribed by its location and

the perspectives that a particular historical configuration, as opposed to another, can sustain. At the same time, such limits transform dreams of universalism into an altogether more pertinent registration of location that precisely permits planetary recognition: real differences that disseminate a global register.

So, both the "library" and the "postcolonial" are defined in the very practices of identifying a set of texts. Here, too, the concept of texts opens out on to an altogether more complex terrain in which the unique medium of writing and print is supplemented by multimedial formats: recordings, sounds, images, simulations. These, in their turn, trouble and disturb inherited hierarchies as the coolness of print is threatened by multiple stimuli jumping off screens and encouraging shifting sensory environments.

As an operation limited in time and space, working within the confines of the European and North Atlantic world, yet at the same time aware that there are other worlds out there, this eventual library should perhaps begin by considering questions that its very operation generates. For the library, the archive and the reading list is both a pedagogical practice and a political initiative. We are invited to think again, and to revaluate our position and power in the world. We are still very much the "subjects," rarely the "objects," of such operations; it is we who presumably initiate the privilege of studying and thereby consider our "selves," however critically, largely secure from the dramatic exertions of being subjected to others, rendered "objects," and simply surviving.

To think of a potential postcolonial bibliography is to identify a series of problematics that do not simply radiate outwards from the metropolitan centre but rather constitute a set of overlapping circle of concerns that can lead to superimposed maps and a multiplication of "centres." Further, the specificity of the particular histories of sea-borne empires (British, Dutch, Spanish, French, Portuguese, but also Danish and Swedish) can also suggest critical archives that are more likely to be sustained in the seas of the Atlantic and Indian oceans rather than merely the expression of territorial and colonial acquisition. The sea itself, as Caribbean poetics has taught us, is history (Walcott 1979). In its fluidity are suspended further histories and interrogations.

There now exists a vast literature in postcolonial studies, largely of anglophone origin and concentrated in the ruins of the British Empire. The work of transporting those concerns into another national configuration suggests both the planetary communality established by European colonialism and imperialism, and the particularities of its "translation' into the immediaces of a national variant of the colonial and postcolonial world. Holding the two poles of the argument together—the global intentionality of European colonialism and the specificity of a national formation—helps us to better identify the holes and lacuna in how both dimensions are experienced and conceptualized. This perhaps also brings us to recognize that, notwithstanding its planetary concern, the critical instance of the "postcolonial" is fundamentally that of the First

World re-elaborating and critically working through (or, more typically, refusing to work through) its colonial inheritance. It is precisely "our" modernity, our nation-states and associated identities, that were fashioned, moulded, elaborated and supported by colonialism and imperialism making the world over in our interests and image. As Frantz Fanon once put it, the First World is a product of the Third World (Fanon 2004).

Finally, and more practically, the eventual contents of the library and its associated bibliographies will be disciplined by its compilers, by their interests and concerns. This obviously raises questions about its potential "communities" of users and of the recruitments and concerns of its practitioners and curators. The simultaneous global reach and the particularities of a specific postcoloniality suggest that not merely the colonizing "centres," but also the colonized "peripheries" they produced, need to be considered: not simply Lisbon, but also Maputo and Luanda, for example. Perhaps it would be better to conceive of the materials to be included in terms of sites and routes: compasses and navigation aids rather than comprehensive and conclusive cartographies. This is to think the library and associated bibliographies in terms of amplifying the narrative (both local and national), while resituating its concerns on an altogether different map, where it is required to renegotiate its historical "voice" and cultural authority.

To transfer the library to the "black holes" of Occidental modernity proposed by its negated colonial past and postcolonial present, and there re-arrange the logic of its catalogues and the significance of its texts, is finally to respond to an unacknowledged inheritance. The colonial and imperial past that economically, politically, culturally and historically has formed modernity, returns as a permanent interrogation able to rework and reroute the very nature of the present (and the future). For if Europe was, and is, in Africa, Asia and Latin America, then, and as a consequence, Africa, Asia and Latin America are also in Europe. Precisely in this transitory, translated and diasporic space the archives can be re-opened, re-routed and re-read, and inherited monuments (museums, libraries, canonical reading lists and syllabuses) returned to the traumatic site of altogether more fraught memories and contested foundations.

To deepen this argument in order to see how its leads to the identification of other spaces in the critical revaluation of "our" modernity, I would like to conclude by drawing some perspectives from Michel Foucault's short essay, "Of Other Places." Here is Foucault:

> From a general standpoint, in a society like ours heterotopias and heterochronies are structured and distributed in a relatively complex fashion. First of all, there are heterotopias of indefinitely accumulating time, for example museums and libraries, Museums and libraries have become heterotopias in which time never stops building up and topping its own summit, whereas in the seventeenth century, even at the end of the century, museums and libraries were the expression of an individual choice. By contrast, the idea of

accumulating everything, of establishing a sort of general archive, the will to enclose in one place all times, all epochs, all forms, all tastes, the idea of constituting a place of all times that is itself outside of time and inaccessible to its ravages, the project of organizing in this way a sort of perpetual and indefinite accumulation of time in an immobile place, this whole idea belongs to our modernity. The museum and the library are heterotopias that are proper to western culture of the nineteenth century. (Foucault 1986, 26)

IMG. 04 — *Oakland Museum of California, Oakland. Kevin Roche, 1969. Renovation and expansion by Mark Cavagnero Associates, 2010. "The Story of California" Gallery.*

Foucault, in insisting on the peculiarity of the museum and the library as being "proper to western culture in the nineteenth century," implicitly underlines the necessity of a critical reconfiguration of this type of space and its associated practices. He considers the museum and the library as heterotopic spaces. If these are most obviously spaces that serve to preserve from time selected objects and the associated narration of events, sustained in their organization in catalogues, archives and displays, we can also note the profound ambiguity of such spaces. For if they tendentially reproduce the logic of conservation—both in curatorial and cultural terms—they are also potential counter-sites of a modernity that can be narrated other-wise [Imgs. 03-04]. Here there emerge lines of flight that sustain critical spaces "in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect" (24).

The very operation of rendering both the museum and library space "neutral' and scientific, as the site of disinterested knowledge, now reveals racializing dispositions in the construction of bio-political environments. The disposition of collecting, organizing and exposing texts forces us to consider the insistence of who collects whom, where, why and how? The very assemblage of items—books, paintings, objects—into a collection (the library, the museum, the catalogue) requires hierarchies of difference, distinction and discrimination. The question then is how to uproot these logics in order to permit new configurations more suitable for postcolonial concerns? The initial move perhaps lies in considering the library as an archive that houses memories for/of the future: the site of histories, lives and sentiments yet to be registered and narrated.

IMG. 05 — *Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust. Hagy Belzberg, 2010. "The World That Was" Room.*

In such a heterotopic or counter-space of modernity, where the logic of governing the past in order to discipline it and render it transparent to our will is subverted, there can emerge the perspective of the museum and the library as a complex, uncertain and fluid zone of contacts, frictions and contaminations. Such a prospect throws light on these spaces and practices not simply as a space in crisis, but rather and altogether more significantly, as a critical space of vital contemporary importance. Located in a world in which social and historical justice, still to come, invests us from the future, we can perhaps begin to consider how such forces might "explode" the museum: not to cancel it physically, but to renew it historically.

→ **REFERENCES**

Didi-Huberman, Georges. 2009. "Temporalità e Memoria del Visuale. Conversazione con Georges Didi-Huberman," by Alessia Cervini, and Bruno Roberti. *Fatamorgana* 8 (May-August). Accessed March 27, 2012. http://fatamorgana.unical.it/numero08/Didi-Huberman08.htm.

Clifford, James. 1988. *The Predicament of Culture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Derrida, Jacques. 1996. *Archive Fever. A Freudian Impression.* Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Ettinger, Bracha. 2006. *The Matrixial Borderspace.* Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University Press.

Fanon, Frantz. 2004. *The Wretched of the Earth.* New York: Grove Press.

Foucault, Michel. 1986. "Of Other Places." Translated by Jay Miskowiec. *Diacritics* 16 (1): 22-27. First presented 1967.

Sans Soleil. 1983. DVD. Directed by Chris Marker. Neuilly-sur-Seine: Argos Film.

Sandell, Richard. 2002. *Museums, Society, Inequality.* London & New York: Routledge.

Virno, Paolo. 2003. 'The Multitude and the Principle of Individuation." Translated by Elizabeth Lawler. Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal 24 (2): 133-145.

Walcott, Derek. 1979. "The Sea is History." *The Star–Apple Kingdom.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Museums, Peoples, Places
European Museums and Identity in History

→ CHRISTOPHER WHITEHEAD, RHIANNON MASON

Christopher Whitehead is Professor of Museology at Newcastle University and member of the University's Cultural Affairs Steering Group and the Great North Museum's Board. His research activities focus on both historical and contemporary museology. He has published extensively in the field of art museum history, with particular emphases on architecture, display and knowledge construction.

Rhiannon Mason is Senior Lecturer in Museum, Gallery, and Heritage Studies and the current Director of the International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies (ICCHS) at Newcastle University. Her interests are in national museums and heritage, history curatorship, identity, memory, and new museology.

→ ABSTRACT

This is an introduction to Research Field 01 of the MeLa project, which involves a historical and contemporary focus on the significance of museum representations of place for expressions of cultural identity in European Museums. The importance of place in museums—as a conceptual, epistemological and representational framework—is first considered historically, in relation to international museo-political relations (e.g. spoliation, colonial collecting, etc.) and nation building within the modern state. The essay then goes on to address questions surrounding place–people(s)–culture relations in contemporary European museums, involving consideration of the ways in which museums construct places and their inhabitants through representational practices. Establishing the parameters and methodologies to be adopted, we ask how such representations are figured and consumed at the present time, against a backdrop of changing geo-political and social orders brought about by EU legislation, migration and mobility and discourses about place (local, national, "European," etc.) in relation to citizenship.

This research to be undertaken in MeLa's Research Field 01 "Museums & Identity in History and Contemporaneity" will examine the historical and contemporary relationships between European museum representations and identity within the contextual structure of place. Place has a complex and sometimes (paradoxically) multidimensional role within the morphology of the museum and its representations, such as displays. During the early development of the modern museum in Europe place was indexed through the physical subtraction of material from contexts, as a consequence of exploration or as a part of conquest, both symbolic and literal:

> Such materials—fragments and metonyms of their contexts—are literally owned by the collecting nation, and lead to an experience of the museum as a space of suggestion in which "other" places and "others'" pasts can be intellectually and morally "occupied." (Whitehead 2010, 109)

This, it has been argued, formed part of a modern impulse to survey the world cartographically within museum space, which, in the presumed experience of the imagined visitor, became a surrogate for travel in microcosm (Whitehead 2009), while sequestered material culture became a sign of the national ability to dominate (Macdonald 2003). At the same time the modern museum was the object of a long tradition of criticism concerned with the ethics of dismembering places (from Quatremère de Quincy's protest at the Napoleonic spoliation to certain uses within museological theory of Foucault's *heterotopia*).

It has been argued that some national museums such as the South Kensington Museum (later the V&A) were concerned with referencing the cultures of the other (including the non-western other) rather than identifying and characterizing the national self (Saumarez Smith 1997; Whitehead 2010), bolstering a representation of the nation as cultural marshal and steward but not as obvious cultural territory in itself. Alternative museum representations focused on indigenous European culture, sometimes with the agenda of glorifying the home nation and its natives. In these contexts, museums have operated as representations of place, and indeed place is normally implicated as an organizing principle in the management of collections. This is inherent in the geographical organization of material culture (which is also an epistemological and conceptual organization) and is at its most explicit in museums of the nation and in city museums (e.g. the Amsterdam Museum). In such museums, to represent place was (and is) also discursively to construct it, and to identify and characterise its inhabitants. It is this kind of representational dynamic which can be questioned if not challenged in European museums in the twenty-first century, in conditions where the primacy of indigenousness gives way to discourses of multiculturalism, when populations are mobile and when ambivalence obtains about the propriety of the representation of the national self, in the light of nationalist political extremism, for example.

So, museums inevitably articulate relations between people, cultures and places, be this through archaeological origin stories accounting for settlement patterns in relation to the morphology of places, through the journeys made by curators to map and collect parts of the world at home or abroad, or through the explicit institutional and political desire to present place (nation, region, city, colony, etc.) to audiences both local and non-local. As indicated, such representations are no mere reflections of the relations between place, people and culture but work as ideological constructions of it, forming appeals to visitors who may or may not feel belonging or an entitlement to belong. While there has been significant work on national museums (see Mason 2007; Knell et al. 2010) and museum representations of the nation, there is insufficient work on museums and place more generally (encompassing not just the national but also the regional, the civic and indeed the supranational), and there is also little understanding of the ways in which visitors consume or receive such representations. These are lacunae of historical and contemporary importance within Europe and the EU, given the need to understand people's relationships with places and their brokerage against a varied backdrop of postcolonial sensibilities and individual and collective potential mobilities engendered by the "Four Freedoms,"[1] multiple possible senses of identity and belonging and investment in ubiquitous localized redevelopment and regeneration initiatives.

---

1   The free movement of people, goods, services and capital in the EU.

IMG. 02 — *How are "other" places mapped in European museums? A display in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin, characterising the archaeological "capture" of artefacts, including the material remains of buildings, and the index of geographically, historically and culturally remote locations.*

The imperatives surrounding the museum representation of place have shifted from the late eighteenth century (at which time the modern public museum arguably originated) to today as the political significance of place itself has changed and continues to change at all scales, from local, civic, regional to national and supranational. At the same time, changes in population flows, migration patterns and demographic movement and, perhaps more importantly, a recognition of the centrality of such changes to the human experience of life and society in modernity now underscore both cultural and political practice, be it in the accommodation of "diversity" in cultural and social policy, scholarly explorations of hybridity or in state immigration controls. These issues, taken historically, have particular significance for contemporary understandings of the role of place in individual, collective and state

notions of society in the EU and in the EU member states. How do European museums present societies as bound to, or enabled by, place and places, as having roots in places and/or taking routes from, to and through places? What cartographical groupings, borders, knowledges (e.g. archaeological, socio-historical, ethnographic, etc.) and traversals order and organise populations into societies in the museum? What is the metaphorical "place" of place in European museums now, what does this say about identities, and how do people (museum actors and visitors) feel about the identities on show?

To flip these questions, we might ask what happens or what can happen, when the "peoples" and "places" implicated in, and at least to some extent constructed in, museum representation shift, change, multiply, fragment and/or move? What happens when the Enlightenment desire for fixity and the making-permanent of knowledge, peoples and places is dislocated by new sensibilities towards population flows, shifting demographics, multiple heritages, ethnic diversification and the shifting territories of geopolitical places and knowledge? Should museums' representational practices change? If so how? What are the new dimensions of identity construction and production in museums whose physical place is fixed, but whose audiences, with their changing heritages and cultures, are not? These are critical questions to explore in national, postnational and transnational contexts and a historical and theoretical exploration of them will form a foundational structure for the MeLa project as a whole.

The initial impetus for this investigation will be a consideration of the production and consumption of museum representations in relation to components of the bodies of theory surrounding place identity and sense of place. Notably, we will explore the ways in which museum representations articulate the relations between people(s) and places in Europe, considering:

→ the ways in which place is represented as significant within local and global human history, from morphology (e.g. features of the natural environment) to local traditions;

→ the dialectics of the representation of place as locus of roots or as part of many routes;

→ the dynamics of the mode of address of museum representations in implying who belongs to which place and how and why, as well as who does not belong;

→ the play of interpellation (e.g. the appeal to people's "insideness" (Rowles 1983, 308) and "disinheritance", where cultures are presented as "someone else's" (Ashworth and Tunbridge 1996, 21) and people are excluded from claiming a heritage and a place as their own;

→ the consumption or reception of museum representations which articulate the relations between places and people(s) on the part of visitors.

The main objectives of the Research Field 01 are:

→ to investigate aspects of the relationships between museums, place and identity in Europe from the development of nation states (notably in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) to the present day;

→ to study the relationship between museums and the multidimensional, potentially shifting "territory" in which they are situated and purport to represent—a territory both geographical, political and epistemological;

→ to examine how museum actions (including collecting and display) have articulated and articulate the relationships between places, peoples and cultures within geopolitical conceptual frames (e.g. the "nation", the "region", "Europe");

→ to study changing practices of representation, interpellation and audience participation in the context of population dynamics and flows and diversified conceptions of place (as both routes and roots);

→ to study producers' intentions with regard to such representations;

→ to study visitor understandings both of such museum representations and to evaluate their congruence or incongruence with visitors' individual sense of identity.

The investigation will focus on history, archaeology and ethnography/folk culture museums, based on the rationale that these are all disciplines which explicitly seek to represent the holistic relationships between people and places. This is not to suggest that place is not implicated in other types of museum display (e.g. art museums, natural science museums, etc.) but rather that it is less likely to be foregrounded and that the most effective use of time in this Research Field is to study museums whose focus on place is centrally acknowledged. Some of our previous research (see Mason, Whitehead, and Graham 2011; Whitehead 2006, 2009, 2010) has explored the implicit significance of place within the context of art museums.

The field investigation will proceed from historical understandings of museum representations of place-culture-people relations in order to examine specific representations and consumptions of identity in civic and national museums founded since 1993 (given that this study will be set within the context of the EU), employing both display and interpretation analysis as well as semi-structured interviews with curators, directors and visitors in situ. The precise selection of museums as sites for study will be informed by initial desk research and by the first Brainstorming, while the number will be governed by feasibility. However, in principle the field investigation will seek to focus on museums which allow for the close study of representational practices around place-culture-people relations, such as those which have adapted or introduced displays to respond to changing populations, and which have developed new forms of address. In this context it is important to note that migration and population flows are not new, but rather the imperative to rec-

ognise, understand and accommodate mobilities has changed, as has the imperative to recognise and valorize regional and local distinctiveness.

The sites of study will be museums with state imprimatur (support, finance, backing, administration) which we anticipate will invoke an implicit idea of nationhood, in however capillary a form. For example national museums in Italy are numerous, diverse in terms of their size and focus and geographically very widely spread. They represent a capillary notion of the nation as a composite of individual regional specificities and cultural depths, while museums in other countries may form central points of representational consolidation, located in capital cities.

In each case, the study will be multifaceted, combining:

→ historical institutional research;

→ site visits (display analysis, interpretation content analysis);

→ semi-structured interviews with museum staff (e.g. directors and curators) (purposive sampling);

→ semi-structured interviews with visitors (convenience non-representative sampling).

These methods will create a rich body of data allowing for an analysis which is attentive to the interrelations between production, consumption, representation, regulation and identity (Hall 1997), allowing, for example, an understanding of whether producers intend to communicate the "messages" perceptible in display and if and how visitors receive and identify with such messages. This, it is hoped, will add an empirical dimension to the theory-informed studies of representation which are a commonplace in museum studies. In this context, Research Field 01 represents an opportunity to collect and configure a variety of data allowing for an analysis of a scale and reach which would be difficult to achieve without the overarching intellectual and practical framework of the MeLa project.

→ REFERENCES

Ashworth, Gregory J., and John E. Tunbridge. 1996. *Dissonant Heritage: the Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict.* New York: Wiley.

Hall, Stuart, ed. 1997. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London: Sage Publications

Knell, Simon J., Peter Aronsson, Arne B. Amundsen, Amy Barnes, Stuart Burch, Jennifer Carter, Viviane Gosselin, Sally Hughes, and Alan M. Kirwan, eds. 2010. *National Museums: New Studies from Around the World.* London & New York: Routledge.

Macdonald, Sharon. 2003. "Museums, National, Postnational and Transcultural Identities." *Museum and Society* 1 (1):1-16. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/museumsociety/documents/volumes/mands1.pdf.

Mason, Rhiannon. 2007. *Museums, Nations, Identities: Wales and Its National Museums.* Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Mason, Rhiannon, Chris Whitehead, and Helen Graham. 2011. "The Place of Art in the Public Art Gallery: A Visual Sense of Place." In *Making Sense of Place: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Ian Convery, Gerard Corsane, and Peter Davis. London: Boydell and Brewer, in Press.

Rowles, Graham D. 1983. "Place and Personal Identity in Old Age: Observations from Appalachia." *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 3 (2): 299-313

Saumarez Smith, Charles. 1997. "National Consciousness, National Heritage, and the Idea of 'Englishness'." In *A Grand Design: The Art of the Victoria and Albert Museum*, edited by Malcolm Baker and Brenda Richardson, 275-283. London: V&A Publications.

Whitehead, Christopher. 2006. "Aesthetic Otherness, Authenticity and the Roads to Museological Appropriation: Henry Cole's Travel Writing and the Making of the Victoria and Albert Museum." *Studies in Travel Writing* 10 (1): 1-26.

———. 2009. "Locating Art: The Display and Construction of Place Identity in Art Galleries." In *Heritage and Identity: Engagement and Demission in the Contemporary World,* edited by Elsa Peralta and Marta Anico, 29-46. London & New York: Routledge.

———. 2010. "National Art Museum Practice as Political Cartography in 19th Century Britain." In *National Museums: New Studies from Around the World,* edited by Simon J. Knell, Peter Aronsson, Arne B. Amundsen, Amy Barnes, Stuart Burch, Jennifer Carter, Viviane Gosselin, Sally Hughes, and Alan M. Kirwa, 105-122. London & New York: Routledge.

What Kind of Technology is the Museum?

→ JAMIE ALLEN, DAVID GAUTHIER, KIRSTI REITAN ANDERSEN

Jamie Allen is Head of Research at CIID and directs the strategy and focus of research and experimentation at the institute. He has a Masters degree in Interactive Telecommunication from the Tisch School of the Arts, New York University and is a PhD candidate in Media and Communications at the European Graduate School.

David Gauthier is Resident Faculty and Researcher at CIID. His work and teachings explore innovative use of technologies as a mean to probe and develop future scenarios involving humans and machines. He has scientific and artistic research expertise in domains ranging from actuated textiles to viral communications.

Kirsti Reitan Andersen holds a BA in English Literary and Cultural Studies and Master in European Cultural Studies from the University of Århus. She conducted field work and co-creation sessions in different cultural settings across the world.

→ ABSTRACT

The museum of the twenty-first century embodies a set of cultural, social and physical interactions of immense interest to research and practice in Interaction Design. Understanding peoples' relationships with technologies as both an external framework of negotiating physical and attentional spaces, as well as a means of expressing and shaping subjective identity, we posit to some initial questions and frames of thinking. Can the museum be thought as a site for acting and counteracting the proliferation of Foucaultian heterotopic spaces through technology in our daily lives? How might museums benefit from a conception of networked and social media technologies as Technologies of the Self? And finally, if we broaden our perspective and expand the scale of our concerns as designers of interactions and technologies, might we provocatively and productively ask: what kind of technology is the museum?

> The computer is more than an object: it is also an icon and
> a metaphor that suggests new ways of thinking about ourselves
> and our environment, new ways of constructing images of
> what it means to be human and to live in a humanoid world.
>
> Bill Nichols

Scholars and designers with an interest in contemporary technologies often assign a particular kind of independent agency to the technologies we seek to employ and evaluate. We find ourselves asking questions like, "what will happen when digital technologies pervade the space of the cultural institution?" Or "what new opportunities do technologies afford for the museum visitor?" These sorts of questions make sense, of course, when trying to clarify a problem or develop a specific, practical tool. But limiting our questioning to discussions of the individual technological use, we limit our view of their comprehensive effects and possibilities. Writing on the aggregate conditioning that technologies, communications, and electronic and digital forms represent, theorist of technology Friedrich Kittler asserts that "media determine our situation" (Kittler 1999, xxxix). Conversely, the new kinds of temporal, ambient and focused attentional investments we make towards and through digital, mobile and computing technologies serve to tailor, guide and sometimes frustrate our subjective experience of the world. In *Windows and Mirrors Interaction Design, Digital Art, and the Myth of Transparency,* Jay Bolter and Diane Gromala critique design values that over-privilege this kind of transparency (Bolter and Diane Gromala 2003). Transparency can result in disappearance. When we moved from operating computers to interacting with them, Bolter and Gromala claim, we risk missing the effect of the medium for want of the message: "If we only look through the interface, we cannot appreciate the ways in which the interface itself shapes our experience" (9).

Interaction Design (ID), a largely practice-led field, has taken up challenge of shaping and navigating a kind of middle ground between top-down views of social structures situated by often somewhat domineering technologies, and the individual involvement and authorship that can be made available to people. Our particular mediatic situation calls for this, as Derrida writes, as our current digital technologies tend to "[transform] the limit between the private, the secret, and the public or phenomenal" (Derrida 1998, 17). A discipline steeped in design thinking, ID is more comfortable with operations of synthesis than analysis and is the craft of facilitating collaborations between human beings and the complex collections of material objects that we have come to call "technology." Thinking technology in this way—as an elaborate network of stuff, at variable scale relative (not only) to people—helps us understand why ID continues its prolonged engagement and fascination with the museum space: sites where identity, objects, bodies, information and the importance of physical context collide [Img. 01]. The museum as a space of encounters, as well as learning, analysis and contemplation (Thrift and Dewsbury 2000).

A younger cousin to the still-related fields such of architecture, museum studies, industrial and exhibition design, interaction designers owe a cultural and historical debt. The Internet, a techno-social phenomenon which arguably gave ID many of its professional and academic problem sets and capacities, would never have existed were it not for the genealogical (in Neitsche or Foucault's sense) precursors of private-come-public access and use-value of shared cultural information: the World's Fair, the museum, the public exhibition, the cabinet of wonders (Gehl 2009).

It is with this broad view of what a technology is, and what the technological might reveal to us, that Copenhagen Institute of Interaction Design (CIID) begins its research. Firstly canvassing of contemporary

best-practices in ID for Museums, with a view towards gaining under-
standings beyond individual application or implementation. One sum-
mary of this sentiment is a kind of battle cry for holistic thinking in
technology and ID for public, cultural spaces: "going beyond the touch
screen." The museum, as technology and as cultural medium, provides
a frame for thinking of potentials to shape our sense of self and new
understandings thereof.

> The idea of accumulating everything, of establishing a sort of general ar-
> chive, the will to enclose in one place all times, all epochs, all forms, all
> tastes, the idea of constituting a place of all times that is itself outside of
> time and inaccessible to its ravages, the project of organizing in this way a
> sort of perpetual and indefinite accumulation of time in an immobile place,
> this whole idea belongs to our modernity. The museum and the library are
> heterotopias that are proper to western culture of the nineteenth century.
> (Foucault 1986, 26)

Foucault's above description, from a short talk delivered to a group of
architects in late 1967, reminds us of Steve Dietz's later accounts of the
"stack 'em deep, pile 'em high philosophy" common to early and mid-
twentieth century museum and curatorial practices (Dietz 2011). Fou-
cault was attempting to describe the museum as a space for a particular
kind unreal reality, a staged experience where multiple times (realities)
occur all at once in a real space, as distinct from utopias, which are pos-
ited realities that could never exist. This description of heterotopic space
has been helpful to geographers and theorists in describing peoples' re-
lationships to place, home and belonging in culture. Written just under
fifty years ago, our radically technologized experience seems to be writ
large within Foucault's idea. Imagine a woman waiting for her flight
at an airport, watching a movie on her iPad, simultaneously Skyping
with her grandmother, and composing a text to one of her employees.
Add to this collision of attentional realities and polyvocalities the now
unremarkable set of different interface "spaces" navigated through these
activities, and the digital potential to store these in a personal, general
archive ("accumulating everything," as Foucault says of museums). Here
we have a picture of the heterotopic space of everyday experience medi-
ated through technology: all the world as a heterotopic stage, the men
and women need merely press play (Lesk 2012).

What might the museum space of the twenty-first century provide, if a
fantasmic conjoining of multiple realities into the real, temporal space
of our experience has become the norm for many of us? Should mu-
seums provide a potentially needed respite to these sorts of multiple-
experiences, or continue in their tradition of augmenting heterotopia,
as Foucault suggests is their institutional legacy and perhaps inevitable
trajectory? In witnessing the transformation of culture from one of ob-
jects to one of information, museums have developed and conceived for
themselves a number of new roles and outlooks. From an archival or
curatorial perspective museums can no longer be contented collecting
only static objects and artifacts. Curatorial considerations can, and in

some rather extreme but increasingly common cases must, now include anything from digitised virtual objects, to a piece of software, to a web-link resident on someone else's physical serving computer (as in the case of certain Net-Art exhibition and work acquisition practices). What can be most interesting about these objects of study, archiving and exhibition is not just the latter-day mediums they employ, it is in how their technological specificities remind us of the agencies and interconnected networks redistributed by all objects, by all institutions, by each of us as viewers.

> Imagine a beautifully designed museum where light, airy galleries enter into contrapuntal conversation with darker, more atmospheric niches. Imagine further that these spaces frame and give texture to thousands of objects collected from near and far, from long ago and yesterday. Now imagine that, intermingling with beautiful and intact, text-accompanied objects, there are hidden display cases, empty or half- filled with tragic and disintegrating objects, some smelly. The visible manifestation of declining funding? The aftermath of "looting" such as recently occurred at the Iraqi National Museum in Baghdad? No. The future of museums and archaeology? Hopefully. (Ouzman 2006, 270)

The digital media video file, as one example, is only of interest when played, that is when enacted, by a relevant platform and contextual conglomeration of display (LCD? CRT? LED?) and acoustic (speakers? headphones?) technologies. Software can only be exhibited, studied or archived when the context of its use is reproduced by the machinic assemblage of specific hardwares (Jones 2012). These aspects of dealing with digital (and digitised) artefacts give us access to a new kind of thinking about the ontologies and interactions with and within museums. Designing interactions within the museum space (i.e.: enacting collaborations between people and complexes of materials called technology) have helped remind us over the past few decades about latent and very real potentials for "object agency," dynamism and relationality. Sven Ouzman's provocations above likewise point to a set of "Object Rights" that begin to actualize an experience mutuality between nature and culture through the technology of the museum (Ouzman 2006). "The Relational Museum," a project (from 2002 to 2006) by Chris Gosden at the School of Archaeology, University of Oxford, points to some of these repercussions, where more traditional museum objects are examined as if they were digital, through their activation and storage networks, metadata and their dynamic attach-ability and juxtaposition to other networks and objects (Gosden 2009). A shift from a problematic of static representation to one of the action, space and movement of objects. Nina Simon further invokes Jyri Engeström's term "social objects" to speak of the vital power of objects not only to assert specific forms of social vitality, as well: personal, active, and provocative (Simon 2010). (Engeström's own "object-centered sociality" concepts stem from social network and online behavior analysis, clarifying and linking to ideas for analogous physical and architectural engagements) (Engeström 2005).

A similar kind of "vitality of matter" is described by Jane Bennett, writing through Spinoza, Guattari and Latour, in her superb book on the political and cultural agency of objects and materials, *Vibrant Matter* (Bennett 2010). The main example Bennett pursues that deals with what we might more typically call "technology" is the story of the Northeast Blackout of 2003. At 4:10p.m. Eastern Standard Time on an otherwise normal autumnal day, a portion of the North American electrical grid asserted its agency by turning itself off (Wikipedia 2003). Bennett unearths a number of perspectives on the event, in press and government reports of the happening, that point to a kind of positive anthropomorphic tendency in the analysis of such systems which, under any other access to understanding or means of representation, would seem grossly reductive. "Here [anthropomorphism] works to gesture toward the inadequacy of understanding the grid simply as a machine or a tool, as, that is, a series of fixed parts organized from without that serves an external purpose" (Bennett 2010, 25). Complex objects, archives and technologies more and more act in concert as near-organisms, with a thing-power perhaps deserving of respect, or rights, as well as policing and criticism. And although this is true of all objects and materials to varying degrees, nowhere is it more apparent than through digital technologies where high information densities and temporal dynamics of representation are foregrounded and manifest. Writing on Chris Marker's cinematic critique of African Art, *Les Statues Meurent Aussi* (1953), Nora Alter highlights the potential of film technology to capture the animism of objects:

> The act of filming does not discriminate between living beings and inanimate objects but rather freezes what is in front of the camera on the same representational plane and renders interchangeable all that it captures. To that extent Marker's camera treats all subjects in front of its lens without differentiating between humans, statues, animals, landscapes, architecture, or signs. The magic of cinema both imbues inanimate objects with life and carries out the mortification of living subjects. (Alter 2006, 59)

Such techno-vitalisms are intensified when we consider contemporary interactive systems for museum display that quite literally sense and alter their own features and environments (we are left to wonder what Marker or Alter might make of Augmented Reality systems, or digital projection-mapping onto cultural artifacts, as in Peter Greenaway's work projecting literal narrative into Renaissance painting) (Kennedy 2010). As systems designed to produce communicative presence and agency in engaging ways, interactive technologies can serve to help us understand the active and interactive potentials of all the other things in the world—their distinct, energetic, polyvocal identities—and the way they can address our affective registers. Further, when such systems link to others in architectural, physical and on-line networks, the museum-as-technology begins to presence its identity on a larger scale as a vital object [Imgs. 02-03].

IMG. 02 — *Science Museum, Wellcome Wing, London. "Digitopolis" exhibition about the future of digital technology. Casson Mann, 2000-2006.*

IMG. 03 — *Museo Virtuale della Città di Lucca. Studio Azzurro, 1999.*

IMG. 04 — *Museum of London. "People's City: 1850s-1940s" gallery. Charles Booth's Map of Poverty, 1887-9.*

Interaction Design research approaches give rise to specific opportunities to synthesise and develop new object identities and agencies in thoughtful ways. Museums have only been exhibiting and collecting the digital object (objects that more obviously express dynamic temporal, material agencies) for a few decades, so there is much more to learn. We might propose exhibitions and collections that emphasise techno-genealogies, showing the provenance, resonant and reproductive effects of a networked-museum-object. We might endeavor to develop new interiors and anti-representational spaces, that divert the eye and frustrate single perspectives and views. Museums and cultural institutions are potential sites for experimentation with the vital-relationalism and variability of representation invoked by concepts like of "the Internet of Things" (Gershenfeld, Krikorian, and Cohen 2004) and practices like Gosden's "participatory anthropology" (Gosden 2009).

Research at CIID is seeking to explore these and other opportunities in collaboration with research partners to develop a set of exploratory and experimental design proposals through design practice. Re-expression and re-examination of the scales and modalities of physical and digital object identities necessarily enable and provoke peoples' freedoms to transfigure and express all of their other polyvalent, networked identities: continental, national, political, racial, communal, familial, and individual.

> Like the digital world, physical interaction is full of socially bound "interfaces," operating methods that determine the substance of relationships. As any millennial can attest, the idea that there is an in-person "real" version of you that comprises your full identity and an online personage that bears no impact on your "real" self, isn't an accurate description of contemporary life. (Troemel 2010)

Foucault's (1988) "Technologies of the Self" text complements the other of his works referenced herein (Foucault 1988). In it, the subject's modes of working on itself are historicized and analyzed through early Christian practices. The piece outlines "governmentality," which Foucault describes as "the contact between the technologies of domination of others and those of the self" (19). If we are to understand heterotopic contemporary existence as a kind of piloting, or technological navigation of multiple attentional spaces in parallel (recall our woman at the airport), we are reminded by Foucault's turn not to forget how our internal, psychical existences, are shaped by "the history of how an individual acts upon himself" (19).

Early (late 90s) psychologies and sociologies of "cyberspace," it seems now, overemphasized the desirability, problematics and actual take-up of identity mediation and virtualisation of the self. The rhetoric of "avatars" and "virtual selves," dominant during the early days of the Internet, created a slew of services, platforms and philosophical directions that now seem already outmoded (Second Life's user-activity and financial decline are the subject of infrequent debate) (Kawamoto 2010). As the

above Troemel quote highlights, talk of avatars and cyber-identities already seem somehow quaint or outdated in light of the way that cultures globally have shaped social network and online identities. What we have arrived at, at least for now, is a more familiar re-expression of a paradoxically multi-faceted-yet-singular existing identity. Our most popular and recent technological interactions with others (and ourselves) are provided via mobile phone, email, Facebook and Google+, all of which point decidedly back to the "real us," bodily and geographically situated. (Until very recently Google+ required that users use only their real names associated to an account—no nicknames, no monikers) (BBC 2012). The reality for most is that these technologies seem to be additional aspects of an expanding identity, rather than a performed, virtual or "other" self needing to be governed or authored in some radically new way.

For some, re-rooting our identities in a singular self in this way points to a missed opportunity, a lack of creative imagination, and a misrepresentation of the complexity of personhood (Parr 2011). For others, it is yet another example of our historically constructed sense of self, wrought through technologies. For still others, our current inaccessibility to tools that allow us to virtually embody numerous selves are the result of dominant powers with vested interests in controlling or limiting such multiplicity. (These last two are both arguments Foucault himself would likely be sympathetic to.) Regardless of which of these vectors has the greatest import, we can surely conclude, as we did through our discussion of object-vitality, that technological mediations and dynamics create a heightened awareness of existing and emerging modes of identity "construction" (itself a decidedly technological, machinic metaphor for knowledge and care of the self).

Thinking through the technologies of object and subject as actions and interactions, as an interaction designer might, creates a frame of synthesis for heterotopic spaces, cultural institutions and contemporary technologies of the self. It is our interest to further elaborate and experiment with these subject and object vitalisms through a set of collaborations to document and evaluate the experience of the museum visitor. Constituting the museum as a set of interactions at multiple scales, in the context of a highly heterotopic and technologized world, we ask at the outset of the MeLa-European Museums in the Age of Migration project, "what kind of technology is the Museum?"

→ REFERENCES

Alter, Nora M. 2006. *Contemporary Film Directors: Chris Marker.* Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press.

BBC Mobile: News Technology. 2012. "Google+ Relaxes Real Name Policy to Allow Pseudonyms." 24 Jan. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-16700902.

Bennett, Jane. 2010. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things.* Durham, NC & London: Duke University Press.

Bolter, Jay, and Diane Gromala. 2003. *Windows and Mirrors Interaction Design, Digital Art, and the Myth of Transparency.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Derrida, Jacques. 1998. *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Dietz, Steve. 2011. "Curating (on) the Web." *Net Art* 3.0 (July). Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.afsnitp.dk/onoff/Texts/dietzcuratingont.html.

Engeström, Jyri. 2005. "Why Some Social Network Services Work and Others Don't—Or: The Case for Object-centered Sociality." *Zengestrom Blog,* April 13. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.zengestrom.com/blog/2005/04/why-some-social-network-services-work-and-others-dont-or-the-case-for-object-centered-sociality.html.

Foucault, Michel. 1986. "Of Other Places." Translated by Jay Miskowiec. *Diacritics* 16 (1): 22-27. First presented 1967.

———. 1988. "Technologies of the Self." In T*echnologies of the Self: A Seminar With Michel Foucault*, edited by Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton, 16-49. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

Gehl, Robert. 2009. "YouTube as Archive: Who Will Curate this Digital Wunderkammer?" *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 12 (1): 43-60.

Gershenfeld, Neil, Raffi Krikorian, and Danny Cohen. 2004. "The Internet of Things." *Scientic American* (October).

Gosden, Chris. 2009. "The Relational Museum." *Material World Blog*, January 16. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://blogs.nyu.edu/projects/materialworld/good_links/.

Kawamoto, Dawn. 2010. "'Second Life' Owner Linden Lab to Lay Off 30% of Its Workers." *Daily Finance,* September 6. Accessed March 27, 2012.http://www.dailyfinance.com/2010/06/09/second-life-owner-linden-lab-to-lay-off-30-of-its-workers/.

Kennedy, Randy. 2010. "'Last Supper' for the Laptop Generation." *New York Times,* December 2. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/03/arts/design/03greenaway.html.

Kittler, Friedrich A. 1999. *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Jones, Caitlin. 2012. "Does Hardware Dictate Meaning? Three Variable Media Conversation Case Studies." *Ghost: Archive, Evolution, Entropy* 18. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.horizonzero.ca/textsite/ghost.php?is=18&file=6&tlang=0.

Lesk, Michael. 2012. "How Much Information Is There in the World." Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.lesk.com/mlesk/ksg97/ksg.html.

Statues Also Die. Film. Directed by Chris Marker, and Alain Resnais. Tadié Cinéma, 1953.

Nichols, Bill. 1988. "The Work of Culture in the Age of Cybernetic Systems." *Screen* 29 (1): 22-47.

Ouzman, Sven. 2006. "The Beauty of Letting Go: Fragmentary Museums and Archaeologies of Archive." In *Sensible Objects: Colonialism, Museums, and Material Culture*, edited by Elizabeth Edwards, Chris Gosden, and Ruth B. Phillips, 269-301. Oxford: Berg.

Parr, Ben. 2011. "4chan Founder: Facebook and Google Do Identity Wrong" (video). *Mashable Social Media* 18 (October). Accessed March 27, 2012. http://mashable.com/2011/10/18/chris-poole-4chan-web-2/.

Simon, Nina. 2010. *The Participatory Museum.* Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.participatorymuseum.org/read/.

Thrift, Nigel, and John-David Dewsbury. 2000. "Dead Geographies—and How to Make Them Live Again." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 18(4): 411-432. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.envplan.com/epd/editorials/d1804ed.pdf.

Troemel, Brad. 2010. "What Relational Aesthetics Can Learn From 4Chan." *Art Fag City. IMG MGMT,* September 09. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.artfagcity.com/2010/09/09/img-mgmt-what-relational-aesthetics-can-learn-from-4chan/.

Wikipedia. 2003. "Northeast Blackout of 2003." Accessed March 27, 2012. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northeast_blackout_of_2003

Bridging European Communities

Investigating Networks and Collaboration Models for Museums, Libraries and Public Cultural Institutions

→ PERLA INNOCENTI

Research Fellow in History of Art at the School of Culture and Creative Arts of the University of Glasgow, she is Principal Investigator and Co–Investigator in EU–funded research projects related to cultural heritage, digital preservation and digital libraries. In MeLa she is leading the research field dedicated to a Network of Museums, Libraries and Public Cultural Institutions. Her current research interest focus on digital preservation for media art, audit and risk assessment for digital repositories, digital libraries design and policies, museography and museology.

→ ABSTRACT

This paper presents an overview of the original research under development within the EU-funded FP7 SSH MeLA project, Research Field 03 (RF03) "Network of Museums, Libraries and Public Cultural Institutions." In this Research Field we are investigating innovative coordination strategies between public European museums, libraries and public cultural institutions, for the benefit of multicultural audiences and towards European integration. Museums and libraries, in particular, developed as historically separate institutional contexts and distinct cultures, yet their commonalities are increasingly important to their sustainability in a globalised world. However, a theoretical framework to scope and address such collaborative model still needs to be developed in the specific context of a transnational and multicultural European society. The Research Field 03 team is framing its research along four thematic areas: Narratives for Europe, European Cultural and Scientific Heritage, Migration and Mobility, and Collaboration Models. The goal of our investigation is to lay the foundations for a theoretical framework supporting coordination and networking between museums, libraries and public cultural institutions at European level.

Global migration is here to stay

Knut Kjeldstadli

The term "cultural institution" can be characterized by a number of specific features: the presence of a collection, offered to users within the frame of a systematic, continuous, organised knowledge structure, and encompassed by scholarship, information and thought (Carr 2003). Cultural institutions typically address public knowledge and memory, a culture of inquiry and learning, and interdisciplinary dynamic connections. They also deal with the need to create a coherent narrative, a storytelling of who we are and what are our cultural, historical, social contexts. In modern Western society, cultural institutions include but are not limited to museums, libraries, archives (sometimes jointly defined as LAMs—Libraries Archives and Museums; see Zorich, Gunther, and Erway 2008), galleries, and various heritage and cultural organisations. Their history is often intertwined, although their interrelations have not always led to a consolidated path of collaboration. For example, traditionally museums and libraries developed as historically separate institutional contexts and distinct cultures. Jennifer Trant noted how philosophies and policies of museums and libraries reflect their different approach to interpreting, collecting, preserving and providing access to objects in their care (Trant 2009). Liz Bishoff remarked that "libraries believe in resource sharing, are committed to freely available information, value the preservation of collections, and focus on access to information. Museums believe in preservation of collections, often create their identity based on these collections, are committed to community education, and frequently operate in a strongly competitive environment" (Bishoff 2004, 35). In the last century policy-makers have attempted to group and bridge these communities of practices through "their similar role as part of the informal educational structures supported by the public, and their common governance" (Trant 2009, 369). Such commonalities are increasingly important to museums, libraries and related public cultural institutions sustainability in a globalized world. However a theoretical framework to scope and address such collaborative model has yet not been developed, in particular in the specific context of European multicultural society.

The goal of MeLa Research Field 03 (RF03) "Network of Museums, Libraries and Public Cultural Institutions,"[1] is to fill this gap by investigating, identifying and proposing innovative coordination strategies between these institutions, for the benefit of multicultural audiences across Europe. The idea of laying the theoretical foundations for a European network of museums, libraries and public cultural institutions addressing globalization, migration and new media is particularly fitting the structure of migrant communities, which "in the receiving countries can best be described from a structural perspective as a network of organizations" (Faist 1998, 215).

1   MeLa Research Field 03, http://RF3.MeLa-project.eu/. Accessed March 27, 2012.

In the first phase of our research, we focus in particular on collaborations between museums and libraries as a promising area to identify patterns and trends. Some studies on museums, and libraries collaborations,[2] have highlighted the benefits of joining forces and resources in a variety of areas, including but not limited to:

→ library activities and programmes related to museum exhibits;

→ travelling museum exhibitions hosted in libraries;

→ links established between web–based resources in library and museum websites;

→ library programs including passes to museums;

→ collaborative digitization and digital library projects enhancing access to resources in both museums and libraries;

→ collaborative initiatives to bring in authors as speakers;

→ museum and library partnerships with cultural and educational organizations for public programmes.

The overall opportunities of improving collections, increasing the number of users, leveraging experiences and funding also comes across as some of the main benefits of such partnerships. These studies have also often included archives as a virtuous third player in museums and archives collaborations. The aims and objectives of collaboration projects between museums and libraries, investigated in previous studies, include: educational focus (e.g. learning about past civilizations, encourage families learning together, etc.), cross-over visits between institutions, promoting resources to various target groups, improving coordination among institutions, demonstrating joint working or training activities, providing models for working practices.

The International Federation of Libraries Association (IFLA) remarked that museums and libraries are often natural partners for collaboration and cooperation (Yarrow, Clubb, and Draper 2008). In this context, a study in the United States observed that "collaboration may enable [...] museums and libraries to strengthen their public standing, improve their services and programs, and better meet the needs of a larger and more diverse cross–sections of learners" (Institute of Museum and Library Services 2004, 9). The nature of this collaboration can be multifaceted and varied, and the terminology itself is interpreted with diverse meanings, in particular regarding the degree of intensity of the collaboration and its transformational capacity. Hannah Gibson, Anne Morris and Marigold Cleeve noted that "'Library-museum collaboration'" can be defined as the cooperation between a library and a museum, possibly involving other partners" (Gibson, Morris, and Cleeve 2007, 53).

---

2   See for example: Gibson, Morris, and Cleeve, 2007; Zorich, Gunter, and Erway, 2008; Yarrow, Clubb, and Draper, 2008. The RF03 team is preparing a selected bibliography for the purpose of the Research Field activities.

The authors use the term "collaboration" with the meaning indicated by Betsy Diamant-Cohen and Dina Sherman, as a "'combining resources to create better programs while reducing expenses" (Diamant-Cohen and Sherman 2003, 105).

Museums and libraries seem well positioned to synergically support and enable the multicultural identity of a migration society.[3] As a result, museums are ideally placed to interpret and preserve culturally diverse heritage.[4] As centres for culture, information hubs, learning and gathering, libraries are natural service providers for culturally diverse communities, enabling intercultural dialogue and education while supporting and promoting diversity (IFLA 2006). Nevertheless, the fruitful convergence between museums and libraries faces a number of challenges. Some authors have highlighted the risks and obstacles on the road to accomplishing a successful collaboration between museums and libraries with respect to their different mission, culture, organizational and funding structure.

In their case study research on libraries and museums collaboration in England and the USA, Gibson, Morris and Cleeve (2007) found differences in procedures and common working criteria: management, staffing and organizational difficulties in England, and limited space, planning, communication, managing, budget and coordination issues in the USA (Gibson, Morris, and Cleeve 2007). They have also highlighted the risk of the lack of resources, and of a domineering partner in the collaboration. Christopher Walker and Carlos Manjarrez recognized four types of risks in public libraries and museums: capacity risk, where partners are unable to perform agreed upon tasks; strategy risk of the collaboration not ending as planned; commitment risk, where partners might be misaligned in their pledge to the collaboration; and compatibility risk, where assets and liabilities of the partners are mismatched (Walker and Manjarrez 2008). The authors also identified three further sources of risks, present in each collaborative project with variable degrees of impact and probabilities: innovation, complexity, and institutional interdependence.

---

3   The definition of culture I am looking at can be found in the "UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity": "culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs (See: UNESCO. 2002. "UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity." Accessed March 27, 2012. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127160m.pdf). In this paper the terms "multicultural," "multiculturalism" and "cultural diversity" are considered synonymous.

4   See for example Barker, Emma, ed. 1999. *Contemporary Cultures of Display*. London: Yale University Press; Bennett, Tony. 2009. *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*. London & New York: Routledge; Gonzalez, Jennifer A. 2008. *Subject to Display: Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; Graham, Beryl, and Sarah Cook. 2010. *Rethinking Curating: Art after New Media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; Karp, Ivan, Corinne A. Kratz, Lynn Szwaja, and Tómas Ybarra-Frausto, eds. 2006. *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Durham, NC & London: Duke University Press; Knell, Simon J., Suzanne Macleod, and Sheila E. Watson, eds. 2007. *Museum Revolutions: How Museums Change and Are Changed*. London & New York: Routledge.

In terms of change management, Diane Zorich, Gunter Waibel and Ricky Erway suggested that it is important to differentiate between co-ordination and cooperation, and pointed out the organizational changes required for a deep collaboration between libraries, museums and archives (Zorich, Waibel, and Erway 2008). In this regard, Kenneth Sohener stressed that "true collaboration is different from coordination. It devises a new vision for a new way of doing things. It inevitably and fundamentally involves change. Collaboration is transformational and the elements, institutions and individuals involved in collaboration must change. That's why it occurs so infrequently" (Sohener 2005). Within a "collaboration continuum," Zorich, Waibel and Erway remarked that "the collaborative endeavour becomes more complex, the investment of effort becomes more significant, and the risks increase accordingly. However, the rewards also become greater, moving from singular, 'on-off' projects to programs that can transform the services and functions of an organization" (Zorich, Waibel and Erway 2008, 10).

In particular, for collaboration on digital libraries, Bishoff and Innocenti et al. remarked that interoperability is critical to the digital library community (Bishoff 2004; Innocenti et al. 2011). Innocenti et al. further stressed the diverse organizational, semantic and technical interoperability levels that need to be addressed in a digital library, upon the classification of the European Interoperability Framework for eGovernment services (IDABC 2004). Achieving effective organizational interoperability between digital libraries can imply a radical change in the way that organizations work, manage and share their digital assets.

→ RESEARCH FIELD 03 OVERVIEW

The overarching goal of MeLa is to research the new role of museums and define new strategies for contemporary museums in a context characterized by a continuous migration of people and ideas. Within the project, Research Field 03 (RF03) "Network of Museums, Libraries and Public Cultural Institutions" investigates, identifies and proposes innovative strategies for the coordination of transnational European museums, libraries and public cultural institutions, for the benefit of multicultural audiences and towards European integration and European cultural commons. Our research aims to provide evidence of transnational systems and cases that have positively impacted on: visibility of institutions involved, improvement of the diffusion and accessibility of the collections, effectiveness of an integrated organization structure at EU dimension and coherence with European policies towards a common EU heritage definition. RF03 is essentially bridging the gap between communities—in particular museums and libraries—that, as described above, have a young and still challenging history of collaborating with each other.

RF03 is led by History of Art at the University of Glasgow (GU) and the Research Field team includes staff members from Politecnico di

Milano, Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale," University of Newcastle, The Royal College of Art, Copenhagen Institute of Interaction Design, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle/Musée de l'Homme.

The University of Glasgow[5] is a world-leading research institution, member of the Russell Group and the fourth oldest UK university. History of Art[6] has been rated top in the UK (RAE 2008) with internationally recognized research. It includes a cluster of Art, Science and Technology for research and teaching, and fosters collaborations with foremost international institutions. The GU team, composed of Perla Innocenti, John Richards and Sabine Wieber,[7] is bringing to MeLa:

→ *expertise* in art, architecture, design and museum history; case study research; 2D and 3D cultural heritage; digital preservation; digital libraries design and services; exhibition practices and display strategies; gender politics and identity; library and information science; nationalism; risk assessment for digital repositories; usage models and requirement analysis for ICT;

→ *experience* in academic research and teaching; cultural heritage and library management and communication; direct contribution to/lead of EU-funded FP6 and FP7 projects (DPE,[8] Planets,[9] CASPAR,[10] DELOS,[11] SHAMAN,[12] DL.org,[13] ECLAP,[14] and more at the college level);

→ *networks*: direct collaboration with more than 150 European and international libraries, archives, museums, universities, research institutes, professional associations, public/international organizations, and private companies.

The final goal of RF03 is to produce an innovative coordination framework and best practices document towards a European network of museums, libraries and public cultural institutions. To achieve this, the RF03 team will conduct a desk and field investigation including an online

---

5 www.gla.ac.uk.

6 www.gla.ac.uk/subjects/historyofart/.

7 See GU staff profiles: Perla Innocenti (www.gla.ac.uk/schools/cca/staff/perlainnocenti/), John Richards (www.gla.ac.uk/schools/cca/staff/johnrichards) and Sabine Wieber (www.gla.ac.uk/schools/cca/staff/sabinewieber/).

8 Digital Preservation Europe(DPE) project (www.digitalpreservationeurope.eu/).

9 Preservation and Long-term Access through Networked Services (Planets) (www.planets-project.eu/).

10 Cultural, Artistic and Scientific knowledge for Preservation, Access and Retrieval (CASPAR) project (www.casparpreserves.eu/caspar-project.html).

11 Network of Excellence on Digital Libraries (DELOS) (www.delos.info/).

12 Sustaining Heritage Access through Multivalent ArchiviNg (SHAMAN) (http://shaman-ip.eu/).

13 Digital Library Interoperability, Best Pracices and Modelling Foundations (DL.org) (http://www.dlorg.eu/).

14 European Collected Library of Artistic Performances (ECLAP) (www.eclap.eu/drupal/).

RF03 GOALS

investigating, identifying and proposing innovative coordination strategies between European museums, libraries and public cultural institutions

provide evidence of exemplary/specific effective transnational case studies (impact on institutional visibility; collections transmission and accessibility; organizational integration at EU policy level)

ACTIVITIES

→ **investigate** the interdependency between transnational museums, libraries and public cultural institutions

→ **describe** how transnational museums, libraries and public cultural institutions represent themselves

→ **evaluate** the effects and benefits of transnational networks

advancing the state-of-the-art within RF03 and MeLa research areas
→ project books
→ publications

impact and knowledge exchange
→ collaborative research
→ real-life case studies
→ events with external audiences
→ policy briefs

OUTPUTS & OUTCOMES

coordination framework
→ museums, libraries and public cultural institutions
→ projects, initiatives and experts

OUTPUTS & OUTCOMES

survey,[15] brainstorming with external experts,[16] in-depth analysis and evaluation of data collected through the investigation [Img. 01]. The research programme is articulated through a series of enquiries that intend to:

→ investigate the interdependency of developing transnational museums, library and public cultural institutions collaborations and the society of migration;

→ identify and describe how transnational museums, libraries and public cultural institutions collaborating together present themselves to various public communities;

→ understand and evaluate the effects (benefits and disadvantages) of transnational museums, libraries and public cultural institutions collaborations on the audiences, in terms of recognition of delocalized cultures.

Through its desk and field investigation, RF03 aims to provide evidence of effective case studies of collaboration among operative museums, li-

IMG. 01 — *Diagram of MeLa Research Field 03 goals, activities, outputs and outcomes.*

---

15   http://RF3.MeLa-project.eu/RF/pages/research-field-03-online-survey.

16   http://RF3.MeLa-project.eu/RF/pages/research-field-03-brainstorming.

COORDINATION FRAMEWORK

RF01

RF02

DISSEMINATION & EXPLOITATION

RF04

RF03
Network of Museums, Libraries and Public Cultural Institutions

RF07

RF05

RF06

advancing the state-of-the-art within RF03 and across RTD RFs

RTD RFs

OTHER RFs
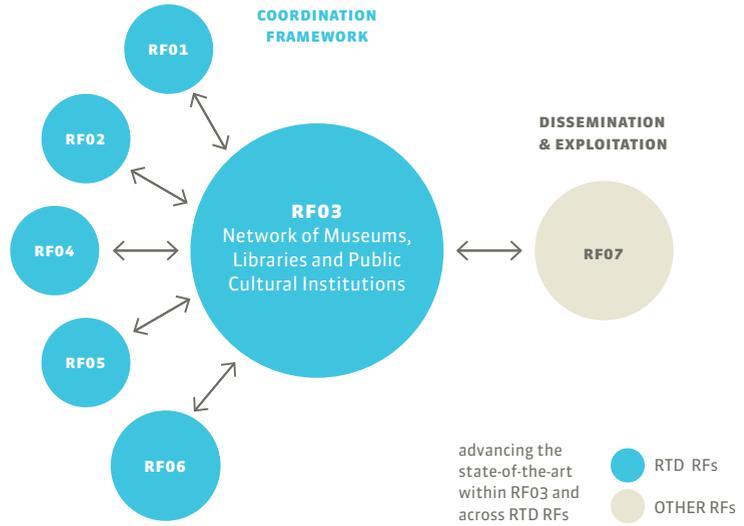
braries and public cultural institutions. Targeted case studies will be selected where possible identifying their positive impact on:

→   visibility of the single institutions involved;

→   improvement of the diffusion and accessibility of the collections for the audience;

→   effectiveness of an integrated organization structure at the EU dimension;

→   coherence with EU policies towards a common EU heritage definition.

The RF03 team is selecting targeted organizations from a pool of identified institutions, which will be part of the RF03 case studies. Overall RF03 will contribute to achieving MeLa main objectives by:

→   conducting case studies of collaboration models and experiences of among operative transnational museums, libraries and public cultural institutions;

→   setting up a platform for discussion in the form of a multidisciplinary expert group, in which selected leading internal and external experts will be engaged on RF03 research activities;

→   organizing an international conference on RF03 research activities and intermediate results.

These goals will be met also by liaising with other MeLa research fields, with which RF03 is interconnected [Img. 02]. RF03 is connected on one side to the other MeLa Research and Technological Development (RTD) Research Fields for what concerns the areas of "Museums & Identity in History and Contemporaneity" (RF01), "Cultural Memory, Migration Modernity and Museum Practices" (RF02), "Curatorial and Artistic Research" (RF04), "Envisioning 21st Century Museums"

MS1 — Milestone 1 Month 18 MS2 — Milestone 2 Month 25 MS3 — Milestone 3 Month 36

D3.1 — Deliverable 3.1 Month 18 D3.2 — Deliverable 3.2 Month 25 D3.3 — Deliverable 3.3 Month 36

* RF03 Conceptualization and Planning

RF03* | Task 3.1 Desk and Field Research & Brainstorming | Task 3.2 International Conference | Task 3.3 Critical Elaboration

March 2011 M01

February 2014 M36

M01	M02	M03	M04	M05	M06	M07	M08	M09	M10	M11	M12	M13	M14	M15	M16	M17	M18	M19	M20	M21	M22	M23	M24	M25	M26	M27	M28	M29	M30	M31	M32	M33	M34	M35	M36
03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	01	02
11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	14	14

(RF06). RF03 also has a close connection with RF05 "Exhibition Design, Technology of Representation and Experimental Actions" and with RF07 "Envisioning Dissemination and Exploitation."

IMG. 03 — *Diagram of MeLa RF03 timeline, deliverables and milestones.*

→ **RESEARCH FIELD 03 ORGANIZATION AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

This Research Field is organized in three distinct tasks within the timeline planned for RF03 in the MeLa Description of Work [Img. 03]: "Desk and Field Investigation & Brainstorming," "International Conference" and "Critical Elaboration." "Desk and Field Investigation & Brainstorming" focuses on extending the knowledge of transnational museums, libraries and public cultural institutions and their effective collaboration, and developing a more precise understanding of effective case studies in this area. This task will investigate the state of the art and potential advancements in the research on collaboration models for transnational museums, libraries and public cultural institutions, conducting desk and field research activities. The "Brainstorming" will build upon the work carried out in the desk and field investigation, in order to exchange of ideas at theoretical and operational level with a panel of experts (scholars, directors and other museums, libraries and public cultural institutions representatives but also practitioners). The "International Conference" task will include organizing an international conference with call for papers[17] on the research areas of RF03. Finally the critical elaboration task will provide critical explanation of data collected from previous actions (desk and field research; brainstorming; conference), leading to knowledge advancement in this area of research.

The results of RF03 research will be disseminated, along with other re-

---

17 http://wp3.mela-project.eu/wp/pages/research-field-03-international-conference.

search, through three project books and various publication in selected conferences, journals and further channels.

Within the MeLa RF03, we will be investigating exemplary experiences of collaborations between museums, libraries and public cultural institutions, followed by the analysis of strategies and models towards a network framework at European level. In this initial stage of the project, we are in the process of establishing critical nodes and points of research, and a consequent timeline articulated through a detailed RF03 workplan that has been prepared by the University of Glasgow. The theoretical foundation knowledge of the RF03 will be brought into a concrete context via selected case studies, to observe how this knowledge within collaborations can become operative in practical terms: for example who, what, how should be represented in particular museums and libraries, how to exhibit, how to catalogue, how to document and preserve. We will develop collaborative scenarios with existing museums, libraries and public cultural institutions, whereby critical interdisciplinary and intercultural perspectives are elaborated in existing contexts in order to see how MeLa is actually addressing its research questions, and how such situations can critically feedback into the ongoing research and its subsequent proposals. Our research will be articulated in four clusters: Narratives for Europe, European Cultural and Scientific Heritage, Migration and Mobility, Collaboration models. Sub-clusters include case studies on museums, libraries and public cultural institutions collaborating for European integration; national and transnational collaboration models: partnerships, cooperation, coordination; Identity, memory and heritage in European museums, libraries and public cultural institutions; the making of European cultural and scientific heritage: actors and processes; European cultural policies, migration and mobility; studies on European narratives and cultural commons; operative approaches to multiculturalism, interculturalism, transculturalism in public cultural institutions; visitor experiences in collaborative projects involving European museums, libraries and public cultural institutions.

We will be investigating both transnational and translocal connections of museums, libraries and public cultural institutions collaboration to address contemporary challenges of globalization, European integration, and new media. This will enrich the current research directions indicated in the MeLa Description of Work, and allow more flexible and heterogenic connections to be considered, both within Europe—where for example public libraries are at the forefront of leading initiatives addressing multicultural diversity—and outside its assumed confines (for example the Mediterranean), also in terms of European Union legitimacy and identity.[18] To examine how to frame and improve collaborations,

18   See for example Fuchs, Dieter and Andrea Schlenker. 2006. "European Identity and the Legitimacy of the EU. EU FP6 Consent Network of Excellence." Accessed March 27,

we will start by looking closely at the similarities between museums and libraries. The core activities of archiving, cataloguing and framing memory (and the associated categories of hierarchies of cultural value and historical identity) provide a common unifying nexus between museum practices and those of the library. However, as described in the opening paragraph, these are distinct entities with their own histories, coming from different communities of practice and with different procedures and perspectives that can clash in the context of collaboration and partnerships.

At the beginning of this project I remarked the differences and current tension points between museums and libraries: from collection management, funding documentation and cataloguing standards, to the type of artefacts that they hold (typically unique for museums—although perhaps less so for digital/new media artworks[19]—and typically serial and as much as possible managed with automated processes and OPACs for libraries), their audiences and the dissemination and public availability of their catalogues and holdings. It is also interesting to notice the progressive hybridization of media and digital artefacts both within museums and libraries. Iain Chambers, leader of RF02 and member of the RF03 team and authors of relevant publications in this area, suggested two critical lines of thinking for museums within RF03 theoretical analysis and understanding (Chambers 1994, 2007; Chambers and Curti 1996): on one hand the "government mentality" of the power of the museum and museum display (Bennett 2009); on the other, the concept of museums as "contact zones" (Clifford 1997), flexible spaces that support diverse forms of belongings and aggregations, and that can allow the narration of more diverse histories.

We will also analyze how museums, libraries and public cultural institutions may overcome the challenges built into their infrastructure and manage the change conveyed by collaborations. For example, for museums to be effective agents for multicultural education, Ivan Karp and Steven Levine suggested that museums should abandon the concept of museum as a temple and take on the role of museum as a forum (Karp and Levine 1991). In order to achieve this, museums need to go beyond only exhibiting and providing information about objects. One of the strategies to provoke critical thinking on cultural diversity can be to provide as much context as possible: collaboration with libraries focused on the use of ICT to promote their collections could be an effective way to foster this. A further theoretical area of research will touch on EU policies on cultural heritage and how globalization, migration and ICT impact on them. Research Field 03 activities and results will be progressively made available through the MeLa RF03 webpages and blog.[20]

2012. www.eu-consent.net/click_download.asp?contentid=1258.

19   See for example Graham, Beryl, and Sarah Cook. 2010. *Rethinking Curating. Art after New Media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

20   MeLa Research Field 03—Network of Museums, Libraries and Public Cultural Institutions Blog (http://www.MeLa-blog.net/archives/category/field03).

→ REFERENCES

Bennett, Tony. 2009. *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics.* London & New York, NY: Routledge.

Bishoff, Liz. 2004. "The Collaboration Imperative." *Library Journal* 129 (1): 34-35. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA371048.html.

Carr, David. 2003. *The promise of Cultural Institutions.* Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Chambers, Iain. 1994. *Migrancy, Culture, Identity.* London & New York: Routledge.

———. 2007. *Mediterranean Crossings: The Politics of an Interrupted Modernity.* Durham, NC & London: Duke University Press.

Chambers, Iain, and Lidia Curti, eds. 1996. *The Post-colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons.* London & New York, NY: Routledge.

Clifford, James. 1997. "Museums as Contact Zones." In *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century,* 188-218. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Diamant-Cohen, Betsy, and Dina Sherman. 2003. "Hand in Hand: Museums and Libraries Working Together." *Public Libraries* 42 (2): 102-105. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.ala.org/pla/sites/ala.org.pla/files/content/publications/publiclibraries/pastissues/marchapril2003.pdf.

Faist, Thomas. 1998. "Transnational Social Spaces out of the International Migration: Evolution, Significance and Future Prospects." *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 39 (2): 213-247. doi:10.1017/S0003975600007621.

Gibson, Hannah, Anne Morris and Marigold Cleeve. 2007. "Links between Libraries and Museums: Investigating Museum-Library Collaboration in England and the USA." *Libri* 57: 53-64. Accessed March 27, 2012. www.librijournal.org/pdf/2007-2pp53-64.pdf.

IDABC. 2004. *European Interoperability Framework for Pan–European eGovernment Services.* Luxembourg: European Commission. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/servlets/Doca2cd.pdf?id=19528.

IFLA-Library Services to Multicultural Populations Section, ed. 2006. *The IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto: The Multicultural Library.* Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.ifla.org/VII/s32/pub/MulticulturalLibraryManifesto.pdf.

Innocenti, Perla, MacKenzie Smith, Kevin Ashley, Seamus Ross, Antonella De Robbio, Hans Pfeiffenberger and John Faundeen. 2011. "Towards a Holistic Approach to Policy Interoperability in Digital Libraries and Digital Repositories." *The International Journal of Digital Curation* 6 (1). Accessed March 27, 2012. http://ijdc.net/index.php/ijdc/article/view/167/235.

Institute of Museum and Library Services. 2004. "Charting the Landscape, Mapping New Paths: Museums, Libraries, and K-12 Learning." Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.imls.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/Charting_the_Landscape.pdf

Karp, Ivan, and Steven D. Lavine, eds. 1991. *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display.* Washington, DC & London: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Kjeldstadli, Knut. 2010. "Concepts of Nation—and Tasks of Libraries." Keynote speech at IFLA Section Library Services to Multicultural Populations, IFLA Satellite Meeting, Copenhagen, 17-18 August 2010.

Sohener, Kenneth. 2005. "Out of the Ring and into the Future: the Power of Collaboration." Paper presented at the RLG 2005 Members Forum "Libraries, Archives and Museums—Three Ring Circus, One Big Show?" July 14. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://worldcat.org/arcviewer/1/OCC/2007/08/08/0000070504/viewer/file1201.doc.

Trant, Jennifer. 2009. "Emerging Convergence? Thoughts on Museums, Archives, Libraries, and Professional Training." *Museum Management and Curatorship* 24 (4): 369 - 387. doi:10.1080/09647770903314738.

Walker, Christopher, and Carlos A. Manjarrez. 2003. *Partnerships for Free Choice Learning: Public Libraries, Museums and Public Broadcasters Working Together.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute and Urban Libraries Council. Accessed March 27, 2012. http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/410661_partnerships_for_free_choice_learning.pdf.

Yarrow, Alexandra, Barbara Clubb and Jennifer-Lynn Draper. 2008. *Public Libraries, Archives and Museums: Trends in Collaboration and Cooperation.* IFLA Professional Reports 108. The Hague: IFLA Headquarters, 2008. Accessed March 27, 2012. www.ifla.org/VII/s8/pub/Profrep108.pdf.

Zorich, Diane M., Waibel Gunter and Ricky Erway. 2008. "Beyond the Silos of the LAMs: Collaboration Among Libraries, Archives and Museums." Report produced for OCLC Research: 5. Accessed March 27, 2012. www.oclc.org/research/publications/library/2008/2008-05.pdf.

Reinventing the Museum to Mankind

→ MICHEL VAN PRAËT

Professor at the Natural History Museum in Paris and Director of the renovation project of the Museum of Mankind/Musée de L'Homme, he is also Professor of Museology at Université Paris 3-Sorbonne. His research interests focus on the analysis of the museum visitors' behavior and its implications for exhibition design, and on the evolution of museums and exhibitions with particular regard to the topics of natural science and human body parts. He served as president of the French Committee of ICOM-International Council of Museums, and he was one of the drafters of ICOM's Code of Ethics.

→ ABSTRACT

The Museum of Mankind, a department of the National Natural History Museum, closed for renovation in March 2009. In the meantime, the National Natural History Museum started to think about how to integrate their research project on human evolution and the relationships between natural environment and human societies into the renovation project. This is in keeping with the ongoing process of reinventing the role and functions of the Museum: first, in 1878, as an ethnographic museum; later, in 1937, as transformed into the Museum of Mankind to include a greater anthropological collection; and currently, as extending its role to incorporate environmental issues. The latter represents a scientific and cultural dimension that is of paramount importance for the National Natural History Museum. And this is why the museum is determined to do its utmost to meet this challenge.

IMG. 01 — *The Palace of Trocadéro, designed by Gabriel Davioud for the Paris World's Fair of 1878, hosted the Museum of Ethnography from 1878 to 1935. Private collection.*

> Rare or beautiful things intelligently assembled in this space
> to catch the eye of the beholder as if never before contemplated
> all these things belonging to this world.
>
> Paul Valery

In 1937, date of the Paris International Exhibition, Mr. Paul Rivet founded the Museum of Mankind—Musée de L'Homme—in the brand new Palais de Chaillot in the Passy/Trocadéro wing of this building [Img. 01 & 02]. He was given support for this project by the then Minister of Education, Mr. Jean Zay. To get the project off the ground, Mr. Paul Rivet brought together the "exotic" and "picturesque" collection pieces belonging to the Trocadéro Museum of Ethnography dating from 1878, along with pieces of collections coming from the ethnography, physical anthropology and prehistoric research carried out by the Natural History Museum. He also brought the researchers together under one Professorial Chair entitled "Ethnology of Modern and Fossilized Man," this way addressing the concept that "mankind is one and undivided both in time and in space" (Rivet 1948, 112).

Open to the public at large since 1938, little by little the Museum of Mankind/Musée de l'Homme brought together on one site researchers, collections, a library and exhibitions, using the "laboratory museum" as its model—a concept developed at the Natural History Museum since the seventeenth century. Thus, it no longer was limited to the unique concept of being just an Ethnography Museum, no matter what its image was, or continued to be, in the minds of the public at large.

→ UNDERSTANDING MAN IN HIS GLOBALITY

Currently the aim of giving particular attention to the idea of understanding man in his globality, analysing both his biological and cultural dimensions, is still of paramount importance. Our understanding of mankind has grown significantly. Our perception of diversity in human societies has also been deeply modified over time; however much our knowledge has progressed—enabling us to better master our environment and our human bodies—the diversity of cultural rites and traditions, and how these aspects have been applied to controlling our environment and our own well-being, among other things, are sources

IMG. 02 — *The Palais de Chaillot separated by the Human Rights Plaza. Built for the Exposition Universelle of 1937, it was designed by Léon Azéma, Jacques Carlu, and Hippolyte Boileau on the former site of Trocadéro.*

of wealth that today appear to be given more and more recognition and value. In fact, new discoveries and approaches to pre-historic times have played a part in our understanding of how, within a large group of primates, several different species recognized and identified each other, very likely co-existing with each other and even with modern man. Archaeological data in the area of genetics converge and show documents proving how, after a process of differentiation in Africa, *Homo Sapiens* went on to populate the planet over a period of several hundred thousand years; how also, even beyond biologically adapting to the diversity of different environments, a multitude of different cultural rites and traditions continued to be invented so that man could live better in those diverse environments he began to inhabit.

Among the anthropologists, while continuing to deepen and refine their knowledge of the anatomy of the human body, some also engaged in studies of cultural rites and representation thereto connected [Img. 03]. Others analysed the diversity of languages and looked into their origins. More recently, in view of the progress being made in molecular biology, a new approach in the area of genetics has been made possible among the human populations, including fossilized humans. The idea of fundamental unity among all modern men has hence been confirmed, thus recalling the ambition of Paul Rivet for a global definition of mankind. This is all the more necessary inasmuch as no biological criteria alone has been able to define man, given that the links with other species are most significant even when taking into consideration development in anatomy or genetics, or even in social behaviour or in the increased sophistication in learning skills within the category of primates. Defining mankind more than ever needs a global approach, transversally looking at both his cultural diversity and biological development, while at the same time analysing the relationships within the different societies in an ever changing natural environment that has been occurring since the beginning of the Neolithic period some thousands of years ago.

→ UNDERSTANDING AND BRINGING TO THE FOREFRONT NATURE'S CULTURAL HISTORY TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

For thousands of years, modern man exploited the world's natural resources, improving his tools for hunting and harvesting. He left for us to discover traces of representations of himself, his lifestyle, and his

surrounding natural environments: tools, pieces of jewellery, clothing, offerings in honour of the dead, prehistoric paintings, and so on. However, it was only about 10,000 years ago that man started to create new resources, in particular by domesticating animals and vegetables within different geographic areas, outside the domain of the natural resources already available to him. Since that time man has been constantly modifying his natural environment by means of agriculture, raising livestock, and through a diversity of cultural and technical practices invented by him for improvement. In parallel, the population of mankind has been growing, amplifying the impact of man's actions on nature. No matter how powerful or how long term the natural phenomena are, elements of cultural history of the natural environment are constantly being put into place, being accompanied by social organisations that allow exchanges of resources on a large scale to be set up, be they within empires or between populations geographically far away from each other, leading finally to the contemporary phenomena called globalization.

The natural history of mankind has been addressing a long term debate on questions coming from all and sundry issues. However, the cultural history of the natural environment has only been debated for a few decades as to the future of our planet and its sustainable use by mankind. Questioning this historical dimension of our cultural natural environment is henceforth an essential component in deepening our understanding of the state of our planet and is a huge source of information by means of the diversity of inventions created and put in place by both past and contemporary societies.

Understanding and bringing to the forefront the diversity of nature's cultural history has become at the present time an innovative aim and a source of prospection. With this in mind, the definition of mankind requires an ethical approach more than ever before, taking into consideration our relationship with the natural environment and also our differences, all of these elements contributing a wealth of information, however not to be taken as foundation elements for social hierarchies.

→ **THE MUSEUM OF MANKIND/LE MUSÉE DE L'HOMME:**

A SPACE FOR RESEARCH AND ACCESS FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Well beyond the impact sprouting from its research work and its role in the conservation of collections of major importance documenting the history of mankind, the Museum is at the core in the area of themes that incite questioning coming from all of us, be we young or old, notwithstanding our cultural backgrounds. We can ask the questions, what are we, mankind, in fact? What can we learn from human fossils? What can we learn from our genome? What can we learn from the diversity of our cultural backgrounds? What can we learn from our distant history and from that of today? Beyond the surprises in store for us and the pleasure of tracing back our history from the collections, there is also the pleasure of coming face to face with Cro-Magnon Man, and witnessing

the diversity of nature's representations [Imgs. 04-05]. In what way can all of these representations help us, individually, to live better lives and collectively prepare our future?

→ A MUSEUM OF THE "AGORA" STYLE OPEN TO CONTEMPORARY DEBATE

The idea of a place for debate should play a long term role in interesting visitors, whereas discoveries will surely capture their attention; and depending on the age of the visitors, they should respond to everyone's fluctuating expectations. To address the diverse interests in the Museum of Mankind/Musée de l'Homme, its different sections aim to offer a large range of propositions. Over a period of several years, the 2,800 square metres of the permanent exhibitions area will showcase fundamental references, which will be also examined in in-depth temporary exhibitions in an area covering 650 square metres [Img. 06]. Moreover, there will be another area comprising a cinema named after Jean Rouch, a pedagogical space, and an area covering contemporary issues. Our aim is to turn the museum space into an "agora" to discover not only the most recent information on discoveries and scientific research, but also to enter into discussions with researchers, to share emotional reactions and knowledge, to access resources to answer any questions visitors may have, or to go back in time over the several million years of the history of mankind, but also to find out what is in store for our planet tomorrow.

→ REFERENCE

Rivet, Paul. 1948. "Organisation d'un musée d'ethnologie." *Museum* 1 (1-2): 68-70; 111-113.

Process Versus Product

New Paths for Archiving in the Field of Contemporary Artistic Practices

→ MELA DÁVILA FREIRE

She holds a B.A. in English and German Philology from the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona and completed postgraduate studies in Publishing at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona). She has worked as a translator, editor and freelance editor. Since 1996 she has held various positions at contemporary art institutions. She was head of publications at el Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea (Santiago de Compostela), assistant to the director of MECAD/Media Centre d'Art i Disseny (Sabadell, Barcelona), and head of publications at Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona-MACBA. In December 2007, she was appointed the first director of MACBA's new Study Centre.

→ ABSTRACT

This text is an updated version of the paper I read at the IV Meeting of Contemporary Art Documentation Centres at the Artium Centre–Basque Museum of Contemporary Art, which took place on 22 and 23 October 2008. That paper embodied a declaration of intentions, as the MACBA Study Centre had only recently opened its doors. The centre has now been running for more than three years, and this revised version of the paper no longer presents only projects and intentions, but discusses some of the initial conclusions that we have drawn from our professional practice in the work of defining and building up bibliographic and documentary collections. These conclusions are eminently provisional: one can only hope and wish that the processes of analysis that generated them will be continued, leading to fresh reflection and, therefore, new conclusions and new work methods. All this, because the role that documentary collections and documentation centres themselves play as regards contemporary artistic practices is far from being definitively established.

The Study Centre of Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MAC-BA) opened in December 2007 with three main objectives: to gather a seminal collection of documents (bibliography, archives, audiovisual materials, etc.) related to the practice of contemporary art, to disseminate this collection, and to foster research in this field, in particular using as a basis this collection of documents as well. By definition, these objectives place the Study Centre in the interstices which open between traditional museums and traditional libraries, since we are expected to preserve and systematize (as in libraries) but also activate and disseminate (as in museums) collections which share, in their very physical materiality as well as in their relationships and resonances, conceptual and aesthetic features that are usually associated to library and museum materials, respectively.

Now that the Study Centre has been running for more than three years, the moment has come to make public and discuss the initial conclusions that we have drawn from our professional practice in the work of defining and building up bibliographic and documentary collections. It must be stressed that these conclusions are far from being definitive: one can only hope, and wish, that the processes of analysis that generated them will continue, leading to new reflections and, therefore, new conclusions and new work methods, since the role that documentary collections and documentation centres themselves play in contemporary artistic practices is far from being definitively established.

→ BACKGROUND

The embryo of the resources that now form the bibliographic and documentary collection conserved by the MACBA Study Centre was provided by the old MACBA Library, which was established in 1993 and opened to the public in 1995, when the Museum opened its doors [Img. 01]. The library collection was started by small donations from different institutions and regular purchases, and it was provided with a small reading room next to the staff offices of the Museum. Despite the limited nature of these resources, the publications collection grew rapidly, and very soon both the space and the staff—two librarians—became insufficient to manage the library and to catalogue new acquisitions.

From 1999, the idea of establishing a study centre that would bring together not only reference publications, but also artists' books, special publications, personal archives and documentary materials of all kinds, began to form part of the Museum's plans for expansion, at the same time since interest in documentation linked to contemporary art was clearly growing, as could be seen in the presence of documents displayed alongside artworks in the Museum exhibition rooms and in the acquisition of the first documentary resources. These resources ranged from artists' books to documentation produced by such groups as Video-Nou and Tucumán Arde, amongst others. As the project for the future Study Centre took shape, custody of these documentary materials was shared between the old library and the MACBA art collection, which is where,

LIBRARY

REFERENCE LITERATURE
→ exhibition catalogues
→ monographs
→ audiovisual materials
→ music, sound art

SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS
→ dated before 1950
→ photobooks
→ special formats and sizes

ARCHIVE
→ MACBA Historical Archive
→ fonds and papers from artists,
   galleries, art critics, etc.
→ posters

→ artist publications
→ photographers' archives
→ documents generated by artists or
   artistic groups in their creative practice

→ art works   **ART COLLECTION**

CONSULTATION
IN LIBRARY
READING ROOM

CONSULTATION
UNDER
RESTRICTED
CONDITIONS

CONSULTATION
IN EXHIBITION
SPACES

for instance, many publications by artists such as Hans-Peter Feldmann and Dieter Roth, amongst others, ended up.

In 2005 the Barcelona City Council granted MACBA a twenty-five year concession to use a building adjoining the Museum: a three-storey construction designed to become the provincial media library, and therefore, due both to its physical characteristics and its location, was ideal for conversion into the documentation centre [Img. 02]. The whole process was finally culminated on 13 December 2007 with the opening of the MACBA Study Centre, whose mission was defined as "enhancing the development of the Museum, and extending the scope of its activities beyond the organization of exhibitions to serve as a centre for research, debate and mediation, a social arena and a space for dissemination."[1]

The work carried out by the MACBA Study Centre entails the development of a new field of action which shares the basic discursive lines that define all of the other services and activities of the Museum, namely presentations of the MACBA Collection, temporary exhibitions, public and educational programmes, publications, etc. In turn, the two major collections around which the Study Centre's heritage is structured—the library and the archive—act as complementary prolongations to the MACBA art collection, which brings together works belonging to the Museum itself along with permanent loans from other bodies, such as the MACBA Foundation, the Government of Catalonia, the Barcelona City Council, certain private collections, etc. MACBA's heritage is thus seen as a continuous line formed by materials in a large range of formats and supports, divided amongst these three branches (MACBA collection, archive, library) according to the most appropriate policy for use and reference in each case. In other words, the Study Centre's collections are not seen as subsidiary or secondary to the art collection; rather, they complement, expand and strengthen it, establishing ties, not of dependency, but of mutual bonding with it. There are, therefore, broad areas of contact between these three MACBA sections [Img. 03].

This concept regarding the museum heritage has direct consequences at the technical level: in order to strengthen the links between the MACBA collection and the archive area, MACBA adopted the decision to employ a single database to catalogue both the art and the documents. This not only improves our management of artworks and documentary material when brought together in an exhibition context (as well as all the formalities involved, such as storage, insurance, restoration work, loans to third parties, transport, etc.), but also, and above all, suggests a richer range of transversal readings of their respective content, both internally (the MACBA team of curators) and externally, thanks to the search engine that, since it entered into service in January 2012, has enabled users to browse both collections simultaneously.

IMG. 02 — *MACBA Study Center, Special Collections Room.*

IMG. 03 — *"Diagram Library–Archive–Art Collection."*

1   "El Centro de Estudios y Documentación del MACBA, ubicado en el Convent dels Àngels, está destinado a potenciar el desarrollo del Museo extendiendo su ámbito de actividad más allá de las exposiciones para actuar como centro de investigación, estructura de diálogo y mediación, y espacio social y de difusión" (MACBA 2011).

→ **RESOURCES**

The library collection is the result of the fusion of the resources held in the old MACBA library and the Alexandre Cirici Contemporary Art Documentation Centre, which was established in 1984 by the Government of Catalonia's Culture Ministry and which belonged to the Santa Mònica Art Centre in Barcelona until 2005. The present library, born from this merger and constantly enriched by new acquisitions, contains some 70,000 volumes specializing in international art after 1945, including exhibition catalogues, monographic studies, essays and other reference work, as well as a large number of specialist international magazines—both current and historic—, alternative publications, magazines, video art, films, audio recordings, etc. To this must be added the museum's research collections, which include nearly 30,000 files, each devoted to a different artist or group and containing documentation generally referred to as "ephemeral" (flyers, invitations, etc.), along with photographs, press cuttings, photographs, etc.

As for the Archive, the initial collection with which it was launched in December 2007 was the result of an in-depth review of the resources in the old library and the MACBA collection, which had been previously enriched, as mentioned, by numerous artist publications, a varied array of documents related to artists and artist groups, and other documentary materials. Building on these beginnings, the archive resources were expanded through acquisitions of different types: purchases, donations and long-term deposits. Among the varied types of documents held in the archive, some collections are particularly relevant, such as the artist publications (artist's books, periodicals conceived and designed by artists and a large range of multiples and editions), as well as the archives and personal libraries of key figures in the art scene, such as artists, art and photography critics, photographers, etc. [Img. 04].

The mission of the archive is also to conserve and make available to users the documentary traces left by MACBA itself in its activities, establishing and actively enriching the museum's institutional archive. This col-

IMG. 04 — *Xavier Miserachs Fond. Detail of a contact sheet album.*

lection covers two broad areas: firstly, the administrative archive, whose conservation and consultation is largely defined by legislation passed at different levels of the administration—State, the Government of Catalonia and so on; and, secondly, the archive of public activity, which records the activities generated by MACBA by way of documents which are not administrative. Traditionally, this second area contains promotional materials produced by the Museum to communicate its activities, as well as its publications, audiovisual recordings of events on the public programme, documentary recordings of exhibitions, etc.

The structure taken by the archive and library collections is complex, as it derives from a theoretical concept according to which the categories of "artwork"and "document," understood in their classical sense, do not apply. In practice, the relation of continuity between those collections and the MACBA art collection, and the fact that the archive and the collection are described with entries of one single database, are two factors that help to resolve certain important problems. Amongst other things, this fluid relationship avoids the need for endless, futile discussions aimed at ascertaining whether certain research collections are "works"or "documents." Rather, it emphasizes their hybrid nature, their combination of the two categories. On the other hand, in some cases this approach also makes the work of managing the three areas—archive, library and art collection—more complex and requires the technical teams in each to work in close coordination.

The concept of continuity between collections is not the only factor conditioning the method used at the Study Centre in pursuing its mission. There also exists another factor that exercises an equivalent impact on the practical approach taken to managing bibliographical and documentary collections linked to contemporary artistic practices. In this case, it has to do with the hazy line that divides what we could call "working processes" and "work products."This factor, which can lead to in-depth reconsideration of classical classification methods and types of descriptions, is particularly relevant in certain specific cases. These include, particularly: the personal archives of certain artists and groups whose practice short-circuits traditional distinctions between art genres or between the categories of "work" and "document;" and the very archive of public activities and content of such an institution as MACBA and, specifically, its methods for documenting the museum exhibitions.

The process of "dematerialization" of the art object that began to take place in the field of artistic creation in the 1950s (though it had notable antecedents amongst the first avant-garde movements of the twentieth century), which finally resulted in the disappearance of the end *product* of creative activity, that is to say, the "artwork," is one of the factors usually mentioned as crucial in the importance that documentation has gradually acquired within the context of contemporary artistic creation. This dematerialization, which is evident in such practices as performance,

happening, etc., has had profound consequences whose effects are noted even today. In terms of classification and description, one of the main consequences of this process is the fact that the work is stripped of its status as object, and consequently the *product* of *creation* having disappeared, the *relations* between the different elements involved in the creative process take on crucial importance. In other words, it becomes an imperious necessity to make clear, through classification, the description and visualization of elements in the archive, the *relations* between the documents themselves, and between these and their context, apart from their intrinsic physical characteristics and their content. If this is not the case, then these relations can tend to become shadowy or to disappear completely. By providing a number of specific examples we may help to clarify this question.

The Video-Nou/Servei de Video Comunitari group, which was active in Barcelona from 1977 to 1983, was engaged in exploring the different fields in which video could be applied—the social, the artistic, the documentary, the educational and the professional—with a view to providing a public service and encouraging social activism. For their part, the members of the Grup de Treball (1973-1975) adopted a radically critical stance in rebelling against the prevailing art system and defending social and political engagement in art. The artistic and documentary legacy left by both groups are deposited at the MACBA Study Centre, formed, *grosso modo*, by a large amount of audiovisual materials, pamphlets, flyers, posters and many, many typed, photocopied and printed texts, which can practically never be considered 'unique' or 'original', since they were conceived with the explicit intention of circulating them far and wide.

The versatility with which some artists jump from one genre to another has a direct relation with the difficulty in classifying and describing their legacy based on series of classical descriptions, such as, for instance, "manuscripts" as opposed to "visual work (original)," which, in turn, is distinguished from "visual work (edited)." At present, the MACBA Study Centre is engaged in incorporating into the collections a legacy that represents an outstanding illustration of this problem. This legacy comprises the library, personal archive and artworks of Joan Brossa (Barcelona, 1919-1998), a poet, playwright and fine artist in equal parts. It contains three-dimensional objects, as well as visual poems both published and unpublished, theatre manuscripts, poetry and prose, originals and printed versions of posters, correspondence, photographs, press cuttings and a vast amount of miscellaneous documentation, all interlinked by numerous relations and creatively recycled time and again in different formats.

A third case that presents complexities when it comes to processing it according to classical classification parameters is the production of such artists as, for instance, Antoni Miralda (Terrassa, 1942) and Pedro G. Romero (Huelva, 1964), who use the archive in their work, not just as a conceptual anchor but as a material element in itself. The different materials that have been added over the years to Pedro G. Romero's *Archivo*

F.X., a project that is subject to a permanent process of expansion, pose significant (and deliberate) difficulties when it comes to classification, as they share features that would enable them to fit meaningfully into the three sections into which the resources managed by MACBA and similar libraries are divided: library, archive or art collection. Similarly, the personal archive of objects related to food that Miralda has accumulated over many years and numerous journeys maintains such close relations of continuity with his project *Food Cultura* that it is difficult to distinguish where one piece ends and the other begins. Very much the same thing occurs between these and other works by Miralda, such as *Honeymoon Project* (1986 - …) and *Holy Food – Santa comida* (1984), to mention just two of this artist's best-known pieces [Img. 05].

Within the context of defining and launching the MACBA Institutional Archive, the Study Centre has undertaken the task of rethinking the implications and meaning, in both theoretical and practical terms, behind the activity of *archiving exhibitions*. Exhibitions are discursive devices that are furnished with their own codes, whose keys are often not transparent to the public, nor are they considered an object for analysis by the institution that produces them and presents them as a fundamental and particularly visible (and, at the same time, ephemeral) part of its activity. We can point to the increasingly important role that was allotted to art curators over the course of the twentieth century as one of the factors that has contributed to the process of sophistication and specialization undergone by exhibition languages. This may also go some way to explaining the growing interest in the history of exhibitions in their status as cultural objects: their impact on artistic historiography, the codes to their language, their shortcomings and their successes in presenting creative activity in the rooms of a gallery or museum.

IMG. 05 — *Antoni Miralda's Studio. General view. Barcelona, 2011.*

Aware of these considerations, the Study Centre has launched a review of the methods used by our and other similar institutions to archive the documentary "trace" that all exhibitions leave behind them. The ultimate goal behind this process is to include in the documentary archive generated by all exhibitions presented by MACBA all those documents that, in the medium- and long-term, can facilitate the study of aspects in the process of creating exhibitions, and not just to evaluate them in terms of final result or product. This work of analysis and reassessment, which is still currently ongoing, will result in the inclusion in the MACBA exhibition archive of types of documents hitherto considered "provisional" and, as such, not duly taken into consideration in terms of the institutional archive, at least by MACBA. They include, for example, the succession of draft lists of works or their organization in the exhibition rooms. However, one also hopes that the results generated by this methodological renewal will also include, once more, the establishment of a way of describing the various documentary elements that clearly illustrates the different relations between them and their status as parts in a *work process* that has, to date, been largely ignored in favour of final *products,* such as flyers, invitations, the photographic report on each different exhibition in the organization shape finally given to it, etc.

Study of all these cases leads to a clear conclusion: that the classification, description and visualization of documentary legacies and collections such as these require more (or different) resources to those provided under classical systems if they are to reflect the complex network of relations that give meaning to elements with such different status and characteristics as those that form these resources. In terms of their conservation and classification, this requires preliminary work of analysis and conceptualization that can, in the end, turn the final result into something much more complex than a mere repository of documentary units organized into series; something that, ideally, should be capable of including diagrams that show the relations between elements, reflecting the ambiguous nature of the materials that conform them (work versus document, etc.) and provide reference systems that, using creative methods for the visualization of data, adapted to all kinds of consultation methods, from the traditional (in the archive, before the original objects) to those based on online searches, as well as all types of formats for presentation and exhibition in the space.

Carrying out this work of conceptualization and, above all, putting it into practice, is a major challenge. However, it is also an indispensable undertaking if we are to equip the working methods used at documentation centres linked to contemporary artistic practices with the ability to capture the wealth of different readings that the documentary materials preserved in their holdings can suggest.

→ **REFERENCE**

MACBA. 2011. Accessed September 1, 2011. No longer online.

Curatorial Methodology and Exhibition Practice

→ **MARK NASH, JAMIE GILHAM**

Mark Nash is Professor and Head of Department of Curating Contemporary Art at the Royal College of Art, London. He is a curator, film historian and filmmaker, with a specialism in contemporary fine art moving image practices, avant-garde and world cinema. Mark has curated the film element of several international exhibitions including: "Force Fields Phases of the Kinetic" (2000); "The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945-1994" (2001), and the Berlin Biennial (2004). He was co-curator of Documenta 11 (2002). Mark's forthcoming curatorial projects include an exhibition "Ecologies of Image" at MUSAC, Spain (2012).

Jamie Gilham is Senior Research Manager at the Royal College of Art, London. He is also a member of the College's Research Committee and Research Excellence Framework 2014 (REF) Working Group.

→ **ABSTRACT**

Mark Nash, leader of MeLa's Research Field 04 "Curatorial and Artistic Research," describes the work of the curatorial program at the Royal College of Art and the plans of his research team for the MeLa project. The paper points out that there has already been a wide range of curatorial work and exhibitions on issues of migration, borders, fluid identities, etc. In a way, CCA—the department of Curating Contemporary Art at the Royal College of Art—wants to assess all of this, and then try to interpret these projects to develop critical lessons for future use. Within the framework of MeLa, then, the aim of Research Field 04 is to develop a curatorial methodology and exhibition practice that can reflect the complexity of the interests and processes involved. In this regard, the paper identifies some of the major issues that will be addressed by Research Field 04: the role of artists in current debates and discussions, artistic networks, and the themes of multiplicity, migration and indigeneity.

Mark Nash of the Royal College of Art (RCA) is leading the MeLa Research Field on "Curatorial and Artistic Research." He is a curator and Head of the department of Curating Contemporary Art (CCA), which was funded and co-funded, by the Arts Council, England and the RCA in 1992. This was the first postgraduate program to specialize in curatorial practice in relation to contemporary art which came out of cultural actors and administrators' desire to produce a new layer of professionally qualified museum administrators dealing with contemporary art. This was an initiative by the Arts Council as it felt that there was a need for specialist training for contemporary art. For some historical reasons the RCA has not had that much connection with museum studies so it is very positive that through MeLa the RCA is making more contact with colleagues in museum studies back in the UK. CCA is running an MA course, which is essentially a mix of a professional, vocational qualification and an academic qualification. Our students work on five or six practical projects, finishing up with a final exhibition. The College has some quite generous exhibition spaces, which hopefully can be used for the MeLa exhibition. Among these, the Henry Moore Gallery runs across the front of the building looking over Hyde Park: it runs at 90 degrees to that North-South.

"Remembering exhibitions" was one of four student group projects. It represents an attempt to engage with the history of exhibitions, which paradoxically has been remarkably difficult to research and teach. This is partly because of the difficulty of accessing materials and the difficulty of teaching with materials. Therefore, one of the benefits of the MeLa project for CCA will be the possibility of developing networks and resources which can enable us to reference exhibitions and contemporary exhibition history.

Another interesting project where a upward artists and curators have gone back and interpreted or re-presented material from a number of important exhibitions was the one that was part of an independent group exhibition that was put on at the IC in the mid 1950s. Another interesting example is the work by a Norwegian artist, Hendrik Hendrickson, who uses these wooden structures to obstruct or re-configure the way a viewer moves through the space. Among these, there is his intervention in the Hamburger Bahnhof where he blocked off the central apps of the building completely so you had to go through as it were the side passages. Normally, it is a very dramatic intervention in the space.

The department of Curating Contemporary Art has fifteen research students enrolled in PhD and M.Phil programs. The department is in the process of setting up a curating research group and the MeLa project has helped move that forward. The CCA main focus has been for a while the postcolonial: this term has to be understood rather generally because it also includes concern with indigenous art and representations of indigeneity, and the connection of the postcolonial to the indigenous. Current research student projects include a project on post 1960 Cypriot art, and one of the CCA PhD students was involved in the Venice Biennial

in Larnaka and curated an exhibition on the history of Cyprus. Another student's activity is focused on presentations of Indian contemporary art through a range of exhibitions, both in India and in the rest of the world about India. The CCA department is however also researching the history of international exhibitions, and—in particular—the phenomenon of the increasing number of biennials across the world.

The CCA will be collaborating with the Università degli Studi di Napoli "L' Orientale" on their investigation of cultural memory, and there have also been talks, already, with Mike Barr on developing a shared bibliographic resource specifically on exhibition history. The structure of the research group at CCA for the MeLa includes Mark Nash as the research leader. There are also Clare Carolin, who was formerly a curator at the Hayward Gallery and is now the Deputy Head of Department, and Kit Hammonds who used to a curator at the South London Gallery and the Show Room. Both Clare and Kit have expertise in exhibition making, and together with Mark Nash will have a major input in the exhibition process which forms the main output of the work package. In addition to the curatorial staff, a number of other members of staff who will be making input into the project, particularly, Jean Fisher, former editor of the Journal *Third Text* whose work has developed recently in the area of questions around indigeneity and colonialism. There will also be the input of a younger researcher, doctor Ros Gray who has worked on contemporary cinema and art in Mozambique and the history of the Cult War in Mozambique film production. Jean and Ros will contribute particularly to the brainstorming and publication elements. A research administrator will shortly be appointed, together with one or two PhD students through a bursary system, which we will be contributing to.

The objectives of this program of work are research on artists and curators working on the issue of migration, the role of museums and galleries showing this kind of work and disseminating knowledge of these issues in other ways through lectures, seminars, publications and so on. An initial research phase will review existing and extensive curatorial work on this theme. And what the CCA department wants to do in this period is look at the wide range of work. There has been an enormous amount of curatorial work and an enormous amount of exhibitions on issues of migration, borders, the fluid identities, etc. In a way, CCA wants to assess all of this, then stand back from it, and then try to interpret all these projects and see what is possible to learn from in relation to the work that we are doing. That is the aim of the brainstorming scheduled for the twentieth month of the MeLa project. The main idea is that the CCA department will mount an exhibition that presents the result of this work, a kind of survey of exhibitions or an exhibition history (it is not quite clear yet what the form of that exhibition will take). However, CCA conceives it as research exhibition that reviews current practice and then further down the line, a year or so later, CCA department will have a final exhibition which sets out our thinking including work by both established as well as younger artists who are engaging with this theme.

It is fundamental spending a few moments on the role of artists in current debates and discussions. This is because artists have increasingly been involved with economists, politicians and NGOs in addressing these issues. There are several issues that arise when both national governments and the EU attempt to organise the flow of undocumented peoples, so called illegal migrants attempting to enter the European fortress in search of work. In the exhibition that Mark Nash curated in 2002 (Documenta 11), there was a protest group called Kimench Istilegal who mounted an oppositional pavilion dealing with exactly the issue of migration which they felt. This is to some extent an issue that had not addressed sufficiently in the exhibition, although it did include work, for example, by the multiplicity collective in their installation the solid C which documents the movements of peoples across the Mediterranean and the fragility of the efforts of some people to find a better life through that process.

And the theme of multiplicity is worth mentioning. The road-map project represents a very interesting collective of sociologists, publishers, artists. It is both a research collective and a dissemination collective. In fact the notion of who is and who is not an artist becomes increasingly problematic and represents one of the interesting areas that should be explored. An interesting example is represented by one of the installations of a friend and colleague, the artist Isaac Julien whose work has for many years been focussed on issues of migration. His installation "Western Union Small Boats" which was recently shown in Palermo and in Munich focuses on the theme of migration. His practice is a mix of complex moving image installations and photographic works. The work represents a graveyard of migrant boats in Lampedusa which, as everybody knowns, is one of the main sites of entry of illegal migrants into Italy. Though some of the work was filmed in Lampedusa it is not a documentary. It includes fantasy scenes in which drowned bodies are carried through the Baroque of the Palazzo Gangi in Palermo. It is important to contrast these two images because one of the big problems in this area in terms of artistic practice is when artists are made to be representative—or to speak for—themes which are articulated outside of their practice as opposed to themes that are developed within their practice. Isaac's work is quite elegant in moving between these two spaces: on the one hand you have a re-enactment of people moving from North Africa and drowning in the Mediterranean, but on the other hand you have the same people, as it were, dragging themselves through this Baroque, magnificent Baroque building, somehow representing or commenting on the different layers of labour and capital accumulated in that process. All of this gives you a sense of the complexity of the issues that we are talking about.

It is also important to mention one the of many exhibitions dealing with concepts of Europe, that took place in 2001: "Unpacking Europe," an exhibition that took place at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam that was curated by Salah Hassan and Iftikhar Dadi. Here there was the work by the British Nigerian artist, Yinka Shonibare. The

first part of the work package would need to deal with a review and re-visitation of these exhibitions, in order to see what their aims and objectives were, how successfully they achieved them, what the artists who participated in them thought about their participation, and so on.

As many have already pointed out, the concept of migration has many meanings, but it is worth mentioning that both art and artists have also been mobile. Artists have always travelled to Rome, London, Amsterdam or Madrid wherever there were commissions to produce work and, equally, works of art have moved between aristocratic collectors before ending up in various places. There is the need somehow for an increased sensitivity to the networks which artists have to inhabit today. It is true that there are sometimes discussions about the way, for example, African artists are no longer African when they have to leave Africa for Europe, but actually that mobility is part of what it is to be an artist in the twenty-first st century.

This takes us to the issue of indigeneity. The CCA department is currently working with colleagues in Hungary and Poland on a project, which concerns Roma artists. Another example of this is the work of Sámi artists, one of which is Katarina Pirak, who is the author of an upside-down version of the map of Scandinavia that shows the Mermounts region in Russia, with Finland above and Sweden over the far right. The Sámi are one of the indigenous peoples in Europe that were very affected by the Cold War but have their own cultural history and are really quite involved in contemporary art practices. One of the things the CCA department wants to focus on are also these slightly neglected areas of European contemporary art.

The aim of the project is therefore that of developing a curatorial methodology and exhibition practice that can reflect the complexity of the interests and processes involved. The work by RCA will be slightly different from the one done in other MeLa reseacrh fields, due to the fact that the RCA main output is going to be an exhibition and a catalogue. Nevertheless, the RCA looks forward to engaging with the other branches of the MeLa research and learning about their inputs into our proposals.

Selected
Bibliography

Selected Bibliography

This bibliography, which integrates each essay's list of references, includes only printed books on museum topics published in Europe and in the United States in the last two decades—a period that has witnessed a flourishing of studies on the rapidly changing contemporary museum field. As it is renown, the 1980s opened with the affirmation of the schools of "museum studies" in the Anglo-Saxon countries and the birth of the Nouvelle Muséologie in France, and then ended up with the publication of Peter Vergo's seminal anthology *The New Museology* in 1989. From that moment on, not only we have witnessed the building of a large number of museums, but also the development of a broad spectrum of museum topics and representation strategies indebted to postmodern and postcolonial theories that have questioned the existing museums' missions and roles.

The books listed here are primarily related to the research issues of MeLa. That is, they tackle the growing interest in the social role of museums, the strong attention in communication processes, the shift to multi- and trans-culturality produced by the pervasive mobility of people, goods, services, information, and knowledge; the increasingly visible melting pot of ethnicities and cultures that characterizes contemporary societies, and also the role of advanced technologies as means of global networking and interchange of collective and personal relationships. Furthermore, new architectural expressions, new contents and forms of exhibitions and displays, an interdisciplinary approach to cultural offer and new missions and partnerships (for example with libraries) are also part of a general process of rethinking the organization of the museum institution. Such are some of the challenges that museums must take on at the beginning of the new millennium.

The bibliography is an abridged version of a more comprehensive one available on MeLa website (http://www.mela-project.eu/publications/747).

PREVIOUS PAGE — *Musée des Arts Asiatiques, Nice. Kenzo Tange, François Deslaugiers, 1998.*

→ **CONTEMPORARY DEBATE ON MUSEUMS**

Anderson, Gail, ed. 2004. *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Paradigm Shift.* Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press

Baur, Joachim, ed. 2010. *Museumsanalyse: Methoden und Konturen eines neuen Forschungsfeldes.* Bielefeld: Transcript.

Barrett, Jennifer. 2011. *Museums and the Public Sphere.* Malden, MA, Oxford & Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Bennett, Tony. 1995. *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics.* London & New York: Routledge.

Carbonell, Bettina Messias, ed. 2004. *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts.* Malden, MA & Oxford: Blackwell.

Cuno, James, ed. 2009. *Whose Culture? The Promise of Museums and the Debate over Antiquities.* Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press.

———. 2011. *Museums Matter: In Praise of the Encyclopedic Museum.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Deloche, Bernard. 2010. *Mythologie du musée: De l'uchronie à l'utopie.* Paris: Le Cavalier Bleu.

Drugman, Fredi. 2010. *Lo specchio dei desideri: Antologia sul museo.* Edited by Mariella Brenna. Bologna: Clueb.

Farago, Claire J., and Donald Preziosi, eds. 2004. *Grasping the World: The Idea of the Museum.* Aldershot & Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Ferrari, Federico. 2004. *Lo spazio critico: Note per una decostruzione dell'istituzione museale.* Bologna: Luca Sossella Editore.

Galard, Jean, ed. 2001. *L'avenir des musées.* Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux.

Genoways, Hugh H., ed. 2006. *Museum Philosophy for the Twenty-first Century.* Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

Hein, Hilde S. 2000. *The Museum in Transition: A Philosophical Perspective.* Washington, DC & London: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Janes, Robert R. 2009. *Museums in a Troubled World: Renewal, Irrelevance or Collapse?* London & New York: Routledge.

Jaumain, Serge, ed. 2000. *Les musées en movement: Nouvelles conceptions, nouveaux publics.* Bruxelles: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles.

John, Hartmut, and Anja Dauschek, eds. 2008. *Museen neu Denken: Perspektiven der Kulturvermittlung und Zielgruppenarbeit.* Bielefeld: Transcript.

Knell, Simon J., ed. 2007. *Museums in the Material World.* London & New York: Routledge.

Knell, Simon J., Suzanne MacLeod, and Sheila Watson, eds. 2007. *Museum Revolutions: How Museums Change and are Changed.* London & New York: Routledge.

Kravagna, Christian, ed. 2001. *The Museum as Arena: Institutional-critical Statements by Artists/Das Museum als Arena: Institutionskritische Texte von KünstlerInnen*. Cologne: Kunsthaus Bregenz-Walther König.

Macdonald, Sharon, and Gordon Fyfe, eds. 1996. *Theorizing Museums*. Oxford & Cambridge: Blackwell.

Macdonald, Sharon, ed. 2006. *A Companion to Museum Studies*. Malden, MA & Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Madan, Rachel. 2010. *Sustainable Museums: Strategies for the 21st Century*. Edinburgh & New York: MuseumsEtc.

Mairesse, François, and André Desvallées, eds. 2007. V*ers une redéfinition du musée?* Paris: L'Harmattan.

———, eds. 2011. *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de muséologie*. Paris: Armand Colin.

Noever, Peter, ed. 2001. *The Discursive Museum*. Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz.

Pollock, Griselda, and Joyce Zemans. 2007. *Museums After Modernism: Strategies of Engagement*. Malden, MA & Oxford: Blackwell.

Rasse, Paul. 1999. *Les musées à la lumiere de l'espace public: Histoire, évolution, enjeux*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Rolland, Anne-Solène, and Hanna Murauskaya, eds. 2008. *De nouveaux modèles de musées? Formes et enjeux des creations et renovations de musées en Europe XIXe–XXIe siècles*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Sherman, Daniel J., and Irit Rogoff, eds. 1994. *Museum Culture: Histories, Discourses, Spectacles*. Minneapolis, MN & London: University of Minnesota Press & Routledge.

Vergo, Peter, ed. 1989. *The New Museology*. London: Reaktion Books.

Werner, Paul. 2006. *Museum, Inc.: Inside the Global Art World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Witcomb, Andrea. 2003. *Re-Imagining the Museum: Beyond the Mausoleum*. London & New York: Routledge.

→ MUSEUMS: NATIONAL, TRANSNATIONAL AND MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Ames, Michael M. 1992. *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Ballé, Catherine, and Dominique Poulot, eds. 2000. *Publics et projets culturels: Un enjeu des musées en Europe*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Ballé, Catherine, Dominique Poulot, and Marie-Annick Mazoyer. 2004. *Musées en Europe: Une mutation inachevée*. Paris: La documentation francaise.

Barringer, Tim, and Tom Flynn, eds. 1998. *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture and the Museum*. London & New York: Routledge.

Clifford, James. 1997. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Evans, Jessica, and David Boswell, eds. 1999. *Representing the Nation: A Reader in Heritage and Museums.* London & New York: Routledge.

Henare, Amiria J.M. 2008. *Museums, Anthropology and Imperial Exchange.* Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press.

Holo, Sara Reuben. 2000. *Beyond the Prado: Museums and Identity in Democratic Spain.* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Jalla, Daniele, Guido Vaglio, and Laura Salvai, eds. 2003. *Europa e musei: Identità e rappresentazioni/Europe and Museums:Identities and Representations/Europe et musées: Identités et representations.* Turin: Celid.

Kaplan, Flora E. S., ed. 1994. *Museums and the Making of Ourselves: The Role of Objects in National Identity.* London & New York: Leicester University Press.

Karp, Ivan, and Steven D. Lavine. 1991. *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display.* Washington, DC & London: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Karp, Ivan, Corinne A. Kratz, Lynn Szwaja, and Tomás Ybarra-Frausto, eds. 2006. *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations.* Durham, NC & London: Duke University Press.

Knell, Simon J., Peter Aronsson, Arne Bugge Amundsen, Amy Barnes, Stuart Burch, Jennifer Carter, Viviane Gosselin, Sally Hughes, and Alan M. Kirkwan, eds. 2010. *National Museums: New Studies from Around the World.* London & New York: Routledge.

Kreps, Christina F. 2003. *Liberating Culture: Cross-cultural Perspectives on Museums, Curation and Heritage Preservation.* London & New York: Routledge.

Mason, Rhiannon. 2007. *Museums, Nations, Identities: Wales and Its National Museums.* Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Ostow, Robin, ed. 2008. *(Re)Visualizing National History: Museums and National Identities in Europe in the New Millennium.* Toronto, Buffalo, NY & London: University of Toronto Press.

Rolland, Anne-Solène, Hanna Murauskaya, Dominique Poulot, and Annie Héritier, eds. 2008. *Les musées de la nation: Créations, transpositions, renouveaux, Europe XIXe–XXIe siècles.* Paris: L'Harmattan.

Simpson, Moira G. 1996. *Making Representations: Museums in the Post-Colonial Era.* London & New York: Routledge.

Somé, Roger. 2004. *Le musée à l'ère de la mondialisation: Pour une anthropologie de l'altérité.* Paris: L'Harmattan.

Stanley, Nick. 1998. *Being Ourselves for You: Global Display of Cultures.* London: Middlesex University Press.

Taffin, Dominique, ed. 2000. *Du musée colonial au musée des cultures du monde: Actes du colloque organisé par le Musée national des arts d'Afrique et*

d'Océanie et le Centre Georges-Pompidou, 3-6 juin 1998. Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose.

Thomas, Dominic, ed. 2009. *Museums in Postcolonial Europe.* London & New York: Routledge.

Weibel, Peter, and Andrea Buddensieg. 2007. *Contemporary Art and the Museum: A Global Perspective.* Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz.

→ OBJECTS, COLLECTIONS, INTERPRETATIONS

Byrne, Sarah, Anne Clarke, Rodney Harrison, and Robin Torrence, eds. 2011. *Unpacking the Collection: Networks of Material and Social Agency in the Museum.* New York, Dordrecht, Heidelberg & London: Springer.

Dudley, Sandra H., ed. 2010. *Museum Materialities: Objects, Engagements, Interpretations.* London & New York: Routledge.

Dudley, Sandra, Amy Jane Barnes, Jennifer Binnie, Julia Petrov, and Jennifer Walklate, eds. 2011. *The Thing about Museums: Objects and Experience, Representation and Contestation.* London & New York: Routledge.

Fritsch, Juliette, ed. 2011. *Museum Gallery Interpretation and Material Culture.* London & New York: Routledge.

Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. 2000. *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture.* London & New York: Routledge.

Keene, Suzanne. 2005. *Fragments of the World: Uses of Museum Collections.* Oxford & Burlington, MA: Butterworth Heinemann.

Knell, Simon J., ed. 1999. *Museums and the Future of Collecting.* Aldershot & Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Pearce, Susan M. 1992. *Museums, Objects and Collections: A Cultural Study.* Washington, DC & London: Smithsonian Institution Press.

———, ed. 1994. *Interpreting Objects and Collections.* London & New York: Routledge.

Riccini, Raimonda, ed. 2003. *Imparare dalle cose: La cultura materiale nei musei.* Bologna: Clueb.

Whitehead, Christopher. 2012. *Interpreting Art in Museums and Galleries.* London & New York: Routledge.

→ REPRESENTING MULTIPLE HISTORIES AND MEMORIES

Baur, Joachim. 2009. *Die Musealisierung der Migration: Einwanderungsmuseen und die Inszenierung der multikulturellen Nation.* Bielefeld: Transcript.

Cameron, Fiona, and Linda Kelly, eds. 2010. *Hot Topics, Public Culture, Museums.* Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Hinz, Hans-Martin, ed. 1997. *Der Krieg und seine Museen.* Frankfurt & New York: Campus.

Holtschneider, K. Hannah. 2011. *The Holocaust and Representations of Jews: History and Identity in the Museum.* London & New York: Routledge.

Kavanagh, Gaynor, ed. 1996. *Making Histories in Museums.* London & New York: Leicester University Press.

———. 2000. *Dream Spaces: Memory and the Museum.* London & New York: Leicester University Press.

Kavanagh, Gaynor, and Elizabeth Frostick, eds. 1998. *Making City Histories in Museums.* London & New York: Leicester University Press.

Kjeldbaek, Esben, ed. 2010. *The Power of the Object: Museums and World War II.* Edimburgh & New York: MuseumsEtc.

Kurilo, Olga, ed. 2007. *Der Zweite Weltkrieg im Museum: Kontinuität und Wandel.* Berlin: Avinus.

Padberg, Martina, and Martin Schmidt, eds. 2010. *Die Magie der Geschichte: Geschichtskultur und Museum.* Bielefeld: Transcript.

Ruggieri Tricoli, Maria Clara. 2009. *Trauma: Memoriali e musei fra tragedia e controversia.* Santarcangelo di Romagna: Maggioli.

Sandell, Richard, Jocelyn Dodd, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, eds. 2010. *Re-Presenting Disability: Activism and Agency in the Museum.* London & New York: Routledge.

Sherman, Daniel J., ed. 1998. *Museums and Difference.* Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Smith, Laurajane, Geoff Cubitt, Kalliopi Fouseki, and Ross Wilson, eds. 2011. *Representing Enslavement and Abolition in Museums.* London & New York: Routledge.

Williams, Paul. 2007. *Memorial Museums: The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities.* Oxford & New York: Berg.

Wonisch, Regina, and Thomas Hubel, eds. 2012. *Museum und Migration: Konzepte - Kontexte – Kontroversen.* Bielefeld: Transcript.

→ **HERITAGE, PLACES, COMMUNITIES**

Anico, Marta, and Elsa Peralta, eds. 2009. *Heritage and Identity: Engagement and Demission in the Contemporary World*. London & New York: Routledge.

Ashworth, Gregory J., Brian Graham, and John E. Tunbridge. 2007. *Pluralising Pasts: Heritage, Identity and Place in Multicultural Societies.* London & Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press.

Brown, Alison K., and Laura Peers, eds. 2003. *Museums and Source Communities: A Reader.* London & New York: Routledge.

Corsane, Gerard, ed. 2005. *Heritage, Museums and Galleries: An Introductory Reader.* London & New York: Routledge.

Crooke, Elizabeth. 2007. *Museums and Community: Ideas, Issues and*

Challenges. London & New York: Routledge.

Davis, Peter. 2011. *Ecomuseums: A Sense of Place.* Second edition, London: Continuum. First published 1999.

Dell'Orso, Silvia. 2009. *Musei e territorio: Una scommessa italiana.* Milan: Mondadori Electa.

Graham, Brian, and Peter Howard, eds. 2008. *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity.* Aldershot & Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Guntarik, Olivia, ed. 2010. *Narratives of Community: Museums and Ethnicity.* Edimburgh & New York: MuseumsEtc.

Jones, Ian, Robert R. MacDonald, and Darryl McIntyre, eds. 2008. *City Museums and City Development.* Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

Karp, Ivan, Christine Mullen Kreamer, and Steven D. Lavine, eds. 1992. *Museums and Communities: The Politic of Public Culture.* Washington, DC & London: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. 1998. *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage.* Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press.

Maggi, Maurizio. 2009. *Musei alla frontiera: Continuità, divergenza, evoluzione nei territori della cultura.* Milan: Jaca Book.

Walsh, Kevin. 1992. *The Representation of the Past: Museums and Heritage in the Post-modern World.* London & New York: Routledge.

Watson, Sheila, ed. 2007. *Museums and their Communities.* London & New York: Routledge.

→ MUSEUMS AND THEIR SOCIAL COMMITMENTS

Bailey, Dina, et al. 2011. *Museums of Ideas: Commitment and Conflict.* Edimburgh & New York: MuseumsEtc.

Black, Graham. 2011. *Transforming Museums in the 21st Century.* London & New York: Routledge.

Bodo, Simona, ed. 2000. *Il museo relazionale: Riflessioni ed esperienze europee.* Turin: Edizioni Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli.

Falk, John H., Lynn D. Dierking, and Susan Foutz, eds. 2007. *In Principle, in Practice: Museums as Learning Institutions.* Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

Falk, John H. 2009. *Identity and The Museum Visitor Experience.* Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Gesser, Susanne, Martin Hanschin, Angela Jannelli, and Sibylle Lichtensteiger, eds. 2012. *Das partizipative Museum: Zwischen Teilhabe und User Generated Content.* Bielefeld: Transcript.

Golding, Viv. 2009. *Learning at the Museum Frontiers: Identity, Race and Power.* Farnham & London: Ashgate.

Hein, George E. 1998. *Learning in the Museum*. London & New York: Routledge.

Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean, ed. 2007.*Museums and Education: Purpose, Pedagogy, Performance*. London & New York: Routledge.-

John, Hartmut, and Jutta Thinesse-Demel, eds. 2004. *Lernort Museum – neu verortet! Ressourcen für soziale Integration und individuelle Entwicklung. Ein europäisches Praxishandbuch*. Bielefeld: Transcript.

Lang, Caroline, John Reeve, and Vicky Woollard, eds. 2006. *The Responsive Museum: Working with Audiences in the Twenty-First Century*. Aldershot & Burlington,VT: Ashgate.

Le Marec, Joëlle. 2007. *Publics et musées: La confiance éprouvée*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Marstine, Janet C., ed. 2011. *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics: Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-First Century Museum*. London & New York: Routledge.

Pecci, Anna Maria. 2009. *Patrimoni in migrazione: Accessibilità, partecipazione, mediazione nei musei*. Milan: Franco Angeli.

Sandell, Richard, ed. 2002. *Museums, Society, Inequality*. London & New York: Routledge.

———. 2007. *Museums, Prejudice and the Reframing of Difference*. London & New York: Routledge.

Sandell, Richard, and Eithne Nightingale, eds. 2012. *Museums, Equality and Social Justice*. London & New York: Routledge.

Silverman, Lois H. 2009. *The Social Work of Museums*. London & New York: Routledge.

→ **EXHIBITIONS AND DISPLAYS**

Bal, Mieke. 1996. *Double Exposures: Subject of Cultural Analysis*. London & New York: Routledge.

Barker, Emma, ed. 1999. *Contemporary Cultures of Display*. New Haven, CT & London: Yale University Press-The Open University.

Basso Peressut, Luca. 1998. *Musei per la scienza: Spazi e luoghi dell'esporre scientifico e tecnico/Science Museums: Spaces of Scientific and Technical Exhibition*. Milan: Lybra Immagine.

Davallon, Jean. 2000. *L'exposition à l'oeuvre*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Dernie, David. 2006. *Exhibition Design*. London: Laurence King.

González, Jennifer A. 2008. *Subject to Display: Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art*. Cambridge, MA & London: MIT Press.

Greenberg, Reesa, Bruce W. Ferguson, and Sandy Nairne, eds. 1996. *Thinking About Exhibitions*. London & New York: Routledge

Guelton, Bernard. 1998. *L'exposition: Interprétation et reinterpretation*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Hanak-Lettner, Werner. 2010. *Die Ausstellung als Drama: Wie das Museum aus dem Theater entstand.* Bielefeld: Transcript.

Jeudy, Henri-Pierre, ed. 1995. *Exposer/Exhiber.* Paris: Éditions de La Villette.

Macdonald, Sharon, ed. 1998. *The Politics of Display: Museums, Science, Culture.* London & New York: Routledge.

Macdonald, Sharon, and Paul Basu, eds. 2007. *Exhibition Experiments.* Malden, MA & Oxford: Blackwell.

Macleod, Suzanne, Laura Hourston, and Jonathan Hale, eds. 2012. *Museum Making: Narratives, Architectures, Exhibitions.* London & New York: Routledge.

Newhouse, Victoria. 2005. *Art and the Power of Placement.* New York: Monacelli Press.

Ruggieri Tricoli, Maria Clara. 2000. *I fantasmi e le cose: La messa in scena della comunicazione museale.* Milan: Lybra Immagine.

Vinçon, René. 1999. *Artifices d'exposition.* Paris: L'Harmattan.

→ MUSEUM ARCHITECTURE

Basso Peressut, Luca. 1999. *Musées: Architectures 1990–2000.* Paris: Actes Sud.

———. 2005. *Il Museo Moderno: Architettura e museografia da Auguste Perret a Louis I. Kahn.* Milan: Lybra Immagine.

Ciorra, Pippo, and Donata Tchou, eds. 2006. *Museums Next Generation/ Il futuro dei musei.* Milan: Electa.

Foulon, Pierre-Jean, ed. 2001. *Architecture et musée: Actes du colloque organise au Musée royal de Marienmont.* Tournai: La Renaissance du Livre.

Giebelhausen, Michaela, ed. 2003. *The Architecture of the Museum: Symbolic Structures, Urban Contexts.* Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press.

Köb, Edelbert, ed. 2000. *Museum Architecture: Texts and Projects by Artists/Museumsarchitektur. Texte und Projekte von Künstlern.* Cologne: Kunsthaus Bregenz-Walther König.

MacLeod, Suzanne, ed. 2005. *Reshaping Museum Space: Architecture, Design, Exhibitions.* London & New York: Routledge.

Maier-Solgk, Frank. 2008. *Neue Museen in Europa: Kultorte für das 21. Jahrhundert.* Munich: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt.

Magnago Lampugnani, Vittorio, and Angeli Sachs, eds. 1999. *Museums for a New Millennium: Concepts, Projects, Buildings.* Munich: Prestel.

Mcclellan, Andrew. 2008. *The Art Museum from Boullée to Bilbao.* Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press.

Marotta, Antonello. 2010. *Contemporary Museums.* Milan: Skira.

Newhouse, Victoria. 2007. *Towards a New Museum*. New York: Monacelli Press.

Puhan-Schulz, Franziska. 2005. *Museen und Stadtimagebildung: Amsterdam–Frankfurt/Main–Prag: Ein Vergleich*. Bielefeld: Transcript.

Suma, Stefania. 2007. *Musées 2: Architectures 2000–2007*. Paris: Actes Sud.

Van Uffelen, Chris. 2011. *Contemporary Museums: Architecture, History, Collections*. Salenstein: Braun Publishing.

→ **ICT, VIRTUALITY, NEW MEDIA IN MUSEUMS**

Antinucci, Francesco. 2008. *Comunicare nel museo*. Rome & Bari: Laterza.

Dziekian, Vince. 2011. *Virtuality and the Art of Exhibition: Curatorial Design for the Multimedial Museum*. Bristol, Wilmington, NC & Toronto: Intellect Books.

Kalay, Yehuda E., Thomas Kvan, and Janice Affleck, eds. 2007. *New Heritage: New Media and Cultural Heritage*. London & New York: Routledge.

Katz, James E., Wayne LaBar, and Ellen Lynch, eds. 2011. C*reativity and Technology: Social Media, Mobiles and Museums*. Edimburgh & New York: MuseumsEtc.

Parry, Ross. 2007. *Recoding the Museum: Digital Heritage and the Technologies of Change*. London & New York: Routledge.

Parry, Ross, ed. 2010. *Museums in a Digital Age*. London & New York: Routledge.

Tallon, Loïc, and Kevin Walker, eds. 2008. *Digital Technologies and the Museum Experience: Handheld Guides and Other Media*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

→ **MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES PARTNERSHIP**

Bierbaum, Esther Green. 1994. *Museum Librarianship*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland.

Carr, David. 2006. *A Place not a Place: Reflections and Possibility in Museums and Libraries*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

Carr, David. 2011. *Open Conversations: Public Learning in Libraries and Museums*. Santa Barbara, CA & Denver, CO & Oxford: ABC-CLIO.

Dilevko, Juris, and Lisa Gottlieb. 2004. *The Evolution of Library and Museum Partnerships: Historical Antecedents, Contemporary Manifestations and Future Directions*. Westport, CT & London: Libraries Unlimited Inc.

MeLa Consortium

MeLa Consortium

POLIMI
Politecnico di Milano, Italy
*Dipartimento di Progettazione
dell'Architettura (DPA)
Dipartimento Industrial Design, Arte,
Comunicazione e Moda (INDACO)
www.polimi.it*

Politecnico di Milano is ranked as one of the most outstanding European Universities in Engineering, Architecture and Industrial Design.

The Department of Architectural Design (DPA) focuses on research and teaching activities related to policy and management of the built environment in the fields of architectural design and urban development, historical and critical analysis of the context, conservation and valorization of cultural heritage. The activity of DPA research group "New Museography" is mainly aimed at researching and developing theoretic and design proposals in order to investigate the new roles of Museum Institutions.

Born in 2002, INDACO is the first Italian Department dedicated to Industrial Design, Arts, Communication, and Fashion; it focuses on research and education activities devoted to critical and theoretical elaborations, and on operational ex-

perimentations within the field of design sciences. INDACO research unit "Design for Cultural Heritage" (DeCH) is aimed at developing design strategies and methodologies for the exploitation and the enhancement of Cultural Heritage.

DPA
Luca Basso Peressut, *MeLa Project Coordinator & RF06 Leader*
Gennaro Postiglione, *MeLa Technical Manager*
Imma Forino
Marco Borsotti
Mariella Brenna
Francesca Lanz
Stephanie Carminati
Anna Chiara Cimoli
Elena Montanari
Camilla Pagani
Margherita Parati
Clelia Pozzi
Claudia Raimondi

INDACO
Raffaella Trocchianesi
Eleonora Lupo
Rita Capurro
Paola Cordera
Lucia Parrino
Davide Spallazzo
Sara Radice

CIID
Copenhagen Institute of Interaction Design, Denmark
ciid.dk

The Copenhagen Institute of Interaction Design is an integrated structure focused on the area of interaction and service design. The institute, that is a recognized leader in the field, incorporates education, research, and consultancy activities. By encouraging the development of a cross-disciplinary and multi-cultural environment, CIID works on new research models that interface with both academia and industry, in order to elaborate innovative products, services, and technology.

The School and Research Lab at CIID provides a platform for a strong post graduate program and innovative research projects. The consultancy is focused on the development of real-world ideas, and on the enhancement of projects with a wide range of international and domestic clients. In these years CIID has built lasting relations with significant private and public partners within ICT, Health Care, Public Administrations and Cultural Institutions.

Jamie Allen, *RF05 Leader*
Simona Maschi
Jakob Bak
David Gauthier

CNR
Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Italy
Istituto di Tecnologie Industriali e Automazione (ITIA)
www.cnr.it

The National Research Council is a public organization focused on the promotion, diffusion and improvement of research activities in the main sectors of knowledge growth and on their application. The Institute for Industrial Technologies and Automation (ITIA) is an applied centre for research and development, focused on such themes as machine tools, production systems for different sectors, as well as Virtual and Augmented Reality application for products, processes and Factory Design. According to ManuFuturing paradigm, ITIA works on a new concept of Factory, applying new technologies on the product life cycle through the development of a Digital and Virtual Factory. In this perspective ITIA started applying the Virtual Factory on a single machine or single products, bringing Virtual and Mixed Reality to the various production phases applicable for small and medium enterprises.

ITIA, that has managed the largest Growth Project within the EU 5th Framework Programme (EUROShoE), developed a long experience in managing national and international consortiums.

Marco Sacco, *MeLa Project Manager*
Claudia Redaelli

GU
University of Glasgow, United Kingdom
History of Art, School of Culture and Creative Arts (HOA)
www.gla.ac.uk

The University of Glasgow is one of United Kingdom oldest Universities, ranked in the world top 100 Universities. Member of the Russell Group, it is a major internationally renowned research hub, with an annual research income in the UK's top ten earners. It also achieved outstanding results in the 2008 UK Research Assessment Exercise, with the majority of research being internationally recognised.

In particular the University of Glasgow is the UK's leading centre for the study of

History of Art. The School of Culture and Creative Arts is focused on continuing and further developing its national and international research profile, enhancing a cluster of art, science and technology, and fostering connections and collaborations with international institutions and projects. The History of Art (HOA) team developed particular strengths in Museum and Art History Studies, management and curation of digital assets, cultural heritage informatics.

Perla Innocenti, *RF03 Leader*
John Richards
Sabine Wieber

MACBA
Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Spain
www.macba.cat

Through its collections, exhibitions and activities program, the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona aims to construct a critical memory of Art of the latter half of the 20th Century, focusing on post-1945 Catalan and Spanish production, but also including foreign art. The institution is managed by MACBA Consortium; MACBA Foundation cooperates with the Generalitat of Catalonia, Barcelona City Council and the Spanish Ministry of Culture.

MACBA achieved an international prestige through a continuous research work and an energetic contribution in the expansion of international museum networks, by developing relations with other institutions and by co-producing exhibitions. As a museum and a study centre, MACBA developed a leading role in the production of knowledge by enhancing its own style in the presentation of contemporary art, offering a high-quality exhibition program, producing publications and conceptual contributions, and providing educational services.

Bartomeu Marí
Mela Dávila Freire
Pamela Sepúlveda
Marta Vega
Maite Muñoz
Eric Jiménez

MNHN
Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, France
Musée de l'Homme, Department "Homme, nature, société" (DHNS)
www.mnhn.fr

The Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, founded in 1793, is a governmental institution developing research, collections, expertise, and education in the fields of Natural History and Human Sciences. The institution, that includes several scientific galleries situated in Paris and all over France, exercises a major patrimonial function, by acquiring, conserving, restoring, managing, and exhibiting important national collections (living organisms, inert elements, databases).

Musée de l'Homme is an internationally exhibition and research centre, created in the occasion of the Universal Exhibition in 1937. Managed under the authority of various ministries and grouping several entities from the research centres, this institution is dedicated to the natural and cultural history of Humanity in its environment. In particular the Homme, Nature, Société Department aims to investigate the unity and diversity of man and his relationship with nature over time and space, from a biological, cultural, and social point of view.

Michel Van Praët

Fabienne Galangau Quérat
Laurence Isnard
Sarah Gamaire

RCA
The Royal College of Art, United Kingdom
Department of Curating Contemporary Art (CCA)
www.rca.ac.uk

The Royal College of Art is the only wholly postgraduate University of Art and Design in the world. Through teaching and research activities, as well as fruitful collaborations with industry and commerce, the institution is focused on the advancement of learning, knowledge, and professional competence particularly in the fields of fine arts, in the enhancement of principles and practice of art and design, in the development of their relation to industrial, commercial, and social processes.

Co-funded by Arts Council England and the Royal College of Art, the Curating Contemporary Art Department (CCA) established the first postgraduate programme in Britain to specialize in curatorial practice related to contemporary art, and to develop an explicitly international perspective on its role in today's museums and galleries, providing a professional preparation for curators and arts administrators, supported by critical studies in contemporary curatorial practice, history of aesthetics and recent theory and history of art after modernism.

Mark Nash, *RF04 Leader*
Clare Carolin
Jean Fisher
Deianira Ganga
Ros Grey
Kit Hammonds
Jan-Erik Lundström
Eszter Steierhoffer

UNEW
Newcastle University, United Kingdom
The International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies (ICCHS)
www.ncl.ac.uk

Newcastle University is a research institution with a reputation for academic excellence, focusing on the creation and the dissemination of knowledge, developing research and teaching activities, as well as engagement in national and international strategic initiatives. It is ranked among the top 20 higher education institutions in the UK. UNEW, which has one of the largest European Union research portfolios, is also a member of the Russell Group, comprising the top twenty research institutions in the UK. In order to promote interdisciplinary research, the University has established a range of internationally renowned research institutes.

The ICCHS is a leading academic centre for research and teaching in museum, gallery and heritage studies, fostering improved professional practice within the sector on national and international levels, and enhancing the understanding of museums, galleries, and cultural and natural heritage organisation.

Christopher Whitehead, *RF01 Leader*
Rhiannon Mason
Susannah Eckersley
Victoria Patton

UNO
Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale," Italy
Dipartimento di Scienze Umane e Sociali (DSUS)
www.iuo.it

"L'Orientale" is the oldest school of Sinology and Oriental Studies in Europe, with a strong tradition in language, cul-

tural and social studies, related to Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. Since its very beginning, in 1732, it has set itself up as a centre for learning and researching through a comparative and intercultural analysis.

The Department of Human and Social Sciences (DSUS) provides the context for contemporary interdisciplinary and intercultural studies, in between a developing tradition in cultural and postcolonial studies focused on questions of migration, memory and the mutation of social and cultural formations. Working with literary, audio-visual and musical languages, critical attention has been devoted to understand the political and poetical affects of such languages in configuring cultural memories, the construction of the historical archive, and the subsequent institutional practices that sustain modalities of historical identification and cultural belonging.

Iain Chambers, *RF02 Leader*
Lidia Curti
Marina De Chiara
Tiziana Terranova
Alessandra De Angelis
Beatrice Ferrara
Giulia Grechi
Mariangela Orabona

Illustration Credits

MUSEUMS
IN AN AGE OF MIGRATIONS
QUESTIONS, CHALLENGES, PERSPECTIVES

This volume collects a series of essays that offer a starting point for the European project *Me–La-European Museums in an age of migrations,* an interdisciplinary research that reflects on the role of museums and heritage in relation to the contemporary global and multicultural world. International scholars and researchers interrogate themselves on issues of history, memory, identity and citizenship, and explore their effects on the organization, functioning, communication strategies, exhibition design and architecture of museums.

With contributions by: Jamie Allen, Kirsti Andersen, Peter Aronsson, Luca Basso Peressut, Iain Chambers, Mela Dávila Freire, Gordon J. Fyfe, David Gauthier, Perla Innocenti, Francesca Lanz, Rhiannon Mason, Mark Nash, Massimo Negri, Giovanni Pinna, Gennaro Postiglione, Sreten Ugričić, Michel Van Praët, and Chris Whitehead.

EDITORS
Luca Basso Peressut, Architect, PhD, is Full Professor in Interior Architecture, Exhibition Design and Museography at the Politecnico di Milano. He is MeLa Project Coordinator.

Clelia Pozzi, Architect, MDesS in History and Philosophy of Design from Harvard Graduate School of Design, is Research Associate at the Politecnico di Milano.

COVER IMAGE — *The Geffen Temporary at MoCA, Los Angeles. "Art in the Streets" exhibition, 2011.*

MeLa–European Museums in an age of migrations