

The Memory of the Sea

Objects Migrating within the Mediterranean

an exhibition and a workshop curated by Anna Chiara Cimoli



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photo Mattia Insolera

1-15 December 2012

Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico "Luigi Pigorini"

Piazza G. Marconi, 14 - 00144 Roma EUR

within the framework of the exhibition **[S]oggetti migranti**

(READ-ME 2, Réseau européen des Associations de Diasporas & Musées d'Ethnographie Project)

1st December 2012, 11 a.m.

« **Around the Sea Memory Museum** »

Workshop with Alessandro Brasile and Gabriele Del Grande

Moderator: Anna Chiara Cimoli

The Memory of the Sea. Objects Migrating within the Mediterranean is a project consisting of an exhibition and a workshop.

While in Europe many migration museums are being born every year, there are no migration museums either in Maghreb, or along the Asiatic coast of the Mediterranean.

The people who leave from these countries have very little with them. Those few poor things are gathered and carried by the sea current. That's how the Sea Memory Museum's collection (Zarzis, Tunisia) was born: outside of the canonic museums' circle, but deeply rooted in the logic of *conservation, research, communication and exhibition* that lies at the basis of every museum.

The museum is located in the private garden of Mohsen Lihidheb, who defines himself an "eco-artist", and who has been walking on the seashore for many years, collecting and rescuing whatever he finds there: fish skeletons, pieces of clothing, bottles, shoes. And, after a long wait, even the corpse of a migrant. Mohsen called him "Mamadou", buried him, and hasn't been able to stop thinking about him, as journalist Gabriele Del Grande recalls in his book *Mamadou va a morire*.

Over the years, Mohsen's painstaking efforts have grasped the historic and epic dimension of migration, starting from objects which just don't want to leave Africa. His museum tells this story to the African people, in Africa, which makes it an important collection not only for its material and artistic value. In a divided, conflicting Mediterranean, who will tell the story of the migrants? And how?

The museum is described in the photographs taken by Alessandro Brasile and Mattia Insolera for the exhibition **The Memory of the Sea. Objects migrating within the Mediterranean** (1-15 December 2012). On the occasion of the exhibition, the short film *Sacrées bouteilles (Holy bottles)*, by Tunisian director Fitouri Belhiba, will be shown as well.

On 1st December, at 11 p.m., the workshop **Around the Sea Memory Museum** will offer visitors the opportunity to listen to people talking about the museum from different points of view.

Along with **Anna Chiara Cimoli**, photographer **Alessandro Brasile** and journalist **Gabriele Del Grande** will discuss the theme of "representing migrations", or, in other words, the "aesthetic of borders": the fluid, material or imagined border between Africa and Europe, described, analyzed, sung by rap music, portrayed in photos taken using cell phones, disseminated thanks to the web. A vast, immaterial "museum".

This project ensued from the Research Project MeLa - European Museums in an age of migrations, funded within the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (SSH-2010-5.2.2) under Grant Agreement n° 266757.

www.mela-project.eu

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