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During the 1992 General Conference of ICOM in Quebec the International Committee for Museology organised six seminars:

1. assessment of the scientific work of the committee during the past 15 years with regard to the theme of the General Conference, focusing on the social role of museums and the problem of defining the museum phenomenon;
2. analysis of the situation of museums and museology in Central and East Europe;
3. discussion about the 'language of exhibitions' and the role of museums as main determining factor in social changes, in particular with regard to the environment, in connection with a visit to the Musée de la Civilisation;
4. assessment of the contribution of 'new museology' to the development of museology as a scientific discipline (joint session with MINOM);
5. assessment of the concept of theory in connection with museology and the theory-practice dichotomy in current museum studies programmes (joint session with ICTOP);
6. survey of current museological research.

The topics that were selected for the six sessions intended to clarify the profile of the committee, and provided a frame work to assess the 'state of the art'. Purpose of the first session was to summarize the results of ICOFOM conferences as our contribution to the main theme of the General Conference of ICOM. The theme of the General Conference echoes the theme of ICOFOM's 1987 symposium (Espoo, Finland). The seminar on Central and East Europe reflects the traditional ties between ICOFOM and the former socialist countries. Even though the actual number of members from this part of the world was small, their influence was substantial. The third seminar refers to the discussions we had in Switzerland during our 1991 conference of 'The language of exhibitions'. The relationship between museum/museology and the environment was discussed during our 1990 conference in Zambia.

Although the 'new museology' movement has found its own institutional framework in the International Movement of a New Museology (MINOM) in 1985, ICOFOM has always sympathized with this movement. Special meetings on ecomuseums were organized in connection with the Leiden 1984 and Zagreb 1985 conferences. The seminar on 'Theory and methodology of New Museology' aimed at an analysis of the characteristics of this movement. Finally, the fifth seminar of the 1992 conference brings in mind the first joint ICOFOM-ICTOP meeting in 1983 (London). The theme is almost identical. The number of museums studies programmes has increased dramatically; museology has gained acceptance as academic discipline. What is the connection between both? How 'scientific' are museum studies programmes?

The papers presented at the joint ICOFOM-ICTOP meeting will be published by ICTOP. The papers presented at the seminar 'Museums under revolutionary change. Museums and
museology in Central and East Europe' will be published separately. The discussion on 'new museology' will be continued at the 1995 ICOFOM meeting in Stavanger (Norway).

The present volume of *ICOFOM Study Series* contains papers presented in connection with the seminar on museological research. In addition some papers presented at the opening session are included. Following the tradition, most of the papers are printed as they were received.

Amsterdam, April 1995

Peter van Mensch
ICOFOM AND MUSEUM BOUNDARIES

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It is naive to assume that museums in the past ever had precisely defined boundaries or scope. Certainly, that was not the case. Yet, in the past the theoreticians conceived some simplistic models. Once such conceptual models were formulated, they continued their stranglehold on the imagination of all concerned both inside and outside museum profession. Strangely, those early museum models became formulae to be repeated indefinitely. They should have served only as starting points for new experiments. Though the older models outlived their utility they were not discarded and replaced. The fault was not of the models but with those who decided to depend on them without critical review. The users were myopic in their vision of museum boundaries. In the absence of a dependable system of evaluation, lacunae in museum services were hidden from public gaze. But the limitations of museums based on traditional models severely reduced their effectiveness as interpreters of cultural and natural heritage. Unfortunately, the society has been showing extremely liberal consideration to many museums by allowing them to exist without demonstrating the fullest use of their own potentialities. The story is different where some museums have to struggle hard and continuously to survive as viable institutions. It is a tight-rope walk for museums to earn public support without giving up their basic commitments to heritage. ICOFOM has rendered significant service to museum profession by provoking candid and critical discussions on all major issues which influence museum decisions of all kinds, directly or indirectly. ICOFOM has succeeded most in pointing out virtues and problems inherent in the traditional concepts and their relevance, or lack of it, in the changing circumstances. ICOFOM deserves credit for the qualitative changes in museum philosophy leading to programmatic improvements though these are not uniformly apparent in different situations or at different levels.

The pertinent issue is the fallacy in assuming that museums are almost alike. The facts speak otherwise. There are less commonalities and more diversity. This is not only in the nature of collections, buildings, personnel, strategies of exhibitions, education, scope for research, etc. But the real diversity, in my opinion, is in the potentiality of museums in the matter of optimum use of their own unique resources and situational advantages.
"Potentiality" is a vague term. The same can be said about "Optimization of available opportunities". The strengths and limitations of these potentialities and opportunities are bound to remain uncertain or indeterminate. Yet, in the context of ICOM'92, conference, the "Potentiality" becomes a Key-concept. The theme of the conference is "Museums: Rethinking the Boundaries?". The so-called boundaries, implied in the conference theme have no reality except in the realm of potentialities. We may examine here some of the museum potentialities along with their conditionals along with their conditionalities for actualization.

One very urgent way of redefining museum boundaries is to contrast the concept of "Majority Museums" from that of "Minority Museums". Here we do not refer to only religious minorities. World is witnessing a keen struggl between the forces of "Majoritism" and the responses of the hundreds of smaller groups of people who take pride in their own identities. It must be understood clearly that this duel between the vastly larger groups and the smaller groups is a continuous phenomenon. Individuals perish in isolation when the circumstances are fatally dangerous to their survival. Hence groups get formed. They tend to self-perpetuate. In the course of time, these smaller groups evolve many mechanisms to distinguish themselves from outsiders. That is the original justification for identity or identity-enforcing heritage. Yet, there is the opposite tendency to overpower outside groups and bend them as much and as long as possible. Out of these attacks is born "Majoritism", a philosophy which is intolerant of alien groups as different from majority groups. Though geographical factors, language, religion are some factors which accelerate groups formation, undoubtedly, they also decide divisions of original groups into subgroups. What is relevant is the fact that "Majoritism" has been a strong force in society; consequently, it is also the uncontested force in the world of museums. If we look around, we see that contents and organization of most of the existing museums reflect the will of majorities. We may call them as majority-museums to suggest that their origin and continuance largely depend on the sweet will of the dominant social group. By corollary, we can call some museums as "Minority-Museums" to refer to those institutions which are committed to identify, collect, preserve and interpret heritage of smaller groups who care to distinguish themselves from others and, particularly from the majority groups. In that sense, all "Community" museums are not necessarily "Minority-Museums" but vice-versa is true.
Majority-Museums are everywhere-yet minority-museums are almost waiting in the wings or sideline to make their appearance on the centre stage. The theme of ICOM-92 conference can be very meaningfully elaborated by analysing the dynamic balance between the aspirations of both "majority-museums" and "minority museums". As the total world heritage is the focal point of international museum movement, creative use of the services of both majority and minority museums can advance the limits of the potentiality of all museums.

(Minority museums is becoming a distinct possibility.) Establishment of Not because, there is a change of heart of majority communities but because minorities are gaining self confidence. No more they are apologetic about their existence. There are new power equations among competing rival dominating majority communities in politics which seek support of minorities. As a result, we see kaleidoscopic changes in many configurations. Minority groups are testing power, some for the first time. Their leaders are quick in understanding the benefits of maintaining their minority status. A dependable way to ensure permanent minority status is to define identity as clearly as possible and to safeguard it at any cost.

In this context, the role of museums has almost unlimited boundaries. It will be even tempting to visualize that museums as the custodians and interpreters of the heritage of all groups may get involved in the power struggle of a new kind. Museums as the guardians of both material and non-material cultural heritage will have before them both new challenges and new risks. In their future work, if museums continue to own allegiance only to the majorities, then they will be seen as betraying the cause of total human patrimony. If minorities fail to find museums as their allies in identity-enforcement, then golden opportunities will be forever lost to encourage minority groups to identify their culture by themselves. If minorities will feel frustrated in their relationship with museums, their prejudice against museums will grow. Minorities expect justice and fair-play. Museums should not antagonize smaller groups. This is a very valid reason to push further the existing or conventional boundaries of museum service till all minorities can repose their trust in museums.

The story of formation of groups in India in terms of castes is very long. The anthropological interpretation of what has been happening during the last two thousand years, if not more, points at the dynamics of formation of new groups and sub-groups for a variety of reasons. The long struggle for power led to the acceptance of hierarchy and survival of the weaker groups on the condition of their acceptance of minority status at lower levels. Even external dangers or subjugation by foreign rulers made no difference to this hierarchical structure.
Centuries after centuries the groups coexisted and went on strengthening their identities by evolving unique cultural characteristics. No group had a fear of getting wiped out even though it had to live as minority provided it accepted that status as a fact of life. For this reason, the present Indian situation provides wonderful opportunity to study how the limits of the conventional majority-dominated museums will not be tolerated forever. Minority groups are waking up to assert, their political and cultural rights. They want to control their own destiny. In that direction, knowledge of who they were, what was their real legacy is seen as a step in gaining self-respect. The minority groups will be alienated if museums disappoint them in their vigorous search for roots. ICOFOM may examine the says in which museology usable by majority groups may also be serviceable to the minority groups. This demonstration is not easy because it does not involve only the levels of techniques or organization. This involves the process of ideation, conceptualization and even value judgements. Minority groups are quite likely to discover that majority-dominated museums have committed so many acts of omissions and commissions to be able to project a distorted account of the past and even of present. Minorities are most likely to see that majority-dominated museums have circumscribed the limits of what newly awakened groups can get out of the institutional services.

ICOFOM may also look into the basic relationship between the survival of the hierarchical structure of human groups and the creation of non-material cultural heritage in terms of ideas, myths, philosophy, world-views and their artistic expressions for justification of the hierarchy. Such has been the power of this non-physical or non-material culture that the process of group and sub-group formation is going on for centuries and still continues as if by common consent. Therefore, when minority groups will look to museums in order to know how they will be usable in their own search for identities, they should not be trapped within limitations imposed on the systems by majority groups in their own favour. Many alternative choices should be available to the new groups for using museums. Minority groups will have alternative visions and perspectives to use museums as places for self discovery. The story told in the majority-dominated museums may not encourage minority groups to involve themselves in museums as they are. Minority-friendly museums or museum-projects will alone win their confidence and patronage. The ways in which material and non-material culture of minority groups are often projected are unsympathetic to those communities. Unless revolutionary changes take place, museums will be loaded against the groups which were victims of long dominations.
In countries where colonial foreign powers were hated for destroying local pride in their own national heritage, we are disappointed to see a new but subtle colonial attitude towards lowly groups. The colonial models of museums were responsible for strengthening foreign powers at the cost of natives. Now, the majority-dominated museums are also working in favour only of dominating classes, at the expense of lowly groups. The solution lies in ensuring justice to all groups in their search for true knowledge of themselves, by pushing the limits of potentialities of museums. Both majority and minority groups can evolve, complementary uses of museums to be able to win the minorities and minimize chances of their estrangement. A well conceived strategy of action is necessary, some of the following suggestions may help.

3) There is a special need to demonstrate that available museum models are not the only conceivable models and even the most favoured or popular museum models are not universally acceptable any more. Experiments in new museology have succeeded. Therefore, minority groups can explore limitless alternative ways to suit their aspirations. To encourage minority groups to participate in such experiments, special projects can be planned under the aegis of sympathetic museums. Out of such experiments, minority groups can gain confidence in using museums to serve their own objectives, on their own terms.

2) The philosophy and the "worldview" which kept all Indian groups and subgroups together as parts of a society in the past centuries may not continue to succeed in future. They might be seen as "instruments of victimization" by some groups, and as "great cultural heritage" by others. Consequently, all expressions of the ancient heritage may also be interpreted in aggressively contrasting opposite ways. To accommodate such conflicting approaches, the museums will have to expand their limits in very positive ways. Only national perspective of what happened in the past will ensure reconciliation of groups holding divergent view.

3) Minorities will not succeed if they depend solely on confrontation with majority groups for boosting their own integrity. The wrongs perpetrated in the past cannot be compensated by new animosities. A positive alternative is an in-depth search for those very class characteristics and cultural achievements which helped in maintaining separate identity of the groups, for a very long time.

Majority groups can take legitimate pride in the demonstration to the world at large that minority cultures could thrive side by side because of their philosophy of encouragement to plurality.
5) An element of hostility appears to be an inevitable feature of class consciousness of minority. Hence minority museum will differ markedly from a normal community museum or eco-museum. The degree of hostility towards outsiders is understandable. But it should not degenerate into intemperate abuse, calumny and willful distortion of the story of society as such. There should be a respect for ICOM code for professional conduct. Facts should not be suppressed or evidence is not manipulated even if goals are noble. The imagined or real indignities suffered by minorities may fan the fire of intergroup hatred. Can minority museums provide opportunities for sublimating experiences to turn them into causes for positive community-oriented actions?

6) Minorities appear to carry a perpetual burden of living as minorities amidst majorities. Subgroups even of minorities react differently to such situation some preferring to accept that life as misfortune while others nurturing permanent hatred towards outside groups. All this has repercussions on the over all attitude to museum systems. Museums can assist by convincing minority groups and sub groups that they also have contributed in nation building and they have acquired special skills which others might not have so that being a minority is not always a disadvantage. In fact, it is possible to show many distinct favourable features of minority life like close links among members, better integration, cohesion, mastery/special skills, etc.

7) Minorities want to be treated as human beings on equal terms and to be shown dignity and respect. In India, the national leaders realized these needs and decided against the so-called process of assimilation of minorities in mainstream of national life. That may degenerate, in practice, into persuading the minority groups to shed their cultural characteristics. A healthy approach to integration is necessary. Integration is not assimilation. Integration is not homogeneity. It is an organisation so that groups try to achieve common objectives. Hence in the process of attaining integration groups can maintain their own identities. An identity is the characteristic trait of a group which provides separate existence to it. This identity depends on many ethnic and historical factors. The basic trait of identity is its continuity. Museums have complex problems to face in facilitating the process of integration of small groups.
8) Even the so-called majority groups have their problems of identity. In fact, majority communities are confederations of smaller subgroups with their own cultural traits. The subtle and distinct identities of the subgroups of the majority communities are under growing threat owing to industrialization, urbanization and break up of joint families. There is an imminent danger to the culture of those subgroups of the majority communities. It is a matter of time. In fact, the danger is very much more real than the danger faced by minority groups. Majority subgroups remain under illusion that their culture is dominant and will continue to be so. But time is a great leveller.

Museum boundaries will have to go on expanding in those directions in which groups of people wish to move in search of their identities. ICOFOM and its members have done well in the past in anticipating new challenges before the museum profession. I hope they will willingly accept the task of analysing new forms which museums will have to assume in order to widen their horizons for serving the new public which is composed of various majority and minority groups and subgroups each may have its own special reasons to use museums.
Dans notre comité nous avons du musée une définition globalisante: l'instrument qui révèle (et exprime) les rapports de l'homme à la réalité. C'est dans ce contexte que je m'inscris, et, laissant à d'autres le soin de développer les aspects déontologiques, je vais m'attacher à un aspect plus épistémologique, dans le concret muséographique et dans l'histoire, qui couvre à proprement parler les limites physiques du musée.

En effet, dans l'ordre purement épistémologique, la question des limites du musée se pose de nos jours dans les mêmes termes que ceux du débat qui a opposé, à la fin du 18ème siècle et au début du suivant, l'amateur d'art Antoine Quatremère de Quincy à nombre de ses contemporains - parmi lesquels, cible privilégiée, Alexandre Lenoir, qui avait pourtant créé le Musée des Monuments français en recueillant et en sauvegardant les vestiges des excès de la Révolution de 1789, et dont la conception, en fait, était très proche de la sienne. Les plus nombreux revendiquaient l'existence du musée pour l'étude des œuvres d'art, l'instruction et l'expression d'idées et justifiaient l'enlèvement d'Italie, de Hollande ou d'ailleurs des chefs-d'œuvres de l'Antiquité, de la Renaissance ou des temps modernes.

A ces derniers, Quatremère opposait en 1796, dans ses Lettres à Miranda, que Rome dans sa totalité était un musée, que l'Italie était un musée, qu'il était préférable de se déplacer pour voir les vestiges antiques dans leur cadre d'origine, et avec tout ce que l'histoire et l'évolution de la société avait pu leur apporter, que d'arracher ces vestiges à l'Italie pour les transporter à Paris. Et plus tard il précisera que "Ne nous dites plus que les ouvrages de l'art se conservent dans ces dépôts. Oui, vous y en avez transporté la matière; mais avez-vous pu transporter avec eux ce cortège de sensations tendres, profondes, mélancoliques, sublimes ou touchantes, qui les environnait. [...] Déplacer tous les monuments, en recueillir ainsi les fragments décomposés, en classer méthodiquement les débris, et faire d'une telle réunion un cours pratique de chronologie moderne; c'est de son vivant assister à ses funérailles; c'est tuer l'Art pour en faire l'histoire, ce n'est point en faire l'histoire mais l'épitaphe. [...] Aussi le véritable amour de l'antiquité vous dit de séparer, le moins possible, ses véritables débris, des lieux, des circonstances et de l'ensemble d'accessoires avec lesquels ils sont en rapport." Antoine Quatremère de Quincy, Considération morales sur la destination des ouvrages de l'Art, Paris, 1815, pp.57-58 et 87)

Aux uns et aux autres Quatremère opposait, comme le fera plus près de nous Paul Valéry, à la fois le manque d'intérêt de regarder des œuvres hors de leur contexte d'origine et la difficulté de bien voir dans une salle de musée des œuvres qui s'entremêlent les unes les autres au regard. "Toute idée de relation se perd dans cet unisson. S'intertwine arrive une sorte d'indifférence pour le beau, l'organe usé ne reçoit plus que des impressions faibles, qui laissent distinguer à peine le bon du médiocre." (id.loc., p.44)

Cette critique est donc fondamentale puisqu'elle s'en prend à l'essence même du musée. En effet, la démarche du musée étant de "séparer" les muséalia de la réalité vivante afin de les mieux étudier et les mieux exposer, la question est de savoir ce qu'il sépare, ce qu'il isole, et la proportion de ce qu'il transfert par rapport à ce qu'il laisse sur place. Ce sont là ses limites principales. La critique n'admet que deux réponses:
1) - ou bien le musée, après avoir fait l'inventaire de ses limites, essaie au maximum de les combler en essayant de reconstituer à l'intérieur de ses murs ce qu'il a laissé à l'extérieur;

2) - ou bien il accepte une définition qui lui permette de sortir de ses murs, qui muséalise in situ, et il tend à devenir un écomusée.

1) Avec la première réponse, nous rejoignons Alexandre Lenoir. En effet, si l'on dépasse pour l'instant la position radicale de Quatremerre, fondamentalement opposé à l'idée de musée, il faut bien reconnaître que, pour ce qui concerne l'exposition, avec les moyens de son temps Lenoir répondait aux principales objections de son adversaire.

A la différence de ses contemporains qui organisaient le Musée du Louvre en disposant les œuvres d'abord selon des critères seulement esthétiques, puis en les regroupant par écoles, sur le modèle de la "galleria progressiva" de Düsseldorf (1756) et du Belvédère de Vienne par Christian von Mechal (1784), mais en continuant à les aligner comme des bocaux dans une pharmacie ou une épicérie, ou des spécimens dans un musée d'histoire naturelle, le créateur du Musée des Monuments français, restitua en effet le maximum d'ensembles funéraires qu'il avait pu démonter, il reconstitua d'autres ensembles en regroupant diverses pièces lapidaires de façon à recréer des ambiances, jusqu'à y compris en adaptant l'architecture des salles aux siècles correspondant aux œuvres qu'elles accueillaient. Et, sous le nom de Jardin Elysée, ce musée se poursuivait à l'extérieur, en un premier musée de sculpture de plein air. Avant la lettre il a fait des "scénographies", comme on dit à présent.

Et pourtant, pour Quatremerre, de telles "scénographies" n'étaient pas suffisantes: "Que me disent toutes ces mausolées sans sépulture, ces cénotaphes doublement vides, ces tombeaux que la mort n'anime plus?" (id. loc, p.58).

Rappelons un instant, sans nous arrêter, le succès qu'ont eu, surtout en France, mais aussi ailleurs, les dioramas ou panoramas, à partir de la fin du 18ème siècle. Du fait qu'ils étaient constitués essentiellement de décors artificiels et de substituts ils se situaient, à l'époque, en dehors des musées. Il en reste comme vestiges le Panorama Mesdag à La Haye, d'autres à Waterloo, à Lucerne, à Thun, à Altbüdingen, à Salzburg, à Innsbruck, à Moscou, à Sébastopol, à Volgograd, à Gettysbourg, à Atlanta, et, tout près d'ici, à Sainte-Anne-de Beaupré (1882). On peut en rapprocher, d'un genre un peu différent, le Musée Grévin, à Paris, et Mme Tussaud, à Londres). Ce type d'exposition, même s'il est uniquement factice, s'il n'utilise pas d'objets authentiques - sortis de la réalité, au premier degré - pousse l'évocation de la réalité jusqu'aux limites extrêmes de la fidélité. Les limites du musée reculent avec celles de l'expression muséographique. Mais, à partir du moment où les musées de sciences humaines, comme les musées scientifiques, vont utiliser de plus en plus des modes d'expression comparables à ceux qu'utilisent des entreprises purement commerciales, il va devenir de plus en plus difficile de faire la différence. Et c'est bien ce qui fait présentement le danger de la concurrence des Disneyland avec les établissements dont nous avons la charge.

De nos jours, en effet, on va de plus en plus loin dans la restitution, dans la reconstitution ou dans l'évocation. Rarement, certes, dans les musées de Beaux-arts, si ce n'est en des parties très restreintes de certaines


Mais avec les musées de plein-air, à partir du modèle créé par Artur Hazelius à Stockholm, en 1901, une étape supplémentaire avait été franchie dans la fidélité à la réalité. Des maisons entières étaient transportées, lorsque possible avec tout leur contenu. Et, lorsque la chose était économiquement viable, on y ajoutait des animaux domestiques.

Parallèlement - lesquels ont influencé les autres? - les musées d’histoire naturelle ont fait avancer aussi l’expression muséographique, tout d’abord par la mise en situation des jardins botaniques, par la transformation des ménageries en jardins zoologiques, puis par la création des aquariums. Le premier aquarium semble avoir été celui de Monaco, créé par le Prince Albert 1er en 1905. Quant à la mise en situation dans les musées et jardins existant, elle a consisté à transformer leur présentation purement taxonomique en une présentation écologique, par présentation d’écocystèmes successifs, ce qui s’est fait progressivement à partir de la fin du 19ème siècle mais surtout récemment. Un des exemples les meilleurs et les plus récents est sans doute le Biodôme de Montréal, qui nous présente, dans toute leur richesse et leur vie, à la fois botanique et zoologique, quatre écosystèmes différents (tropical, boréal, marin-fluvial et polaire). Seuls les murs et le toit, lorsqu’il y en a, sont encore une limite au musée d’histoire naturelle - mais aussi les limites imposées par respect de la sensibilité du public, qui exclut par exemple de garder dans le miel les prédateurs.

Et c’est aussi à partir de l’exemple des musées d’histoire naturelle, que les musées d’histoire et les musées d’ethnographie, à partir des années soixante de notre siècle, ont été de plus en plus conduits à exposer, eux aussi, par des unités écologiques comme au Musée des Arts et traditions populaires de Paris, et plus tard au Museum of London, des reconstructions, à défaut de reconstitutions, pour évoquer des moments-témoins de l’histoire et de milieux sociaux ou professionnels. Les scènes de rue initiées dans les musées de l’ouest Canada en sont des dérivés, plus influencées par la scénographie
du théâtre, mais ils peuvent concourir au même résultat de restitution de la réalité manquante.

2) Cependant tous ces modes d’expression restent des succédanés si l’on s’en tient aux critiques que Quatremère de Quincy adressait au musée. Le musée trouve ses limites non pas tellement du fait de son toit et de ses murs (dans les musées de plein air, toits et murs sont déjà des muséalia et des expôts) mais du fait que l’on y transporte, lorsqu’ils n’y sont pas déjà, des éléments de la réalité, arrachés à leur milieu original pour en faire des objets de collection. Ce qui est en cause, cela n’est pas tellement le fait que cette réalité soit transformée en muséalia et en expôts, que leur arrachement à leur contexte géographique, biologique, social, historique, et, malgré le maximum d’exigence scientifique que l’on se donne – la disparition de ce que Quatremère appelait des "accessoires" - et que nous appelions "documentation", avant de comprendre que cette documentation ne pouvait être désolidarisée du témoin que l’on sélectionnait.

Si donc, en un premier temps, le musée a dû sélectionner (comme le collectionneur) afin d’étudier les individus (les spécimens) et de les comparer, l’écologie nous a appris, depuis un certain nombre de décennies, qu’il n’était pas souhaitable de désolidariser les spécimens de leur milieu et qu’il valait mieux les conserver dans leur intégrité pour les étudier sur place que de les fragmenter et les transporter. Les Américains l’ont compris les premiers – peut-être poussés par le problème des amérindiens – en créant, dès 1871, le Parc de Yellowstone et les premières réserves naturelles, mais il a fallu attendre presque un siècle pour que la France commençât à créer ses premiers parcs.

Ce retard, cependant a peut-être été bénéfique puisqu’il a permis de faire avancer parallèlement le concept d’écomusée et de repousser les limites du musée aussi loin qu’on peut le vouloir.

En effet, partant du concept de musée de plein-air et de celui de musée de site, les Américains ont aménagé Colonial Williamsburg (Virginie), entre 1926 et 1930, et Greenfield Village (près de Dearborn, Michigan), à partir de 1929. Pour ces ensembles, très peu de maisons ont été déplacées ou reconstruites. C’est ce modèle qui a été employé dans un musée de plein air comme celui de Marquez, situé dans le cadre de l’écomusée de la Grande Lande, à partir de 1968.

Mais on peut aller plus loin encore dans la conservation in situ. Où se situe en effet la nuance entre Greenfield Village et Georgetown, ancienne banlieue de Washington, protégée dans sa totalité comme un monument historique, si ce n’est dans le fait que, dans le premier cas la vie a été réintroduite au moyen de figurants, alors que, dans le second cas, les habitants ont continué à vivre normalement dans leurs maisons?

Nous devons donc reprendre le problème par l’autre bout et nous demander à partir de quel moment on quitte la vie pour passer dans le monde du musée lorsqu’on décide de muséaliser in situ.

Pour cela, retournerons aux énoncés proposés, dès 1978, par Hugues de Varine à propos des écomusées, dans la Gazette, le bulletin de l’Association des Musées canadiens (n°11, Ottawa, pp.28-40), texte qui a été repris aussi.

"Une fois définie par la communauté et fixées par celle-ci les problèmes à résoudre en vue du développement, ce sont les ressources offertes par le patrimoine de cette communauté qui seront utilisées comme support et matériau de l'action de l'écomusée. Il convient donc d'en faire l'inventaire, d'en prévoir l'usage en fonction de sa disponibilité, de le connaître non seulement pour ce qu'il est mais surtout pour ce qu'il permet d'exprimer, de déterminer concernant la communauté actuelle." Et de Varine évoque les deux cas envisageables:

"- un élément a perdu fonction et signification tant pour la communauté que pour l'individu qui le détient. il devient alors potentiellement musealisable [...]. L'acquisition peut se faire par collecte d'échantillons, appropriation collective, par mise en réserve chez le propriétaire, par enregistrement ou reproduction, par étude scientifique. Ce patrimoine peut être immatériel ou mobilier, naturel ou culturel, permanent, éphémère ou transmissible, de caractère technique, documentaire ou esthétique. Il est le plus souvent composé d'ensembles (de préférence à des éléments isolés). Un paysan, une forêt, un marais, une église ou une maison avec son mobilier, une danse et sa musique, la totalité des usages et des techniques qui conditionnent telle ou telle culture agricole, tout cela appartient au patrimoine."

"- un élément du patrimoine possède une fonction actuelle (fonction d'origine, secondaire, dérivée) ou une signification relevant de la sensibilité individuelle ou collective: il est alors essentiel de le maintenir in situ, aussi longtemps que fonction ou signification subsisteront. L'écomusée ne prendra pas moins cet élément en compte et pourra, le cas échéant, l'utiliser pour une action de développement communautaire, dans le respect de son environnement et de son utilité."

"Un cas particulier est celui du "patrimoine humain" composé à la fois de personnes en qui réside la conscience et la mémoire de la communauté et des techniques et connaissances qui forment le capital culturel encore plus ou moins vivant accumulé par cette communauté."

"Il ressort de ce qui précède un certain nombre de principes et de règles. D'abord l'écomusée ne "saisit" pas un état de la communauté à un instant donné, ni ne cherche à reconstruire de manière statique l'ensemble du passé de celle-ci. Il prend en compte la globalité de la communauté dans le temps et dans l'espace, sans en exclure un seul élément. Ensuite les notions de collectes, de réserves, d'inventaire, de conservation, de classement, de typologie doivent, dans le cas de l'écomusée, recevoir un nouveau contenu et une nouvelle définition. Toutes les disciplines scientifiques doivent être mises à contribution, humaines, naturelles, exactes. La technologie est également concernée." D'une certaine façon, c'est ce qui se passe en France avec les sites et monuments historiques protégés et avec ce que nous appelons l'inventaire général. L'approche en est beaucoup plus globale, beaucoup plus interdisciplinaire que dans la plupart des musées.

"Enfin, la présentation d'un élément quelconque du patrimoine, fut-il unique, ne peut être une fin en soi, cet élément, dans le cadre d'un écomusée, ne prenant sa signification qu'en fonction du rôle qu'il peut jouer au service de la communauté."
"On conçoit dès lors que, pour aller au fond des choses, on doit remettre ici en question la notion de propriété individuelle. Certes, la seule institution d'un écomusée ne supprime pas le droit de propriété que détient tout membre de la communauté. Le droit d'usage et de jouissance reste intact et il n'est pas question d'user de procédures telles que l'expropriation et la confiscation sous le seul prétexte qu'un particulier détient un bien dont l'écomusée a besoin! Il n'en reste pas moins qu'il résulte des considérations qui précèdent sur le patrimoine de la communauté l'existence de fait et la reconnaissance progressive d'un droit moral de la collectivité sur chaque élément de son patrimoine. Le propriétaire, au sens traditionnel du terme, ne peut plus "abuser" de son bien s'il peut en user librement. Cette thèse, où il ne faut pas voir une prise de position de valeur juridique, se trouve refléter une évolution récente mais désormais bien établie qui tend à reconnaître à la collectivité internationale, nationale ou locale un certain droit de regard et de jouissance sur diverses catégories de biens: richesses de l'air, des mers et du sous-sol, monuments et sites historiques et naturels d'importance majeure notamment. Ce que l'on suggère ici, c'est simplement d'étendre ce raisonnement aux éléments du patrimoine communautaire qui font partie intégrante de l'identité de la communauté." Vagues, pp.459-462)

Si, à partir de ce concept élargi, nous revoyons les définitions classiques du musée, il est bien évident qu'aucune n'est adaptée,

- que ce soit la définition française du 14 juillet 1945: "Est considéré comme musée toute collection permanente et ouverte au public d'œuvres présentant un intérêt artistique, historique ou archéologique"

- que ce soit la première définition de l'Icom, en 1946: "L'Icom reconnaît la qualité de musée à toute institution permanente qui conserve et présente des collections d'objets de caractère culturel ou scientifique, à des fins d'étude, d'éducation et de délectation.//Rentrent dans cette définition: a) les galeries permanentes d'exposition dépendant de bibliothèques et de centres d'archives; b) les monuments historiques, les parties de monuments historiques ou leurs dépendances, telles que les trésors d'églises, les sites historiques, archéologiques et naturels, s'ils sont ouverts officiellement au public; c) les jardins botaniques et zoologiques, aquariums, vivariums et autres institutions qui présentent des spécimens vivants; d) les parcs naturels."

- que ce soit la récente définition de l'Association des musées britanniques, en 1991: "A museum is an institution which collects, documents, preserves, exhibits and interprets material evident and associated information for the public benefit."

Le principal progrès effectué entre 1945 et 1946 fut de ne plus préciser les disciplines, de façon à ne pas exclure celles qui apparaissent d'année en année et à ne pas se trouver dépasser par les modifications du langage.

Même la dernière définition de l'Icom, de 1974, confirmée en 1989, n'est pas non plus tout à fait satisfaisante, qu'aucune n'intègre dans sa problématique la société et l'environnement: "Le musée est une institution permanente, sans but lucratif, au service de la société et de son développement, ouverte au public et qui fait des recherches concernant les témoins matériels de l'homme et de son environnement, acquiert ceux-là, les conserve, les
communique et notamment les expose à des fins d'études, d'éducation et de délectation."

Les seules définitions qui puissent convenir à la fois au musée traditionnel, à collections déplacées, et au maintien sur place du patrimoine sont celles que nous utilisons dans notre comité, qu'elles soient de Zbyneck Stranski, de Anna Gregorova ou de Judith Spielbauer. Et, à mon tour en m'inscrivant dans la même logique, je proposerais ma propre définition, en la complétant d'incidences pratiques: "Le musée est une institution permanente, sans but lucratif, ouverte au public. Sa mission est de révéler à l'être humain ses rapports à la réalité en recensant, en étudiant et en mettant en valeur, éventuellement en collectant en conservant (conservation consciente et systématique) et en communiquant un recueil de témoignages naturels et culturels. Pour ce faire, il utilise les moyens d'inventaire et d'analyse, de documentation, d'éducation et d'exposition les plus appropriés au service de la société."

André DESVALLÉES
Museological research

Peter van Mensch

If museology is to be considered an academic discipline, what is its content and methodology, and to what extent can it be distinguished from other disciplines? These questions were discussed from the very beginning of the foundation of the International Committee for Museology. Actually its first symposium (1978) dealt with this topic. Subsequent symposia tended to focus on the relationship between theory and practice, i.e. the use of museological theory for day-to-day museum practice.

Different levels

The term museological research is not used univocally. During the ICOFOM symposium 'Possibilities and limits in scientific research typical for the museum' (Warsow 1978), the term museological research was often used, but not always with the same meaning. In his contribution to this symposium Wolfgang Klauswitz, for example, used the term in a wide sense as synonym to 'research work within the museum', including analysis, description and comparative evaluation of collections as well as (applied) research with regard to conservation, restoration and exhibitions (Klauswitz 1978). Doing so, Klauswitz fails to distinguish between research in the museum (i.e. research as a museum function) and research of the museum and its functions. In this respect Razgon and Sofka made a more adequate and useful distinction between subject-matter oriented research and museological research. Subject-matter oriented research belongs to the so-called subject-matter disciplines, i.e. the disciplines that have an interest in the collections. As such, subject-matter research is synonymous to 'museum research'. Museological research follows from the cognitive orientation and purpose of museology as discipline.

The relationship between museology and the subject-matter disciplines is one of the central issues within the museology discourse. This relationship can be studied on different levels:

1. the relation between museology and other academic disciplines in general (metamuseological level);
2. the relation between museology and subject-matter disciplines within the museological field (institutional level);

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1 Museological research was also the main theme of the Zweite Museumsdirektorenkonferenz of the German Democratic Republic (1981). This resulted in a series of supplements to the Informationen für die Museen in der DDR (edited by the Abteilung Theorie und Methodik of the Institut für Museumsweisen), dedicated to the problem of museological research.

2 In the German version of this text the term 'museumspezifisches Forschen' is used (Klauswitz 1979: 16). Klauswitz' use of the term agrees with Auer in his keynote address to the General Conference of ICOM in 1977 (Auer 1979).

3 Razgon 1978 and 1981; Sofka 1978. The same distinction is made by Daifuku who speaks of academic research (= subject-matter research) and applied research (= research in relation to museum work) (Daifuku 1960). In the German Democratic Republic the term 'Museologische Forschung' was always used in the same sense as given by Razgon and Sofka. Schlimpff used 'Fachdisziplin' and 'Objektwissenschaft' for subject-matter discipline (Schlimpff 1982: 17). Pearce speaks of 'discipline based study of museum material' vs. museum theory (Pearce 1992: 10). In French texts 'recherche muséologique' is commonly used to denote subject-matter research (see, for example, Trottier 1986).
the relation between museology and subject-matter disciplines on the level of
day-to-day museum work (*museographical level*).

If museology has its own object of knowledge it is then by definition distinct from other
academic disciplines (level 1). On a lower abstraction level, the institutional level (level
2), the relationship between museology and other disciplines is not always clear and much
discussed. The crucial and most convincing distinction lies on the level of daily routine
and concerns the handling of objects and collections, the preparation of exhibitions, etc.
(level 3).

*Meta-museological level*

It is clear that the views on the relationship between museology and other academic
disciplines (level 1), as found in museological literature, depend on the concept of
museology as a science. Nevertheless, it can be stated that to a certain extent museology
as well as the subject-matter disciplines are both determined by the use of collections.
Subject-matter disciplines elicit new scientific knowledge from objects. They focus on the
information content of objects in relation to the specific needs of the discipline. Usually
there is an exclusive relationship between the museum collection and one subject-matter
discipline. As such, priorities and methodology of the relevant discipline(s) are reflected
in the contents and structure of the collections. Concerning the use of collections museo-
logical research has another orientation.

In his analysis of the position of museology as a science, Volkert Schimpff puts it very
concise: museology studies the 'how' of museum work, the 'what' of the subject-matter
disciplines stays outside the scope of its interest (Schimpff 1986). Other authors,
however, tend to emphasize the 'why' of museum work as key-element in museological
research by referring to the value of objects in relation to the social role of museums.

This point of view is reflected in the works of, for example, Hofmann (Hofmann 1983),
Maroevic (Maroevic 1983), and Schubertova (Schubertova 1982). These authors clarify
the different orientations of subject-matter research and museological research on the
basis of the distinction of two aspects of the (museum) object, described by Maroevic as
*scientific and cultural information*. Subject-matter disciplines make use of scientific
information (Hofmann: 'Fachwissenschaftliche Sphäre'), whereas museology makes use of
cultural information (Hofmann: 'Museologische Sphäre'). The different levels of
interpretation of the information potential of objects is analyzed in a similar way by
Schubertova. Following Stránský she makes a clear distinction between the object as part
of a museum collection (in German: 'museale Sammlungsgegenstand') and the object as
'musealium' (German: 'Musealie'). The 'museale Sammlungsgegenstand' provides the
data needed for subject-matter disciplines. Relevant to museology, however, is the
recognised museality which distinguishes a 'museale Sammlungsgegenstand' from a
'Musealie'. To recognize this museality is part of museological research and can in this
line of thought even be the very subject-matter of museology itself. In this respect Maroe-
vic and Stránský see museology as one of the disciplines within the sphere of documenta-
tion, together with informatics, documentation science, archive science and library
science.
The model as elaborated by Maroevic helps us to clarify the position of museology and the specificity of museological research in relation subject-matter research from the metamuseological level down to the museographical level, especially in connection with the position of the collection as research object. As to the position of the activities related to preservation (collection, documentation, conservation, restoration, registration) as specialized research object there is little competition in the field of sciences. There are several academic disciplines concerned with communication and education as well as with cultural institutions. The specificity of museology follows from the specificity of the exhibition and the museum (and related institutes) as research objects. In general it can be said that the rationale of museological research is the recognition of cultural information and the realization of its social relevance on the institutional and the museographical level.

*Interdisciplinarity*

Museology does not intend to replace subject-matter disciplines within the museological context (level 2), but forms a necessary complement ("Komplettierungsforshung", Razgon 1977). The concept of museological research as complementary research involves interdisciplinarity. The question of interdisciplinarity in museology was briefly touched upon during the ICOFOM Mexico City 1980 symposium and elaborated in MuWoP 2 and at the ICOFOM Paris 1982 symposium. However, it is difficult to draw conclusions from the papers that were published. Part of the papers focus on the relationship between museology and other academic disciplines (the meta-museological level), while others discuss the relationship between museology and subject-matter disciplines on an institutional level.

At this point distinction should be made between the subject-matter disciplines - referred to by Stránský as 'sciences represented in museum affairs' - and disciplines that are used to improve museum practice - 'sciences applied in museum affairs'\(^4\). This last category of disciplines, like sociology, chemistry, semiotics, pedagogics, management, etc., are usually described as 'support disciplines' or 'auxiliary disciplines'.

Obviously referring to the meta-museological level, Waldisa Russo mentions interdisciplinarity as the methodology for museology (Russo 1983: 121). It is, however, not clear from her paper what is meant. There may be some connection with Bernard Deloche's concept of 'muséologie comme logique de l'interdisciplinarité' (Deloche 1987). Deloche considers the museum as the frame work for the interaction of a wide range of disciplines. Possibly this point of view comes close to Jahn's. Ilse Jahn interprets the interdisciplinary character of museology as the ability, or rather the task, of museology to interlink subject-matter disciplines with support disciplines (Jahn 1981). In this respect she speaks of museology as 'Querschnittdisziplin'. The same point of view has been expressed by Jiri Neustupny who considers the field of museology an aggregate of scientific disciplines bound by the theory of museology (Neustupny 1968).

The apparent conformity of above mentioned ideas, manifested in the simplified diagram

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of Fig. 1, is probably based on a different use of the term interdisciplinarity. Throughout MuWoP 2 and other ICOFOM publications the term -disciplinarity can be encountered in many forms: inter-, multi-, etc. Usually no attempts are made to define the used terms. Gluzinski considers the claim of interdisciplinarity to be unjustified, because what we have in museology is only multidisciplinarity (in *Museologicke sesity* 9: 29). This approach is also found among authors that do not accept museology as distinct and coherent discipline (see, for example, Kavanagh 1992). This is, however, not necessarily in contradiction with the ideas of other authors. The relevant point is not the juxtaposition of disciplines, but the degree of integration on the institutional level as well as on the museographical level. In Fig. 1 this can be illustrated by the size of field 2 (museology sensu stricto) in relation to field 1 (the museological field). Some authors tend to equal field 1 and 2, but in practice the present professionalization trend brings about a multidisciplinary segmentation of the museological field instead of an integration of approaches.

In order to speak of 'real' interdisciplinarity it is necessary to have causal or genetic relations. This is far from being realized as yet. Instead there are, as Gluzinski states, only 'accidental, pragmatic relations of a teleological nature' in museum work. However, the example he uses to prove this, may also be used to prove the true interdisciplinary character of museum work (and museology). Gluzinski states, for example, that the scientific description of collections and the routine conservation work on the same collections are two different and separate phenomena, involving two different sets of methods, but as is shown elsewhere there is a connection between both activities which can be expressed by some basic conceptual models (Van Mensch 1990). The same models show that there is also a connection between the group of activities referred to as preservation and those referred to as communication.

**Basic and applied research**

The use of the term 'museographical research' precedes the use of 'museological research'. The gradual emergence of museology as academic discipline introduced the term 'museological research' not as synonym but as an extension of the concept of 'museographical research'. Starting from this point of view, Sofka divides museological research into basic museological research and applied museological research (Sofka 1980). The first category deals with issues that are common to all museums and that are not within the sphere of activity of any other branch of science. The second category (1) draws the attention of other branches of science to the museum and its activities, (2) initiates research on questions pertaining to the museum and its activities, and (3) applies the results of other branches of research to its own object of study. Basic museological research, as described by Sofka, relates to field 2 in Fig. 1, while his notion of applied museology is visualized by the fields indicated as a. This approach echoes Neustupny's concept of 'museological disciplines'. In this concept applied museological research is not museological research proper. Museology sensu stricto (field 2 in Fig. 1) plays the role of coordinator.

Teather's definition of basic and applied research differs from Sofka's (Teather 1983). She considers basic research to consist of original investigation undertaken to acquire new knowledge, with the primary purpose of contributing to the conceptual development of the
field or adding to already accumulated, objective and systematic knowledge. Applied research consists of original investigation undertaken in order to acquire new knowledge with the primary purpose of applying knowledge to the solution of practical or technical problems. This approach comes close to Stránský’s distinction of three levels of knowledge within the field of theoretical museology. Basic research thus refers to the levels of theoretical and philosophical knowledge, while applied research is related to the level of empirical knowledge and the field of applied museology. The distinction between basic and applied research runs parallel to the distinction made between the empirically-theoretical approach and the praxeological approach in museology. In this sense applied research is synonymous to museographical research, while basic research refers to the study of the cultural information of objects.

Methodology

In his contribution to the ICOFOM London 1983 symposium Burcaw expressed an opinion shared by many museologists: 'I have never thought of museology as having one (methodology)' (Burcaw 1983: 10). Museological practice (and theory) is seen by Burcaw as an amalgam of many methods borrowed from outside the museum field. In his view there is no typical museological methodology, '... or at least not yet’. Other museologists, however, hold other opinions. Throughout the different publications on the theory of museology different views are expressed, ranging from the denial of the possibility of a museological methodology to the proposal of a detailed methodological approach. In order to clarify the apparent contradictions it is useful to distinguish between three hierarchical levels. The highest level of a methodological system is formed by general principles which pervade all sciences. The second level contains methods specific for the cognitive intention of museology, i.e. its basic premises and philosophical foundations. The third level is the level of techniques, i.e. research practice. In this chapter the emphasis will be on the second level.

The complexity of the museological field and the lack of a generally accepted museological methodology gave rise to a wide spread pragmatism as to the level of research practice. 'Pragmatism is the basis for acquiring museographical knowledge. Whatever works is right. What works better is preferable. Experience and evaluation are the means employed' (Burcaw 1983: 17). This pragmatism - or what Judith Spielbauer has called 'useful borrowing' - is found by many museologists. Even those who emphasize the existence of one methodology of museological research, like for example Neustupny and Jahn, accept this borrowing. But if museology exists as a science, it is more than the simple sum of its parts. Museology must provide a broad, encompassing theoretical frame-work in which the interaction of all those different methods is interpreted and understood in explanation of problems and situations characteristic to the museological field. This suggests that within museology the second level of the methodological system is possible.

During the last twenty years, museologists working on the development of a special museological methodology seem to have chosen two different, more or less opposite, directions: a community-oriented and an object-oriented methodology. In modern management terms both approaches might be described as product-oriented versus market-oriented, or supply-oriented versus demand-oriented (Ashworth & Tunbridge 1990: 25),
or perhaps more satisfactory as mission-driven versus market-driven (Ames 1988).

The community-oriented methodology is connected with the philosophical-critical approach in museology and has chosen a sociological perspective. This approach is usually museum-centred, but the museum is explicitly seen as a tool enabling the local population 'to understand and to control economic, social and cultural change' (Evvard 1980). In France and the United Kingdom the term New Museology has been introduced to distinguish this so called new approach from the object-oriented approach which is considered traditional or even reactionary: 'While preserving the material achievements of past civilizations and protecting the achievements characteristic of the aspirations and technology of today, the new museology is primarily concerned with community development...' (Declaration of Quebec, 13 Oct. 1984). As such the community-oriented approach is 'market-oriented'. Apart from research techniques borrowed from sociology and marketing, the new museology has not yet provided a research strategy.

It seems that at least a part of the discussion on the specific methodology of museology, i.e. its basic premises and philosophical foundations ('disciplinary matrix', Kuhn), misses its point as it refers to two different levels: the museographical and the institutional level.

**Museographical level**

Although rejected by some museologists as being reactionary, the object-oriented methodology has recently received a good deal of attention among museologists. This approach met considerable support within the International Committee for Museology. The museum object is considered to be the basic unit of the museum working procedures, and the basic parameter determining the complete character of this procedure. The possession of collections is what distinguishes a museum from other kinds of institutions. Consequently the object as key-element has determined the very character of the methodology applied to the museum working procedure. However, 'we do not have museums because of the objects they contain but because of the concepts or ideas that these objects help to convey' (Sola 1986).

Object-oriented methodological thinking has a long tradition especially in the field of conservation. 'There is only one methodology which unites all practitioners of conservation’, writes Feilden (1979: 21). In his opinion this methodology should be based on the assumption that 'conservation is primarily a process leading to the prolongation of the life of cultural property for its utilization now and in the future'. Any interventions must be governed by 'unswerving respect for the aesthetic, historical and physical integrity of cultural property'. This underlying philosophical principle provides the framework for the practical work. For example, it means that the interventions must be minimal, reversible and not endangering future intervention. Besides each intervention must be harmonious in colour, tone, texture, form and scale. This approach, as summarized by Feilden, is reflected is most codes of ethics that underlie the museum profession. Nevertheless, there seems to exist a gap between those involved with conservation and its theory and those involved with museology and its theory. For example, in the ICOFOM papers very seldom reference is made to publications in the field of the theory of conservation/restoration. The lack of a consistent museological approach in which the information
value of objects is respected and which is clearly distinct from other, subject-matter, approaches, is one of the main reasons of a weak profile of museology as a discipline and as a profession.

Recently a growing interest in museology as an information science can be observed. In this approach the object as data carrier plays a key role. As objects are seen as documents, the proper methodological approach is considered to be found in the information sciences. A case in point is the Croatian museologist Ivo Marojević applying models developed by information scientist Miroslav Tjudman (Marojević 1993). Their distinction of scientific and cultural information makes it possible to clarify the relationship between museology and the subject-matter disciplines. Museology focuses on cultural information, i.e. the social value. Like Stránský Marojević considers the determination of museality as main task of museology. However, Marojević' concept of museality differs from Stránský's. Whereas Marojević considers museality in terms of information, Stránský speaks of value.

Although working from a different direction and using different terminology, the American museologist Hawes agrees with Stránský and Marojević where it concerns the evaluation of the cultural information (symbolic content in his terms) of artifacts: 'Every country has its symbolic artifacts commonly enshrined in museums. It is an important task of museology to identify them, to see how they misshape perceptions of past and present, to determine how they can be used to clarify historical processes that are still going on around us' (Hawes 1986: 139).

As to the methodological orientation in museology one can conclude that the main approach is object-oriented, but that there has occurred a notable shift from a 'muséologie d'objet' towards a 'muséologie d'idée' (Davallon 1993).

Institutional level

On the institutional level the main lines of thought that can be distinguished reflect the three basic museum orientations as described by Gluzinski: (1) orientation on material objects - historical and research orientation; (2) orientation on man - sociological orientation; (3) orientation on values and meanings - cultural orientation. According to Gluzinski each of these orientations is founded on its own particular epistemological basis in the form of knowledge of different sciences, and thus involves its own methodology (Gluzinski 1988). A similar approach is given by Per-Uno Agren. He distinguishes three perspectives: (1) a historical perspective, which seeks to describe and understand the environmental heritage of a certain area and a certain place; (2) a sociological perspective, which studies the institutions and activities which have come into being as the result of the notion of a cultural and natural heritage; and (3) a communicative perspective, which applies to the attempts to mediate the environmental heritage in time and space (Agren 1992).

Following the first view as described by Gluzinski, research within the museological field is considered to be applied research, derived from the subject-matter specialism of the given museum, completed with other relevant disciplines. This approach necessarily implies that there can be no such thing as 'museological research' as each type of
collection/museum requires its own research methodology. According to the second view as described by Gluzinski, as well as the three views as described by Agren, museums are seen as socio-cultural institutions. As such an unifying approach is possible. As this methodological approach tends to focus on the museum as institute the methodology of sociology can be adopted easily. This view has been advocated by many museologists.

In this respect an interesting approach can be derived from Kruithof (Kruithof 1985). The museological field is defined by four aspect or elements. Each aspect brings its own methodology: social relevance - sociology, acting subject - psychology, ideological context - cultural science, and ecological (social) context - anthropology (Fig. 2). In this way the conceptual frame works of different social sciences are introduced within the museological field. The contribution of these approaches can be studied on three levels: the field of action, the form of action and the pattern of action. The combination of anthropology and sociology (social ethnology) studies the role of preservation and communication in a certain community. By combining psychology and sociology (social psychology) the relation can be studied between the individual member of a community and the social role of preservation and communication, for example socialization processes. Finally, the combination of cultural science and sociology (cultural sociology) focuses on institutionalization processes in the context of prevailing ideologies.

Research topics

Teather emphasizes the need of preliminary research, i.e. a general survey of the field by means of library bibliographic search techniques, and the location of previous research in the identified topic in non-library sources, like archives, letters, diaries, unpublished investigations, etc. Investigative tools for research in the field have to be developed. Only after this work has been done have the necessary conditions been fulfilled to conduct basic research, which consists of original investigation undertaken to acquire new scientific knowledge.

The most comprehensive lists of research topics are provided by museologists from East Europe, like Gluzinski (1983), Hühns (1973), Jahn (1982), Lang (1978), Levykin (in Grampp et al. 1988), Pischulin (1980), Razgon (in Herbst & Levykin eds. 1988), and Swiecimski (1981). The Japanese museologist Tsuruta provides a classification of the fields of museological research in relation to his proposal for a structure of the discipline (Tsuruta 1980). In addition some authors mention one task or a few tasks that according to their view is relevant for a given theme, or might be characteristic for museology. The most detailed research proposals are given by the supporters of an object-oriented, where the recognition of the information potential of the object is the prime concern of museological research.

Not surprisingly the research topics as found in literature reflect the basic parameters of the museological field (object, activities, institute), and their interrelationships, within their social context, i.e. including structural form and cultural content. The topics can be arranged according to the matrix given in Fig. 3. To fit each individual research project in this matrix is not always simple since many projects combine different fields. A study of collecting policies of art museums belongs to fields 1.2-4.2 (depending the main orientation) as well as 5.2. The above mentioned proposals focus on the fields of
theoretical and applied museology, with special attention to the activities, i.e. collecting, documenting, conservation, registration, exhibition design, education. The fields 1.2 and 4.2 are most frequently referred to.

References


Fig. 1 Museology as interdisciplinary science

1. museological field
2. museology sensu stricto
3. subject-matter disciplines
4. support disciplines

Fig. 2 The interrelationship between different research perspectives in museology (after Kruithof 1985).

Fig. 3 Typology of research topics in museology
Appendix

Survey of museological research topics

*Gluzinski 1983: 34*

1. to create a theory of museum as a cultural unit
2. to create a museum object theory
3. to create a museum collection theory
4. to create a museum visual message theory

*Hühns 1973*

1. to study the history of museums
2. to determine the principles of selection
3. to develop registration methods
4. to develop exhibition methods
5. to study principles of museum education
6. to analyse the methods of information science
7. to analyse cooperation between museums and develop models for such cooperation
8. to study museum architecture
9. to develop conservation and restoration methods
10. to propose training programmes for museum personnel

*Jahn 1982*

In her PhD thesis Ilse Jahn (1979) classified nine fields of research (‘museologische Fragen’) which she elaborates in a comprehensive list of research topics. These nine fields are: classification systems, typology of objects, valuation, selection, documentation, storage, conservation, use, management. A more detailed survey is given in Jahn 1982.

*Kavanagh 1992: 101-102*

Kavanagh mentions some future research needs in the field of museum studies: collection management (for example, concerning conservation vs. restoration, and the responsibilities of the curator vs. the conservator), the financial dependencies and requirements of museums, the nature of curatorial work, and health and injury in museum practice.

*Lang 1978*

Lang mentions two main fields of research (‘Problemkreise’): (1) the role of museums in the socialist society of the German Democratic Republik, and (2) collections management. With regard to this last field of research seven research topics are given:

1. the role of museum objects in scientific research
2. the principles of classification of museum objects
criteria for the selection of objects for museum collections
criteria for the selection of objects for exhibitions
the principles of museum documentation
determination and analysis of the source value of museum objects
the principles of conservation, restoration and storage


1 to study the social role of museums, especially in contemporary society
2 to establish directions for the development of museum collections
3 to develop a proper methodology for public oriented activities
4 to study the implications of the extension of the concept of museum object

Pishchulin 1980: 30

1 the nature and principle characteristics of the museum object
2 the pattern of museum collecting
3 the pattern of the representation of the historical process in exhibits
4 the sociological and socio-psychological premisses of the educational activities in museums
5 the public, its socio-demographical composition, its reasons for visiting museums
6 the social role of museums and its evolution

Razgon 1988 (in Herbst & Levykin eds. 1988)

Concerning museum objects:
1 to identify (on the basis of the relevant disciplines) themes which could be presented and to select objects which could visualize these themes
2 to study data content and data structure of objects
3 to study objects in order to make them available for scientific study as primary sources by systematization and classification
4 to study objects in order to determine the optimal conservation and restoration methods
5 to study objects in order to discover their communicative potential

Concerning the museum institution:
1 to study the origin and history of the museum domain
2 to study the organizational structure of the museum institute and the interrelationships between the internal organization and the social functions of the institute
3 to study the different activities, like collecting, conservation, restoration, documentation, exhibition, etc.
4 to study the fundamental laws governing museum management and administration
5 to study the origin, development and structure of museum networks

Świecimski 1981: 63

1 technological (conservation, etc.)
2 factographic (description of case studies)
3 normative (models and prescriptions)
reviewing (evaluation of case studies)
typological-comparative and typological-intrinsic philosophical
a aesthetic research
b semiological research
psychological (visitor research)

*Tsuruta 1980: 48*

1 study of the classification of museums
2 study of forms and structures (external and internal)
3 study of the functions of museums
4 study of the museum field as population of museums
5 study of the relations between museums and their social and natural environments
6 study of the historical background of museums
7 study of the management and administration of individual museums and the museum field
MUSEOLOGICAL RESEARCHES AND THEIR APPLICATION

Josef BENEŠ, Czechoslovakia

Museology studies the museum world as a specific milieu which has an unreplaceable mission: to preserve and maintain for the society selected works of nature or those created by man as part of the cultural heritage which in the interests of the public is necessary to pass to future generations as a legacy of lasting value. The museum world presents and gives evidence of continuous evolution of changes in surroundings and way of life from the past through present time to the future. Museology answers the questions WHY, WHAT, HOW, WHICH WAY, WHERE, FOR WHOM to preserve and present the cultural heritage. All these questions have various aspects: theoretical - i.e. philosophy of the museum world and methodical - studies the way of work with collection objects since they were moved out of their original surroundings to museum display cases - aspect of technical organization - i.e. museography - and of course the aspect of development - i.e. history of museums and museology. Museological thinking is to be considered as a consistently formed effort to ensure the necessary theoretical basis for all activities instead of simple use of experiences. It enables to regard the museum world as a system in which each act, means, phenomenon, instrument and result work in both vertical and horizontal relations, because individual things in this system are mutually attached and conditioned or at least influenced. It would be wrong to regard only individual things, i.e. collection objects as simple facts, because multilateral links and relations form their special value and importance. A museum worker can acquire museological thinking only by a consistent study of museology as a discipline with proper system of knowledge and terminology. In practice it is definitely not enough to acquire individual pieces of knowledge ad hoc for a particular task in pragmatic conception and ignore the system relations. The absence of museological thinking causes stagnation of museum work which is then mostly restricted to the creation of new pieces of knowledge from problems of the objects of which are in the museum collections. This sort attitude reduced to research only reduces the value of museum objects only to sources of scientific knowledge as if they were not at the same time and first of all cultural estates of the cultural heritage and means of educational working on the public. From the point view of the workers who are concentrated on research it seems to be right to limit the museum mission only to research and publication of the results, because it is only research they were schooled in at universities. The absence of museological schooling causes that other activities are realized without any scientific basis which could be ensured only by museological teaching.
The need of museology, however, is differentiated: It is necessarily needed in schooling work-places which make the system of museological knowledge and thus contribute to the development of scientific knowledge. Museology is also needed in work-places which are in charge of information service to help museum workers. In museum practice museology stands in the role of theoretical basis for all kinds of activities which do not include only abstract principles but also a methodical application on factual demands of practice.

What is the difference between museum research and museological research? Museum research studies collection objects and deduces from it pieces of knowledge for the given discipline and so its method of research is not different from the research in the same discipline in other outside museum work-places, e.g. universities. Museological research studies a certain part of the museum world as a global reality and produces pieces of knowledge which are not covered by collection disciplines and it is not in their scheme either. Hence it follows that the point of view that the theory of museum work is a mere application of collection discipline to museum conditions is wrong, because the attitudes towards the studied reality are different. In contradiction with the system of archives and libraries which are affined branches and work also with mobile works of the cultural heritage but in homogeneous form with archival documents and books the means of work in the museum system are very different. That is why there is no teaching in museum means of work (Quellenkunde) as the archives have in archives have in archives teaching. The absence of the teaching in this field results in seeking it in museology and defining its object of study as musealia (museum objects) teaching eventually as museality teaching (museum value of the object), which justifies moving the object from its home surroundings to a museum collection. The selection of objects suitable for museum collections makes only a part of museological theory which must comprise the whole museum world together with its social mission, functions, activities, means and forms of realization, etc. Objects in museum collections undergo a protection regime (conservation to preserve them) and a process of evaluation (musealisation) by which they acquire anew and higher value on cultural level than their former utility value was. In this way objects in museum collections differ from objects of the same kind in collector’s collection or in an antique shop which is not concerned with cultural value.

The administration of public collections considers these two museum functions compulsory: Moving the object from its home surroundings as a salvage act to a collection as a scientific model of original reality and conserving preservation together with evaluation in the process of musealisation and administrative registration. That means preservation of the object and its readiness for further use of different goal and realization. Scientific use
(application) enables to produce new pieces of knowledge which are usually published for professionals. Educational use means to put the object to use as an exhibit in educational scheme for the general public. Both applications are facultative because they are conditioned by social needs but first of all by the possibilities of the museum. The lay opinion that all objects are not on display because the museum lacks room is basically wrong: it is not necessary to display all objects. From the viewpoint of presentation a choice is desirable—never will all of them be exhibited. Public museums keep millions of authentic evidences of the development of nature and mankind, pieces of numerically unexpressible value from the point of view of culture, history, science and art. The way of keeping them and securing them against damage and loss, using their intellectual potential of their importance is a matter society care and cultural policy. In contradiction to private 5 collections and objects dispersed in private ownership the society is trying both to preserve public collections for future generation and to use them for the development of science and education. That is why the expenses of most museums are covered by public means.

Museology teaching as one of the prerequisites of optimum museum functioning is public care of the cultural heritage and its exertion on the way of life. That is why museology is taught at a great many universities in order to provide future museum workers with necessary qualification or offer actual museum workers the possibility of post-graduate studies. Teaching, however, varies very much. There are two extremely different conceptions: one is pragmatic museology, the other abstract museology. The first offers only practical training in appurtenantpace of activities with minimum museology theory. The second conception is philosophio-leaving practical application to the graduate. In my opinion the teaching should comprise both—lectures on complex theoretical principles of keeping and using the collections and methods of application in seminars and practical exercises in organizing. It would be ideal if we could give to each new worker the book "Basic Museology" serving him as a theoretical and methodical basis of knowledge in the museum world, even in specialized methods of different fields that have their particularities conditioned among others by specific kinds of collections.

The need of museological researches is caused partly by general necessity to enrich science with new pieces of knowledge from all spheres of human activities, partly to make a scientifically well-informed basis for museum practice so that optimum results can be achieved without unnecessary mistakes and faults which cause undesirable waste of means and working capacity as well as losses of chances for the museum to participate effectively in cultural life. Researches must be both published and put to the disposal of professionals and the general public in a specific museum form—in the form of exhibition—using new
pieces of knowledge and contributing to the development of science. It is beneficial for museums and museum profession to open the museum backstage to the public and not to regard museums as institutions separated from life, concentrated on their problems, indifferent to the needs of cultivating and humanizing mankind. The point is that the way of life in future should not be reduced to material consumption and should comprise spiritual potential which will give human dimension to life which we cannot imagine without benefitting from cultural values, which belong to basic human rights in the same way as a well-accessible information in libraries. Hence it follows that each society has make all cultural treasures accessible to all people and to found and support museums as institutions which contribute to the development of the society. Bibliography shows that museological production does not put up with applied research orientated to individual activities, but directs its attention to problems of common museology which treats the mentioned missions: to enrich scientific knowledge in common conception in which global approach to museum word is applied and to provide museum activities with scientific basis which enables all activities to become scientific not only in the respective collection discipline. Production of new museological knowledge published in museological magazines, miscellanies and monographies serves directly museum needs and initiates museological thinking by providing impulses for reasoning and discussions which are held at thematic symposia, which are organized by ICOFOM every year, trying to consolidate contradicting views so that common principles of museum work can be reached (achieved). Museology helps museums even at this incomplete stage. It will be fully applied when is completed as a commonly-known discipline with all necessary attributes. This is the point at which the effort of all museologists should aim, of all those who in various parts of the world and in different conditions work on the same thing—to develop a science which solves the problems of the museum world on the level of present scientific knowledge while foreseeing the changes which are being brought by life.
The miracle of Musealisation

Musealisation

Schematic demonstration of turning a utility object into musealum (collection object)

1. Selection
2. Conservation (thesaurisation)
3. Cataloguing
4. Systematisation

- Use of musealum as a source of knowledge
- Education use as an exhibit of presentation
- Use for museum ready by musealisation process

Line of division between two worlds and two ways of evaluation of objects:

A. Original production
B. Use of the object in concrete situation, space and time
C. Setting out of use

Utility sphere

Sphere of cultural use

Presentation

Management

Conservation

Thesaurisation
THEMATIC DIFFERENTIATION OF MUSEUM PRODUCTION AS REFLECTED BY PERIODICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

Josef Beneš - Prague

I look forward with some impatience to every further issue of the Selected Bibliography of Museological Literature from Bratislava. The reason is that it permits me to take my bearings in what is going on in the world of museums, how museologists deal with museum problems and how museological thinking becomes reflected in practice - and all this within a delay of a mere two years' lapse which is the shortest possible time for realizing such a service. This is provided in the form of brief bibliographic annotations permitting every interested museum worker to keep contact with museum events without having to browse through scores of periodicals.

But time is not the only factor involved: the fact is that most of the periodicals are not accessible to the current museum worker over here, the latter is not conversant with the various languages and, concentrating on his own professional line, he hardly has the time and the will to follow the spate of museological writings. Yet I can hardly think of a professional working in a museum who would do without this service, which has been provided for three decades by the Museological Institute, Slovak National Museum, in Bratislava; I consider it indispensable to anyone anxious to keep step with what is going on in the museum world and not satisfying himself with his own personal experience.

By the term devotedly I have in mind not solely the financial means connected with the printing and distribution
but primarily the admirable endeavours on the part of the Editor Viera Schnappová who successfully organizes and keeps fifteen abstractors of annotations busy, so to ensure a uniform orientation and the required standard. Annotation processing is no easy task; I know from personal experience how difficult it may be to grasp, extract the essential information, and not merely a catchword about the content of the article, but also its sense and whether it is a contribution or a novelty.

The title rarely adequately reflects the content; hence, a well-processed annotation retrieves all that may be of importance in the article, thus showing whether it is worth reading or not. It thereby saves much time e.g. in locating a journal in which a title may - injudiciously - promise information that is not at all processed. For instance, the title of a study like "Problems of Collections Cataloguing in a Museum" is so indefinite that it may deal with issues of an essential nature, but may also be a mere evocation of an author's personal experience without any reference to essential issues - resolved or not in the world; it may deal with partial questions of cataloguing, or with the use of computer technique, etc. In short, an annotation must give a clear clue as to the content, mode of problem-solving and the results attained, and all this briefly, tersely.

Pondering over the 30th volume of the Selected Bibliography, I thought of attempting a quantitative analysis of the museological production in the world - taking several volumes to exclude randomness. The mean number of 123 excerpted periodicals permits us to judge the museological production from
aspect of their contents. I leave aside monograph publications as followed by the Documentation Centre UNESCO/ICOM in Paris, but merely by title, i.e., without annotations which, however, would be very valuable precisely in this basic museum literature. And this despite the fact that journals often carry reviews of some publications; but these do not assure completeness of this information service, very profitable especially to museum and teaching workplaces.

I asked myself whether such a quantitative analysis is of any value at all, whether it does not present a distorted image of museological production in that it does not include the entire production, but solely a selected part. As a matter of fact, a double selection is involved here: the first one is made by the author of the annotation in that he chooses solely titles of essential validity, of a supratemporal significance, omitting such as furnish information of a short-term character. The authors of the annotations are assumed to have experience in this work and select the titles objectively, assessing their informational contribution and excluding all subjective attitude towards topics of their own personal branches, interest, etc. The second selection is made by the editorial staff who judge the excerpted material from an overall point of view, in order that the different topical domains would be proportionally represented and yet the size of the volume would fit into the expense brackets.

Thus, the aim in view is not the broadest of selections but rather to present what is the most significant, what plays a role in the development of museology. It is likewise assumed that...
assumed that the editorial staff select important excerpts and that this selection in its final form proportionally corresponds to the overall system of published titles. The term 'proportionally' is meant adequately to present a picture of the production and is a condition of the truthfulness of this analysis. Were we to deny objectivity to both these selections, then the whole attempt to compare the various topical domains in museological production would be questionable and even misleading.

The principal data of the analysis are summarized in the appended table which shows the proportions of the various topics as given by the classification of the abstracts into 13 key words with 14 specifications. On the whole, some of the key words might be subsumed under broader sectors yielding four basic thematic groups; 1. Museum practice /1-4/, 2. Collections /5-6/, 3. Activities /7-10/, 4. Museum Types /11-13/. A percentual distribution reveals an approximately quarterly representation, so that the differences are negligible: group I /11-14/ shows a mean of 25% of annotations, group II 26%, group III 20% and group IV 27%. The last bibliographic rubric completes the data up to 100%, the data being rounded off to whole percentages since mathematical precision is not an issue here.

The main point is how the thematic groups are saturated and whether those proportions correspond to the needs of museum practice and museology. A glance at the table reveals interesting details which will be differently assessed by different individuals according to their interest, practical needs and appreciation of the topics.

From this aspect, the fundamental criterion is concre-
te need of museological information in one's practice. A museologist interested in theoretical thinking, a lecturer of museology will, naturally need far more information than a common museum worker who is expected to apply theoretical thinking in practice, i.e., to utilize information in order to attain the required standard of a professional in museum practice and not solely a researcher in one definite collection discipline.

I have stated in several studies that precisely a utilization of museological information differentiates a museum worker from a research worker in a scientific institute which is not concerned at all or partially only with conservation and application of the values of the cultural patrimony. That explains why I so vehemently enforce the view that no worker without a formal museological training i.e., with a purely single-discipline qualification may professionally function, because the museum profession is not identical with that of a research or an academic institute.

In my view, the greatest drawback and obstacle to the development of museology reside in the fact that the need of museological thinking has not been recognized so far as a prerequisite for a successful fulfilment of museology's social mission. If the lack of such thinking as a systems approach to the entire museum reality is replaced ad hoc by partial information, i.e., in a definite case, e.g., preparing a topic exhibition, the resulting state is far from satisfactory: thinking about a complex approach to the profession, museum and its tasks, cannot be supplanted in such a manner. Nonetheless, utilization of that partial informa-
tion is better than working in terms of one's own experience and subjective approaches to the given task, as this may entail the risk of squandering financial means and work capacities.

This brings us to the necessity of utilizing museological bibliographic data as the primary step to obtain a general view of what is going on in the museum world. If a museum worker is not interested in trends in museology, does not feel the need to keep informed on what is being introduced and discussed, that is a sign of resignation. Everyone should take it as his own personal problem regardless of whether the museum curator assesses his work also from the museological aspect, or satisfies himself solely with impressions as to the quantity and quality of his performance in relation to the needs of the museum that pays him.
Then, what profit can a museum worker, say an ethnographer, draw from bibliographic museological production? Naturally, he will not be interested solely in rubrics about ethnographic museums and open-air museums, for all the other groups have titles that may directly affect his work. From the first group he may learn about museological trends, sessions and symposia by ethnographers, museums reports, new museum buildings, etc. From the group "Collections" he may obtain information on acquisition problems, protection of collections, conservation of, perhaps, ethnographic objects. In the group about museum activities he might be interested not solely in results of scientific-research work, but primarily in various modes of displaying ethnographic collections as a part of the cultural heritage, or in the manner in which precisely folk culture shares in profiling regional identity and maintaining traditions.

This, of course, does not imply that the aim, the purpose of bibliography is thereby exhausted. Quite the contrary, it ought to be a stimulus, in order that topics of its interest become objects of its study by the museum worker, i.e. of definite titles to which bibliography directs his attention. Only through such a utilization of the material will he come to realize that bibliography provides irreplaceable services to everyone who has his own professional advance at heart and who is not satisfied with a routine, problem-free existence.

Before closing, just a few words about the composition of the bibliography as shown in the table. In group I, rather more attention is devoted to museum work and museology, in order to underline the need of defining competence and res-
ponsibility of the profession for its share of the care and conservation of cultural values and their application, for they are a means of expression on the part of the museum within the framework of our cultural heritage. In Group II, problems of acquisition and conservation come in for a larger share of attention: this is an expression of the need to conserve things that are perishing about us, that which should be part of the bequest to future generations as our irreplaceable share in the promotion of culture.

Dominant in Group III is the topic of exhibitions and displays; this is a sign that this area is undergoing great changes thanks to the view now being enforced that a museum is a living cultural centre, which satisfies in an optimum manner - or ought to - people's cultural needs, so that is seeks - and finds more attractive presentation programmes whose realization is not merely a matter of money, but primarily of new ideas, innovations, non-traditional approaches. The typological area shows a lack of balance in the number of annotations. However, this corresponds to the world of museums in which art museums are asserting themselves more and more, for through works of art, they help the public to understand the cultural milieu, peoples' feelings and yearnings, their way of thinking and acting far better than museums working on the basis of scientific, i.e. rational knowledge.

Museums of a technological orientation are represented far more modestly, although they enjoy great popularity among the public, because technology is a striking expression of the present-way world. It would be fitting if these two modes of knowing reality, i.e. rational and emotional
were combined, for this would ensure the necessary degree of synthesis. Although the plan to set up a museum that would confront advanced technology with abstract art— as once envisaged by protagonists of new museums in Paris— could not be carried out, this idea should not be let to die, for a union of these two means of expression of a different type and influence might yield an unsuspected efficiency in the cultivation of human consciousness.

And what to say in conclusion? Do not underestimate museological bibliography, profit by the immense potential of ideas and stimuli to improve your own work and thereby to achieve your own personal satisfaction from it, for without such satisfaction, hardly any work is successful. Man needs to experience satisfaction from his activity, for that, too, forms part of "self-realization" as meaning of a full human life!
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Mária Bezzeg

On the Museal Document

"Immediacy is in every society with rich differentiation of roles only one of the ways as the very intricate mediations appear. Thinking and research have to unveil these mediations in social reality, by the same token transcending immediacy in thought." /G.Lukács/¹

Paul Trepanier and Luc Nappen have formulated a general contemporary opinion in their paper for the present conference stating: "The object that is conserved, studied, exhibited and interpreted to differing degrees is central to the definition of the museum."² This idea leads instantly to the question of whether "object" is the most appropriate term in the case of a rock, a preserved butterfly, a photograph, voice recording, film, video or text. Since apart from the collections of objects, in a closer sence, items of this kind are to be found in museums in almost unlimited number. Another possible objection to the term "object" may
be that it is a concept from everyday life, having no scientific purpose. A text, photo or voice recording are, in the usual sense of the word, not objects. From a philosophical point of view each entity can be of course considered as an object; the concept of "object", however, for the purposes of museology fails to offer an adequate and essential definition. The term "object" is not general enough and at the same time not sufficiently concrete. It does not cover many items belonging to museology, neither does it express the fundamental difference between objects in museum collections and those of everyday use. The immediate impression may be that there is no real difference between items from the two domains. A jug is a jug in the former as well as in the latter sphere. A jug from a museum collection, however, incorporates in itself the marks of museality. It is a reminiscence, a document of an epoch of humankind, chosen and evaluated by the experts, the museologists.

The ICOM conference in London accepted a recommendation on the collection of "elements from the world contemporary culture". In this definition the greatest problem is that the term "element" does not involve specifications. Elements may belong to
widely differing items. The notion "elements" does not express any fundamental meaning about a museum's mood of being. It does not convey the idea that these elements have to document something, a period or a domain of humankind's life.

Today it is usual that museums are analysed in close relationship with humankind's cultural and natural heritage. "Heritage" is an essential but also not a duly specified term. Many other items not only museum's collections belong to that heritage. On the other hand it does not take into account the fact that museums collect documents not only from our past but from our contemporary world as well. In today's museums we don't simply find objects or elements of culture or heritage in general, but outstanding and typical documents of humankind's life / of its past and present/, i.e. museal documents.

The contemporary state of a museum's mood of being is the most developed and manifold complex of its history. The central category within this mood of being is the category of the museal document. Because of its outstanding position, due to its character affecting this whole mood of being this is the category we have to make pivotal in any discussion of theoretical museology. First of all

* By a museum's mood of being I mean the whole part of reality which is connected with museums, museology, their past and present.
let's look at the category of the document in general terms. Documents existed long before museums or for that matter systematic collection. Even in the earliest stages of the history of collection, items of ideological importance were already treated as documents. By that I mean objects belonging to famous historical figures such as the weapons of the heroes of Troy, which were adored exactly because they were considered as documents of the deeds of outstanding men. It would probably be considered sacrilege, for instance, to exhibit copies of the weapons of Trojan heroes with the comment: the heroes of Troy used weapons like these in their struggle. It cannot be maintained, however, that the category of document would achieve a dominant position in antiquity or even in later historic epochs. The domain of reference of this category gradually spreads over to newer and newer objects accumulated in collections. This very simple category only appears with any strength, however, in the most developed stages of a museum's mood of being. At earlier stages it does not penetrate any relationship connected with collection.

In the course of history the items accumulated in collections are used immediately, without recourse to mediations. The general approach is determined
by aspects of outer utility. The overwhelming question is: what use can be given to a piece of art, natural rarity, mineral or plant? So, for instance, artists used Greek and Roman sculptures as means of artistic labour during the Renaissance. In the same way books are valued for a long time only because of the knowledge they include, natural rarities are artistically formed, minerals and plants are applied in medical treatment. Later the materials accumulated in collections are perceived through mediations, they serve as resources and so are investigated in the most diverse disciplines. At the latest stage, in the contemporary world, they function as documents of a given era of humankind. These are however much richer and much more articulated documents. The documentary character of the most different remnants in this time actually realized, the category is perceived and designated, the essential feature recognised.

"Document" seems to be quite a simple category. It is in the sense of this simplicity however as modern a category as those conditions which brought it about. In this context the most important aspect is that social expectations to museum exhibitions have changed. Contemporary people are not only
curious about rarities or the results of the sciences, they are also eager to know how our ancestors lived in different times. To have documented this is possible only by means of the most diverse documents of humankind's life.

In a collection's or a museum's mood of being it is easy to observe the following tendency. The documents of humankind's life are, at the outset, generally isolated from their real context /such as works of art of individual artists, sculptors, the achievements of individual scientists or the relics of outstanding personalities/, later they are partitioned according to certain, often outer aspects /classification, typology, aesthetic aspect, chronology, history of development etc./, and nowadays with possibly the most complete presentation of their real context, approaching in a complex way the intricate social existence. Tendencies of integration, today being intensified, all over the world have accentuated the aspect of totality also in a museum's mood of being. In its realisation we find of course fundamental differences in the particular countries as well as in diverse domains of a museum's mood of being. The former practice of collection which was determined by contingent and outer aspects, later by the
approaches of specialized sciences, gradually gives space to a collecting and exhibiting practice which intends to take into account the whole natural and social being. That way of collecting which isolates the documents from their real context and partitions them according to certain outer aspects is in fact rooted in a "thinglike" outlook of reality. This way of seeing things isolates the phenomena from their context and does not take into account the fact that any phenomenon can be known and understood only in relation to its historical genesis and its place in its whole relevant context. Georg Lukács considered it to be very important to engage in polemics with this type of understanding. As he puts it, we have first of all "to defeat that stubborn semblance that in our world the 'thinglike character' of entities is a determining property of every possible object."\textsuperscript{11} From the aspect of museology the following idea of the philosopher is of special importance: "everything, even what is of material character, in its real existence is an irreversible process of complexes ..."\textsuperscript{12} Nowadays the need in museology to unveil and expose the relationships of the different items indicates that the "thinglike" understanding of being is successively surpassed by thinking in
processes and taking into account the movements of continuously progressing complexes.

The precondition that the most diverse items /objects, written texts, photographs, voice recordings, film or video recordings/ today may be conceived as documents is that all the types of these items became, as it were, indifferent as to their concrete physical state. Not very long ago among the exhibited items, apart from objects, one could find, say, written texts or photos only by way of a subsidiary illustrating role. Nowadays, however, the documentative value of items of the most diverse kind has become more and more significant. The indifference to the material medium of documents presupposes a highly developed totality of documentative items, where no one kind possesses a dominating role over any other.

To offer some philosophical foundations for these phenomena, the most general categories may emerge exclusively on the basis of very differentiated concrete developments. In this context a given item is perceived as the common content of a very great many things, sometimes of a whole. Therefore, it may be conceived not only as a concrete kind of item, as suggested by the principle, "museal documents are no less and no more than objects". The indifference
to the physical medium is in accord with a social form in which, say, the manager of exhibition planning switches backwards and forwards with ease from one kind of medium to another, the concrete kind of the documentative item being unimportant, i.e. incidental.

In the background of the mentioned phenomena there is a fertile development, which can be characterized to the effect that the "thinglike" outlook of reality is surpassed by a new approach which treats objects from the most different forms of being as resources; at the same time this "non-thinglike" outlook dethrones the "tyranny" of the object-fetishism. If the exposition of single remnants does not suffice, if social expectation demands the presentation of whole periods, then it is indispensible that both earlier and later forms of the different types of objects should be exhibited, as well as to treat, in museums, the most different documents /written, objective, voice and video recording, photo and film items/ as equally legitimate.

Up to now we have spoken about the category of document. This does not, however, express precisely enough the specificity of a museum's mood of being. As we know people endeavour to preserve documents of their activities in the most diverse domains of
social existence /think of the radio and television archives/, but the function of these documents varies to a very considerable extent. The category of the museal document characteristic of a museum’s mood of being is on the other hand the result of historical evolution. In its emergence the most important moment is as the documents of humankind’s life fulfil not their originally intended function, or do not remain in a state of unintended existence /think of individuals from natural being/, but transcending their original function in social or natural existence they begin to fulfil a new function, at the outset only for everyday thinking /for instance: reverence to the weapons of Troy’s heroes or Caesar’s sword/ and later for museological approach as well. We have in mind the elementary fact that originally table-ware is used for meals, carpets and paintings decorate rooms and inner spaces, sculptures are ornaments in homes or public places, book are read etc. And then functions change. The mentioned qualitative change in the case of works of art or books emerges easier than in that of other documents of human existence as the original function of these is closer to serve as a reminiscence of something /people look at them having aesthetic delight, read them/.
In the case of a plough for that matter its original function and its role as a piece of memory stand quite separate to each other. Apart from the domain of the sciences and the arts this change of function in all probability comes about most easily in the case of relics of famous personalities.\(^{14}\) Other documents of past epochs are transformed to parts of memory as a result of far later developments.

With the institutionalization of collecting activities, with extensive and intensive emergence of a museum's mood of being today's museums collect, preserve and analyse /on the levels of fundamental and applied research/ outstanding and typical documents of humankind's /past and contemporary/ life reflected in science, art and everyday life /thinking and practice/. A museal document may be a typical item representing humankind's general level reached in a certain epoch or an outstanding item documenting old and new phenomena of a given period.

To put it in the most general formulation: among those documents which were and are collected by individuals in diverse times as well as in contemporary museums there is not a single item which would not belong to the sphere of humankind's life. For the foundation of social being is inorganic and organic
nature, humankind's life develops to full maturity on the basis of these three levels of reality which can be separated only in thought.

This being recognized or not, museums collect documents of humankind's life. This definition holds true even if we take natural being into account because "knowing of nature's objects and processes came about only in the material exchange of nature and society". Knowledge of nature depends on how far this material exchange has progressed: the difference between documents of natural being as reflected in everyday life /thought and practice/ and in the sciences is immense indeed. When collecting natural rarities and curiosities people used to approach natural being by means of analogical thinking. It was highly characteristic to create surrounding myths. /Remember the dinosaur bones from the collection of Ferdinand II which were considered to be bones of giants./ Today natural scientific museology contributes by means of the sciences to adequate knowing of reality. The development leads from everyday thinking to scientific thought, from "thinglike" to processual perception of reality.

Why is it not enough to speak about cultural and natural heritage, or elements of world contemporary culture as far as museums are concerned? Because
what has been accumulated in the course of history
in the context of the most different intentions is
"an open book of human essential forces".\textsuperscript{17} Collections
and museums were interpreted for a long time only
from the aspect of their external uses /certain
collections contributed to the work of pharmacists,
others met the needs of education or illustration/.
It is as a result of later developments that this
domain of reality is interpreted in relation to
human essence. And we can grasp on precisely this
point the most essential specificity of a museum's
mood of being. Contemporary museums do not simply
educate, inform, popularize science or entertain.
Similar activities are also performed in a lot of
other institutions. Museums have however their
specific place among other institutions due to their
decisive specificity. "The specific properties of an
existing thing are no less than its genuine possibili-
ties", as Lukács puts it.\textsuperscript{18} From this it follows
that museums should not move in the direction of
"creating spectacles at all costs" or "bringing
about communities if needed also without museal
documents". Museums are able to exert influences
upon people because there is a continuity in the
context of which every individual is part of
humankind's species development and as such is offered by museums the possibility to meet with a stage of the path covered by mankind till now, with a section of the development of the species. By the same token he is able to experience the fact that he is an heir of the past, a member of the whole of humankind of past and present. In this way he can ascend to the level of contemporary human species. Museums are different from other domains for which the mentioned definition also holds true /sciences and arts/ that the function of recollection is fulfilled in museums by means of outstanding and typical documents of humankind's life.19

Rethinking the boundaries? - poses the question the present conference. The answer is unambiguously affirmative. If museums are to be defended from heterogeneous influences of the most different origins, if they are to preserve their specific and genuine character, then we have to rethink the boundaries of museums, strengthening their basic specificity, the category of the museal document, thereby meeting the challenges of the contemporary world.
Bezzeg/15


5 The symposion organized by ICOFOM in 1985 proposes the theme "Originals and Substitutes" - to my mind this theme fails to grasp the fundamental question. For this is that of museal document.

6 In the following analysis I use the analysis of the category of labour given by marx. /The Hungarian edition: MEM Vol. 13, Budapest: Kossuth Könyvkiadó, 1965, p. 169f./

7 "Special reverence enjoyed those relics which belonged to famous personalities. As Vitellius writes Caesar's sword was in the temple of Mars. The dagger
enabled emperor Otto to commit suicide decorated the Roman church of Cologne. The dagger of Ecavinus with which he wanted to kill Nero in 65 was placed in the temple of Fortuna. The clothes of king Servius Tullius were, according to Plinius, also kept in Rome. The ring of Polycrates was demonstrated in the temple Concordia of Rome."

In the temple Ilium identified by the Romans with Troy were exposed the weapons of Paris and the Homeric heroes. József Korek, Gyűjtemények, múzeumok, muzeológia /Collections, museums and museology/, Manuscript, Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó, 1976, p. 16f.

"In the workshops of artists as at the master Mantegna or Francesco Squarcione in Padova the Greek and Roman sculptures served in fact as means of work, as models of production." Lanfranco Binni-Giovanni Pinna, A múzeum- Egy kulturális gépezet története és működése a XVI. századtól napjainkig. Budapest, Gondolat, 1986, p. 16.

The "use of plants, animals and minerals in medical therapy gave the whole task of identification a manifestly practical purpose". Giuseppe Olmi, "Science- honour- metaphor: Italian cabinets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries", in: The Origins of Museums, The cabinet of curiosities

10 "...museum objects can really be also attested documents..." Z. Stránský, "A múzeumi kiállítások muzeológiai irányelvei" /Museological principles of museum exhibitions/, in: A korszerű múzeumi kiállítások tartalmi, didaktikai és esztétikai problémái /Substantial, didactic and aesthetic problems of up-to-date museum exhibitions/, Budapest: Múzeumi Restaurátor és Módszertani Központ, 1978, p. 68.

"The history museum treats artifacts or objects as social documents—often as important for the historian, argue the museum curators, as the library’s printed books or manuscripts. These artifacts may have many forms; they may be associated with political events, military armament and equipment, industrial or technological machines and processes, or buildings, furnishing and gardens." Edward P. Alexander, Museums in Motion - An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1982, p. 120.


13 On this question I have written in ICOFOM Study Series /Vol. 20/: "Museal Document and Specificity—Two major, central categories of the genre of museum exhibition".

14 Cf. note 7.

15 G. Lukács, op. cit., p. 291.

16 "There were also minerals, fossil fishes and 'giants' bones', deriving in fact from long-dead dinosaurs."

Elisabeth Scheicher, The Collection of Archduke Ferdinand II at Schloss Ambras: its purpose, composition and evolution, in: The Origins of Museums, p. 32. And also: "Although he showed some interest in naturalia in their raw form, Ferdinand was more attracted by them as material for carvings, particularly those conserving something of the natural form of the original. Of principal interest in this field are the corals, carved as mythological figures or beasts and mounted in cabinets /mostly in appropriate setting of marine shells and snails/, partly gilded and populated with small animals of glass or bronze."


17 As Lukács quotes Marx' Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts /op. cit., p. 229f./: economy is an open book of human's essential faculties, a kind
of sensibly graspable phsychology, up to this time never understood in its relationship with man's essence, but from an external utilitarian point of view.

18 Lukács, op. cit., p. 185.

19 In this respect I found my considerations upon Lukács insights concerning human species who endeavoured to reconstruct the fundamental conception of Marx. Cf. Georg Lukács, op. cit., p. 79f.
I. THE OBJECT AS OBSTACLE AND LIMIT

The notion of object (from the Latin "objectum") presupposes a notion of man/subject, in terms of action, is placed as an obstacle. The relation between the subject and the object is based on reflection that the dimension of the action corresponds to the act of leaning towards it.

Once this is understood, the object will be the limit, the delimitation of an activity or an operation. It could be asked: Who establishes the delimitation in this bipolar relation?

If the answer points to the object, it will be considered as data, as something ready and finished. If the answer points to the man/subject, the delimitation will be a pure by self-imposed invention, without any direct correspondence to the structures of reality. A third answer, however, is possible which points to the relation itself, to both poles (man/subject and object) in a system of constant exchange.

Although both poles are linked, each one of them is also a system of relation. In this case, the delimitation is constructed, that is, the object is historically built, and the man/subject historically established. According to Pedro Demo "(...) the science that works on a built reality is more and more accepted", and therefore, its is a possible way of seeing reality, though never the only or the final one. 

The so-called scientific disciplines present fragmented points of view. Demo elucidates this idea: "Although they are ways of conceiving reality, they are also ways of not knowing it, since is reduced to a parcial dimension. It is fundamental to understand that research is an indispensable tool for the comprehension of reality, but that, unable to exhaust its abundant complexity, it is also unknown, once it is parcial, distorts facts, emphasizes its own ideology and makes simple dimensions become absolute." 

II. THE OBJECT OF STUDY IN MUSEOLOGY

Museology and the museums are not excluded from this rule: they are also a specific way of looking, understanding and interpreting reality. When Freyre understood that museology and the museums are fragmented, he finally asked: "But aren't true, that museums made of shreds or substantial fragmentes of these realities?" Varine Bohan also states that "No museum is total".

Accepting temporarily, museology as being a discipline that investigates the relation between man/subject and object/cultural property in a space/scenery named museum or even out of it, and recognizing that man, the cultural property and space/museum are part of the same reality historically determined, we have then beginning of delimitation of the object of the museology study.

The temporary acceptance of this delimitation is linked to the recognition that the object of museology study is in process and also to the fact that this delimitation does not distinguishes well museology from other disciplines, such as Social Psychology that, according to Abraham Moles, studies "the relation between Man and Society - or those that happen in the contemporaneous world."

It is important to observe, however, that in observing the relation pointed before, museology withdraws from the empirical objectivity, that imposes data on the man/subject and
also to the subjective relativism that idealizes and fancies reality. This procedure allows that museology, and; more exactly, the researcher in delimitating and building the object, turns it into a critical and processual way. Reality, the object of research, the researcher, the museum, society, the museum’s object, are all under metamorphosis with different rhythms in time (short and long time durations).

Three basics and inter-related terms are in evidence in the museology conception here presented:

1. Space/Scenary
2. Object/Cultural property
3. Man/Subject

These three terms (more or less enlarged) are present in the definition of museum itself (11) as a traditional one or as a contemporaneous museum.

In a superficial definition, based on common sense, a museum is understood as being composed of a building, a collection and a public. From this verification, Varine Bohan came up with the possibility of one thinking of a new kind of museum, that would consider not the building, but the region or territory; not the collection, but the patrimony; not the public, but the community (12).

It is not hard to realize that in the case of conception of museology we are faced with a matrix. The terms patrimony, collection and object/cultural property puts us before the dimension of time or memory. This is clear through the term patrimony, that can be understood as heritage or specific cultural fragments transmitted from generation to generation of a time A to a time B. The terms territory, building and space/scenary places us in front of the dimension of space. And the terms community or local society, public and man/subject introduces in this relation the human dimension, the social and historical consciousness. Without this last dimension, museology and the museums would lose their purpose. Nevertheless it is necessary not to forget that the terms: community or local society, public and man/subject hide social groups and classes, specific and differentiated individuals.

III. SEEKING FOR THE LOST OBJECT: THE INVENTORY

Before we try to rehearse the finding of an object for research in museums, it is convenient to enlighten the following points:

I. Scientific research is not an exclusivity of universities. Institutions such as the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, the Rui Barbosa Foundation, the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation etc., are deeply involved (13) with scientific research. Side by side with these institutions we can find (or we should find) museums that, by definition, (14) have, among others, the function of researching.

II. Here, research is understood as “the construction of the original knowledge, according to certain scientific demands.” (15).

Understanding the matrix cited before as a museum institution definer, we will also understand the different possibilities of constructing the object of research in the case of museum. Independently of the institution’s classification, the three elements of the matrix can be taken as research objects. It is important to observe that these three elements are in constant inter-relation, and inserted in a reality in transit.

The questions of the researcher may be emphasizing only one, two or three aspects or yet, their inter-relation. The field delimited by these three elements in an exchanging system with reality is also the field where theory and museological practice are developed. According to this point of
view, it is though the matrix that one can try to define the specificity or research work in museums.

From the definition of this specificity, new specificities can be based, for instance, on the classification of museum institutions (geografical localization, thematic field, administration sphere, etc.)

Following this order of ideas, it is quite evident that the so-called museological research, when orienting itself exclusively towards one of the angles of the matrix overlooks to consider museums and museology in all their complexity.

This is equivalent to state that only the existence of a collection can define a museum. This reduced perspective does not consider, for example, the fact that the collection can be either starting point (or source) of scientific research, or the reaching point, the materialization or the final result of a study process (16).

Without pretending, by no means, to exhaust the possibilities of approach of the matrix, aiming the construction of the original knowledge we could raise the following points:

1. In considering the patrimony, the collection and the cultural property as object of research, it is interesting to notice that:

1.1 Both witnesses, the present or the absent ones are clarifying, as well. The confrontation between the absence and the present of cultural property in time and space can be useful to elucidate the preservation's ideological trend and the construction of sets of cultural property.
1.2 We can work either with the museum's cultural property or with the potentially museological object.
1.3 We can work either approach a set of cultural properties as well as an isolated cultural property.
1.4 The forms of acquisition and disposal a collection; the techniques of documentation, protection, preservation, conservation and restoration can become objects of research.
1.5 The exhibited collection and the storage room, as well as the exhibiting and storing techniques can be transformed into objects of research.
1.6 It is possible to judiciously approach the relation between a cultural patrimony with researchers, social groups, the public, the physical space with original context, with the environment, with the museografic furniture, the popular mythology, in different levels of time.
1.7 The relation between a museum's collection with others, as well as the patrimony preserved out of museums can become an object of research.
1.8 There are 'n' possibilities of approaches.

2. When considering local society or the community, the public and the man/subject as an object of research, it is interesting to observe that:

2.1 It is important to know the profile of the usualy and of the current museum public, as well as to know the potential public: those who could come to the museum but actually do not.
2.2 The public behaviour (isolated or in group) in and outside a museum can be an object of
research.
2.3 The necessities, the desires and the questions of social groups and individuals are not
previously known.
2.4 The value of a museum's cultural property can be interesting for the researching field.
2.5 The educational works and exhibition of cultural property can be developed according to
scientific criteria.
2.6 The relation between individuals and the social groups with the collection, the physical
space, the museum professionals, the building's architecture, with memory, time and the notions
of conservation, etc. can be of great interest for research.
2.7 There are 'n' approaching possibilities.

3. When considering the territory, the building and the space/scenery as research objects, it is
interesting to observe that:

3.1 There is a relation capable, between territory, environment and cultural property's
preservation.
3.2 The image of the museum's building in popular mythology is also subject for research.
3.3 The relations of physical space, museografic techniques, the security system, the public,
the illumination system, can be considered as research objects.
3.4 The history of the building and the institution related or not with similar buildings and
institutions are a possible object.
3.5 As the museum institution continues expanding itself, a new field for research is opened.
3.6 There are 'n' approaching possibilities.

4. When considering the relation between the three elements of the matrix as research
objects, it is interesting to notice that:

4.1 The process of "musealization" is a vast field for research.
4.2 The image of the museum varies through time and space and can be scientifically
researched.
4.3 The museum theory and practice can be taken as a research object.
4.4 The relation between the museum's institution and the different fields of knowledge as
well as the inter-relations between the three elements of the matrix are also possible
research objects.
4.5 There are 'n' other approaching possibilities.

IV. FROM THE KNOWN OBJECT TO THE IGNORED OBJECT

From what was shown here, we suppose it is clear that the field of study in museology -
as a discipline that deals, among others, with representations and memory contents - is also the
field of interdisciplinarity.

As said before, the research object in the case of museums is located in a field here,
called 'matrix term'. This object, however, can only exist for the researcher as long as he directs
his "eye" to it, with questions and problems. Without questionings and problems, the object is
lost. The question proposed by the researcher give the tone of his social commitment. Wandering
by the obvious, as Paulo Freire would say, we can affirm: "the reason for research is ignorance".
This way, the construction of our research object has great dose of ignorance. And as we reach a
situation of a new knowledge, it will be necessary to admit we also arrived at a situation of a
new ignorance for, then, a new object be built and placed before the "eyesight" as a limit and as an
obstacle.
NOTES

3. ABBAGNO, Nicola. op. cit., p. 694.

pg 18


11. According to article number 3 in the Museum's International Council's Statutes (ICON) cited in the Professional Ethics' code of the Museum's International Council: "The museum is a permanent institution without profit proposals, at the service of society and its development, open to the public. It also researches material witnesses of man and his environment, acquires, conserves, communicates and exhibits them with the purpose of study, education and pleasure".
14. See the definition for Museum: note 11.
15. DEMO, Pedro. op. cit. pg. 7

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RESEARCH PROJECT:

"DISCOURSE AND TRAJECTORY OF THE MUSEOLOGICAL
THOUGHT IN BRAZIL AS OF THE KNOWLEDGE'S PRODUCTION
ANALYSIS"

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Museology, in the last twenty years, has been going through an accelerated transformation process. Initially conceived as a disciplin that aimed at studying and organizing museums, museology today is looking for new paradigms by which it may be able to re-orientate and re-define itself. This transformation process can be clearly perceived in the international sphere, and has its reflections in the national one.

The year of 1992 demarcates the 60th anniversary of the Escola de Museologia (Museology School) in Brazil. If we should try to take stock of production and transference of knowledge in the museological area in this period, what should we find? Which transformations in the theoretic and practical fields of museology can we perceive? Is it possible as of this production's analysis to identify a museological discourse and thought in Brazil? These questions supplied the basis to the conception of the project Discourse and Trajectory of the
Museological Thought in Brazil as of the Knowledge's Production Analysis, begun in March, 1992.

The scantiness of review works and the lack of sistematization of the museological production in Brazil makes it difficult to establish a panorama that can turn it possible to verify in which stage the knowledge in the area finds itself and which trajectory (or trajectories) it has been following. Through the recognition of this problematic, we elaborated this project that aims to survey, register and analyse the bibliographic production edited in the museological area, in the period included between 1932 and 1992.

The general criteria chosen to direct the charting of titles, authors and themes are the following:

- in relationship to the interest fields:
  those which constitute the general museology, specialized museology and applied museology

- in relationship to the authors' universe:
  Brazilian and foreign authors published in Brazil, besides thesis and dissertations submitted to the public defense

- in relationship to the temporal demarcation:
  1932 - Creation of the 1st Museology course in Brazil
  1972 - Round table of Santiago do Chile
  1992 - The present time
These general criteria sub-divide themselves into distinct categories which have the role of organizing, directing and selecting the data during all the research's phases.

Three main stages constitute the project's operational systematics: the data gathering (which includes means such as questionnaires and interviews), the sistematization of the gathered material, and the critical analysis of the raised production.

To our understanding, this enterprise, still in motion, will occasion two main products: a reference work and a consultation one.

We are sure, nevertheless, that it is perfectly possible to withdraw from these products various sub-products such as: the trajectory of the educative-cultural actions; an identification of emerging paradigms; evolution of the cultural goods' conservation techniques; the transformation of the museum concept; constancies and changes in the expositions' field; etc...

Free from the fact of the project being in motion, some observations were made and can already be indicated:

1) There is a bibliographic production in the museological area. Although modest, if compared to other knowledge areas, this production already shows itself as sufficiently representative;
2) The knowledge produced in the area finds itself scattered in specialized and non-specialized periodicals, without presenting any systematics. This fact makes it enormously difficult to regain any information in this field;

3) There is a deep lack of appropriate means of promotion to the diffusion of the produced knowledge. The few specialized periodicals do not have continuity;

4) A good part of the accomplished studies is found in the area of applied museology.

We understand that this research will be able to contribute to a better knowledge of the trajectory of the museological thought in Brazil, in the degree that it will put in evidence its formation and evolution, its fundamental points and characteristics, the theoretic principles and tendencies involved in this dynamics.

The relationships with the museological thought developed outside of Brazil may be pointed out, but not yet carefully examined. We hope that other countries develop similar enterprises so as to render possible the scientific interchange and the establishment of referential parameters.
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ON ART AND ART MUSEUMS:

Teija Hihnala
MA, museum educator

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ART MUSEUMS AS MUSEUMS *** ART COLLECTIONS / WORKS OF ART AS MUSEOLOGICAL OBJECTS (MUSEUM OBJECTS) *** A PERMANENT EXHIBITION AS RECONTEXTUALIZED REALITY

An analysis of the work carried out by art museums as seen from the perspectives of museology and what is generally referred to as the art world, and, in parallel, an exhibition project and a survey made by the use of questionnaires.

The present study in the context of museological studies

Up to the present, museological research has seldom touched upon art museums and their functions. Neither have art museums themselves showed much interest in museological viewpoints. This piece of research, which will be carried out in the near future, can therefore be regarded as something of a pioneer work in its field. Our objective is to define an art collection/ a work of art as a museological object. Another essential task is to study whether this object in some respect differs from that museum object (work of art or art collection) which art museums in their present form are devoted to preserving, documenting and displaying. We also need to go into a number of fundamental questions: What is an art museum? In the context of museological institutions, does it differ from other museums? And, if that is the case, why? Further research into the overall effects of this potential difference also appears relevant. Focussing on permanent exhibitions, we intend to examine how the difference is reflected in art museums’ tasks of recording and communication. Our hypothesis is that by giving up traditional forms of presenting works of art and art collections in which these are primarily conceived as art historical documents, and by setting out the objects to be exhibited (also in the case of entire art collections or parts of one) in a social, cultural, historical, and, what is most important, in a human frame of reference, we can offer exhibitions that are easier for the audience to approach - exhibitions in which art no longer stands aloof from everyday life.

The study aims high: at defining the concept of an art museum (in museological terms) and outlining its duties, seeking for solutions and choises that would prove relevant and applicable also outside Finland. In spite of this attempt at wider perspectives, the starting-point for our study is practical and national. The data is mostly from Finnish museums and collections, whereas the references to be cited are from international literature.

An art museum: qu’est-ce que c’est?

ICOM’s definition for a museum indisputably comprises art museums, yet they seem unwilling to give up their role of a "special museum". Even when serving as a section of a museum of cultural history, art museums often maintain a particular standing, due to their identification with a specific branch of science (art history) and association with "the art world" or "the institution of art" as defined by Arthur C. Danto, George Dickie or Peter Bürger (Arthur Danto, The art world in The Journal of Philosophy 61/64, George Dickie,
Aesthetics. An introduction, 1971; Peter Bürger, Theory of the Avant-Garde, Minneapolis, 1984). Except for epoch exhibitions so fashionable a few years ago, art museums have rarely made concessions to other domains, such as cultural history.

Can art museums be regarded as special museums of cultural history? If that is the case, how is this conception reflected in their functions and the outlining of their tasks? Douglas Crimp’s fairly recent book On the Museum’s Ruins (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MIT Press, 1990/ Museo raunioilla, Hameenlinna, 1990) caused a well-deserved yet short-lived sensation among Finnish museum professionals, especially in the sphere of art museums. All self-respecting Finnish museum professionals naturally studied the book, but Crimp’s critical views never inspired any profound discussions on art museums and their values. In Finland, Crimp’s critique soon became embedded in the art world and the museum institution, which may have been the case elsewhere, too. This phenomenon of course brings to mind Duchamp’s ready-made objects, which were intended as a critique of modern art but became an integral part of it.

Therefore, despite all conventional definitions, the relevant question still remains: how should the concept of the art museum be defined and who is entitled to do it? Which is the more adequate definition: the one stated by the ICOM or, say, Marcel Broodthaers’ characterization drawing on his numerous museum projects carried out in various parts of Europe and in the US: “MUSEUM
- - - Rectangular director. Round servant - - -
- - - Triangular ticket-seller. Square-shaped guard - -

- - - No people allowed. This is a place where games will be played every day until the end of the world.

The duties of the art museum

In principle, the tasks of art museums do not differ from those of other museums. Regardless of how the art museum is defined, the following model can be applied in grouping its functions:

1. Preservation
2. Research
3. Communication

(Peter van Mensch, Methodological museology; or, towards a theory of museum practice in Objects of Knowledge, ed. by Susan Pearce, 1990)

Our study will focus on art museums and how they carry out the responsibilities of preservation and communication. What do they preserve and on whose terms; what do they communicate and on whose terms? These stand out as fundamental questions, not only from the museological point of view but also with regard to the art museum as an art institution or as an expression of the art world. Another aspect of particular interest is, of course, collections donated to / housed in art museums, in many cases the museums’ historical corner-stones. What is the relation of these collections to collections accumulated by the museum itself, for example?
Our study will also be very much concerned with that picture of art which is rendered by art museums through their collections and exhibitions. Is the reality preserved in museums actually a reality of their own? In what respects does the conception of reality conveyed by art museums differ from, say, the view presented by museums of cultural history?

A work of art/ an art collection as a museological object

The ICOFOM meeting held in 1991 took up the question whether museum objects are mute by nature. The same question can with good reason also be extended to works of art displayed by museums. We are naturally well-informed about such particulars as the maker and name of a certain work of art, the techniques used by the artist, the year that work was completed, and the style it represents. But does this suffice as a frame of reference for any work of art? And how should the context for an entire art collection be drawn up?

Could a museological approach open up new vistas for art museums? Can the information structure model be applied when analyzing information contents of works of art / art collections? Can the following four synchronic levels of information content be perceived in works of art / art collections: the structural, functional and contextual level and the level of significance? These aspects constitute an object’s biography, which can further be analyzed in terms of three diachronic levels of identity: the conceptual, factual and actual stages (Mencsh: Methodology...)

In the field of museology, one of the controversial topics has been what in actual fact happens to an object when it is taken to a museum. As we all know a great deal of essential information is naturally lost in any new setting. But how does the museum as a new environment affect a work of art? The question is by no means a simple one, especially in the case of modern and/or contemporary art. That is why we are eager to investigate whether the analysis described above also proves applicable to these art historical periods and to related museums and art collections.

Can this structural model be used in further analyses of the information value of an entire art collection? Could the results derived from a study of this kind outline the communicative function of art museums in a new way, offering new challenges (duties)?

CASE STUDY:
Permanent exhibitions as a means of communicating art collections and works of art as museological objects

The Alvar Aalto Museum in Jyväskylä houses a private collection of about thousand works of art. It has been preserved on the museum’s premises for some 20 years without a permanent exhibition space. Regardless of this fact, the collection stands out as the museum’s most significant collection, not only for its art historical or art educational aspects but also for its human value. We were offered an opportunity to set up an exhibition of about 200 works to be shown in two cities outside Jyväskylä. We seized the opportunity and built a basic exhibition out of the vast collection - wishing for a happier future with a permanent setting in an art museum.

We set out to build a permanent exhibition of another kind, designed for an art museum of another kind. We aimed at creating an exhibition that would be faithful to the art collector, to art itself and to the society which was the overall background, both for the works of art that belong to the collection and to the collector’s pursuits. All those works and the whole collection, which had not as yet been generally recognized as one, certainly deserved a
context. It called for a frame of reference which would open up spectators' eyes, so that they could approach art "with alert curiosity" and "for love of the arts", as Jalo Sihtola, the collector himself put it.

Our selection offers one interpretation, and numerous others would be equally possible. Yet ours may still be slightly more possible for the public at large, since to be able to grasp it, one needs not be familiar with art or art history, for example.

In order to see if we were anywhere near reality in our hypotheses, we also planned a survey of the audience's reactions to the exhibition. Questionnaires and interviews will provide information for subsequent studies of the new solutions we applied.
THE LANGUAGE OF EXHIBITIONS

The main goal of this presentation is to communicate that the topic of the 1991 ICOFOM symposium in Vevey/Switzerland continues to interest me very strongly and that I have the intention to pursue research on it. The aim is to elaborate a kind of framework for exhibition interpretation, to create tools for reading exhibitions museologically.

In view of the still highly fragmentary and unfinished character of my considerations I prefer not to give a paper but just to mention some points showing in which direction I want to go on.

- The starting point was the Alimentarium's 1991 exhibition "700 Years of Food. Or: The 7 Exhibition Displays" and the related publication on "Food in Switzerland from the Late Middle Ages to the Present Day and Ways of Depicting the History of Food in a Museum", where I tried to reflect on the visual representation of history in three parts: "CONTENT: The History of Food"; "FORM: The Museum Medium. The Central Role of the Object and the Visual Representation of History"; and "IMPLEMENTATION: An Exhibition". (The latter two parts, in 1991 only available in French and German, will be published in English in ICOFOM Study Series 20.) The exhibition displayed seven types of visualization (seven "exhibition languages") of the same topic corresponding to seven ways of manipulating the objects:
  - The object is mute: The museum as store-house
  - The object gives pleasure: The museum as dream-world
  - The object illustrates: The museum as history-book
  - The objects affects the emotions: The museum as theatre
  - The object educates: The museum as school
  - The object signifies: The museum as forum for discussion
  - The object testifies: The museum as narrative.

The very lively and fruitful discussions we had during the 1991 ICOFOM symposium as well as the papers presented stimulated me to rethink the topic. In addition, the preparations for the four terms of postgraduate studies in museology at Basel University (October 1992 - July 1994) and for a course on visualization of history which I am giving at Zurich University (winter term 1992/93) make me go more deeply into the problem. I hope to publish on it in the not too distant future.

- Concerning the seven approaches of my exhibition, I abandoned the idea of language for the first display, it being rather a random assembly of objects, in some way comparable to a dictionary. The others represent languages or better semiotic systems with different rules for the selection of the elements and their combination (to compare with a kind of grammar). Is it possible to make groups of several semiotic systems such as object-oriented, theme-oriented, taxonomy-oriented,
community-oriented exhibitions, etc., and to combine them into one language family? By analogy with linguistic terminology there are three levels to be distinguished: system (one language, one tongue) (level of what theoretically would be functional) - norm (several languages, several tongues) (what has become functional) - speech (parole) (concrete implementation). In semiotic terms it can be said that all the elements of an exhibition are signs with a material aspect (the signifier) and a meaning (the signified); the objects refer to true reality (the referent), which needs interpretation. Beyond that a boundless number of connotations are created. Museums offer direct experience, but always mediated by the means of the exhibition, when the object is present (metonymy) and indirect experience when it is absent and when we have to use a cognitive substitute to explain the real thing (metaphor).

- Concerning the question of the communication process, especially with respect to the sender and the message, different opinions are put forward: is the curator or the community or the artist/manufacturer the sender of a message visualized in the exhibition or is the object itself (its form, material, meaning) in the beginning and the curator a kind of mediator for its message? What is the message-bearer? The object or the exhibition as a whole? I think that we could distinguish two levels: on a general level the exhibition maker conveys a message with the exhibition medium (objects - by far the most important element - pictures, texts, films, colours, showcases, lighting, etc.) to the visitors. On a lower level and within this general framework, every displayed object is interpreted by the curator, since the mute object itself says nothing about its first life outside the museum. Besides this process going from the object via the curator to the visitor there exists of course a direct object-visitor appeal, described in the next paragraph as personal reality; with respect to the message of the exhibition this fact can interfere with the intended communication, but represents, on the visitor's side, a fantastic source of emotions and inspirations! Since there is, in an exhibition, no simple technical communication process and since every visitor has his own cultural codes the decoded messages never fully and exactly correspond to the intended ones (polysemic character of the object and the exhibition). That's why it is not possible to control the communication process in an exhibition.

- To describe the complex man-object relationship I introduced three types of reality, considering that the object is only meaningful in context with man (and generally with other objects). The true reality, the original meaning and functional context of the objects, their utilitarian function, exists in everyday life but cannot be transferred into a museum - whatever the kind of visualization. In the exhibition an imaginary reality, a kind of fiction, is created, because the object has been taken out of its original context. Such a "museological situation" exists, of course, in every museum, but it can also be created outside the walls of a museum: restored buildings, preserved old towns or sawmills, even in our homes... This phenomenon, generally called musealization, is extremely widespread today, as never before in history. The third reality, finally, called personal reality, may exist inside or outside the museological situation. It happens whenever the symbolic function of an object prevails over its utilitarian function;
in this case the object is detached physically or intellectually from its existing context and introduced into a personal framework, where it can give pleasure, spur memories, evoke knowledge or make us think on any topic, according to the personal biography and the cultural context wherein the person lives.

• It is evident that such sharp distinctions between three realities are mainly made for their heuristic value; life is - as good luck would have it - much more complex; so, for instance, the functional and the symbolic value of an object are both present at the same time and in the same situation, but one of them may predominate. Finally, all these three realities change constantly, since they don't consist of stable structures, but of a relationship between man and objects (and also among objects).

• I would be very glad to receive criticisms and suggestions on this topic!
"The museum is the Universe in all its expressions. The museum is mankind and all that surrounds him".

Andre Desvallee

LET'S LEARN TO LIVE ON OUR PLANET

More so, the slogan should read "Beware of man's action on the Planet" since apparently there is no serious awareness of the environmental degradation problems that affect all of us.

If we think that our own actions will protect the environment - of which we are a part - what at first appears as an individual action will then become a general conviction. "To defend ecology is to defend ourselves".

The air we breathe has no borders, the seas and rivers we are polluting have no geographical boundaries. The sun, the rain and the wind can be found worldwide. It does not matter whether the countries in the region are rich or poor. We are facing changes in climate that affect all nations. Nowadays there are a series of natural catastrophes that cannot be foreseen despite all technological progress.

Aren't these events the result of our irresponsible acts?

Unfortunately the problem does not seem to have been correctly understood. During the International Conference held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, "The World Summit", it was noted that several industrialized countries are not willing to sufficiently reduce some of their activities that contaminate the most. Such countries which have a high degree of consumption and strong protectionist policies adopt certain attitudes as if the consequences of an ecological disaster would never reach them.

As Lucio Mansilla, a La Nación journalist, says, the ECO '92 Meeting generated norms and mechanisms for preservation not taking into account that the countries they are directed at should participate in their elaboration.

Quoting Dr. Nafis Sadik's words "... for development programmes to be efficient both national and local initiatives should be taken into consideration...". It would be essential to bear in mind this thought when projecting rules and regulations for conservation of the environment oriented to Third World countries.
Although in the last few years Governments have started to elaborate laws on the matter, the Non-governmental Organizations' concern has been greater. They have tried to make the population aware of the problems and to implement projects on a better use of the natural resources whilst claiming for economic growth not to continue destroying biodiversity.

**All countries have made their contribution**

As regards degradation of the environment, no country is exempt from the responsibility of having contributed to the issue. It is not only the poor countries, with their big families and less advanced technologies, that generate this environmental unbalance.

If the whole of mankind, especially those that rule the nations, would become aware that the responsible use of natural resources will benefit humanity; that they are part of such humanity which is to be protected and thus, part of the ecological system, they would finally understand that all efforts made to attain a better quality of life should lead to a better use of the resources offered by nature and of the technology created by man.

Air pollution, emissions of carbon dioxide, nuclear plants - that lack the necessary safety measures -, manufacturing of chemical arms, deforestation and indiscriminate hunting for commercial purposes - which has brought about the progressive disappearance of several species - are some of Human Being's actions that endanger future life on earth.

**Poverty and Ignorance**

These two concepts should be analyzed coherently to avoid false ideas.

In the poorest societies there is still a strong tradition with respect to nature. Maybe it is these societies that can best survive to environmental unbalance. They know exactly what surrounds them and do not damage it, using it according to their needs.

A lot has been said about poverty but little has been put in concrete terms. In this respect, it is worth recalling Dr. N. Sadik's words "Many programmes to fight against poverty have failed because the beneficiaries did not participate in their elaboration and implementation and many of them have not shown the expected results because they arise from contradictory policies".
Nowadays the schools are including in their curricula subjects related to environmental education. In the most developed countries where there exist more efficient educational policies, an attempt is being made to make children aware of the importance of the Earth. The least developed countries, that have deficient educational policies, are also including subjects related to this issue, besides the contributions made by Non-Governmental Institutions.

On the other hand, a great number of the world's inhabitants do not attend school. They are elderly people, professionals, housewives, pensioners. These people need the information of the mass media so as to get to know the real ecological problems. If somehow this information does not reach them, they will ignore the issues that will affect their future.

Ignorance as to the daily activities that damage our environment can be found both in industrialized and developing countries. United Nations statistics indicate that the greatest consumers are the countries with the latest technology and the highest economic status among their population.

In a world where consumption policies have advanced at a great speed under the slogan of a better quality of life, the image of comfortable life has extended to all regions, not taking into consideration the adequate use of technology and natural resources vis-a-vis consumption abuses.

It is in view of the above that I consider ignorance is the common element we must face both in the north and the south.

**MUSEUMS AND MUSEOLOGY**

Human beings who throughout the centuries have worked on the development of techniques for a longer and better life - the results whereof we all somehow enjoy - have also generated a highly competitive society that is isolating them from their natural and cultural entourage.

At present the slogan seems to be that nature is only good enough to be used and traded; and society to be induced to greater consumption and greater wealth for just a few. Vis-a-vis this situation we wonder what is happening to the culture of the people, their traditions, their values..., do they just exist to be shown in a museum?

If we consider that the foundations of the different societies can be found in the museums which not only lodge and show the cultural objects produced by society and the elements of nature, but also enable us to acknowledge the successes and failures of mankind throughout history; then why haven't
preservation policies been encouraged at international level through these institutions, since the environment is humanity's heritage.

Isn't this the right time to ask whether the Museum has become inserted in today's reality and to implement projects for preserving the future of mankind?

Has the museological entourage become aware of recent past events and of the uncertain future we are facing?

When one talks about museums and the environment, of possible actions, the "difference" between first and third world countries arises once again. When one thinks of projects aimed at the preservation of the biosphere, the difference between technical and economic means of developed and developing countries appears as a priority matter. It is necessary to submit a thorough proposal concerning the role of the museum in the preservation of life on the planet and to define clear policies with concrete objectives that may be implemented in all regions with the technical means within reach.

**Ignorance is no heritage of the poor countries**

In the big cities of countries with advanced technology, the inhabitants are induced to an excessive consumption of products offered by the market. These persons who are attracted by the great publicity of the articles are not aware of the environmental damage produced by their disproportionate use which will, in turn, affect them.

In third world countries, inhabitants are induced to an inadequate utilization of natural resources and to the employment of a technology which is no longer used in the northern countries, imposing on them a model of life that, although alien to their cultural context, appears as an ideal model. For example, these people know what happens with an indiscriminate felling of trees, but are obliged to do so since they have no other option. It is the duty of the professionals related to museology and museums to defend the natural heritage of the region and the world by disseminating knowledge on the rational use of resources and the recent progress attained by mankind.

It is only through education and information – which are both inherent to museum activities – that we may overcome ignorance. As Francesco di Castri says "...to leave behind this handicap it is necessary to change the rules that govern the international market..." and "...a structural modification is necessary with respect to the north-south relations". Why shouldn't the museums of the different regions start working jointly?
It would be convenient for the museology professionals of the different disciplines related to the environment to set forth the need to start work on a joint project.

The museum is the institution with the greatest resources to make citizens aware of environmental problems. It is worth recalling the expression put forward at the ICOFOM LAM Regional Meeting as to the need for "actions to be defined so that the museum as an institution implement them vis-a-vis the global change that is taking place on Earth, encouraging the elaboration of programmes for disseminating knowledge on the imminent dangers for the Planet".

Only joint actions between north and south may revert the existent situation.

Let's not forget that if nowadays the museums show a past that constitutes a referral point for our present, it is NOW that we must work for the present to become the referral point of the future.

Let's defend our planet and act in favour of Science and Technology with a view to attaining sustainable development. Let's learn to live on Earth.

As an answer to the query set forth in the title of the forthcoming General ICOM Conference in Quebec, I assert that THE MUSEUM IS A NEVER-ENDING POSSIBILITY and as such renders intervention opportunities that must not be wasted.

Maria del Carmen Maza
"El museo es el Universo en todos sus avatares. El museo es el Hombre con todas las cosas que lo rodean."

Andre Desvallées

APRENDAMOS A VIVIR EN NUESTRO PLANETA

Es más, quizás el lema debería ser "Cuidemos al planeta de la acción del Hombre", ya que aparentemente no hay una cabal toma de conciencia de que los problemas del desgaste ambiental afectarán a todos por igual.

Si pensamos que a partir de nuestras propias acciones vamos a proteger al medio ambiente -del cual somos parte integrante- entonces lo que en un principio aparecerá como una acción individual, luego, será una convicción general. "Defender la ecología es defendernos nosotros mismos."

El aire que respiramos no conoce fronteras, los mares y ríos que estamos contaminando no saben de límites geográficos. El sol, las lluvias y los vientos se hacen presentes en todas las regiones del mundo. No importa si en esas regiones los países son pobres o ricos. Estamos asistiendo a cambios climáticos que afectan a todas las naciones. Hoy se están produciendo una serie de catástrofes naturales, que pese a los adelantos tecnológicos, no se pueden prever.

No serán estos acontecimientos el resultado de nuestro irresponsable quehacer?

Lamentablemente parece que el problema no ha sido bien entendido. Durante el encuentro realizado en Río de Janeiro por la Conferencia Internacional ECO 92, "La cumbre de la tierra", se pudo apreciar que varios de los países industrializados, no están dispuestos a reducir lo suficiente algunas de sus actividades más contaminantes. Dichos países poseedores de un alto índice de consumo y de fuertes políticas proteccionistas, adoptaron actitudes tales, que parecerían que las consecuencias de un desastre ecológico no los alcanzará nunca.

Como dice Lucio Mansilla, cronista del diario La Nación, durante la ECO 92, generar normas y mecanismos de preservación sin tener en cuenta para ello que los países a que van dirigidos deberían participar en su elaboración.

Tomando las palabras de la doctora Nafis Sadik, "...para que los programas de desarrollo sean eficaces se debe tener en cuenta tanto las necesidades nacionales, como las iniciativas locales...". Sería conveniente tener presente este pensamiento cuando se proyectan normas de conservación dirigidas a los países del tercer mundo.

Si bien en los últimos años, los gobiernos han comenzado a elaborar ciertas legislaciones, ha sido mayor aún, la preocupación de las Organizaciones no Gubernamentales. Ellas han tratado de llevar adelante planes de concientización y de poner en práctica proyectos sobre el aprovechamiento responsable de los recursos naturales, a la vez que clamán para que el crecimiento
económico no prosiiga con la destrucción de la biodiversidad.

**Todos los países han aportado su cuota**

En la degradación del medio ambiente, ningún país está exento de haber hecho su aporte en el tema que nos ocupa. Pero no son los países pobres, con sus familias numerosas y sus tecnologías menos avanzadas, los únicos generadores del desequilibrio ambiental.

Si todos los hombres, en especial aquellos que dirigen el destino de las naciones, cobraran conciencia que el uso responsable de los recursos naturales va a beneficiar a la humanidad: que ellos son integrantes de esta humanidad a la que se quiere proteger, y que por lo tanto forman parte del sistema ecológico, comprenderían al fin que todos los esfuerzos que se hagan en pos de una mejor calidad de vida deben conducir al correcto aprovechamiento de los recursos que nos ofrece la naturaleza y de la tecnología que crea el hombre.

La polución atmosférica, las emanaciones de dióxido de carbono, las centrales nucleares, —sin la seguridad suficiente—, la fabricación de armas químicas, la deforestación y la caza indiscriminada, con fines comerciales —que ha provocado que numerosas especies esté en vías de extinción— son algunas de las obras del Ser Humano que hacen peligrar la vida futura en nuestra tierra.

**Pobreza e ignorancia**

He aquí dos factores que se deben analizar coherentemente para no crear falsos conceptos.

En las sociedades más pobres, aún se puede encontrar una fuerte tradición de respeto por la naturaleza. Probablemente sean dichas sociedades quienes mejor puedan sobrevivir al desequilibrio ambiental. Conocen su entorno y no lo danan, utilizando según sus necesidades.

De la pobreza mucho se ha hablado pero poco se ha concretado, cabe recordar al respecto las palabras de la doctora N. Sadik “Muchos programas para combatir la pobreza han fracasado porque los beneficiarios no participaron en su concepción ni en su ejecución y muchos de ellos no han dado el resultado esperado por ser el fruto de políticas contradictorias”.

En la actualidad las escuelas han implementado en los planes de estudio materias relacionadas con la educación ambiental. En los países más avanzados poseedores de políticas educacionales muy eficientes, se está tratando de concientizar a los niños acerca de la importancia de nuestra tierra. En los países menos avanzados, con políticas de educación un tanto deficientes, también están incluyendo materias relacionadas con la disciplina que nos ocupa, además de contar con el aporte de las Instituciones no Gubernamentales.

Por otra parte un gran número de habitantes del mundo ya no asisten a la escuela. Son personas mayores, son profesionales, son amas de casa, son jubilados, estas personas necesitan de la información que se puede recibir a través de los diferentes medios de comunicación para conocer la verdadera problemática...
ecológica. Si por cualquier razón esa información no les llega
ignorarán los motivos que afectan su futuro.

El desconocimiento de las actividades y usos cotidianos
que danan nuestro entorno, se encuentra en las naciones
industrializadas y en los países en vías de desarrollo. Las
estadísticas de las Naciones Unidas indican que los mayores
consumidores son los países con alta tecnología y con un mejor
nivel económico en la población.

En un mundo donde las políticas consumistas han avanzado
con gran rapidez, bajo el lema de una mejor calidad de vida, se
ha ido extendiendo por todas las regiones del planeta, la imagen
de una vida confortable, sin tener en cuenta el uso responsable de
la tecnología y los recursos naturales, frente a los abusos del
consumo.

Es por lo expuesto que considero que la ignorancia es el
elemento común que debemos enfrentar y está radicada tanto en el
norte como en el sur.

**MUSEOS Y MUSEOLOGÍA**

El ser humano, que a través de los siglos ha trabajado
en el desarrollo de técnicas en pos de una vida más larga y
placentera —de cuyos resultados todos hacemos uso en mayor o
menor grado— también ha generado una sociedad altamente
competitiva que lo está aislando del entorno natural y cultural.

Hoy la consigna parecería ser que la naturaleza sirve
sólo para valerse de ella y comerciar; la sociedad para inducirla
a un mayor consumo y así unos pocos acrecentar sus riquezas. Pero
ante esta situación nos preguntamos, ¿qué sucede con las culturas
de los pueblos, con sus tradiciones, con sus valores... tan sólo
están para ser exhibidas en los museos?

Si consideramos que en los museos están los cimientos de
las diversas sociedades: que no sólo albergan y muestran los
objetos culturales por ellas producidos y los elementos que
pertenecen a la naturaleza, sino que a partir de ellos podemos
conocer los aciertos y desaciertos del hombre en lo que va de su
propia historia. Por qué con todo el potencial que poseen no se
ha fomentado por su intermedio una política de preservación a
nivel internacional, siendo que el medio ambiente es patrimonio
de la humanidad.

No será este el momento oportuno para preguntarnos si
realmente el Museo se ha insertado en la realidad actual y poner
en práctica proyectos tendientes a la preservación del futuro del
hombre?

Se ha tomado conciencia en el ambiente museológico de
los acontecimientos del pasado reciente y del futuro incierto al
que nos estamos enfrentando?

Cuando se habla del museo y del medio ambiente, de su
posible accionar, surge nuevamente "esa frontera" entre los
países del primer y tercer mundo. Cuando se piensa en proyectos
dirigidos a la preservación de la biosfera, pasan a ser
prioridades las diferencias de medios técnicos y económicos que hay entre los países desarrollados y aquellos en vías de desarrollo. Es necesario intentar un planteamiento profundo del rol del museo en la preservación de la vida en el planeta, definir políticas claras con objetivos precisos que se puedan implementar en todas las regiones con los medios técnicos que estén a su alcance.

La ignorancia no es patrimonio de los países pobres

En las grandes ciudades, en los países con alta tecnología se induce a los habitantes a un excesivo consumo de los productos que propone el mercado. Esas personas atraídas por la gran difusión que generalmente tienen sus artículos, desconocen el daño ambiental que con su uso desmedido pueden provocar y que finalmente redundará en su contra.

En los países del tercer mundo los habitantes son inducidos a una mala utilización de los recursos naturales y al empleo de una tecnología ya en desuso en las naciones del norte, imponiéndoles por medio de una amplia difusión, un modelo de vida que si bien es ajeno a su contexto cultural, aparece como un ideal de vida. Estas personas saben lo que sucede, por ejemplo, con la tala indiscriminada, pero se ven obligados a seguir haciéndolo porque no tienen otra opción. Es un deber de los profesionales vinculados a la museología y a los museos, comprometerse con su comunidad y actuar en defensa del patrimonio natural de su región y del resto del mundo, mediante la difusión de los conocimientos sobre el uso racional de su entorno y los adelantos conseguidos por el hombre.

Sólo a través de la educación y la información -funciones inherentes a las actividades de los museos- podríamos superar el desconocimiento que nos abruma. Como dice Francesco di Castri "...para salir de este atolladero habrá que modificar las reglas de juego del mercado internacional..." y "...se impone una modificación estructural de las relaciones entre el norte y el sur.". Porqué no empezar a trabajar en forma interrelacionada los museos de las distintas regiones?

Sería conveniente que los profesionales de la museología de las diversas disciplinas vinculadas al medio ambiente se plantearan la necesidad de comenzar a trabajar con un proyecto en común.

Es el museo la institución con mayores recursos para concientizar a los ciudadanos acerca de los problemas ambientales. Cabe recordar lo enunciado en la Reunión Regional del ICOMIC LAM donde entre otras cosas se expresa la necesidad que los museos "determinen las acciones que pueden llevar a cabo frente al cambio global que se está operando en la tierra propiciando la elaboración de programas destinados a la difusión de los conocimientos sobre los peligros inminentes que se ciernen sobre el planeta."

Sólo las acciones solidarias y conjuntas entre el norte y el sur podrán revertir la situación existente en la actualidad. No olvidemos que si hoy los museos trabajan mostrando un
pasado que es referente de nuestro presente, también HOY debemos trabajar para que este presente pueda ser el referente del futuro.

Defendamos nuestro planeta. Actuemos en favor de la Ciencia y Tecnología en vías de un desarrollo sustentable. Aprendamos a vivir en nuestra tierra.

Respondiendo a la pregunta que plantea el título de la próxima Conferencia General del ICOM, en Quebec, afirmo que: EL MUSEO ES UNA POSIBILIDAD SIN FRONTERAS y como tal nos brinda oportunidades de intervención que no debemos desaprovechar.

María del Carmen Maza
Conservador de Museos

Between 1976 and 1991 fourteen symposia were organized. All conference papers were published as "ICOFOM Studies Series" (ISS). In addition two issues of "Museological Working Papers" (MuWoP) were published. Initially MuWoP was meant to be the medium through which the results of the symposia were made known. Only two issues were published (in 1980 and 1981). Awaiting the continuation of MuWoP, the conclusions of the symposia of 1989 and 1990 were published in "Museological News".

Symposium 1

'Possibilities and limits in scientific research typical for the museum' (Warsaw 1978).

The theme of this first ICOFOM symposium was broken down into three questions:

1) If museums are considered to be primarily educationally oriented institutions, would it not be better to leave research activities to other institutions?
2) If museums cannot do without scientific activities, isn't the scientific work realized by museums of marginal character only, while real scientific work is done by other institutions?
3) What is to be done with the smaller and regional museums, mostly not equipped for scientific activities?

All seven authors considered research an important, even essential aspect of museum work for all types of museums. Especially in Soviet museology, which referred to Lenin's instructions, museums were seen as specific, multifunctional scientific institutions with well-developed educational-cultural functions.

Although this was not mentioned in the questions, some authors paid much attention to the specificity of the museological approach, notably museological research as compared with other scientific research. Concerning this aspect, the committee suggested creating an international centre for museological studies, connected with a network of national centres (as proposed by Vinos Sofka). These centres should do research into the purpose, role, functioning, etc. of museums and also play a central role in the training of museum personnel. Furthermore the publication of a handbook on museology was advocated.

Symposium 2

'Sociological and ecological aspects in modern museum activities in the light of cooperation with other related institutions' (Torgiano 1979).

This second ICOFOM symposium had basically the same structure as the first one: a limited number of specialists was invited to present a lecture on the theme of the symposium. The theme was introduced by chairman Jan Jelinek. It is interesting to notice that the problem as formulated by him recurred in 1987 as one of the themes of ICOFOM's 10th symposium (Espoo 1987).

The organizers of the symposium considered institutes concerned with architectural and historical monuments, nature parks, game reserves, zoos, botanical gardens, etc. as related institutions, not as museums 'sensu lato' And yet, in his introduction, Jelinek pointed at the application of museological (read: museum) methods in the educational activities realized by the other institutes. At the same time, however, museum work is influenced by the sociological and ecological methods developed by those other institutes.

It would seem that the interpretation of the theme caused the authors some problems and this might be the explanation of the diversity of the papers. With regard to the the ecological aspect some authors pleaded for a context-oriented preservation policy, as e.g. country houses (Cannon-Brookes),
agrarian villages (Xiau) and museological monuments (Boschma).

Symposium 3

'Systematics and systems in museology' (Mexico 1980).

The original intention of the symposium miscarried. Only two of the scheduled lectures actually took place. It was decided to return to this theme in the next meeting (Paris 1982).

Throughout the symposium the terms systematics and systems were used in various senses. The original intention of the symposium was to discuss the internal structure of the discipline. Stransky, however, elaborated the use of concepts from the General Systems Theory, while Lewis and Sofka on the other hand spoke mainly about ICOM, ICOMCOM and the relationship between international committees. Although the original intention miscarried, the concept of interdisciplinarity within ICOM as reflection of interdisciplinarity in museum work, became the main subject of a special session included in the programme of the 1989 ICOM General Conference in The Hague.

Symposium 4

'The system of museology and interdisciplinarity' (Paris 1982).

This symposium is to be seen as the continuation of the Mexico City, 1981 meeting and both issues of Museological Working Papers.

In his contribution Tomislav Sola concentrated on the subject matter of museology. In this paper he introduced the concept of 'heritology'. The other authors dealt more or less with the theme(s) as outlined in the invitation: the system of/in museology and interdisciplinarity. Mota and Razgon focussed on the structure of museology as an academic discipline. While Mota presented a rather atypical structure, Razgon based himself strongly on the ideas of east-european museologists. The remaining papers (Lacouture and Spielbauer) focussed on the concept of systems in museology in relationship with interdisciplinarity. Both authors consider a interdisciplinary approach in museum work and museology of prime importance.

Symposium 5

'Methodology of museology and professional training' (London 1983).

Because of cooperation with the International Committee for the Training of Museum Personnel a twofold theme was chosen: 'methodology of museology' as the ICOM part and 'professional training as an ICOM part. The idea was, however, to integrate both aspects. In the following summary only the first aspect will be considered.

As could be expected, a wide variety of opinions was reflected in the papers. As to the subject matter of museology Spielbauer described the variety of opinions as 'a continua with a predominantly pragmatic institutional approach at the one end and a more generalized human/object relationship approach at the other'. However, the museum as institute remains a fundamental variable, a 'shared reality' (Spielbauer). In two papers only museology is considered to have a broader meaning than the museum as institute. All other authors relate museology exclusively to museums. Three points of view were expressed:

a. museology as the science of the museum as a socio-cultural institute;
b. museology as the science of a set of activities, implemented in the context of the museum institute;
c. museology as the science of the essence of the museum phenomenon.

Symposium 6


This symposium can be considered as the complement of the colomnium 'Methodology of museology and professional training', held during the same annual conference. The theme was the result of the Paris 1982 meeting, were the ecomuseologists vehemently claimed their own 'niche' within the committee.

In the introductory guidelines it was suggested that the symposium should deal with two phenomena: ecology and ecomuseums. Although the conference papers were published with a green cover, ecology as studied in relation with ecomuseums should not be interpreted solely as an natural science. Ecomuseums are not a special kind of natural history museums. This misunderstanding led to much confusion during the symposium. When studying the papers one can clearly distinguish between the ecomuseologists and those that hold a natural history view.

Symposium 7

'Collecting today for tomorrow' (Leiden 1984).

Following the structure of the triennial programme the 1984 symposium was devoted to collecting. The theme was subdivided into four sub-themes. Authors were asked to concentrate on one of the following topics:

a. Museum object - what and why? A definition or description of just what a museum object is or should be.
b. Criteria for the selection of museum objects and the current constraints that limit the selection.
c. The global dimension of collecting and the reassessment of new and current holdings. What should we continue to preserve of the present collections?
d. Current acquisition policy and its appropriateness for tomorrow's needs.

Actually, the theme of the symposium was wrongly interpreted by most authors as documenting the present by collecting. This was due to the title chosen which happens to be the same as the well known brochure from SAMOK, the Swedish organisation documenting the present.

The papers on the characteristics of the museum object anticipated the theme of the Zagreb 1985 symposium. These papers stressed the unique museological approach to objects. As such the concept of 'museum object' (musealia: Schreiner, museum material: Tsurtani, museological object: Van Mensch) was considered as the corner stone of museological methodology.

In general most authors seemed to be dissatisfied about past and current collecting policies. The importance of scientific acquisition and documentation programmes was stressed. The authors expressed their hopes for museological theory to provide suitable selection criteria. Some authors appeared to ask for normative views, but at the same time others emphasized that collecting policies are time- and culture-dependent.
In view of the theme some attention was paid to expected future demands. Most authors expressed as their opinion that it is impossible to predict the future. Some, however, emphasized the importance of a future oriented approach. In his comment G. Bills Burcauw too looked into the future. He foresaw the creation of "public memory institutions" in which museums will merge with other institutions, like archives, libraries, etc. Modern technology will help to install these institutes. Here, Burcauw's view came close to Sola's. Sola saw high hopes on information technology. Andreas Grote, on the other hand appeared to be rather sceptic, or even cynical about the future. 'Which future?' and 'Whose future?' he asked.

Strangely enough little was said about cooperation between museums. Another aspect left unconsidered was the excessive growth of collections and the concomitant problems. De-accessioning as one strategy to cope with growth was not discussed.

Symposium 8

'Originals and substitutes in museums' (Zagreb 1985)

Although the theme originally focused on substitutes in the widest sense, most authors concentrated on one special type of substitute only, namely copies. The more or less theoretical papers of the five invited members were complemented by five invited contributions concerning specialized institutes that either make or use copies.

The theme of the symposium was divided into four sub-themes:

a) Concepts and definitions
b) Justified and unjustified use - ethical and legal aspects
c) Typology of substitutes
d) Implications for museum work

The symposium theme intended to combine two focal points: the characteristics of a copy designating it as a special object, and the use of this special type of objects in museums. During the Leiden 1984 symposium some authors had declared the object to be a cornerstone of museum work. For them a structured approach to the object was therefore the cornerstone of museological theory and methodology. Discussing copies as a category 'per se' was a legitimate question. This is why some Leiden 1984 contributions had named authenticity as the most important quality of museum objects.

The title of the symposium mentioned substitutes, which is a broader term than copies. Most authors, however, concentrated on copies (either malafide or bona fide). Several questions were dealt with: what is an original, what is the relation between original and copy, does a copy have an intrinsic value, etc. With the help of non-western examples Konare and Maranda showed the relativity of the materialistic approach to originality and authenticity that characterizes much of museum work in the Western world. Bernard Deloche and Tomislav Sola, referring to Andre Malraux, welcomed the technological opportunities to make perfect copies. Copying liberates the object (especially the art object) from the suffocating fetters of the myth of originality, objectivity and truth, and neutralizes these sources. Mathilde Bailleul and Peter Van Mensch pointed at the intrinsic value of copies (models, etc.) as documents. Other authors mentioned the use of copies (models, etc.) for the development of museums, a whole array of authors considered copies of derived importance, of minor importance too, although they had to admit that there are occasions, especially with regard to exhibitions, when museums may consider the use of copies.

Symposium 9

'Museology and identity' (Buenos Aires 1986).

The theme of this symposium was carefully chosen in view of the theme of the General Conference as well as the place where this conference was held. It was expected that it would appeal to museologists outside Europe and North America, especially those in Latin America. The theme was subdivided into three sub-themes:

a) the definition of identity (including its natural and cultural scope),

b) the approach of museums to identity,

c) the role of museology.

The participants were not asked to concentrate on just one sub-theme, but expected to cover the whole scope. Not surprisingly, most authors narrowed their attention to the second sub-theme. Cultural identity was a hot issue at the time and this, together with a high percentage of 'newcomers', will have accounted for the emphasis on 'museums and identity' rather than 'museology and identity'. The topic provoked a series of very committed papers, starting with the provocative paper by Sola. The relatively high percentage of authors from so-called Third World countries and the context of the meeting as a whole (the first ICOM General Conference to be held on the South American continent) also contributed to a general atmosphere of engagement.

All authors, though in different wording, stressed the importance of museums in preserving and communicating objects as elements of culture ('materialized culture'). Some authors emphasized the fact that preserving and communicating objects means preserving and communicating the underlying ideas. The musealization process, however, often means 'la denaturation et la mutilation des objets' (MUCHARD). Museums must try to preserve the cultural vitality of the object. A group of authors (mainly French) considered the concept of museology as the best concept in which this can be realized.

The first sub-theme gave a confusing diversity of approaches and definitions. Some authors took a very philosophical stand, others chose a more practical starting-point.

The concept of identity contains an element of distinction and an element of correspondence. Most authors, in defining identity or the characteristic, defined a unique and distinctive feature of a group of people, stressed - unwittingly or unwittingly - the aspect of distinction. In this respect museum work is seen in the context of profiling the group as an entity, i.e. as distinct from other groups.

Symposium 10

'Museology and museums' (Espoo 1987).

This annual ICOFOM symposium was the 10th symposium to publish its working material. The symposium dealt with the relationship museology - museum. In his introduction chairman Vimo Sofka described the theme 'the role of museums' for discussion'. However, the main aim was not to solve the seniory question (museology or museums), but to return to the basic question that was raised in Munich-Ett: what is the subject matter of museology? A recurring question during the discussions for the successive symposia and the First ICOFOM Museology Workshop (1986) was, whether museology as a scientific concept is limited to the museum phenomenon only or has a wider scope. The latter view was expressed in several papers and during the discussions by the so-called 'all-round
heritologists' attacked by Klaus Schreiner in his comments on the Leiden 1985 symposium. The wish to revive the museum studies versus heritology discussion in the context of the apparent 'identity crisis' of the museum world was the underlying motive for this theme.

Of the authors of the basic papers one group concentrated on the function of the museums in doing so the attitude of commitment of the Buenos Aires 1986 symposium was echoed. Authors from Third World countries pointed at the difference in history and social significance of museums in their parts of the world, compared with those in the First World. Barbara Abramo described these differences in terms of privacy: First World museums are mostly concerned with the preservation of collections, while Third World museums are seen as instruments of social change. When there is an identity crisis, there is a crisis among First World museums. The problems of Third World museums are of a different kind.

Despite the diversity of opinions on the relation museology—museums, this caused little discussion. The authors discussing it agreed that museology development should contribute to the further development of museums. The three modes of relationship as given by Bedekar, may serve as a basic structure for the summary of all papers: 1. The institution/structure taken by the museum. Museology describes and analyzes the museum as a museology develops innovative models and methods, which are presented to museums to improve their effectiveness. 2. Museology is the basis of all training. Among the authors there was a slight preference for a normative approach to the second mode.

Symposium II

'Museology and developing countries — help or manipulation?' (Hyderabad 1988).

The theme of the 1988 symposium related to the place where the conference was held. It was the first special ICOPOM conference outside Europe (the conferences in Mexico and Buenos Aires were held in connection with ICOM General Conferences). In the contributions to former symposia participants from the Third World had emphasized the special role of museums and museology in their parts of the world. During the Hyderabad symposium it was strongly suggested by most of the Third World authors that the 'traditional' museum form, historically developed in European oriented societies, does not meet the needs of other societies around the world. Museology was expected to propose new and innovative forms specifically adjusted to meet community needs. This expectation reflects a two-fold relation between museology and development: the development of society and the development of museology. The interaction between these two developments was chosen to be the theme of the 1988 conference. The basic question put forward to the contributors was: 'What contribution has museology to offer to the developing countries?' This basic question was specified into four topics:

a. What is the prime purpose of museology and museological institutions (like museums) in developing countries?

b. What are the conditions that limit the realization of the aims of museology and museological programmes? How can we cope with them?

c. How can the theory of museology be of help in adapting old approaches to present needs? How can the theory of museology in developing new models? Do local, indigenous models exist? What role do the developed world models play?

d. What is the role of the means of transmission of museological theory into practice — be it museums, museological training centres or research institutes — and how is the valuable experience of practice converted into general theory?

Almost half of the contributors lived in the Third World. But of these 23 museologists seven came from India (the host country), seven from Brazil, four from Argentina, and three from different countries in Africa. Partly due to this, there was much emphasis on the relationship between museums and cultural identity, thus repeating the basic questions of the 1986 conference.

Most of the Third World contributors emphasize the fact that the concept of the museum is a colonial artefact, although there might be some local museological traditions. The African museologist are most opposed to the colonial concept of the traditional museum: 'La colonisateur a domine le colonisé pour avoir implanté deux grandes institutions: d'un cote, les bases militaires pour liquider physique et de l'autre, la muséographie pour liquider spirituellement, mentalement voire aliener culturellement' (Assogba, South American museologists, especially the Brazilian, unanimously consider the traditional museums of their countries as institutions dominated by a culturally, economically and politically dominant elite. The European share of our cultural heritage (formed by native, African and European cultures) has always been imposed through ignorance of principles and fundamental concepts of the other two heritages' (Araujo & Bruno). In their contributions the Indian museologists do not refer to dominant elites. Nevertheless they emphasize the lack of social relevance of many (most?) museums. All Third World contributors agree with this. They consider museums important instruments for raising cultural awareness. To be effective museums have to identify themselves with the needs of the local population.

Limiting conditions are the lack of resources, the stay behind of professionalism, and the lack of support by local and national authorities. There is a general feeling that museological techniques should not be copied from the west, but that they should be adapted to the specific conditions of the Third World. Special models should be developed and tested. For India the example is given of the successful science centres that are mushrooming throughout the country.

Not surprisingly most of the European and North American contributors keep to the general level, while those coming from the Third World focus their attention mostly on concrete issues. However, their contributions do not contradict each other. Most of the European and North American museologists emphasize that the 19th century museum model (which is the colonial model for Third World countries) is obsolete in Europe too. Museums in general should be more community oriented. In view of the different social environments, the museum concept should be 'correspondingly elastic'.

Although many authors state that museology and museology are developed in different contexts, they seem to accept a general theory of museology, valid for all parts of the world. On a lower abstraction level ('musaeography') there should be some differentiation as to local conditions.
Symposium 12


In the title of the symposium 'forecasting' and 'futurology' were used as synonyms, 'forecasting' being the more adequate one. The theme was subdivided into two subthemes: (1) the role of forecasting in museology, and (2) museology and museological institutions as active agents of change.

Surprisingly only a few authors deal with the theme as it was intended. Obviously by lack of sufficient knowledge of futurological research methods, most authors tend to focus on the present situation and/or write about their ideas on how museums should look like in the future. Some authors even deny the usefulness of forecasting, being not scientific. In an attempt to find a starting point some authors give a brief survey of past and present developments. The main view, however, is that anyhow the present is literally and figuratively a pivotal point. It is in the present that we build an understanding of the social role of museums in the past as well as in the future.

Many authors propose what museums should become, based on their currently changing values and perspectives. Their proposals mainly focus on the social role of museums. As it was stated in the final conclusions (published in Museological News 13) museology and museums have to respond to the changing world if they are to survive 'in the service of society and of its development'. There is a general feeling that museums should try to create awareness and tolerance in the society they serve. They should ensure that the balance between technology and culture is correctly maintained, that the central importance of human creativity and liberty is recognized, and that the community's responsibility to respect and care for its own cultural and natural heritage is not forgotten.

More or less systematic analyses of the forces that will shape museums of the future and their possible consequences are rare among the papers. It is, however, significant that most contributions focus on an alleged inherent continuity of the museum institute rather than broadening the perspective towards a wider range of institutes.

In the papers, but especially during the discussion, attention was drawn towards the differences between different parts of the world. It appears that for contributors from west-European countries changes are required in traditional structures in order to face the future. For contributors from east-European countries the main emphasis is on scientific development and knowledge of the museum domain for a better understanding of the world. Contributors from developing countries think of a kind of 'matrix' where the model is Man and which should reflect his needs and desires.

Symposium 13

'Museums and the environment - natural and cultural' (Zambia 1990)

See Museological News 14.

Symposium 14


See Museological News 15.